



Brownsville

OPEN SPACE INDEX



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*On the cover:
Betsy Head Park,
Duane Kinnon,
Friends of Brownsville
Parks*

Letter from the Executive Director

Brownsville, Brooklyn, is home to almost 60,000 New Yorkers. New Yorkers for Parks' Research & Planning team has been working in Brownsville—collecting data, creating and deepening relationships—since 2014. However, our annual Daffodil Project, the living memorial to 9/11, introduced our Outreach team to Brownsville's residents and open spaces more than five years ago.

Brownsville's residents negotiate burdens of inequitable urban conditions, stemming from decades of public and private disinvestment. The neighborhood's open spaces—and its residents—have suffered from that absence of resources. As NY4P wrapped up its work investigating neighborhood open space conditions in Mott Haven in the Bronx, our Research team was introduced to Brownsville by our connections in the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA). As we learned about the challenges facing Brownsville residents, from poor health factors and low educational outcomes to development pressures and perceptions of unsafety, we committed to performing our neighborhood-focused Open Space Index study.



Betsy Head Park, Duane Kinnon, Friends of Brownsville Parks

Residents and open space advocates from Jackson Heights in Queens to the Lower East Side in Manhattan have used data provided in our Open Space Indices as a base for local movements and successes for local parks. In East Harlem, it was used to inform the vision created in the East Harlem Neighborhood Plan. Although Brownsville has not yet been named as a neighborhood that will be rezoned on a large scale, residents feel the pressures of development already. Brownsville stands on the precipice of unprecedented levels of public

investment, and a commitment to real change by elected officials at multiple levels.

So that Brownsville's residents can ensure that these changes and opportunities accrue real benefits to their community, New Yorkers for Parks is furnishing them with the Open Space Index. Understanding how well parks, gardens, and open spaces are serving today's Brownsville will allow resident stakeholders to make the hard choices of how to plan for the next era. We recommend three open space actions that

will contribute towards Brownsville's continued social, health, and economic development, and allow Brownsville to respond to locally-defined conditions and needs.

Underpinned by our Public Realm Bill of Rights, our research informs the outreach and advocacy work we do: the next step in our work in Brownsville is to increase our outreach presence. We'll connect Brownsville residents and advocates to the larger conversations New York City and other cities are having about the

roles for (and opportunities for) open spaces. We'll convene decision-makers, community programmers, and local stakeholders to create action steps. We'll grow the capacity of local open space advocates to enact local priorities through open-space solutions. We're looking forward to working with the Friends of Brownsville Parks and other local stakeholders to improve Brownsville's open spaces, together.

Lynn B. Kelly, *Executive Director*



Howard Malls, by the Friends of Brownsville Parks

Executive Summary

We investigated neighborhood-level open space conditions in Brooklyn for the first time in the history of the Open Space Index, using publicly available data and observing park conditions to inform a nascent neighborhood-wide park advocacy organization.

NY4P created the Open Space Index to ensure that local stakeholders, responding to local data, can create local priorities and action steps to achieve open space and other inter-related neighborhood improvements. This Open Space Index, investigating Brownsville, Brooklyn, is our seventh. As we study each neighborhood, we update our data collection and evaluation tools to properly assess each neighborhood's open space features, political and social landscapes, and on-the-ground existing capacity.

The Open Space Index measures 14 New York City-specific goals for open spaces, chosen in 2008 primarily from PlaNYC sustainability measures to environmental review standards. A detailed discussion of the Open Space Index methodology can be found in Appendix 1 (page 19). This report (1) identifies locally-defined needs, (2) analyzes local conditions against the 14 open space goals, and (3) recommends action steps for various stakeholders.

1 As a result of four years of working with Brownsville stakeholders, NY4P accepts three major community-defined needs as the driving impetus for any local open space capital or programmatic change.

- A.** Brownsville residents experience the causes and effects of poverty, and need solutions to poor social and economic conditions.
- B.** Brownsville residents suffer disproportionately from poor health outcomes, and need holistic approaches to improving health.
- C.** Brownsville residents identify youth and recreation-focused solutions to violence and crime as a pressing neighborhood need.

2 Local physical open space conditions only meet four out of the 14 Open Space Index goals.

- A.** Access to open spaces in Brownsville is not straightforward: complicated social structures constrain the movement of young people in the neighborhood.
- B.** Brownsville lacks open space acreage to meet the recreational and passive needs of current neighborhood residents.
- C.** With major renovations coming to Betsy Head Park and the Brownsville Recreation Center, key recreational resources, there will be a temporary local vacuum of recreational opportunities in excess of existing everyday recreational needs.

3 NY4P recommends policy, capital, and programming action steps for actors from the Mayor and Governor to local advocates.

- A.** Prioritize publicly-accessible open spaces in new developments.
- B.** Increase opportunities for active park uses.
- C.** Invest in Brownsville open spaces.



Nehemiah Park, by Duane Kinnon, Friends of Brownsville Parks

About Brownsville

NY4P developed the Open Space Index as a tool to guide neighborhood open space planning and help park advocates ensure that future generations will enjoy adequate parkland, greenery, and recreation.

Urbanized Brownsville was first a community of Jewish industrial laborers. As the demographic shift of white flight and the Great Migration occurred in the 1950s, tower-in-the-park public housing developments simultaneously replaced large swathes of historic tenements. Quickly, Brownsville became a largely Black and Latino neighborhood. Since that time, the neighborhood has struggled with the task of improving physical, social, and health conditions in a community hobbled by high poverty and consistently low public funding. Although Brownsville became known for high rates of crime, poverty, and urban decay, the neighborhood's roots in community enterprise and mutual support are deep. Organizations like the Brownsville Community Council and Nehemiah Housing provided funding, housing, organizing, and programming to improve the neighborhood for decades. Local community developers like the Brownsville Partnership carry on the thread of that work today.

Brownsville has had parks and open spaces since the neighborhood's early history. From historic Betsy Head Park, funded by a philanthropic gift to the City in 1915, to newly renovated spaces like Howard Playground, with its new adult fitness stations, Brownsville's parks and open spaces serve a dense community with a growing appetite for safe, clean, attractive places for play, rest, and recreation.

Brownsville Geography

A dense neighborhood in eastern Brooklyn, Brownsville is bounded by Ocean Hill to the north, East New York to the east, Canarsie to the south, and East Flatbush to the west. It lies within Brooklyn's Community Board 16, and is served by City Council Districts 37, 41, and 42.

For this study, the boundaries of the neighborhood are determined to be the same as those of Community Board 16, with a northernmost border at East New York Avenue. Brownsville is served by the 3 and L subway lines on elevated tracks, and by several local bus routes providing connections east-west and north-south. Some protected bicycle lanes provide dedicated road space for cyclists and connect to the city's broader bike lane system.

Brownsville's Parks & Open Spaces

Brownsville is home to 34.7 acres of open space, spread over 38 separate properties. Although it has a fairly good distribution of community gardens and pocket parks, Brownsville lacks a large park of over 20 acres in size. Most Brownsville residents are not within easy walking distance of nearby large parks, such as Lincoln Terrace Park in eastern Crown Heights, or Highland Park, to the north of Cypress Hills.

In 2015, NY4P conducted an informal audit of local park advocates and "Friends of" the parks groups in Brownsville. Our staff identified several super-advocates focused on specific properties or issues, such as Brenda Duchene, who coordinates multiple community gardens as the lead of Isabahlia Ladies of Elegance, and Duane Kinnon, a force in local youth sports programming. In addition, our staff found that several local nonprofit organizations such as the Brownsville Community Justice Center and the Brownsville Partnership, were working in open spaces to advance goals they sought to achieve in, respectively, youth programming and community development. Our conversations with these and other local advocates, as well as organizers

from NYC Parks' Partnerships for Parks (PfP)¹, informed our understanding of local park priorities. At the outset of our work in Brownsville, local advocates identified conditions in Betsy Head Park as the single biggest problem for local parks and open spaces.

