FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Media Contacts:
(Design Trust) Ozgur Gungor, 212-695-2432 x6, ogungor@designtrust.org
(NYC Parks) press.office@parks.nyc.gov
(Queens Museum) David Strauss, 718-592-9700 x145, dstrauss@queensmuseum.org

DESIGN TRUST FOR PUBLIC SPACE ANNOUNCES COMMUNITY FORUMS AND AN EXHIBITION TO INITIATE COMMUNITY-LED ENHANCEMENTS IN FLUSHING MEADOWS CORONA PARK

NEW YORK, NY (February 5, 2015) – The Design Trust for Public Space, in partnership with the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation (NYC Parks) and the Queens Museum, is excited to announce a series of public forums and a design exhibition at the Queens Museum, in conjunction with The World’s Park: Reconnecting a Regional Park with Its Neighbors, a bottom-up community engagement project, focused on developing creative enhancements for Flushing Meadows Corona Park (FMCP).

Two community forums will take place respectively on March 1 and April 12, 2015, from 3-5:30 p.m. At the first forum on March 1, initial design concepts will be presented by The World’s Park project team and Community Advisors to generate thoughtful insights and feedback from the broader community. At the second forum on April 12, final design concepts will be presented. It will also mark the opening of the exhibition, on view until May 3, 2015. The exhibition will feature those community-driven design concepts to improve the connectivity between Flushing Meadows Corona Park (FMCP) and the surrounding communities that use the park’s 897 acres of open space in Queens, New York.

The Queens Museum and NYC Parks, with the support of Design Trust, recruited nearly two dozen residents as Community Advisors to become advocates and effective partners with the NYC Parks Department to initiate community-led enhancements in Flushing Meadows Corona Park. The Community Advisors have been working together intensely since December 2014 attending a Community Design School to acquire the planning, design, and stewardship skills to improve and maintain the vast Flushing Meadows Corona Park, former World’s Fairs site.

Flushing Meadows Corona Park, one of the most heavily used parks in the NYC Parks system, houses national sports centers, such as the USTA Billie Jean King National Center and CitiField as well as cultural institutions, including New York Hall of Science, Queens Museum, Queens Theatre, and Queens Zoo. The Community Advisors reflect the diversity of the neighborhoods surrounding FMCP. The group is developing design concepts that focus on the theme of connectivity, and are working on proposals to improve the access points, circulation patterns, and wayfinding system of a park that has faced immense challenges in those areas.
“Flushing Meadows Corona Park is the largest open space in New York City’s most diverse borough, and we look forward to hearing directly from the community on how the park can best serve their variety of needs. We are grateful to the Design Trust and the Queens Museum for their partnership on this innovative new way to imagine and build the park’s future,” said NYC Parks Administrator Janice Melnick.

“The Queens Museum, Flushing Meadows Corona Park and our local communities are inextricably linked by a true symbiotic relationship, and with The World’s Park, we’ve been able to integrate our own experiences in community engagement and education to help create a new model for meaningful public involvement in design. Together with the Design Trust and Parks Department, we have created an exciting opportunity for creative proposals to emerge that are both community-driven, and embody this Park’s historic, current and future legacy as a place for people and perspectives from around the world to be shared,” said Laura Raicovich, Executive Director of the Queens Museum.

“With The World’s Park project, we’re aiming to form a creatively-empowered group of park users that can shape Flushing Meadows Corona Park’s future for years to come, and to create a replicable model of stewardship for parks citywide. I can’t wait to see the groundbreaking ideas from our community advisors,” said Design Trust for Public Space executive director Susan Chin.

“The participants of our Community Design School will leave with knowledge and confidence to present ideas to city agencies, participate in further planning and design of Flushing Meadows Corona Park, and motivate neighbors to do so too. The participants will also gain a comprehensive understanding of the economic forces that shape park planning, maintenance and design in NYC,” said Design Trust for Public Space program director Rosamond Fletcher.

Simultaneous Spanish and Mandarin interpretation will be offered.

Interpretación simultánea en Español y Mandarin será ofrecida.

