



Great
PEOPLE
make
great
parks

Fiscal
Year
2017
Annual
Report



Letter from the Executive Director



Students having fun at a Queens school daffodil planting

Dear Friends,

At New Yorkers for Parks (NY4P), we believe that great parks make a great city. But I always like to add that it's **great people who make great parks**. Community advocates, industry professionals, and generous supporters alike—we are ALL New Yorkers for Parks and I am excited to share with you what we have achieved together this year.

I would like to begin by thanking my predecessor, Tupper Thomas, for her dedication and the accomplishments during her tenure that have laid the groundwork for our continued efforts today. NY4P is at the beginning of a new and exciting chapter, poised to build off its reputation as a stalwart supporter of parks for over 100 years.

In fiscal year 2017, our efforts revolved around a central theme: parks and open space as critical city infrastructure. These spaces fuel economic development, enhance public health, support

ecosystems, and create a sense of community and civic pride. From the release of our 15th *Report Card on Parks*, to the creation of new resources like our *Clean & Green* guide to park maintenance, we continue connecting local parks advocates with the data they need to improve and maintain their green spaces. Through our Civic Action Tracker, we showed how parks and open spaces are also critical to the architecture of democracy. We expanded our reach with new advocacy software, workshops, and webinar technology, while simultaneously growing our signature public program: The Daffodil Project, which celebrated its 15th anniversary this year.

In this important local election year, we worked with everyday New Yorkers and park advocates to craft a campaign platform that conveys the vital importance of parks and open spaces in our city: the Public Realm Bill of Rights for New York City. This document and its accompanying video have become the bedrock of our work, particularly in our focus on communities themselves.

While continuing to strengthen our research, advocacy, and community partnerships, we have our eyes on the horizon to expand our role as an important convening voice for open space advocates, as we simultaneously develop a tactical five-year business plan.

It has been an incredible first year with NY4P. I am proud of our accomplishments and excited to see us grow even more in the next year.

Thank you to all of the parks supporters who are with us in this work.

Go parks!

Sincerely,

Lynn B. Kelly





WE SHARED

Our online resources
were accessed nearly

4,000
times



WE GREW

1,400
more people got to know
us this year



WE EDUCATED

Over 600
people came to our
workshops, trainings,
and webinars



WE ENGAGED

With the help of
23,000
Daffodil Project volunteers
across all five boroughs



WE INSPIRED

15,000
kids participated in Daffodil
plantings citywide



WE UNITED

Special thanks to our
25+
partner organizations

We shared
resources
online
nearly
4,000
times



DATA-DRIVEN RESEARCH remains a staple of our support of parks and open spaces for all neighborhoods. By developing engaging, informative reports and resources, both in print and online, NY4P seeks to ensure that all New Yorkers have the **ACCESS AND UNDERSTANDING TO APPLY THIS DATA** to their communities.

Civic Action Tracker

Our parks and open spaces are not only our everyday recreational spaces—they are the **architecture of our democratic rights of assembly and protest**. But is New York City adequately supporting these actions through its funding, permitting, and capital processes? In early 2017, we started to track civic actions occurring in public places within the five boroughs of New York City. Our Civic Action Tracker recorded actions including protests, rallies, sit-ins, die-ins, and marches, held in any public place, from parks to plazas to streets and sidewalks. In March, we released an interactive online map showing data about each civic action, and identified hotspots. We'll continue to collect this data so that by early 2018, we'll be in a position to issue findings and recommendations for enabling New Yorkers to continue exercising their democratic rights in our public realm.

Clean & Green

How do our parks stay clean?

We answered this question with a visually-driven, plain-language guide about how our parks are maintained.

It's already a most-requested item by local park advocates. In *Clean & Green: Who Takes Care of Our Parks?*, we show why some parks get cleaned every day, or have a dedicated maintenance team, and why some don't. We introduce the entities that aren't NYC Parks who contribute towards park maintenance: nonprofit park partners like conservancies, and groups of volunteers. With funding from Council Members Brad Lander and Mark Levine, we'll follow up by analyzing data about park maintenance resources citywide next year.

The 2016 Report Card on Parks: Spotlight on the Community Parks Initiative

Our fifteenth *Report Card* returned to our roots of **independent analysis of conditions, this time focusing on neighborhood parks, sized between 1 and 20 acres**. Tracking the impact of a key mayoral parks initiative, we limited our analysis to parks within the priority improvement zones identified for the equity-focused Community Parks Initiative, which guides key capital and maintenance spending for NYC Parks under Mayor de Blasio. The 2016 *Report Card on Parks* found some clear areas for improving maintenance and conditions, as well as amenities that are consistently well-managed and maintained. Drinking fountains and athletic fields were major areas of concern, exhibiting a variety of issues related to deferred maintenance that may escalate capital repair problems. Conditions of park trees, pathways, and playgrounds, by contrast, were often found to be acceptable and well-maintained.

