



NYC DESIGN

NYC Public Design Commission
City Hall, Third Floor, New York, NY 10007
nyc.gov/designcommission

Annual Report
2020
NYC DESIGN

Contents

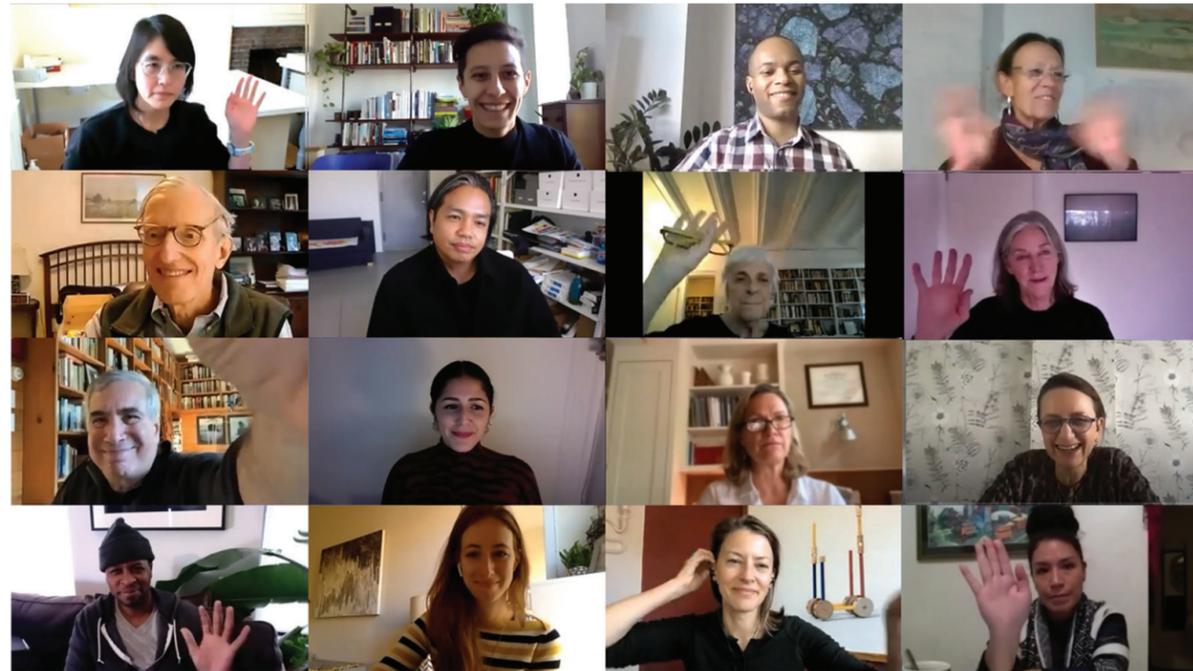
The Public Design Commission (PDC) is New York City's design review agency. Established as the Municipal Art Commission in 1898, the agency was renamed the Public Design Commission in 2008 to better reflect its mission and purview. As an advocate for excellence and innovation in the public realm, the PDC works to ensure the quality and viability of public projects, programs, and services for New Yorkers in all five boroughs.

The PDC reviews permanent works of architecture, landscape architecture, and art proposed on or over City-owned property. The PDC also acts as caretaker and curator of the City's public art collection, which is located throughout public buildings and open spaces in New York City.

The PDC's jurisdiction and procedures are outlined in Chapter 37 of the New York City Charter and the Rules of Practice and Procedure. For more information, see www.nyc.gov/designcommission.