With Claudette Ramos of PfP, we convened a task force meeting on Betsy Head Park. Local stakeholders, organization representatives, and park advocates came together to focus on problems facing Betsy Head Park, and worked towards identifying solutions. The task force developed a successful record of regular meetings and hosted walking tours of the park and its surroundings with citywide organizations like the Municipal Arts Society, and with Brooklyn borough leadership from NYC Parks.

In 2016, the task force agreed to expand its area of focus to all parks in the neighborhood of Brownsville, and adopted the name the Friends of Brownsville Parks. Working towards 501(c) 3 status, the Friends of Brownsville Parks is a nascent neighborhood-wide parks advocacy organization operating with groups like the Open Space Alliance of North Brooklyn as its model.

¹ Partnerships for Parks is a joint program of NYC Parks and the City Parks Foundation which provides support, training, and materials to local park advocates in New York City's five boroughs.

Brownsville, Brooklyn

COMMUNITY GARDENS

(under NYC Parks or GrowNYC jurisdiction)

- 1 Abib Newborn
- 2 Amboy Neighborhood Garden
- 3 Fantasy Garden
- 4 Gesthemane Garden
- 5 Green Valley Community Garden
- 6 Hopkinson R&L Block Association Garden
- 7 Howard Av Block Association
- 8 Isabahlia Ladies of Elegance Garden
- 9 Jes Good Rewards Children's Garden
- 10 Marcus Garvey Tenant's Association Garden
- 11 McLeod's Garden
- 12 MHBA Garden
- 13 Powell Street Block Association—Livonia Garden
- 14 Powell Street Block Association—Powell Street
- 15 Ten Neighbors Community Garden
- 16 United Community Centers Youth Farm
- 17 Garden

POCKET PARKS

(Less than 1 acre in size)

- 18 Carter G. Woodson Children's Park
- 19 Houston Playground
- 20 Howard Malls
- 21 Howard Pool
- 22 Livonia Park
- 23 Newport Playground
- 24 P.S. 125 Playground
- 25 Veterans Triangle
- 26 Zion Triangle

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

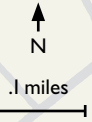
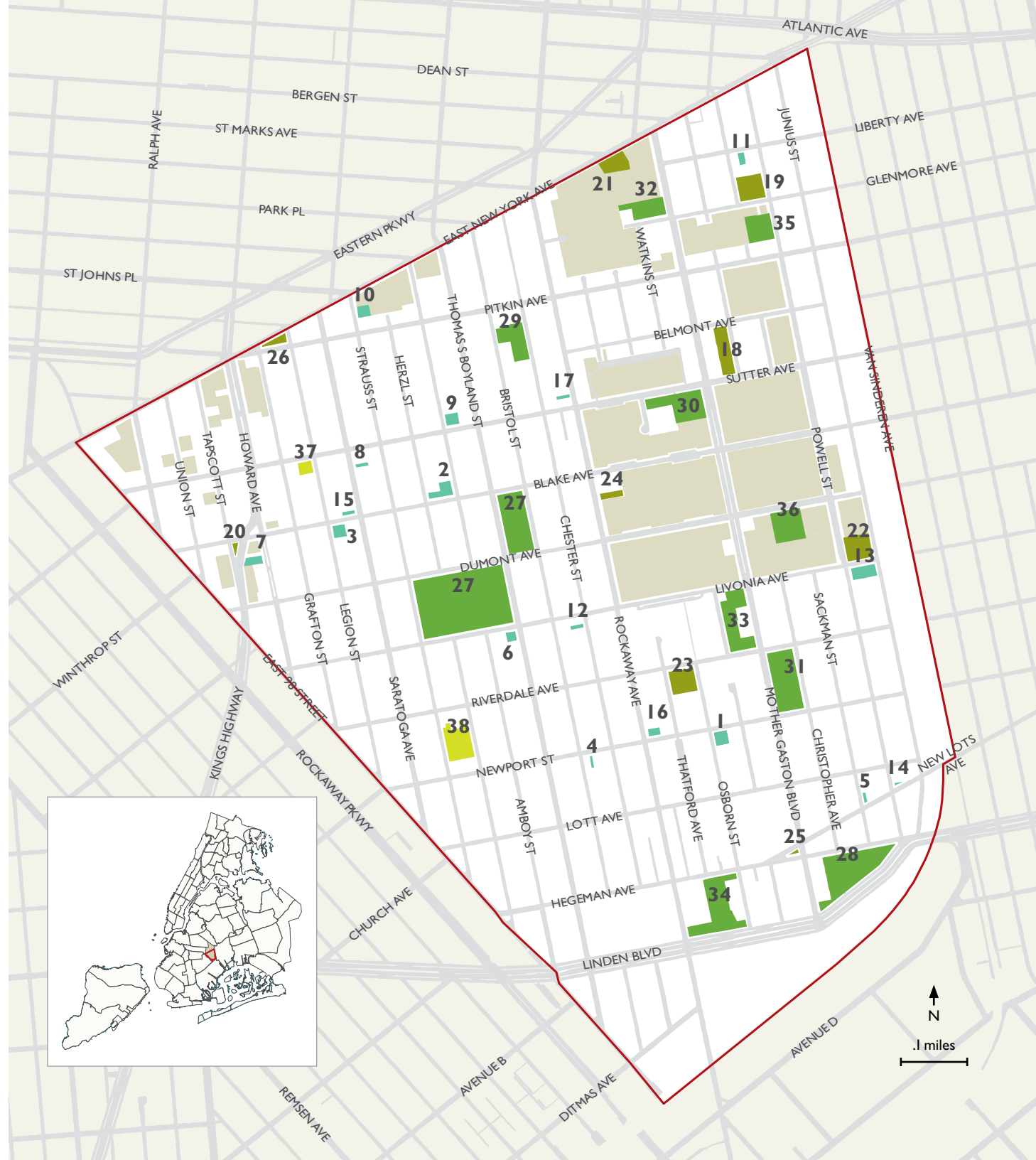
(1 to 20 acres in size)

- 27 Betsy Head Park & Playground
- 28 Brownsville Playground
- 29 Chester Playground
- 30 Dr. Green Playground
- 31 Floyd Patterson Ballfields
- 32 Howard Playground
- 33 Nehemiah Park
- 34 Osborn Playground
- 35 Powell Playground
- 36 Van Dyke Playground

SCHOOLYARDS-TO-PLAYGROUNDS

- 37 P.S. 156
- 38 P.S. 63I

NEW YORK CITY HOUSING AUTHORITY DEVELOPMENTS



Locally-Defined Conditions & Needs

Brownsville has a total population of 58,101 residents.

*Over a third of Brownsville residents are children: 18,071 children live in the neighborhood.**

These residents live in a dense urban neighborhood at first glance not unlike other neighborhoods in Brooklyn, but are subject to conditions that contribute to negative outcomes at rates that are far higher than most of their fellow New Yorkers experience. Underpinning any discussion of these conditions and outcomes is summed up well by the Community Board 16: “Many of the obstacles our community faces are interrelated and cannot be solved in isolation.”

Social and Economic Conditions

Brownsville’s social and economic conditions tell a story of a neighborhood struggling with interrelated burdens and disinvestments that create structural barriers to achievement as compared to more affluent areas in the city. Educational attainment is low for Brownsville adults: more than a quarter of adults in Brownsville don’t have a high school diploma, and fewer than 1 in 5 Brownsville adults are college graduates. More than a third of Brownsville residents live in poverty,¹ and more than half of Brownsville residents are rent-burdened, paying over 1/3 of their incomes on

housing costs. More than 3 in 20 Brownsville adults are unemployed. Coupled with an adult incarceration rate almost quadruple the city-wide rate, and an assault-hospitalization rate almost triple the citywide rate, it’s clear that Brownsville residents navigate conditions and systems daily that can erode their health, safety, and social and economic security.

The Brownsville Partnership, a local community development corporation, seeks locally-led improvements to public housing and community spaces, and works to create a sustainable neighborhood system to respond to and support children exposed to violence. It frames the central challenge of its work as responding to the intertwined causes and effects of poverty.