"NY4P CLIPS" TURN 6

Did you know that NY4P creates a daily email of compiled news relevant to parks and open space?

Parks professionals and advocates have depended on this daily resource for six years. Interested in learning more? Please email us at ny4p@ny4p.org.



From a new overarching open space campaign platform, to grassroots engagement in community rezoning discussions, and easy-to-use advocacy action software, **WE ARE EXPANDING OUR REACH AND EMPOWERING MORE NEW YORKERS TO BECOME PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ADVOCATES.**

We grew our network

1,400 more people got to know us this year



The Public Realm Bill of Rights for New York City

In anticipation of the 2017 elections, NY4P worked with everyday New Yorkers and park advocates to craft our campaign platform, the Public Realm Bill of Rights for NYC. Based on feedback we heard from advocates during our 2016 “How’s Your Park?” and 2017 “NY4P: Boro x Boro” borough meetings, as well as years of on-the-ground research and data collection, NY4P created this five point platform to speak to the broad issues concerning NYC parks and open spaces today: **Access, Infrastructure, Health, Environment, and Funding.** Within each area, we laid out a vision for the baseline standards of open space provision that the city should follow. The aim of the Public Realm Bill of Rights for NYC is to provide a roadmap for the incoming City Council and mayoral administrations for achieving ambitious improvements to parks and open space – for instance, we call for a new goal that **every New Yorker live within a 5 minute walk of some kind of park, garden, or green space**, and that park improvements and maintenance should be primarily funded with public dollars.

Empowering Communities

By providing open space data and advocacy tools, we strengthened our outreach to community advocates facing rezoning changes in their communities. The affordable housing-focused rezoning of East Harlem gathered steam throughout the year, **providing us with a targeted opportunity to build on our research with direct advocacy.** Our work centered on boosting the findings of the East Harlem Neighborhood Plan in the public review of the official East Harlem Rezoning. In Brooklyn, we presented initial results of our Brownsville Open Space Index to the Friends of Brownsville Parks, and worked to link local leaders to the broader citywide open space movement. We’ll continue to support our local partners in these neighborhoods to ensure that open space is not lost in the rezoning conversation.

A New Way to Reach Our Public Officials

With generous funding from the Booth Ferris Foundation, NY4P was able to acquire advocacy software that will help us connect New Yorkers directly with their elected representatives. Our recently launched advocacy module gives us the opportunity to create petitions, letters, and calls to action sent directly to decision-makers. We piloted this new software in the spring during the city’s budget negotiation process, and used it as an opportunity to work with our constituents to directly message the City Council and mayor’s office to push for an increased budget for parks. **Almost 200 New Yorkers signed the petition, influencing a \$9.7M investment by the City Council to preserve 150 critical Maintenance and Operations staff lines.** We anticipate using this software for campaigns and issues as they come up in the future.



Watch our new Public Realm Bill of Rights Video online at www.ny4p.org/advocacy/public-realm-bill-of-rights



*NY4P continues to provide **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE** to park advocates and community members across all five boroughs, providing the tools and training to **CREATE CHANGE** in their communities.*

We educated over 600 New Yorkers at our workshops, trainings, and webinars



NY4P: Boro x Boro

In the winter of 2017, NY4P embarked on its second year of gathering park advocates and open space stewards throughout the five boroughs. This year's round of meetings focused on identifying common issues throughout the park system, and asked participants to identify possible solutions. Attendees were asked to assess issues as they related to park maintenance and staff; capital improvements and infrastructure; climate change and the environment; community engagement and programming; and security and safety. The feedback we received helped inform our annual budget advocacy for NYC Parks, and helped seed the creation of our Public Realm Bill of Rights for NYC.

Parks & Public Health

In our second year working with the Bronx Community Health Network (BCHN), a local healthcare organization, we delivered the results of our research on park usership, and piloted a social science method for collecting park usership data that we adapted for citizen scientists. We found several areas that BCHN and the groups in its parks network can work to improve, including boosting the number of female park users, providing more programming to attract adult and senior park users, and increasing physical and programmatic support for physical activities that provide long-term health benefits. To extend the reach of this baseline data collection, we held trainings and workshops for the groups in the BCHN Community Partners network, teaching them how to collect park usership data using our citizen-science method. The results of these trainings will inform a Residents' Guide we will create that allows park groups to teach themselves how to do this research, interpret it, and use it in their advocacy for park capital and programmatic improvements.

