

THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
NEW YORK, NY 10007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, June 10, 2021

CONTACT: pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov, (212) 788-2958

**DE BLASIO ADMINISTRATION ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF 39TH ANNUAL
AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN DESIGN**

Projects in all five boroughs enhance public open spaces, provide cultural and recreational amenities, and design a healthier and more resilient city

NEW YORK—Today, Mayor de Blasio, Deputy Mayor for Housing and Economic Development Vicki Been, Public Design Commission President Signe Nielsen and Executive Director Keri Butler announced winners of the 39th Annual Awards for Excellence in Design.

The 14 winning projects were selected by the Public Design Commission from the hundreds of submissions reviewed in 2020 and exemplify how thoughtful and creative civic design can provide public spaces that enhance New Yorkers' health and wellbeing. This year's awards focused on city parks, which have been essential places for people to safely gather throughout the pandemic. A special recognition was given to NYC Parks, parks alliances and partner organizations that partner with the City, and the more than 3,000 front line maintenance and operations staff who have kept parks clean, safe, and attractive throughout the pandemic.

The **Design Awards** book is available [here](#) and high-resolution images of this year's winners can be found [here](#).

"Building a recovery for all of us means relying on functional, beautiful, and equitable public spaces. These winning projects will make New York City more livable than ever," said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. "I'm proud to support the Public Design Commission's awardees, and I look forward to enjoying our city's open space throughout this summer and beyond."

"Our parks represent refuge and restoration. With the Public Design Commission, I celebrate the City workforce, private partners, architects, designers, and artists who devote their time and talent to making the city's public spaces more beautiful and enjoyable," said **Deputy Mayor for Housing and Economic Development Vicki Been**. "In recognizing the talented visionaries whose designs grace neighborhoods across the five boroughs, we affirm to *all* New Yorkers that they deserve access to wonderful places to live, work, and play."

"Over the past year, it has become abundantly clear that well-designed and sustainable public parks and open spaces are essential foundations of public health. This year's awards will focus on projects and programs that will provide and maintain these critical places for social gathering, recreation, and wellbeing," said **Public Design Commission President Signe Nielsen**.

“These award-winning designs reflect our City’s commitment to recovery and long-term resiliency, providing critical public spaces that enhance our physical and mental health and enrich our cultural and civic lives. By incorporating principles of good design in our public projects – including sustainability, functionality, beauty, and durability – we’ll make New York City a better place to live, work, and visit,” said **Public Design Commission Executive Director Keri Butler**.

“I’m thrilled that New York City’s citywide coastal resiliency portfolio has been selected for this honor,” said **Jainey Bavishi, Director of the Mayor’s Office of Climate Resiliency**. “Implementing large-scale flood protection projects in such a dense and constrained urban environment poses many complex design challenges. Hundreds of staff from a wide variety of City agencies have worked tirelessly with local communities to approach these challenges with a spirit of innovation and unparalleled dedication. The projects we are advancing now will help create safer, more resilient, and more vibrant neighborhoods all along our shoreline, from the Rockaways to Red Hook and beyond.”

“We are thrilled to be recognized by the Commission, which has been a critical partner to DEP as we advance our broad portfolio of projects to protect the city’s critical water and wastewater infrastructure, improve the environment, and safeguard public health,” said **NYC Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Vincent Sapienza**.

“We are grateful to the Public Design Commission for awarding park designs across the five boroughs and recognizing the dedicated work of our partners and frontline staff,” said **NYC Parks Commissioner Mitchell J. Silver, FAICP**. “The pandemic has underscored the essential role that equitable and sustainable design plays in our physical health and mental wellbeing. We are proud of our work building an inclusive, seamless 21st century park system for New Yorkers and caring for green spaces across the city.”

The Public Design Commission

The Public Design Commission reviews permanent works of architecture, landscape architecture, and art proposed on or over City-owned property. The Commission comprises 11 members, including an architect, landscape architect, painter, sculptor, and three lay members, as well as representatives of the Brooklyn Museum, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York Public Library, and the Mayor.

Members of the Commission serve pro bono and meet once per month. Projects considered for the annual awards are submitted by City agencies and include the construction, renovation, or restoration of buildings and other structures; the creation or rehabilitation of parks, playgrounds, and plazas; installation of lighting and other streetscape elements; signage; and the installation and conservation of artwork and memorials.

The Annual Awards for Excellence in Design

Since 1983, the Public Design Commission has celebrated exemplary public projects with its Annual Awards for Excellence in Design. The selected designs represent the wide-range of

proposals for City-owned land reviewed by the Commission the previous year, such as park and streetscape reconstructions, artwork installations, infrastructure, and large mixed-use developments. The winning projects exemplify how innovative and thoughtful design can enhance the public realm, serve communities, inspire neighborhood pride, and provide durable and resilient spaces for New Yorkers.