Health Conditions

Brownsville is a neighborhood where chronic, preventable health conditions and substance-related hospitalizations are higher than the city as a whole. In Brownsville, more than 3 in 10 adults are obese, and 3 adults in 20 have diabetes. For New York City, only 2.5 adults in 10 are obese, and 2 in 20 adults have diabetes. Brownsville has more than twice the city-wide rates of alcohol-related and drug-related hospitalizations.

Negative health outcomes are more common for Brownsville residents than for New Yorkers

as a whole. Brownsville has more child and adult asthma hospitalizations than citywide averages, and more than twice the rate of adult diabetes hospitalizations. Brownsville has higher infant and premature mortality rates than the city as a whole: meaning that it’s more dangerous to be born in Brownsville, and your chances of dying from preventable causes are higher, too.

The Brownsville Neighborhood Health Action Center (BNHAC) is one of the City’s new neighborhood-based initiatives for improving public health.² The goals of the Centers include addressing the causes of high premature mortality rates, with a specific focus on addressing the root causes of health inequities, including the physical environment, structural racism, housing, and employment. The BNHAC co-locates services, uses evidence-based practices, relies on community expertise, and brings together diverse groups to develop action items. It also serves as the location for varied fitness programming year-round.

A significant health factor that has changed in the past two decades is Brownsville residents’ lack of access to fresh and healthy foods. In 2008, Brownsville was classified as a “food desert” by

the City,³ defined by the US Department of Agriculture as a neighborhood without access to fresh fruit, vegetables, and other healthful whole foods.⁴ However, shifts in City policies, like the Healthy Supermarkets program, and efforts from nonprofit partners, such as the Brownsville Partnership & Greenmarket-driven Youth Market, have contributed to greater local access to healthy food options locally.⁵

Safety Conditions

In its most recent statement of local needs, Community Board 16 called out violence among young people as its greatest concern related to local public safety.

“Youth violence is a growing concern in our community where poverty, family instability, and unemployment provide fertile ground for its growth... Far too many young lives are lost from street justice. Collateral damage inflicted by gun violence impacts the victim’s family, friends, and community.”

Although reported major felony crimes have decreased recently in Brownsville, as they have for New York City as a whole, local residents say that unreported crimes and injuries

* US Census, 2010-2014 5-year ACS estimates.

1 For 2015, the U.S. Census defines the poverty level for a family of four as an annual income of \$24,257 or less. <https://census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/income-poverty/historical-poverty-thresholds.html>

2 <http://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/neighborhood-health/neighborhood-health-action-centers.page>

3 “Going to Market: New York City’s Neighborhood Grocery Store and Supermarket Shortage,” NYC Department of City Planning, NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene, & NYC Economic Development Corporation, 2008, http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/planning/download/pdf/plans/supermarket/presentation_2008_10_29.pdf

4 <http://americannutritionassociation.org/newsletter/us-da-defines-food-deserts>

5 <http://brooklynink.org/2011/10/26/33113-in-brownsville-fresh-food-vendors-struggle-for-buyers/>

continue to occur. Multiple interviewees surveyed by the Center for Court Innovation in 2010 cited a concern for youth safety as a current challenge that Brownsville faces.⁶

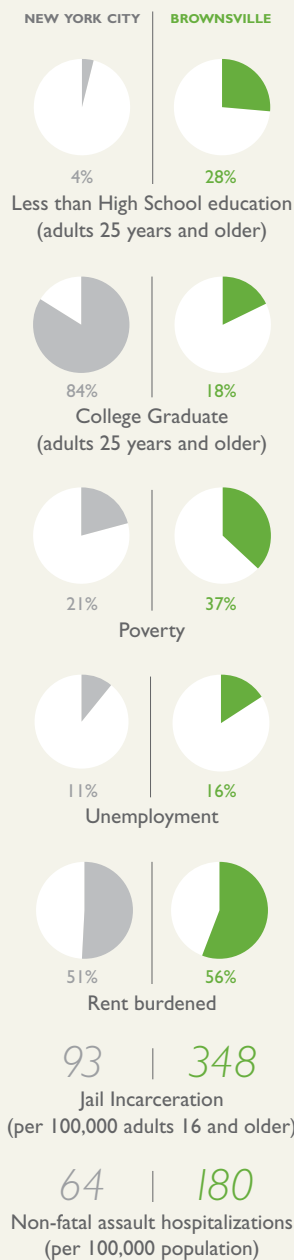
According to data from the Citizens Committee for Children, a disproportionate number of Brownsville youth are admitted to juvenile detention facilities. In 2015, a full 16% of Brooklyn youths sent to juvenile detention facilities were from Brownsville, even though Brownsville only accounts for 5% of the borough's overall child population.⁷

Brownsville's young people are affected by crime, violence, and the criminal justice system at rates higher than their city-wide peers. The Brownsville Community Justice Center (BCJC) works to reduce crime, incarceration of local youth, and restore local faith in the justice system. BCJC is a program of the Center for Court Innovation, engages young people who have had involvement with the criminal justice system. BCJC's strategies include alternative sentencing options for judges, local probation assistance, and general youth development programs. It seeks to strengthen community and divert young people from further involvement with the criminal justice system.

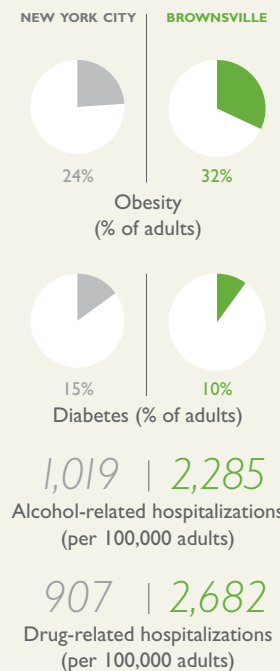
⁶ "Community Perceptions of Brownsville: A Study of Neighborhood Quality of Life, Safety, and Services," Center for Court Innovation, 2011, pg. 4.

⁷ *Keeping Track Online: The Status of New York City Children*, Citizens Committee for Children, <http://data.ccnyny.org/data/bar/1217/admissions-to-juvenile-detention-calendar-year#1217/a/1,28,44/1374/14>, accessed 12/19/2017.

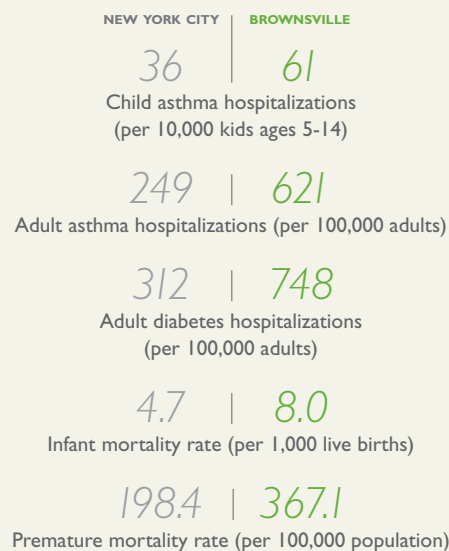
Social and Economic Conditions¹



Health Conditions²



Health Outcomes³



Safety Conditions⁴

Felony Crime Category	Incidences in Brownsville Parks	Incidents in the 73rd Precinct	Incidence in New York City
Murder	0	14	335
Rape	1	33	1,438
Robbery	2	335	15,500
Felony Assault	2	576	20,847
Burglary	0	190	12,990
Grand Larceny	5	356	44,279
Grand Larceny of Automobile	0	99	5,327
Total	10	1,603	101,716

¹ Data: NYC Department of Health Community Health Profiles 2015: Brownsville

² Data: NYC Department of Health Community Health Profiles 2015: Brownsville

³ Data: NYC Department of Health Community Health Profiles 2015: Brownsville

⁴ Data: calendar year 2016, NYPD CompStat, 73rd Precinct, Volume 24 Number 49; NYPD CompStat, Citywide, Volume 24 Number 49; NYC Park Crime Stats, Q1-Q4 2016

Open Space Goals & Brownsville Results

For each Open Space Goal in the Index, NY4P staff gathered data from publicly-available sources to answer the question, “Does Brownsville meet this goal?” Our information on population comes from the US Census’s American Community Survey, and most open space amenity and acreage information comes from the New York City open data platform. A more detailed account of our analytical methodology, including the source for each goal, can be found in Appendix I.