Workshops

In an effort to reach more New Yorkers and park advocates, NY4P partnered with organizations on technical assistance workshops throughout the year. Topics ranged from how to generate usership-data on specific park properties, to how to work with the city to get funding for park improvements. These workshops allowed NY4P to share data and research resources useful to community groups looking to navigate the funding process for park improvements, as well as to provide more information about initiatives we support, such as Participatory Budgeting. In May, Executive Director Lynn Kelly participated in the City Council Candidate School organized by the New York League of Conservation Voters Education Fund, allowing us to share our Public Realm Bill of Rights for NYC with Council hopefuls. Some of the other workshops we participated in were hosted by organizations such as Partnerships for Parks, Bronx Community Health Network, and NYC Parks.



“We’ve been able to work with our community to get millions of dollars for our local parks to be improved – seriously – and that couldn’t have happened without NY4P.”

Nilka Martell, Loving the Bronx and the Bronx Coalition for Parks and Green Spaces

Webinars

In 2016 and 2017, NY4P began exploring new ways of reaching constituents through webinar technology. Topics covered included a primer on how to craft testimony and go on the record at public hearings (such as City Council hearings or Community Board meetings), and an in-depth explanation of how New Yorkers can learn who represents them in the City Council, and why it matters. We also covered some of the topics that we get asked about the most, including a deep dive into our popular *How Can I Improve My Park?* advocacy guide, and an introduction to our new Public Realm Bill of Rights for NYC. These webinars offer us the chance to not only have a live recording with active participants, but also provide evergreen resources that now live on the NY4P website. This new outreach method allows the NY4P team to reach park stewards and New Yorkers who may be curious about how to get involved in open space advocacy, but are unsure of where to start.

A SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR MANY PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS THIS YEAR!

Bronx Community Health Network
Center for Supportive Schools
Clinton Housing Development Corporation
Con Edison
Downtown Alliance
El Puente
Ernst & Young
Friends of Brownsville Parks
Giving Open Access to Learning
Green City Force
GreenThumb
Grow to Learn NYC
Mothers Out Front
The Municipal Art Society of New York
Natural Areas Conservancy

New York City Community Garden Coalition
NYC & Company
NYC Department of Transportation
New York City Housing Authority
NYC Parks
New York League of Conservation Voters
New York Restoration Project
Open Space Alliance for North Brooklyn
The Participatory Budgeting Project
Partnerships for Parks
The Point CDC
Rockaway Waterfront Alliance
Transportation Alternatives
The Trust for Public Land
Waterfront Alliance
...and many more!





We engaged 23,000 volunteers across all five boroughs

THE DAFFODIL PROJECT CELEBRATED 15 YEARS of providing free bulbs to volunteers and community groups – cultivating new park stewards and beautifying communities.

Founded in 2001 as a living memorial to the lives lost on September 11, The Daffodil Project remains one of the largest volunteer efforts in the city's history. The 2016 Daffodil Project season marked the 15th anniversary of NY4P's signature public program. **We distributed 500,000 bulbs to over 900 NYC groups and New Yorkers**, which they planted in hundreds of parks, playgrounds, schoolyards, community gardens, and tree pits across the city. As of fall 2016, NY4P has given 6.5 million daffodil bulbs to New Yorkers who have planted them across the five boroughs.

To celebrate the 15th anniversary of the Project and the centennial anniversary of the National Parks Service (NPS), NY4P and the NPS partnered on a unique volunteer event at Ellis Island, planting over 1,000 bulbs in areas with sweeping views of Lower Manhattan and One World Trade Center. Continued partnerships with Grow

to Learn NYC, The Trust for Public Land, Rockaway Waterfront Alliance, and Partnerships for Parks allowed us to reach hundreds of additional schools and community groups. New planting partnerships with the Center for Supportive Schools in the Bronx and Giving Open Access to Learning in East Harlem resulted in after-school plantings where we reached over 100 low-income public school students. We also partnered with Mothers Out Front, an environmental justice organization based in South Williamsburg, to provide bulbs to be planted throughout the neighborhood.

Above: Volunteers plant daffodil bulbs at Ellis Island in September 2016.

Below: 2017 Daffodil Breakfast honorees (from left to right): Lynn Kelly (NY4P Staff), Ivan Lopez, Franco Mucciacciaro, Nilka Martell, Katherine Thompson, Steve Chesler, Lee Regenbogen, George Reis, Lynden Miller (NY4P Board), Marlene Pantin, Erycka de Jesus, and Joel Steinhaus (NY4P Board).