The Design Award-Winning Projects

Reconstruction of Grant Park

Grant Avenue between East 169th Street and East 170th Street, Bronx

A project of the Department of Parks & Recreation and the Department of Transportation
Stantec

As part of the Jerome Avenue rezoning initiative, this project will convert a portion of the Grant Avenue roadbed into green space, integrating two smaller areas into one larger and more cohesive park. Designed to serve a growing community, the enlarged park will feature natural lawn for passive recreation and field games, shaded areas for seating and gathering, and an active recreational zone with a full-size basketball court and adult fitness area.

Reconstruction of Soccer Fields at the Red Hook Recreation Area, Phase IV

Clinton Street, Bay Street, and Court Street, Brooklyn

A project of the Department of Park & Recreation
Abel Bainnson Butz

As the final phase of the 36-acre reconstruction of the Red Hook Recreational Area, this project will complete the transformation of a formerly contaminated industrial site and popular neighborhood park into a city-wide destination for multi-generational recreation. The design includes storm resiliency and sustainability interventions, park-wide circulation and accessibility enhancements, and a gathering space with a variety of seating to accommodate the Food Truck Marketplace held along Bay Street.

Construction of Bushwick Inlet Park, Motiva Parcel

Kent Avenue between North 14th Street and North 15th Street, Brooklyn

A project of the Department of Parks & Recreation
Abel Bainnson Butz

A critical component of a larger waterfront park initiative and in line with the Williamsburg-Greenpoint Master Plan, this project will remediate a post-industrial landscape while restoring the local ecosystem. A continuous accessible esplanade includes areas for passive recreation such as nature observation points, and a kayak launch provides access to the water for more active pursuits.

Reconstruction of the Pool and Rink at the Harlem Meer

Central Park between East Drive and the Harlem Meer, Manhattan

A project of the Department of Parks and Recreation and the Central Park Conservancy
Susan T. Rodriguez Architecture & Design
Mitchell-Giurgola

The capstone effort of a decades-long commitment to restore the northern end of the Park as a vital resource for the surrounding community, this new pool and rink will replace a failing facility with one inspired by the visionary design of the landmarked park and the tradition of fusing architecture and landscape. Integrated into the topography of the site, the structure's mass will be minimized while providing open and light-filled spaces. The oval-shaped pool, which will be transformed into a flexible recreation space in spring and fall and an ice-skating rink in winter, is framed by a low retaining wall enveloped by a landscape berm. A stream course and park path that were displaced by the construction of the existing facility will be re-established, restoring the continuity of the landscape. The Meer shoreline adjacent to the facility will be naturalized, and a waterside pergola and boardwalk through freshwater marsh plantings will support nature-based recreation.

Reconstruction of Gorman Playground

84th Street, 25th Avenue, 85th Street, and 30th Avenue, East Elmhurst, Queens

A project of the Department of Parks and Recreation

Department of Parks and Recreation In-house

Exemplifying a commitment to inclusive play and universal design, this park reconstruction will offer play opportunities for a wide range of ages and abilities. The play structures feature multiple accessible ramps as well as a variety of slides and climbers. Cozy spaces off the main play area provide a more intimate play experience with lower sensory stimulation. The spray shower, which doubles as a seating area and free play space during cooler months, has both decorative sea animals and ground sprays. Companion seating can be found throughout the play area, bordered by new plantings chosen for their seasonal and sensory interest. Great care was taken to locate new playground features around existing trees and to increase surface permeability for better stormwater retention.

Reconstruction of Dongan Playground

Adjacent to P.S. 52, Dongan Hills Avenue, Mason Avenue, and Buel Avenue, Staten Island

A project of the Department of Parks and Recreation

Department of Parks and Recreation In-house

Utilizing adaptive strategies for building in the floodplain while maintaining typical park functions, this design accommodates sea level rise for the lifespan of the playground. High-value structures are elevated above the projected floodplain and water from moderate storm events is detained below the raised park, decreasing surface flooding and lessening the burden on the neighborhood stormwater system. A large play area with ample seating welcomes students and parents into the park after school. A central ramp connects to elevated play equipment, raising accessible play experiences, while containing the active play zone. The tot-lot and game tables are separated into the quieter spaces within the park, while the synthetic turf lawn creates opportunities for unprogrammed and intergenerational play.

Reconstruction of Ericsson Playground

Adjacent to M.S. 126, Manhattan Avenue and Leonard Street, Brooklyn

A project of the Department of Parks & Recreation

James Corner Field Operations

Designed in part to serve the Magnet School for Environmental Engineering, this park will nearly triple the amount of planting on site and expand on the school's eco-focused mission and programs. A nature trail defines three activity areas: a flexible field and running track, basketball courts with an outdoor fitness area, and a unique climbing feature called the "Tree House" that is universally accessible and promotes rigor, challenge, and socialization.

Modular Comfort Station Prototype for Parks Citywide

A project of the Department of Parks and Recreation
1100 Architect

Piloted in Staten Island's Luis Lopez Playground, this comfort station prototype utilizes the efficiencies of off-site construction and the lower costs associated with modular production techniques to economically provide amenities in the City's public spaces.