AMOUNT OF OPEN SPACE

Total Open Space



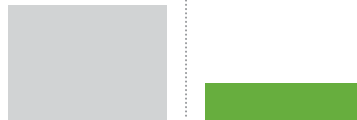
All acres of open space in the neighborhood that provide space for play, relaxation, and contact with nature



Active Open Space



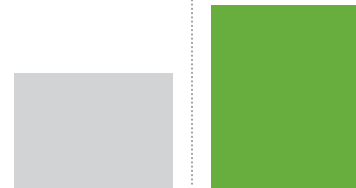
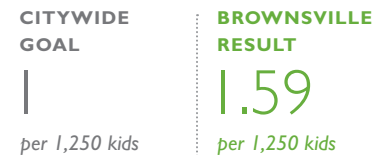
All acres of playgrounds, fields, courts, rec centers and other active open spaces



Playgrounds



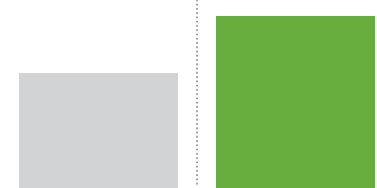
Places for play with things like swings, climbing frames, water features, sand boxes, or other play areas



Athletic Fields



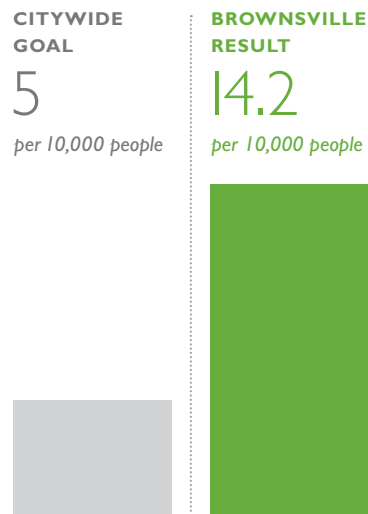
Fields for sports like soccer, football, cricket, baseball, rugby, and field hockey, as well as ice rinks



Courts



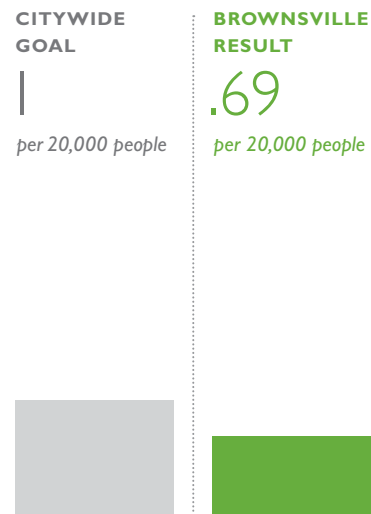
Courts for playing sports like basketball, handball, volleyball, tennis, and bocce



Recreation Centers



Indoor recreation centers operated by NYC Parks, and other indoor facilities with similar fees and public access



Passive Open Space



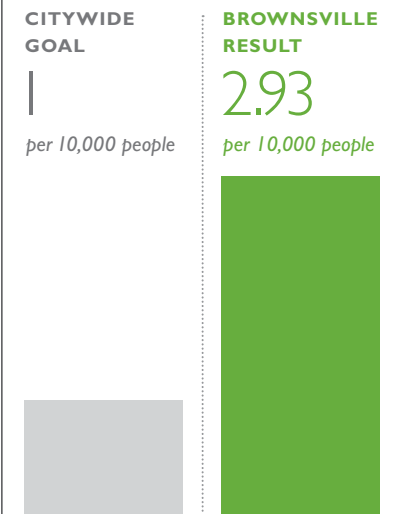
All acres of lawns, esplanades, plazas, beaches, natural areas, planted areas, and community gardens



Community Gardens



All GreenThumb gardens and other community gardens with public access



Open Space Goals & Brownsville Results

ACCESS TO OPEN SPACES

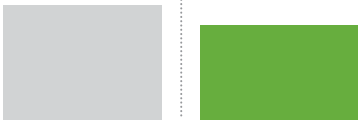
Pocket Parks



Parks smaller than 1 acre in size

CITYWIDE GOAL
100%
of people live within a five-minute walk

BROWNSVILLE RESULT
83%
of people live within a five-minute walk



Neighborhood Parks



Parks larger than 1 acre but smaller than 20 acres in size

CITYWIDE GOAL
100%
of people live within a five-minute walk

BROWNSVILLE RESULT
76%
of people live within a five-minute walk



Large Parks



Parks larger than 20 acres in size

CITYWIDE GOAL
100%
of people live within a ten-minute walk

BROWNSVILLE RESULT
10%
of people live within a ten-minute walk



ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

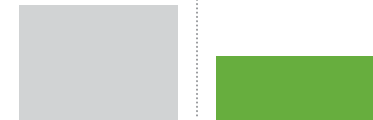
Urban Tree Canopy



The layer of tree leaves, branches, trunks, and stems that cover the ground when viewed from above

CITYWIDE GOAL
30%
of Brownsville can be covered with tree canopy

BROWNSVILLE RESULT
17%
of Brownsville is covered with tree canopy



PARK MAINTENANCE

Cleanliness



NYC Parks' Park Inspection Program rating based on the presence of litter, glass, graffiti, weeds, and ice

CITYWIDE GOAL

90%

of inspections rated "acceptable"

BROWNSVILLE RESULT

58%

of inspections rated "acceptable"



Overall Condition



NYC Parks' Park Inspection Program rating for overall park maintenance conditions

CITYWIDE GOAL

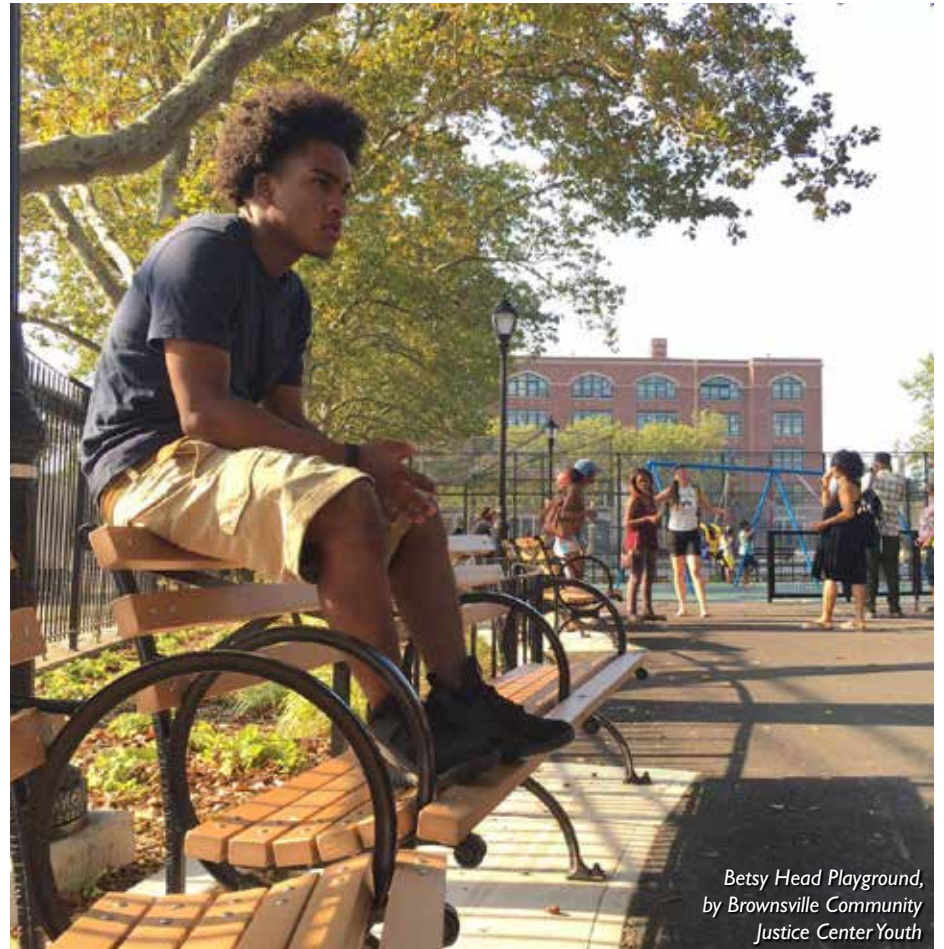
85%

of inspections rated "acceptable"

BROWNSVILLE RESULT

66%

of inspections rated "acceptable"



Findings

Brownsville only met four out of the 14 open space goals: but what does that mean for the status of the neighborhood's open spaces in practice?