2017 DAFFODIL BREAKFAST HONOREES

The Lynden B. Miller Citywide Award Recipient
NYC Parks Storehouse Crew

Parks Pioneer Award Recipient
Friends of Bushwick Inlet Park

BOROUGH DAFFODIL AWARD RECIPIENTS

Bronx
Loving the Bronx and the Bronx Coalition for Parks and Green Space

Brooklyn
Red Hook Conservancy

Manhattan
New York University

Queens
NYC Compost Project hosted by BIG Reuse

Staten Island
The Richard H. Hungerford School



We are looking ahead



NY4P has exciting initiatives lined up for fiscal year 2018. Here's a sneak peak of what's on the horizon:

Our Role as a Convener: Open Space Dialogues

With the support of The Rockefeller Foundation, NY4P seeks new metrics for open space evaluation as part of our work towards influencing New York City's zoning code and public review process, which does not treat open space as the essential city infrastructure it is. In collaboration with WXY architecture + urban design, NY4P will research the lay of the land and bring together thought-leaders from various disciplines in a series of four "Open Space Dialogues" to guide our further research, culminating in a published report of findings, recommendations, and next steps.



The first Open Space Dialogues respondents (from left to right): Madelyn Wils (Hudson River Park Trust), Amy Freitag (The J.M. Kaplan Fund), and Joshua Laird (National Parks of New York Harbor)

Business Plan

With generous funding from the Ford Foundation, NY4P will embark on a five-year strategic business planning process with a consultant team from The Whelan Group. This process will allow the board and staff of NY4P to identify areas for organizational growth and transformation, and will allow us to strengthen our role as NYC's independent voice for parks, gardens, and open spaces. We anticipate the business plan will be completed in early 2018.

2017 Election Campaign

Building on our Public Realm Bill of Rights for NYC, NY4P engaged candidates for local office on issues that relate to parks and green spaces. By participating in candidate forums, sending out a candidate questionnaire, and participating in civic engagement events throughout NYC, we pushed the issue of parks, gardens, and green spaces to the candidates who will become our city's next round of elected officials, and then launch our advocacy campaign with them in 2018.

Public Realm Bill of Rights / La Carta de los Derechos de Dominio Público / 公共领域权利法案 对于纽约市

In a city as diverse as New York, NY4P believes we can do more to reach communities throughout the five boroughs where English is not the primary spoken language. As part of our long-term plans for the Public Realm Bill of Rights for NYC, we will have the document translated into both Spanish and simplified Chinese – the two most commonly spoken languages in NYC, after English. We know that great parks make a great city, but we also know that great New Yorkers speak many languages and reflect many cultures. In the next year, we hope to have additional NY4P documents and resources translated into these languages in an effort to engage more park users and stewards throughout the city.



We are grateful to our generous supporters

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Gifts made July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017

\$100,000+

Booth Ferris Foundation

\$50,000–\$99,999

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Elizabeth H. Atwood
Battery Park City Authority
Mr. & Mrs. Benjamin S. Baxt

*Above left: Party 4 Parks 2016 (from left to right):
Joel Steinhaus, Betsy Smith, Adrian Benepe,
Maria Torres-Springer, and Lynn Kelly*

*Above: Councilmember Mark Levine and NYC Parks
Commissioner Mitchell Silver presenting outgoing
Executive Director Tupper Thomas with gift*

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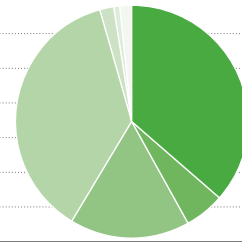
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New Yorkers for Parks FY2017 Operating Report

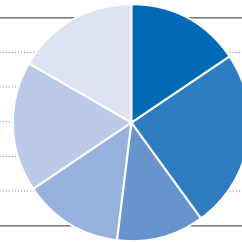
FY 2017 OPERATING REVENUE

	Total	Percentage
● Foundations	\$424,000	36%
● Corporations	64,890	6%
● Individuals/Family Foundations	193,124	17%
● Special Events (net)	432,663	37%
● Organizations	22,566	2%
● Government	8,700	1%
● Other	\$ 17,564	1%



FY 2017 OPERATING EXPENSES

	Total	Percentage
● Community Outreach and Advocacy	\$ 184,890	16%
● Research and Planning	286,796	24%
● The Daffodil Project	141,076	12%
● Public Information and Communication	161,081	14%
● Management & General	206,095	18%
● Fundraising	\$ 195,696	16%



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