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**MAYOR ADAMS, NYC PARKS, NYCHA ANNOUNCE COLLABORATION TO BUILD
NEW OPEN SPACES, PLAYGROUNDS AT SIX HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS**

\$23 Million Mayoral Investment Will Bring City Closer to “Walk to a Park” Goals

NEW YORK – New York City Mayor Eric Adams, the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (NYC Parks), and the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) today announced a pilot program to re-imagine and invest in nearly three acres of NYCHA open space — including playgrounds — across three developments in Queens, two developments in the Bronx, and one development in Brooklyn. The announcement was held at the ribbon cutting ceremony for the new open space at Pomonok Houses in Queens, which has been fully reconstructed under this pilot and now includes fitness equipment, sensory play equipment, seating, and new landscaping.

“New York City’s parks, playgrounds, and open spaces aren’t luxuries, but necessities — playing a critical role to build community and nurturing our physical, mental, and emotional health,” said **Mayor Adams**. “This investment in NYCHA’s playgrounds and open spaces is a down payment on our city’s future that will pay dividends for generations to come.”

“Every New Yorker should be able to walk to a clean, quality, and functional open space. By working closely, NYCHA and NYC Parks are making this reality,” said **Deputy Mayor for Operations Meera Joshi**. “These revitalized areas will be important sources of health and community for the residents. We still have much work to do, but this is a big step in the right direction.”

“Everyone should have access to quality resources and amenities in their community, and that includes places to play and relax outdoors, especially for our younger neighbors,” said **Chief Housing Officer Jessica Katz**. “This new partnership between NYCHA and NYC Parks to overhaul open spaces and playgrounds at six developments will bring joy to thousands of public housing residents. Thank you to NYC Parks for being an incredible partner in building a stronger NYCHA as we work to improve services and quality of life for residents.”

“All New Yorkers deserve to have high-quality parks that are just a short walk away from their homes,” said **NYC Parks Commissioner Sue Donoghue**. “We are so proud of our partnership with NYCHA to transform underutilized areas under their jurisdiction into thriving public amenities, and grateful for the hundreds of NYCHA tenants and community members who came out to our input meetings and shared with us their dreams for these spaces.”

“Providing accessible open spaces that connect NYCHA residents to outdoor activity and recreation is essential to improving the quality of life for our campuses,” said **NYCHA Chair and CEO Greg Russ**. “Today’s exciting partnership is made possible through the support of the mayor’s office and the capacity of NYC Parks, and is in keeping with the Authority’s Connected Communities initiative, which engages in robust agency partnerships and resident-focused input to increase green space equity and integrate resilience in our neighborhoods.”

NYCHA and NYC Parks met with the residents at Woodside, Pomonok, Redfern, Watson, Sotomayor, and Kingsborough Houses to choose locations and help create the vision for their brand new open spaces. Since receiving community feedback, construction has finished at Pomonok Houses, is underway at Woodside and Redfern Houses, is expected to begin at Watson and Kingsborough Houses by spring 2023, and begin at Sotomayor Houses by summer 2023.

As part of the partnership, NYC Parks will maintain and operate the renovated open spaces. Revitalizing these spaces will create new amenities for the NYCHA community and other New Yorkers who currently do not live within walking distance of a park. Citywide, 83.6 percent of New Yorkers currently live within walking distance of a park. The *Walk to a Park* initiative focuses on increasing access to parks and open spaces, concentrating on areas of the city that are under-resourced and where residents are living further than a walk to a park.

Projects included in the initial pilot include:

Redfern Houses (\$9.3 million)

- Size: 50,000 square feet of NYCHA recreation area and Redfern Playground
- Scope: This project will reconstruct Redfern Playground and the adjacent NYCHA open space to include an upgraded ball field, basketball court, and handball court, play equipment, fitness equipment for teens and adults, and a grilling area.

Woodside Houses (\$1.2 million)

- Size: 6,500 square feet
- Scope: This project will revamp a passive seating and landscaped area at Woodside Houses with new game tables, benches, landscaping, and pathways.

Pomonok Houses (\$3 million)

- Size: 13,000 square feet
- Scope: This project has re-imagined an open space at Pomonok Houses to include fitness equipment, sensory play equipment, seating, and new landscaping.

Watson Houses (\$2.5 million)

- Size: 9,300 square feet
- Scope: This project will revamp a playground and seating area at 1471 Watson Houses to include new play equipment, game tables, benches, water play, landscaping, and brand new adult fitness equipment.

Kingsborough Houses (\$5.1 million)

- Size: 20,000 and 16,000 square feet
- Scope: This project will revitalize two playgrounds at Kingsborough Houses with new play equipment, game tables, benches, water play, and landscaping.

Sotomayor Houses (\$1.9 million)

- Size: 9,900 square feet
- Scope: This project will revamp a playground at Sotomayor Houses with new play equipment, water play, game tables, benches, landscaping, and brand-new swings.

“Thank you to Mayor Adams and his administration for launching this pilot program which will provide \$3 million to the Pomonok Houses in my congressional district,” said **U.S.**

Representative Grace Meng. “Open space is crucial for New Yorkers, especially for our kids, and from the fitness equipment to new seating, I look forward to Pomonok residents benefiting from these amenities for many years to come.”

“Every child in New York should have easy access to green space. Freely running around a playground or open greenery is a critical part of childhood development and happiness,” said **New York State Senator Brad Hoylman.** “With the new initiative from Mayor Adams, NYC Parks, and NYCHA, New York City is one step closer to honoring that mission. Creating three acres of green space is no easy feat in our crowded neighborhoods, and I applaud our city for working together to prioritize the quality of life for NYCHA families.”