We understand that a positive result in one neighborhood isn't necessarily the same positive result in another borough—or even another neighborhood nearby. Our *Public Realm Bill of Rights* lays out NY4P's ideal vision for neighborhoods and open spaces in New York City, understanding that local conditions dictate locally unique solutions for moving closer to fulfillment of each article. We can match articles in the Public Realm Bill of Rights to results for Open Space Index goals.

Article I: Access

All New Yorkers have a right to open space in their communities, and every New Yorker should live within a 5-minute walk to a park, garden, or green space. Every user should feel safe traveling to and within these spaces.

- 17% of Brownsville residents are not within a five-minute walk of a pocket park.
- 24% of Brownsville residents are not within a five-minute walk of a neighborhood park.
- 90% of Brownsville residents are not within a ten-minute walk of a large park.

The majority of Brownsville residents live within a five-minute sidewalk trip to a pocket park or a neighborhood park. We used to measure access to parks by calculating as-the-crow-flies distance from a park—now we map the various sidewalk routes that take five minutes or less to walk that lead you to a park entrance, and count the residential population that have access to these sidewalk routes. However, there is evidence to suggest that even this more nuanced definition of access is not sufficient to portray real access to park spaces for Brownsville residents, and especially not for Brownsville youth.

On-the-ground social power structures manifest in an understanding of “turf” that can specifically limit the movement of young people in Brownsville, with certain blocks or street crossings understood to be dangerous or even off-limits based on a young person's sub-neighborhood affiliation. This prevents open spaces that are nominally within walking distance of a young person's home, especially if that home is in a NYCHA development, from being truly accessible to them. This social understanding of these public spaces particularly affects the mobility and recreational opportunities of young men and boys, but undoubtedly also affects the ability of young women and girls to have safe access to active open spaces. In the first Health Impact

Assessment produced in New York City, Made in Brownsville¹ identified this limitation as the single most important item to shape future development in Brownsville around. Made in Brownsville's primary recommendation for future redevelopment and community design in Brownsville is: “Recognize the reality of inter-development rivalries (turfs) resulting in violence and engage youth in trans-generational, spatial programming.”² There is a need for additional recreation and active open space resources to the neighborhood, spread throughout its geography so that more young Brownsville residents have safe access to active recreation.

Article II: Infrastructure

Parks and open spaces are essential parts of New York City's infrastructure. The process of park improvements should be equitable and inclusive of communities surrounding parks. As residential density increases, community planning processes should ensure adequate provision of parks and open spaces, improvements to these spaces, and maintenance of these spaces.

¹ Made In Brownsville is a local nonprofit youth creative agency and innovation hub that provides a gateway for young people to learn marketable STEAM hard skills, access postsecondary education, achieve economic mobility, and engage in place-based community revitalization. www.madeinbrownsville.org

² Made in Brownsville, 6.

- Brownsville is only 24% of the way towards meeting the Total Open Space goal for the total amount of open space for local residents.

At a basic level, there is currently not enough open space to meet New York City's own goals for residents' access to open space resources in Brownsville. The gap in total acreage based on the current population level in Brownsville is more than 110 acres of open spaces.³ It's imperative that every new development in Brownsville consider creating publicly-accessible open space as a way to bridge that gap. Both public-sector and private-sector projects should be scrutinized for their impacts on open spaces access, and for their potential to eliminate barriers to open space access, treating open spaces as the essential city infrastructure that NY4P knows them to be.

Additionally, plans and decision-making around open space projects must involve a robust community participation process. Without these processes, local priorities for amenities and programming of open spaces are lacking. The Friends of Brownsville Parks can be a leader in coordinating local responses to planned developments.

³ See Appendix: Table of Open Space Results for more information.

Article III: Health

Access to nearby parks and open spaces benefits New Yorkers' public, social, psychological, and physical health. These spaces should provide programs and amenities that reflect the needs and character of the neighborhoods they serve. Parks and open spaces should also support civic action, assembly, and speech.

- Brownsville needs 200% more open space designed for active uses to meet the Active Open Space goal.
- It lacks enough recreation centers to serve the current population of the neighborhood. Brownsville meets or exceeds the goals for numbers of playgrounds, athletic fields, and courts.

There is evidence to suggest that even the apparent positive results for numbers of playgrounds, athletic fields, and courts, are not actually meeting the recreational needs of Brownsville residents. Community members and local leaders have identified active recreation programming, through sports leagues, classes, or informal play, as a key strategy for engaging neighborhood young people. In a 2010 survey of Brownsville residents, researchers from the Center for Court Innovation identified that 72% of local respondents noted youth having “nothing to do after school” as a pressing youth problem, and 77% of respondents said that a lack of adult role models was additionally a problem for local youth. In addition, the researchers found that more

than half of the adults and young people they talked to identified “few parks, recreational facilities, or sports teams” as a big problem for local youth.⁴ In total, 77% of adults thought that was a problem, as well as 68% of youth.⁵

In addition, even the current amount of recreation centers will be further insufficient as the Brownsville Recreation Center is due to be reconstructed starting in 2018. This vital recreation resource will be removed from daily use of Brownsville residents for at least two years, leaving the neighborhood with a gap in service.

Article IV: Environment

New York City parks and green spaces provide ecological benefits for city residents and urban wildlife. Green spaces should support multiple ecosystem services to make the city more resilient in the face of a changing climate and extreme weather.

- Brownsville has an abundant number of community gardens, but needs 400% more passive open space acres to meet the Passive Open Space goal.
- About 10% of Brownsville’s land could support trees or tree canopy that currently does not have tree canopy.

⁴ Center for Court Innovation, pg. 4.

⁵ Center for Court Innovation, pg. 5.

In an already dense neighborhood that has pressures on remaining undeveloped land, it is unlikely that Brownsville will be able to meet the Passive Open Space goal. While it appears that community garden access is healthy in the neighborhood, not all community gardens are City parkland, protected by the legal definition of being classified as park space. Gardens operated by other entities, such as GrowNYC, face development pressures as well. They make up the majority of the current passive open spaces in Brownsville, and loss of any one garden will have negative effects on local water quality, permeability for stormwater management, and other linked services provided by passive spaces. Brownsville residents depend on community gardens for fresh-grown local produce, which also supports some of the social service organizations nearby, such as the Brooklyn Community Culinary Institute, an eatery, bakery, and culinary training facility in Brownsville. In addition, the social ties formed and strengthened by community gardens, key to supporting nascent open space advocates and more generally increasing the facility of local community, are threatened when gardens are taken offline.

Trees provide multiple, linked sustainability and health benefits for a neighborhood and its residents. Brownsville can support more trees in its open spaces and streets, but is currently below capacity. The urban tree canopy also requires constant replenishment and maintenance. As today’s young trees mature, they

will add canopy coverage, but young trees also have a greater risk of ill health or tree death. In addition, older trees, even with proper care, will enter a phase of ill health or unsafe conditions.

Article V: Funding

Parks should be funded primarily by public dollars, and every park should be kept to a high standard of care. Our parks and gardens are essential city infrastructure, and should be funded and maintained as such.

- Less than two-thirds of park inspections by City workers found Brownsville parks to be “Acceptable” for either their overall condition or their level of cleanliness.

This falls far below the citywide goal. Unclean parks are a deterrent to users. In addition, Brownsville residents frequently identify the safety and condition of parks and open spaces as a barrier to their ability to use the open spaces. In the 2010 survey by the Center for Court Innovation of Brownsville residents, 74% of respondents said that garbage removal or littering was a problem in the community, and 74% additionally said that run-down public spaces were either a big problem or a minor problem.⁶

⁶ Center for Court Innovation, 4.

