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DESIGN TRUST FOR PUBLIC SPACE, NYC PARKS, AND QUEENS MUSEUM RELEASE A FREE HANDBOOK IN SPANISH TO PROMOTE COMMUNITY-LED IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES FOR THE LARGEST PARK IN QUEENS:

DESARROLLO DE LA ESCUELA PARA EL DISEÑO COMUNITARIO EN EL PARQUE DE FLUSHING MEADOWS/
BUILDING THE COMMUNITY DESIGN SCHOOL AT FLUSHING MEADOWS CORONA PARK

The free handbook is available in Spanish and English at http://designtrust.org/publications/

NEW YORK, NY (Wednesday, September 14, 2016) – The Design Trust for Public Space, NYC Parks, and the Queens Museum announce the Spanish edition of Building the Community Design School at Flushing Meadows Park, entitled Desarrollo de la Escuela para el Diseño Comunitario en el Parque de Flushing Meadows. The handbook was created with the guidance of Queens residents from every neighborhood surrounding Flushing Meadows Corona Park. This free educational resource will enhance the powerful coalition of diverse and informed community members to improve the access and connectivity around and inside the Park to better serve the public’s needs. The publication will expand the reach of collaborative stewardship and ensure that anyone interested in community-driven design can put it to use for locations beyond Flushing Meadows Corona Park.

The bilingual handbook, now available in Spanish and English (and Chinese to come), outlines how The Community Design School emerged as part of The World’s Park: Reconnecting a Regional Park with Its Neighbors, a project of the Design Trust for Public Space in partnership with NYC Parks and the Queens Museum. The project was developed from the Queens Museum’s proposal to the Design Trust’s Request for Proposals in 2014. The School provided park users with a series of bilingual educational workshops, neighborhood forums, and an exhibition of proposals for Flushing Meadows Corona Park. Over the course of twelve weeks, 23 Queens residents gathered at the Queens Museum for intensive sessions conducted by the Design Trust Fellows, to analyze, plan, debate, and design new ideas for the park’s biggest challenges and to increase public use and access. The residents’ ideas included a new generation of information kiosks, art installations to mark park entrances, wayfinding landmarks, and sensory play areas for children with special needs.
“Cuando los cambios llegan a un vecindario, el problema es enterarse después de que ya se haya decidido el plan o cuando los políticos notifican a la comunidad de tal manera que se siente como que están cumpliendo con una lista de quehaceres. Pero también hay veces que parece que la comunidad no está realmente interesada en saber qué sucede. Ahí es cuando se necesita la educación. *When changes are coming to a neighborhood, the problem is finding out after the plan has already been decided, or when politicians notify the community in a way that feels like it’s just about checking a box. But there are also times when it seems that the community is not really interested in knowing. That’s when you need education,*” said The Community Design School participant Libertad Sánchez.

The Community Design School offered an open and collaborative environment that brought residents, neighborhood organizations, and public service stewards together to learn, create, and design. The School’s curriculum, surveyed in this handbook, details the multifaceted processes to realize public designs, from identifying community needs and developing ideas, to building consensus and support, navigating municipal procedures, and executing final plans.

“Our voices were really heard and we were respected as part of the community in enhancing the park. It was—we’re here. Real people in Queens. And our voices are being heard and respected and we’re part of the creative process with access to the whole process. So we can go back to our community and keep it going,” said The Community Design School participant Anandi Premall.

To support this initiative, please visit [http://designtrust.org/support-us/](http://designtrust.org/support-us/)

**The Community Design School Participants**

The civic leaders selected to participate in the school were called “Community Advisors” to acknowledge their tacit knowledge of the park, and their role in passing that expertise on through activities in the program and subsequent advocacy.

These Community Advisors have become advocates and effective partners with NYC Parks’ effort to initiate community-led enhancements in Flushing Meadows Corona Park (FMCP). They ranged in age from 15 to 70 and live in every neighborhood surrounding FMCP. The group has origins in 12 countries, speak eight languages, and represent a wide variety of civic, immigrant, and environmental stewardship organizations in the vicinity of the park. These include Make the Road New York, the FMCP Conservancy, Faith in New York, Immigrant Movement International, Asian Americans for Equality, Queensboro Hill Neighborhood Civic Association, and Sustainable Queens.

**Design Trust Fellows**

Sam Holleran, Participatory Design Fellow, developed the curriculum, taught at The Community Design School, and designed *Desarrollo de la Escuela para el Diseño Comunitario en el Parque de Flushing Meadows/Building the Community Design School at Flushing Meadows Park.* [http://designtrust.org/people/fellows/sam-holleran/](http://designtrust.org/people/fellows/sam-holleran/)

Sarah Lidgus, Design Education Fellow, designed and led the classes at The Community Design School. [http://designtrust.org/people/fellows/sarah-lidgus/](http://designtrust.org/people/fellows/sarah-lidgus/)

José Serrano-McClain, Community Organizing Fellow, cultivated the school participants, led the planning of the community forums, and integrated community organizing education into the curriculum of The Community Design School. [http://designtrust.org/people/fellows/jose-serrano/](http://designtrust.org/people/fellows/jose-serrano/)
NYC Department of Parks & Recreation
NYC Parks is the steward of approximately 29,000 acres of land — 14 percent of New York City — including more than 5,000 individual properties ranging from Coney Island Beach and Central Park to community gardens and Greenstreets. We operate more than 800 athletic fields and nearly 1,000 playgrounds, 550 tennis courts, 66 public pools, 48 recreational facilities, 17 nature centers, 13 golf courses, and 14 miles of beaches. We care for 1,200 monuments and 23 historic house museums. We look after 650,000 street trees, and two million more in parks. We are New York City's principal providers of recreational and athletic facilities and programs. We are home to free concerts, world-class sports events, and cultural festivals. http://www.nyc.gov/parks

Queens Museum
The Queens Museum is dedicated to presenting the highest quality visual arts and educational programming for people in the New York metropolitan area, and particularly for the residents of Queens, a uniquely diverse, ethnic, cultural, and international community. The Museum fulfills its mission by designing and providing art exhibitions, public programs and educational experiences that promote the appreciation and enjoyment of art, support the creative efforts of artists, and enhance the quality of life through interpreting, collecting, and exhibiting art, architecture, and design. http://www.queensmuseum.org/

Design Trust for Public Space
The Design Trust for Public Space is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the future of public space in New York City. Our projects bring together city agencies, community groups and private sector experts to make a lasting impact—through design—on how New Yorkers live, work and play. Our work can be seen, felt and experienced throughout all five boroughs—from parks and plazas to streets and public buildings. The Design Trust saved the High Line structure, jumpstarted NYC's first custom-built Taxi of Tomorrow, developed the Community Design School for Flushing Meadows Corona Park, and created the city's first comprehensive sustainability guidelines that became the precursor to Local Law 86 and PlaNYC, now OneNYC. http://designtrust.org/

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