The Public Design Commission	2
Commissioners	3
Staff	3
Conservation Advisory Group	3
Design Review	4
2020 Year in Review	7
Submissions by Type	8
Architecture and Structures	9
Parks, Open Spaces, and Streetscapes	10
Artworks	11
Private Structures on or over City-owned Land	12
Carry-over Projects	12
Submissions Acted or Commented Upon	13
Review Cycles	13
Submissions and Projects by Lead Agency	14
Submissions and Projects by Borough	15
Special Projects and Interagency Initiatives	16
Annual Awards for Excellence in Design - Toward a Sustainable NYC	19
City Hall Tour Program	24
BGX Epicenter Tour	26
Urban Archive	27
The City's Outdoor Public Art Database	28
Streetscapes for Wellness	30
WE Walk: Streets for Connection	32
Quality Affordable Housing	34
Prefabrication in the Public Realm	36
Guideline Recommendations for Pandemic Resilience and Neighborhood Change	37
Special Projects and Interagency Initiatives	38
Commissioner Biographies	39
Staff Biographies	42

The Public Design Commission



PDC Commissioners and Staff meet virtually after transitioning to a remote work environment due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

2020: A Year of Turmoil, Devastation, and Change

In the second week of March 2020, the Public Design Commission staff was planning our monthly public design review meeting, with a full agenda and high attendance expected. News of a virus was unfolding, and we slowly became aware of the severity of our situation. By the end of the week, we had canceled the meeting and were sent home, leaving City Hall to find the streets of lower Manhattan eerily quiet. With information changing daily and by the hour, our small staff switched gears and tackled a multitude of challenges to develop a remote process for our monthly design review meetings. While much of the city hunkered down, the PDC continued to work and meet remotely, ensuring that City projects like parks and comfort stations were not held up and the review of critical pandemic-related infrastructure was expedited.

While the COVID-19 pandemic devastated New York City, it also brought opportunities to think about public design in new ways. We were inspired by our colleagues, architects, designers, and artists who

worked to transform outdoor spaces – open streets, dining structures, and street murals that provided lively spaces for safe recreation. At the same time, the racial justice protests of 2020 challenged us to consider how the design of public spaces has played a role in systemic racism, how our economic and healthcare systems were inequitable, and how we can make a difference.

Late in the year, we decided to pivot our streetscapes research project to focus on health – physical and mental – and projects that reimagine public streets with people-centered and health improving designs. And, in October, we celebrated City designs that promote equality, provide opportunity, build community, and strengthen democracy. While we are relieved to finally see an end to the pandemic in sight, the challenges of 2020 brought important lessons and new goals for the future of public design.

Commissioners

Signe Nielsen, President, Landscape Architect
Philip E. Aarons, Vice President, Lay Member
Kenseth Armstead, Painter
Laurie Hawkinson, Architect
Karen Kiehl, Brooklyn Museum (appointed May 2021)
Deborah Marton, Lay Member
Manuel Miranda, Lay Member
Richard Moore, Brooklyn Museum* (resigned April 2021)
Susan Morgenthau, The New York Public Library
Ethel Sheffer, Mayor's Representative
Dr. Merryl H. Tisch, The Metropolitan Museum of Art
Mary Valverde, Sculptor
Hank Willis Thomas, Painter* (resigned March 2020)
** Former Commissioner*

Staff

Keri Butler, Executive Director (appointed April 2021)
Justin Garrett Moore, Former Executive Director* (resigned December 2020)
Grace Han, Director of Capital Projects
Rebecca Macklis, Senior Urban Design Manager
Jenna E. Miller, Urban Design & Policy Manager
Carolina Llano, Project Manager
Julianna Monjeau, Archivist & Senior Records Manager
Mary Beth Betts, City Hall Tour Manager
Gail Cornell, Gary Deane, Gail Green, Deirdre LaPorte, and Patricia Orfanos, Docents
** Former Staff*

Conservation Advisory Group

The Conservation Advisory Group (CAG) was established to advise the PDC on projects specific to art and building conservation. CAG includes conservators, art historians, artists, and preservationists who serve pro bono.