Recommendations

In NY4P's conversations with local residents and organizational stakeholders, locally-defined conditions in Brownsville paint a picture of a neighborhood with a tremendous capacity for—and hunger for—change.

Brownsville residents are likely to be disadvantaged from an early age, suffering from high poverty creating issues relating to housing, health, childcare, homelessness, and crime. But there is a strong system of on-the-ground support from local organizations, paired with a Mayoral focus on addressing inequity and the opportunity created by development pressures for local interests to come to the negotiating table with developers and agencies.

As Community Board 16 points out, “Many of the obstacles our community faces are interrelated.” We at NY4P know that parks can’t solve all of a neighborhood’s problems, but we see the interconnected nature of open space access with health impacts, of recreation opportunities with youth programming and diversion from the criminal justice system, of local stewardship opportunities in building and strengthening community ties. Our Public Realm Bill of Rights articulates the roles that open spaces can play in various aspects of a livable community, and we turned to that document to guide our findings in Brownsville.

As Brownsville’s residents and organizations seek to influence its future development, they must be the strong and knowledgeable voice at the table for reaching some of the open space goals we have defined in this Open Space Index. We have identified goals and action steps, for local residents up to the Mayor and Governor, to inch closer to more, and better open spaces for Brownsville.

Prioritize open space provision in new development

It’s time to ensure that open spaces are included as plans are made for Brownsville’s future. All New Yorkers deserve livable, affordable neighborhoods—and affordability is the major, overriding concern for most Brownsville residents. However, as we think about adding density and housing to an already heavily-populated urban neighborhood, we need to consider the opportunity at this time to press for a truly livable neighborhood, which must include adequate open spaces for current and future residents. Future open space development must also take into consideration the constrained movement of local young people, bounded by a local understanding of “turf” to certain safe patterns of getting around the neighborhood. To serve these young people,

new open spaces must be provided in areas that are appropriate for them to access. The opportunity to get Brownsville closer to the goals for acres of open space can be required, implemented, and reinforced, by several different entities, each with a local focus on this neighborhood, its opportunities, and its needs.

- A. New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA)—Pair infill development with improvements to NYCHA open space resources.
- B. NYC Department of Housing Preservation & Development (NYC HPD)—Include public & private open space provision and maintenance commitments in RFPs for Brownsville.
- C. Community Board, Council Member—Commit to strongly encouraging public open spaces in private construction projects.

2 Increase opportunities for active park uses

Brownsville’s parks are mostly small: playgrounds, pocket parks, and community gardens. These spaces serve children and seniors fairly well, but fail to provide adequate spaces for supervised, programmed activities that engage teens and young adults with active recreation, committed mentors, a sense of community, and substantive alternatives to criminal activities. Opportunities for active



Friends of Brownsville Parks

recreation will decrease, in the short term, as two of the most vital spaces for recreation—Betsy Head Park and the Brownsville Recreation Center—are due to be taken offline for renovations for a period of years. Although these actions will result in improved spaces, they alone won't provide enough active park use space for local needs, and alternatives for their resources need to be identified to fill the gap during their absence.

- A.** NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene (NYC DOH)—Increase all-ages programming at the Brownsville Neighborhood Health Action Center.
- B.** NYC Department of Parks & Recreation (NYC Parks)—Create a programming plan to accommodate for the interim absence of the Brownsville Recreation Center and Betsy Head Park, potentially calling on more playground assistants and Shape Up programmers.
- C.** NYPD—Increase engagement and linkages with other city agencies and local community-based organizations, focusing on increasing youth access to open spaces.
- D.** NYC Parks—Invest in the Betsy Head Pool House.
- E.** NYC Board of Education (NYC BOE)—Open more schoolyards to off-hours recreation.
- F.** The Friends of Brownsville Parks (FoBP)—Identify local athletic & activity programming entities and match-make with local open spaces.



Livonia Park

3 Invest in Brownsville's open spaces

Parks and open spaces in Brownsville are, by and large, old, poorly maintained, and not reliably clean or safe. Although increased maintenance attention can solve some of the problems facing these spaces, for many parks and open spaces in Brownsville, increasing maintenance attention is just a stopgap measure in the face of real capital needs. As Brownsville residents feel the pressures of development, it's imperative that the public sector in New York City step up to invest in local open spaces for

current residents, to create a livable community, and make steps towards improving health outcomes and safety conditions.

- A.** Mayor de Blasio—Add a second round of Anchor Parks funding to complete the renovation of Betsy Head Park, restoring the unique WPA-era swimming pool and pool house.
- B.** Mayor de Blasio—Use Community Parks Initiative guidelines to direct capital, maintenance, and programming dollars to Brownsville open spaces.
- C.** NYCHA—Conduct an audit of safety & openness of NYCHA open spaces.
- D.** Governor Cuomo—Direct Vital Brooklyn money to maintenance/programming of Brownsville spaces.
- E.** Council Members—Commit discretionary dollars to the Participatory Budgeting process.
- F.** Council Members—Identify and prioritize capital projects with discretionary dollars early in terms.



Betsy Head Playground, by Brownsville Community Justice Center Youth

Bettering Brownsville

As we consider on-the-ground conditions for Brownsville’s open spaces in conjunction with locally-defined needs, it bears taking a step back to also consider the organizational and political shifts Brownsville is experiencing, or will experience in the future. These actions, commitments, and opportunities are part of the wave of things that are, in short, committed to bettering Brownsville.

FRIENDS OF BROWNSVILLE PARKS

With a growing membership of local park advocates, the Friends of Brownsville Parks is uniquely poised to lead local stakeholders to seek open space improvements.

COMMUNITY PARKS INITIATIVE

This program of NYC Parks identifies high-growth, high-poverty zones in New York City and directs capital, maintenance, and programming resources to parks and open spaces there. Brownsville is in a CPI zone, and some Brownsville parks have received capital funding, maintenance attention, or increased programming.

ANCHOR PARKS

In August 2016, Mayor Bill de Blasio announced a funding tranche of \$150 million for five parks citywide, one of which is Betsy Head Park. Through this NYC Parks program, the Betsy Head Park track, field, entrances, and bleachers will receive \$30 million in major improvements.¹

SCHOOLYARDS-TO-PLAYGROUNDS

Two Brownsville schools participate in this program, which opens school playgrounds and fields to local community use during non-school hours. Schoolyards-to-Playgrounds is majorly funded by the Trust for Public Land, which seeks more partner schools to take part.

BIOSWALES

The NYC Department of Environmental Protection (NYC DEP) has installed hundreds of street right-of-way bioswales² in Brownsville to divert stormwater from New York City’s combined street and sanitary sewer system. Bioswales, which convert impermeable street surface area to small rain gardens, are one of several strategies that NYC DEP uses to divert rainwater and prevent polluting the city’s waterways with overflowing refuse. Bioswales in Brownsville are contributing, through permeability and due to their native plantings, to environmental health in the neighborhood, and present an opportunity for active care and stewardship by local residents.

² As defined by GrowNYC, bioswales are “linear, sloped retention areas designed to capture and convey water, while allowing it to infiltrate the ground slowly over a 24 to 48 hour period.” <https://www.grownyc.org/openspace/green-in-frastructure-toolkit/bioswales>

COMMUNITY GARDENS

Brownsville has a robust portfolio of community gardens under the jurisdiction of NYC Parks and GrowNYC. Gardens in Brownsville build community connections and provide opportunities for growing healthy food.

VITAL BROOKLYN

In March 2017, Governor Cuomo announced \$1.4 billion in funding to address chronic social, economic, and health disparities in Central Brooklyn, which includes Brownsville. Vital Brooklyn identifies “Open Space and Recreation” as the first area for investment, and commits to:

- Eliminating “park deserts” by building green spaces and revitalizing athletic facilities within a 10-minute walk of every neighborhood
- Enhancing more than 12 community gardens and school yards to create spaces for recreation and fitness
- Create more than 5 acres of recreation space at state-funded housing developments
- Improve existing recreation facilities through grant opportunities

NEW COUNCIL MEMBER

FOR DISTRICT 41

In November 2017, Alicka Ampry-Samuel was elected to represent District 41, covering a good portion of Brownsville, at the New York City Council. This change in locally-elected leadership opens doors to funding and policy solutions that were off the table previously. In addition, with a new council member comes a new opportunity to solidify support for park and open space projects.