“At a time when our youth are spending too much time in front of the television, on their phones or playing video games, it’s critically important to have open outdoor spaces for play and recreation,” said **New York State Senator James Sanders Jr.** “I am glad that the city is bringing such amenities to the Redfern Houses, which is in my district and to other locations across the city. Hopefully this will increase the health and wellness of our residents as well as reduce crime rates by giving our young people a productive way to spend their time, one that will hopefully increase their appreciation of their community, help them learn a new sport, and forge new friendships with their neighbors.”

“All investments in NYCHA are necessary, welcome and do justice to our people. I salute Mayor Adams and the NYC Parks for this multi-million dollar investment in our people,” said **New York State Senator Luis Sepúlveda.** “Recreational spaces are a right and not a luxury, NYCHA residents and especially our children deserve investments that can elevate their quality of life. Budget dollars invested directly in the well-being of our communities is the best use of public funds.”

“Open spaces do more than provide opportunities for recreation and socialization — they build community and strengthen the connections that people have with their neighbors,” said **New York State Assemblymember Steven Cymbrowitz.** “I commend NYCHA and the NYC Parks for their vision in creating a partnership that will benefit NYCHA residents of all ages and for generations to come.”

“The announcement by the mayor and NYC Parks that \$23 million will be used to develop open spaces at NYCHA developments across the city is what residents deserve,” said **New York State Assemblymember Chantel Jackson.** “After all the years of divestment they’ve

experienced, it is necessary that we provide NYCHA tenants with spaces that are clean, safe and functional."

"Open air, green grass, and a place to play is vital for our children. We owe all the children of this city a future where they are healthy and well adjusted, putting them on a track to success," said **New York State Assemblymember Jenifer Rajkumar**. "Park and recreational space also gives our seniors a place to relax after a lifetime of hard work. My district is blessed with Forest Park, where everyone experiences this multitude of benefits. We will now give this same gift to thousands of NYCHA residents by revitalizing 125,000 square feet of open space in our public housing. Today, we are taking a huge step forward in meeting Mayor Adams' worthy goal of all New Yorkers to be within walking distance of a park."

"This funding to create new open spaces and playgrounds at Pomonok Houses is a vital step in the right direction to improve the quality of life for thousands of undeserved residents and children residing in the NYCHA system," said **New York State Assemblymember Daniel Rosenthal**. "I would like to thank Mayor Adams for heeding the call of the residents of NYCHA developments around the city, as well as the housing leaders who work day in and day out to improve the lives of their neighbors."

"Communities grow around the spaces we build. When we revitalize our playgrounds and open spaces, like the mayor, Parks, and NYCHA are doing in Kingsborough Houses, we create neighborhoods that nourish the families who live there. This open space initiative is exactly the people-centered project that will benefit Brooklyn and our entire city for generations," said **Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso**.

"With this \$32 million mayoral investment, more and more New Yorkers will now live within walking distance of quality open space," said **Queens Borough President Donovan Richards**. "This will help reduce inequality and pave the way for more rewarding recreational experiences for all. This is a major step forward for Pomonok Houses and the other NYCHA developments that are part of this initiative, and represents a significant effort on the part of Mayor Adams and his administration to overcome the historic underinvestment that contributes to inequality in our city."

"NYC's public housing is in dire need of upgrades, and this includes for our parks and playgrounds," said **New York City Councilmember Shekar Krishnan**. "The new project by NYCHA and NYC Parks will provide more New Yorkers access to parks through their "Walk to a Park" initiative. Access to parks and playgrounds is directly connected to access to housing, a fundamental right affecting everything else in our lives. This is a crucial step forward in the path to better public housing and expanding green space for our most vulnerable communities."

"I am thrilled for the residents of the Pomonok Houses, whom I'm sure will greatly appreciate this \$3 million investment, which includes fitness equipment, sensory play equipment, seating, and new landscaping," said **New York City Councilmember James F. Gennaro**. "Over the last two years, COVID-19 has made it difficult for New Yorkers to focus on physical fitness and community interactions, so I am excited these projects across the city focus on just that. I'd like

to thank NYC Parks, Mayor Adams, and NYCHA for making this much-needed investment into the Pomonok Houses."

"Open spaces are vital to the health of any city," said **New York City Councilmember Alexa Avilés**. "For too long, our public housing agency has been siloed and left to deal with its issues and decades of disinvestment on its own. For NYCHA to succeed we need city agencies to work collaboratively and deliver for public housing residents. I applaud NYC Parks, NYCHA and the mayor's office for spearheading this interagency pilot that will deliver dignified playgrounds for all to enjoy."

"The past few years have shown us how important our greenspaces and parks are to New Yorkers of all ages, especially in our outer-borough and lower income communities," said **New York City Councilmember Amanda Farias**. "The Soundview community has dealt with years of divestment and has been long underserved by local, state, and federal government. That is why I am overjoyed to see that Sonia Sotomayor Houses, in my council district, will receive substantial outdoor renovations as part of this pilot program. This announcement is a good first step in showing that our city is willing to make significant investments in our NYCHA properties and our families. Thank you to Mayor Eric Adams and the teams at NYC Parks and NYCHA for your collaboration on this project. I look forward to seeing this project come to fruition and working together to keep improving our NYCHA developments."

"For far too long, our NYCHA communities have been left out of the quality of life conversations, particularly developments with youth populations," said **New York City Councilmember Marjorie Velázquez**. "The pilot program is a segway to identifying the different needs of our communities for them to have access to modernized spaces and lead healthy lives. While the style and construction vary based on the community, this also allows for the new additions to reflect the community it serves. I look forward to seeing the benefits of this partnership come to life and working with the mayor to expand this program to the Northeast Bronx."

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