Lucy Belloli, former Senior Conservator, The Metropolitan Museum of Art
Dr. Michele H. Bogart, Professor, Department of Art, SUNY Stony Brook
Lauren Bradley, Associate Conservator of Paintings, Brooklyn Museum
Lisa Bruno, Carol Lee Shen Chief Conservator, Brooklyn Museum
Phyllis Samitz Cohen, Director of Adopt-a-Monument/Mural Programs, The Municipal Art Society
Isabelle Duvernois, Associate Conservator, The Metropolitan Museum of Art
Stephen E. Gottlieb, AIA and formerly of WASA
Kendra Roth, Associate Objects Conservator, The Metropolitan Museum of Art
John Willenbecher, Artist and former Art (PDC) Commission member

Design Review

A Typical Capital Project Schedule



When determining whether to approve or reject proposals, the Commission considers a diverse range of design parameters, including the unique context of the site and surrounding area, the history of the site and project, the durability and resiliency of the materials, the sustainability and maintainability of the design, the appropriateness of the design in terms of how it will facilitate the desired function and program, and how to best serve the public through long-term planning and innovative solutions.

The PDC has developed guidelines for certain types of projects, which are intended to provide a general sense of designs the Commission supports, clarify requirements, provide guidance to applicants, and streamline the review process. In addition, staff has worked with City agencies to develop expedited review strategies for prototypical and standardized designs and projects with small scopes.

Due to the iterative nature of design development, the PDC has established multiple levels of review – Conceptual, Preliminary, and Final – that are integrated into typical project schedules established by City capital agencies. The charts on these two pages indicates where the different levels of PDC review fit within a typical capital project schedule. Individual projects may be submitted multiple times within a year as the design progresses through the levels of review.

Conceptual

Conceptual review is required for all artworks, ground-up buildings, major infrastructure projects, master plans, other large-scale or complex projects, as well as projects that are subject to the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP). Submissions are made early in the design process when drawings are at the pre-schematic level.

Preliminary

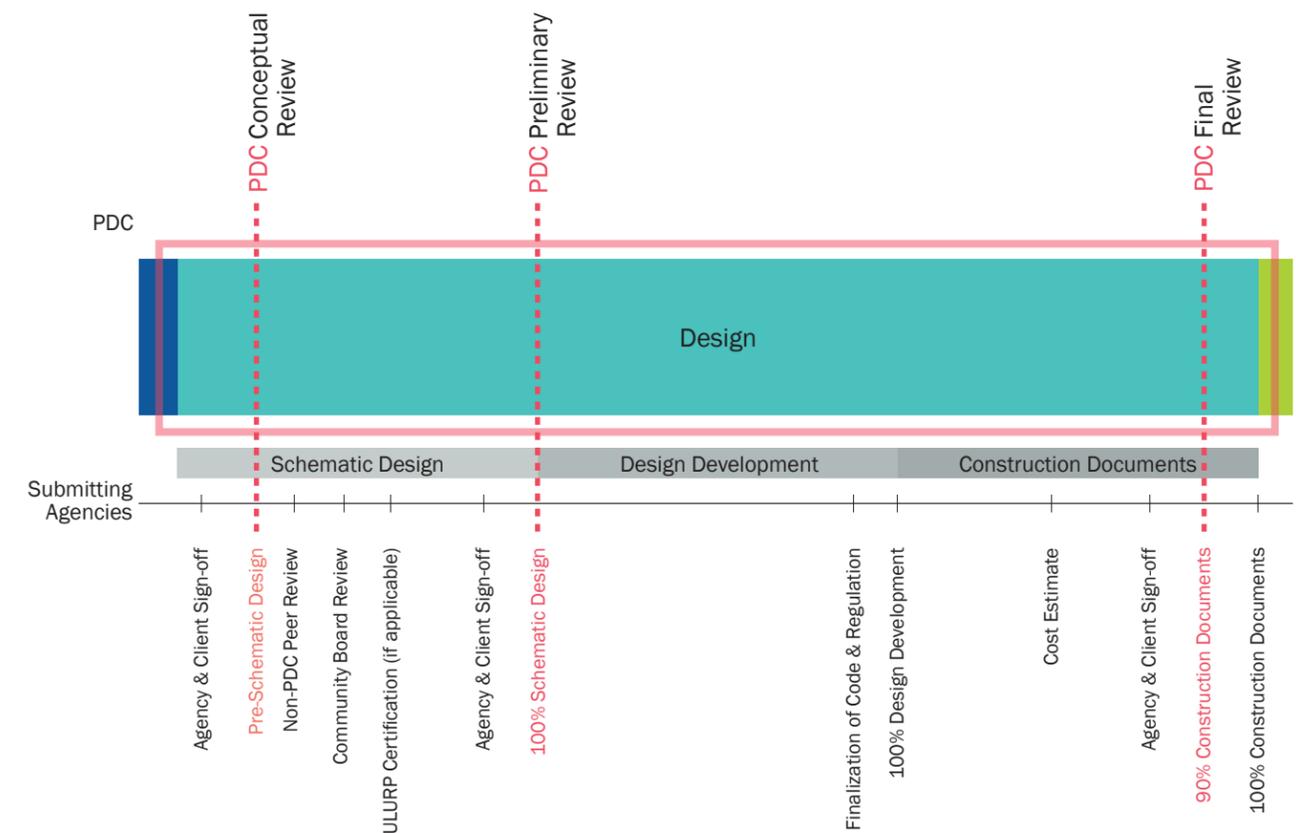
For structures and landscapes, preliminary review occurs at the end of the schematic design phase. For artworks, preliminary review occurs when the artist has completed fabrication drawings.