THE BROWNSVILLE PLAN & RELATED INVESTMENTS

In June 2017, in conjunction with the release of The Brownsville Plan by the New York City Department of Housing Preservation & Development, Mayor de Blasio announced the commitment of \$150 million in City investments to Brownsville resources. Improvements are pledged for Brownsville’s parks, NYCHA developments, streets, and roadways. It includes plans for a new community center for teens at the Brownsville Houses, and funds the work of the Brownsville Neighborhood Health Action Center.³

¹ http://www.qgazette.com/news/2016-08-31/Features/Astoria_Park_One_Of_Five_Anchor_Parks_To_Share_150.html

³ Center for Court Innovation, 4.

What's Next for NY4P & Brownsville

With a detailed knowledge of local open space conditions in Brownsville, NY4P is poised to assist local stakeholders in determining how open space improvements and investments can move the needle on locally-defined needs, such as community safety or chronic health conditions and poor health outcomes.

We'll work with the Friends of Brownsville Parks and other Brownsville advocates closely in the years ahead, providing technical assistance to boost the likelihood of these long-term changes. We'll deepen our outreach and community organizing efforts, expanding our existing programming to reach more Brownsville residents. We'll forge relationships with more organizational stakeholders to introduce our findings and open space recommendations. We'll use our ability to convene diverse organizations, bringing together unlikely partners to find new opportunities for action steps in Brownsville.

Our Outreach & Programs team will seek a deeper involvement with Brownsville and its stakeholders. We'll ensure that the Daffodil Project continues to have a strong Brownsville presence. The Daffodil Project, our main public-facing program, distributes around 500,000 free daffodil bulbs to New Yorkers every year, who pledge to plant them in a public place as an addition to our living memorial to 9/11. We have distributed bulbs to New Yorkers in Brownsville annually since 2012. We'll work with local partners to find new ways to expand the Daffodil Project in Brownsville.

We'll also build stronger ties between our annual borough-wide park advocate organizing meetings and Brownsville park advocates. We'll connect people who care about open spaces in Brownsville with peers from organizations across Brooklyn. Advocates from Brownsville will gain access to the combined knowledge of master park advocates like the Red Hook Conservancy, and have a wider network of resources and peers to reach out to with questions, ideas, and proposals.

In our role as a citywide leader on the interconnectedness of open spaces and livable communities, NY4P has a unique ability to convene organizational partners to tackle local needs and create new action steps towards solutions. We'll gather a diverse group of actors, from sports programmers to citywide research organizations to resource providers and funders. Working with our on-the-ground partners in Brownsville, we'll create the room for conversations that can match a local need with a larger resource, an existing program, or the seed for a new approach.

New Yorkers for Parks sees this Brownsville Open Space Index, in many ways, as just the start of our work in Brownsville. We're looking ahead to the years of work with our partners to improve open spaces in Brownsville, for its present and for its future.



Carter G. Woodson Children's Park

Appendix I: Detailed Methodology

NY4P's development of the Open Space Index began with an extensive survey of open space policies and metrics used in other cities. While many of these standards do not work for New York City's unique population density and geographic constraints, they provided thoughtful groundwork for developing Index targets. NY4P also drew upon existing New York City open space and sustainability goals, such as those laid out in PlaNYC, and recommendations by experts in relevant fields such as urban planning and environmental advocacy. NY4P conducted a pilot study of the Lower East Side in 2009, which helped to refine the *Open Space Index* and was the basis of our first published *Index* report in 2010. Since that time, we have released *Indices* for seven neighborhoods: the Lower East Side, Jackson Heights, East Harlem, East Midtown, the Upper East Side, Mott Haven, and Brownsville.

TOTAL OPEN SPACE

All acres of open space in the neighborhood that provide space for play, relaxation, and contact with nature.

DATA COLLECTION: Shapefiles provided by NYC Parks and obtainable through the NYC Open Data portal provide total acreage figures for all neighborhood open spaces.

ACTIVE OPEN SPACE

All acres of playgrounds, fields, courts, rec centers, and other active open spaces.

Data Collection: Calculating a neighborhood's active open space acreage required measuring the playgrounds, courts, fields, swimming pools, golf courses, greenways, bikeways, and recreation centers. These features are identified on shapefiles provided by NYC Parks, and their presence is confirmed on site visits by NY4P field surveyor staff. Then, NY4P staff use Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping software to calculate the acreage of these features for individual park properties.

PLAYGROUNDS

Places for play with things like swings, climbing frames, water features, sand boxes, or other play areas.

DATA COLLECTION: These features are identified on shapefiles provided by NYC Parks or otherwise on the NYC Open Data website, and their presence is confirmed on site visits by NY4P field surveyor staff. The Open Space Index defines a playground as a portion of a park consisting of play equipment, such

as swings or structures for climbing. A playground is defined as the maximally-bounded area that contains play features. Sometimes this will be a stand-alone property; other times there will be several playgrounds within a larger park. Most New York City public playgrounds are operated by the Parks Department. We also include in our calculation Schoolyards-to-Playgrounds sites, and private schoolyards with explicitly stated hours of public accessibility.

ATHLETIC FIELDS

Fields for sports like soccer, football, cricket, baseball, rugby, and field hockey, as well as ice rinks.

DATA COLLECTION: These features are identified on shapefiles provided by NYC Parks, and their presence and type is confirmed on site visits by NY4P field surveyors. When fields overlap one another, surveyors count the maximum number of fields that can be used simultaneously. For instance, if two baseball fields are drawn atop a soccer field, the area will be counted as two fields.

COURTS

Courts for playing sports like basketball, handball, volleyball, tennis, and bocce.

DATA COLLECTION: These features are identified on shapefiles provided by NYC Parks, and their presence and type is confirmed on site visits by NY4P surveyors. When half-courts for basketball are identified, they are counted as ½ a court.

RECREATION CENTERS

Indoor recreation centers operated by NYC Parks, and other indoor facilities with similar fees and public access.

DATA COLLECTION: Data on recreation centers comes from a variety of sources. NYC Parks shapefiles include recreation centers. Surveyors also identify community centers run by non-profits and other agencies through field work and in consultation with local officials. If these sites offer recreational opportunities, are publicly-accessible, and maintain a fee structure comparable to Parks Department recreation centers, they are included in the neighborhood's recreation center count.

PASSIVE OPEN SPACE

All acres of lawns, esplanades, plazas, beaches, natural areas, planted areas, and community gardens.

DATA COLLECTION: Passive Open Space acreage is obtained by identifying the total acreage for each open space resource, and removing the acreage that can be attributed to Active Open Space programming. Information on privately-owned public spaces (POPS) developed through the City's incentive zoning program is obtained from the NYC Open Data portal. The locations of the NYC Department of Transportation's Plaza Program are also found on the Open Data portal.

COMMUNITY GARDENS

All Green Thumb gardens and other community gardens with public access.

DATA COLLECTION: New York City’s community gardens are owned and operated by a variety of entities including NYC Parks, the Trust for Public Land, New York Restoration Project, and others. NY4P obtains community garden data from the NYC Open Data portal, provided by NYC Parks and GrowNYC. Surveyors confirm the presence of these resources through site visits. Surveyors also identify community gardens through on-the-ground fieldwork and confirm potential public gardens with data from OASIS (www.oasisnyc.net), 596 Acres (www.596acres.org) and PLUTO maps.

ACCESS TO OPEN SPACES

We measure the percentage of the residential population within a 5-minute walk to every park entrance.