The steel-frame structure is clad with a pattern of glazed blocks in a variety of color options, depending on the site, while a green roof enhances the project's environmental performance. The station includes two restrooms and a space for park maintenance, and is designed to be universally accessible, vandal resistant, and available year-round.

Brownsville Library Renovation and Expansion

61 Glenmore Avenue, Brooklyn

A project of the Department of Design and Construction and Brooklyn Public Library

LTL Architects

Architectural Preservation Studio

Local Office Landscape + Urban Design

The restoration of this historic Carnegie library will provide inspirational light-filled spaces while the addition will enhance the facility's ability to provide 21st-Century services to the Brownsville neighborhood. Given the multi-faceted social and cultural roles performed by branch libraries today, this project is designed as a center of hope, learning, and gathering for a community that has been disproportionately impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Paradise Parados by Teresita Fernández

Robert W. Wilson Sculpture Terrace at BAM Strong, 651 Fulton Street, Brooklyn

A project of the Department of Cultural Affairs and the Brooklyn Academy of Music

Teresita Fernández

Camber Studios

Fabricated from mirror-polished stainless steel, this site-specific installation will reflect the changing light of the day and seasons, passersby, street activity, and the surrounding tree canopies of the sculpture's dynamic urban surroundings. Derived from the meandering ivy-covered brick walls common throughout Brooklyn's urban landscape, the artwork's form becomes a canopy that suggests a draped, proscenium-like entrance, mimicking the undulating curtains that would frame a stage.

Public Health Laboratory at the Harlem Hospital Center

40 West 137th Street, Manhattan

A project of the Economic Development Corporation and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
Skidmore, Owings & Merrill

The New York City Public Health Laboratory's new 230,000 sq ft building will further strengthen the City's capability to protect and promote the health of all New Yorkers. Located adjacent to Harlem Hospital, the state-of-the-art lab will allow for testing and services for a wide range of clinical and environmental health-related concerns. From microbiology and virology, to immunology and biosafety, the new laboratory will enhance the City's response to emerging public health challenges like COVID-19. The building's design is characterized by its structural dia grid and corresponding diagonal glass and metal cladding. On the south side, the volume steps to accommodate various laboratory sizes - resulting in a massing that provides passive solar shading. The building will comply with the City's ambitious resiliency and sustainability regulations.

Waterfowl Management Program Building

Kensico Reservoir, Valhalla

A project of the Department of Environmental Protection

Hazen and Sawyer

Goshow Architects

Sited on the shoreline of the Kensico Reservoir, the Waterfowl Management Program building will provide the resources necessary to maintain the safety and high quality of NYC's drinking water. The new facility will enhance the program with offices, storage and training spaces, as well as boat repair and maintenance workshop. Expansive glazing provides unrestricted views to observe the water and surrounding site, while the rear façades face the reservoir's historic campus and are primarily clad in stone, providing an aesthetic continuity with the nearby early 20th-century buildings.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARDS

Citywide Coastal Resiliency Initiatives, including the Raise Shoreline program, the US Army Corps Staten Island Coastal Storm Risk Management and Rockaways Atlantic Shorefront Projects, East Side Coastal Resiliency, Lower Manhattan Coastal Resiliency, and Interim Flood Protection Measures by the Mayor's Office of Climate Resiliency, New York City Economic Development Corporation, Department of Design and Construction, Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Parks and Recreation, Department of Transportation, New York City Emergency Management, and the US Army Corps of Engineers

New York City is advancing the largest and most ambitious portfolio of coastal resiliency projects anywhere in the United States. These projects, which are being implemented across all five boroughs, use a wide variety of design features to protect against coastal storms, prevent regular tidal flooding caused by rising sea levels, reduce beach erosion, and guard critical infrastructure like the Hunts Point Food Markets. As the impacts of the climate crisis continue to worsen, cities around the world are reimagining how their waterfront areas can evolve to meet the needs and challenges of the 21st century.

Parks Maintenance, Operations, and Art Conservation Staff

Department of Parks & Recreation, Asphalt Green, Bronx River Alliance, Bryant Park Corporation / 34th Street Partnership, Central Park Conservancy, City Parks Foundation, Alliance for Flushing Meadows Corona Park, Forest Park Trust, Friends of the High Line, Greenbelt Conservancy, Historic House Trust, Hudson Yards Hell's Kitchen Alliance, Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, Lower East Side Ecology Center, Madison Square Park Conservancy, New York Restoration Project, Prospect Park Alliance, Randall's Island Park Alliance, Riverside Park Conservancy, The Battery Conservancy, and Times Square Alliance

Throughout the pandemic, New Yorkers have recognized the importance of neighborhood parks for providing access to recreation, safe gathering spaces, and enhancing health and well-being. This award celebrates the more than 3,000 citywide staff whose dedication and efforts have ensured that these spaces are clean and safe for the public to enjoy every day.

###