Final

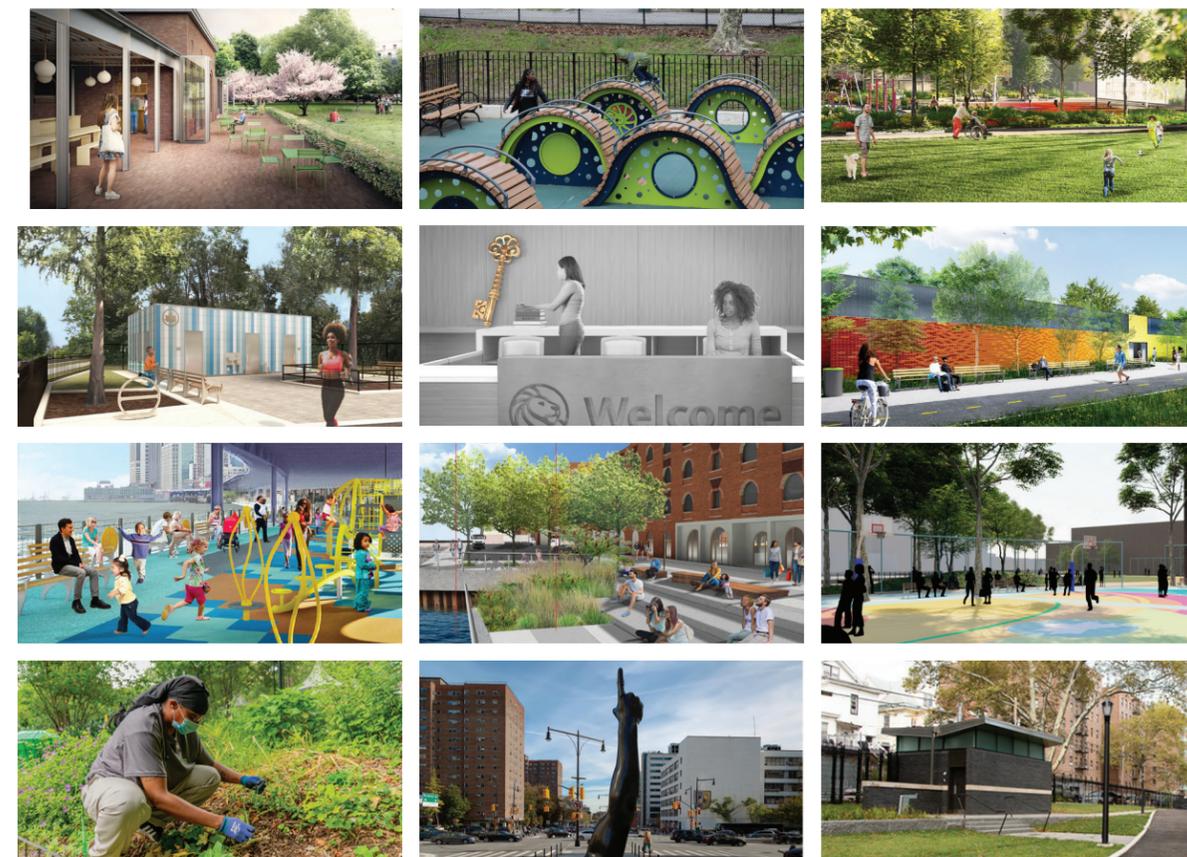
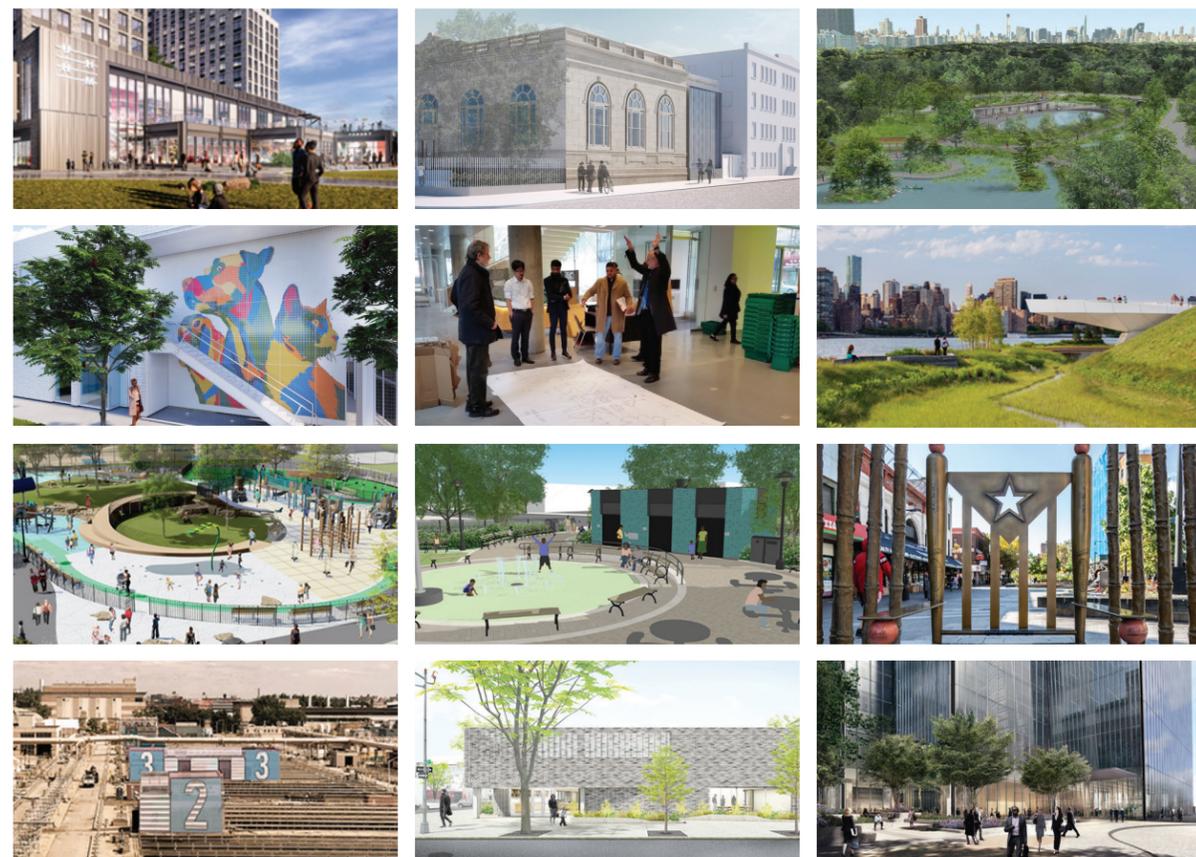
For structures and landscapes, final review and approval occurs at approximately 90% completion of construction documents. Once final approval is granted, construction can commence. For artworks, final review takes place after the artwork has been installed and includes the submission of photographs documenting the installed artwork.