DATA COLLECTION: Using Geographic Information Systems mapping software, we ran a network analysis, measuring sidewalk paths from all park entrances. For pocket parks and neighborhood parks, we calculated ¼-mile sidewalk paths, and for large parks, we calculated ½-mile sidewalk paths. These pathways represent the total area covered by our park accessibility standards. We overlaid census blocks with 2016 American Community Survey 5-year population estimates on these shapes, to derive the population residing in that area. Where the census blocks fell only

partially within the accessibility area, we determined the percentage that was covered, and assumed an equal distribution of the population within the block to arrive at our figures.

URBAN TREE CANOPY

The layer of tree leaves, branches, trunks and stems that cover the ground when viewed from above, measured against local capacity estimates from the U.S. Forest Service.

DATA COLLECTION: We use the potential neighborhood-level tree canopy coverage estimate published in the U.S. Forest Service’s 2006 study, A Report on New York City’s Present and Possible Urban Tree Canopy, as each neighborhood’s target. Using GIS data and aerial photography, the Forest Service calculated New York City’s existing Urban Tree Canopy at 24%. By identifying all land not covered with water, roads, or buildings as possible planting locations, the study estimated that New York City’s Urban Tree Canopy could be expanded to 42%. We derive the current canopy coverage for our study area from 2007 LiDAR data for New York City.¹ In 2018, a new LiDAR data set will be released, accounting for the increased tree plantings resulting from mayoral initiatives over the past decade.

PARK MAINTENANCE

NYC Parks’ Parks Inspection Program ratings for parks in the study area are aggregated.

DATA COLLECTION: To calculate park maintenance results, we use the “cleanliness” and “overall condition” ratings from NYC Parks’ Parks Inspection Program (PIP) for all parks within the survey area over the last two years. The PIP results are available on the NYC Open Data portal. The “cleanliness” rating is based on the presence of litter, glass, graffiti, weeds, and ice. The “overall condition” rating assesses litter, glass, graffiti, weeds, ice, benches, fences, paved surfaces, play equipment, safety surfacing, sidewalks, athletic fields, horticultural areas, lawns, trails, trees, and water bodies. For both categories, NY4P calculates a neighborhood’s result by adding the number of park inspections that are rated “acceptable” and dividing that result by the total number of inspections for area parks over the last three years. The citywide goal is derived from the NYC Mayor’s Management Report park performance targets.

¹ LiDAR stands for Light Detection and Ranging, a remote sensing method that uses light in the form of a pulsed laser to measure ranges to the Earth. For more information, see <https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/facts/lidar.html>.

Appendix 2: Report Card Data for Brownsville Parks

In the summer of 2015, NY4P field surveyors used the Report Card methodology to collect data on maintenance and cleanliness conditions at Brownsville parks. The Report Card, published by NY4P since 2003, provides an

independent assessment of park performance against defined maintenance benchmarks. After collecting data on neighborhood-sized parks (1 to 20 acres) in the Community Parks Initiative zones, NY4P field surveyors deployed

their training on smaller Brownsville parks and open spaces. The results, which were shared in 2016 with the Friends of Brownsville Parks, are reproduced here.

Park	Score	Grade	Size (acres)	Athletic Fields	Bathrooms	Courts	Drinking Fountains	Immediate Environment	Lawns	Natural Areas	Pathways	Playgrounds	Sitting Areas	Trees	Water Bodies
Howard Malls	86	B	0.1	-	-	-	-	86	88	-	-	-	83	89	-
Houston Playground	80	B-	0.9	-	-	-	82	68	64	-	89	88	85	72	-
Zion Triangle	80	B-	0.2	-	-	-	-	86	84	-	-	-	87	38	-
Brownsville Playground	79	C+	3.1	100	-	45	82	64	86	-	91	80	74	86	-
Nehemiah Park	79	C+	1.7	-	-	71	86	86	54	-	91	-	81	86	-
P.S. 125 Playground	78	C+	0.2	-	-	78	-	82	-	-	-	88	56	89	-
Betsy Head Park	75	C	10.6	63	81	72	75	64	91	-	55	-	-	93	-
Chester Playground	75	C	1.2	71	87	79	86	100	100	-	90	88	0	100	-
Osborn Playground	69	D	2.4	100	97	83	29	64	100	-	100	0	87	86	-
Newport Playground	66	D	0.9	68	47	78	0	100	-	-	80	88	40	89	-
Dr. Green Playground	64	D	1.8	0	86	80	24	100	-	-	88	88	0	89	-
Van Dyke Playground	60	D	1.4	-	-	63	0	86	72	-	90	44	61	89	-
Howard Playground	57	F	1.0	-	-	39	34	100	-	-	100	0	45	100	-
Carter G. Woodson Children's Park	50	F	0.9	91	-	-	0	100	-	-	90	0	0	100	-
Veterans Triangle	48	F	0.0	-	-	-	-	64	84	-	-	-	0	89	-
Floyd Patterson Ballfields	42	F	2.4	74	-	-	0	100	56	-	-	-	0	-	-
Livonia Park	39	F	0.9	-	-	-	0	86	84	-	89	-	0	0	-
All Brownsville Parks	66	D	-	73	79	69	38	84	76	-	84	63	44	79	-

Appendix 3: Table of Open Space Results

Amount of Open Space	<i>Goal</i>	<i>Units per capita</i>	<i>Result</i>	<i>Per Capita Result</i>	<i>Meets Standard?</i>	<i>Gap</i>	<i>Needed to Bridge the Gap</i>	<i>Data Source</i>
Playgrounds	1	playgrounds per 1,250 children	23.00	1.59	Yes	–	–	NYC Parks
Athletic Fields	1.5	athletic fields per 10,000 residents	13	2.24	Yes	–	–	NYC Parks
Courts	5	courts per 10,000 residents	82.50	14.20	Yes	–	–	NYC Parks
Recreation Centers	1	recreation centers per 20,000 residents	2	0.69	No	0.31	.9 rec centers	NYC Parks
Active Open Space	1	acres per 1,000 residents	19.20	0.33	No	0.67	38.9 acres	NYC Parks
Community Gardens	1	gardens per 10,000 residents	17	2.93	Yes	–	–	NYC Parks, GrowNYC
Passive Open Space	1.5	acres per 1,000 residents	15.51	0.27	No	1.23	71.64 acres	NYC Parks, GrowNYC
Total Open Space	2.5	acres per 1,000 residents	34.70	0.60	No	1.90	110.55 acres	NYC Parks, GrowNYC
Access and Distance to Parks	<i>Goal</i>	<i>Within</i>	<i>Result</i>	<i>Per Capita Result</i>	<i>Meets Standard?</i>	<i>Gap</i>	<i>Needed to Bridge the Gap</i>	<i>Data Source</i>
Pocket Parks	100% residents	¼ mile of pocket park entrances	48,160	83%	No	17%	9,941 residents	NYC Parks
Neighborhood Parks	100% residents	¼ mile of neighborhood park entrances	44,343	76%	No	24%	13,758 residents	NYC Parks
Large Parks	100% residents	½ mile of large park entrances	6,060	10%	No	90%	52,041 residents	NYC Parks
Environmental Sustainability	<i>Goal</i>		<i>Result</i>		<i>Meets Standard?</i>	<i>Gap</i>		<i>Data Source</i>
Urban Tree Canopy	30% potential tree canopy for Brownsville		17%	–	No	13%	–	NYC Parks
Park Maintenance	<i>Goal</i>		<i>Result</i>		<i>Meets Standard?</i>	<i>Gap</i>		<i>Data Source</i>
Cleanliness	90% of park inspections rated “acceptable”		58%	–	No	32%	–	NYC Parks, FY 2015 & FY 2016
Overall Condition	85% of park inspections rated “acceptable”		66%	–	No	19%	–	NYC Parks, FY 2015 & FY 2016

Further Reading

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New Yorkers for Parks is the citywide independent organization championing quality parks and open spaces for all New Yorkers in all neighborhoods. Parks are essential to the health of residents, the livability of neighborhoods, and the economic development of the city. Through our integrated approach of research, advocacy, and strategic partnerships, we drive immediate actions and long-term policies that protect and enhance the city's vast network of parks, ensure equitable access to quality open spaces for all neighborhoods, and inform and empower communities throughout New York City. Information on New Yorkers for Parks' research and projects is available at www.ny4p.org.

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Brownsville Partnership
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