本活動將會使用西班牙語和普通話進行同聲傳譯。

About Community Advisors
Community Advisors are highly enthusiastic individuals of all ages and diverse professional and cultural backgrounds, who are participating in The World’s Park Community Design School to learn about organizing, design, architecture and art in public spaces. They are working closely with Design Trust Fellows and NYC Parks on design concepts to improve aspects of Flushing Meadows Corona Park pertaining to connectivity, wayfinding and circulation.

The group was formed around a coalition model that brings together park users who represent an array of cultural and community-based organizations that have been actively involved in the Park’s protection and care. The Community Advisor represent every neighborhood that surrounds the Park, and among the organizations represented in the membership are: FMCP Conservancy, Make the Road NY, Evergreen Community Garden, Immigrant Movement International, Queensborough Hill Civic Association, Forest Hills Civic Association, Korean Community Services, Asian Americans for Equality, and Sustainable Queens, among others.

Some Community Advisors were identified after an exhaustive outreach process that included prospective Advisors completing a creative assignment to participate in hands-on learning events and group homework assignments through March 2015. The March 1st community forum will be the first time the Advisors present preliminary design concepts for feedback from the wider community. Final design concepts will be exhibited at the Queens Museum from April 12 – May 3.

This group, while still young, has been strengthened by its diversity and variety of perspective and group members are eager to grow and sustain as a group beyond the exhibition.

About Design Trust Fellows
A team of talented Design Trust Fellows, selected from a large pool of applicants, each an expert in their own field, have led the research, design and planning work for The World’s Park: Reconnecting a Regional Park with Its Neighbors. They include: Community Organizing Fellow José Serrano-McClain from the Queens Museum, Design Education Fellow Sarah Lidgus, and Participatory Design Fellow Sam Holleran.

Community Organizing Fellow, José Serrano-McClain:
José Serrano-McClain has cultivated the Community Advisors and leads the planning of the community forums for The World’s Park project. He has also integrated community organizing education into the curriculum of The World’s Park Community Design School.
In his role as the community organizer for the Queens Museum, José forges community partnerships that bring together artists, urban planners, civic leaders, elected officials, city agencies and researchers in various fields to creatively address a range of complex urban issues, among them immigrant civic integration, sustainable economic development, and community participation in public space design. For further information, please visit: http://designtrust.org/people/fellows/jose-serrano/

**Design Education Fellow, Sarah Lidgus:**

Sarah Lidgus has designed and leads the classes at *The World’s Park* Community Design School.

Sarah is a designer and writer whose work explores opportunities for empathy within large, complicated systems. Sarah’s work spans a wide range of social design topics, including projects such as in-home sanitation in Ghana, flood preparation in New York, and nail salon workers rights in Queens. She teaches at the University of Pennsylvania and the School of Visual Arts in NYC. For further information, please visit: http://designtrust.org/people/fellows/sarah-lidgus/

**Participatory Design Fellow, Sam Holleran:**

Sam Holleran will design the final project exhibition at the Queens Museum. Sam has also developed the curriculum and teaches at *The World’s Park* Community Design School.

Sam is an artist, writer, and educator, practicing at the intersection of visual art, graphic design, and civic engagement. Sam works as a design educator with the Center for Architecture Foundation and the 92nd Street Y in NYC, developing art, architecture, and urban design curriculum for public high school students. For further information, please visit: http://designtrust.org/people/fellows/sam-holleran/

**About the 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.

For further information, please visit: http://www.nyc.gov/parks

**About the 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.

For further information, please visit: http://www.queensmuseum.org/

**About the 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. Design Trust’s projects jumpstarted the High Line’s conversions from derelict railway to a green corridor of open space, activated innovation for the first custom-built *Taxi of Tomorrow*, and developed the sustainability guidelines that became the precursor to New York City’s Local Law and PlaNYC.

For further information, please visit: http://designtrust.org/

*The World’s Park: Reconnecting a Regional Park with Its Neighbors* is made possible by:

Additional support is provided by the Design Trust Founder’s Circle, including Agnes Gund, Kitty Hawks, Sophia W. Healy, Lily Auchincloss Foundation, Camila Pastor & Stephen Maharam, and Kelly Posner.