Final Sign-off

Final sign-off occurs after a project has been completed and photographic documentation has been submitted.



Year in Review 2020



Total Number of Submissions by Type

The Public Design Commission typically reviews approximately 800 to 1,000 submissions (600 to 800 unique projects) every year. However, due to an emergency declaration to stop all nonessential construction during the COVID-19 pandemic, the PDC experienced a significant decrease in the number of annual submissions received during 2020. Most of the projects that the PDC reviews fall under the major categories of structures, parks, open spaces, and streetscapes, and artwork. These main categories are further broken down and described in the following pages.

Total Number of Submissions Received: 700

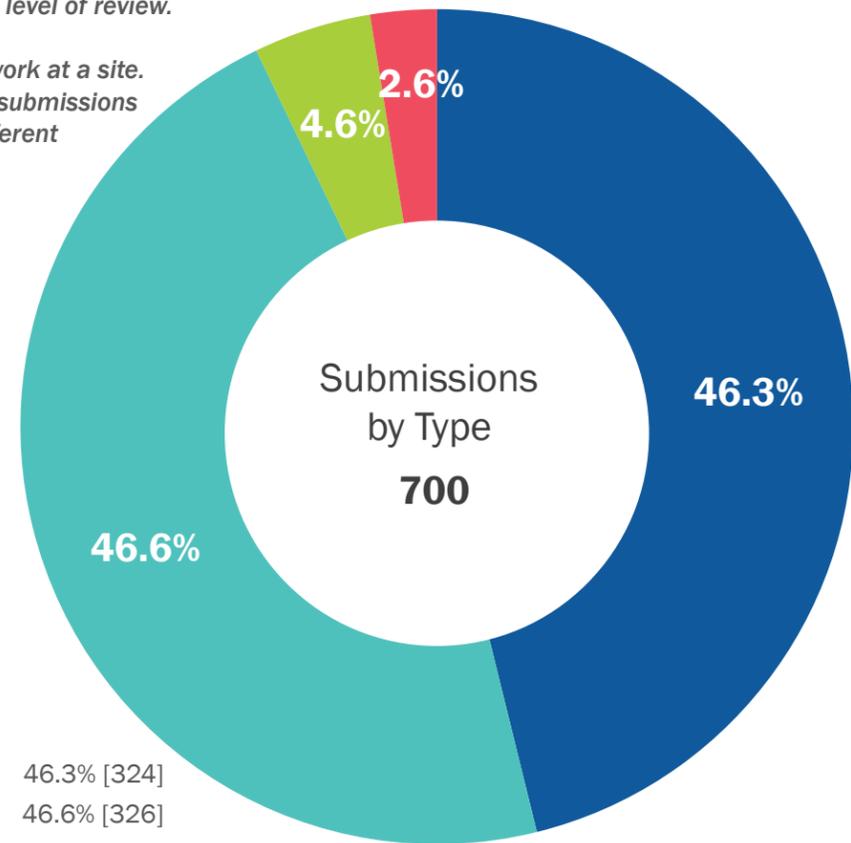


Total Number of Unique Projects Reviewed: 496



A **submission** is a package of review materials for a single project at a specific level of review.

A **project** is a unique scope of work at a site. One project may have multiple submissions within one year, such as for different levels of review.



- Structures 46.3% [324]
- Parks, Open Spaces, and Streetscapes 46.6% [326]
- Signage 4.6% [32]
- Artworks 2.6% [18]

NOTE: All numbers have been rounded to the nearest tenth of a percent.

Architecture and Structures

Architectural projects range in size and scope from large-scale multi-building developments to small-scale building improvements such as HVAC installations. Projects may include new affordable housing, libraries, police stations, sanitation garages, and bridges as well as renovations or restorations of existing buildings or bridges and the installation of mechanical units or other equipment.

Construction

An entirely new building, bridge, or other structure

Building Modifications and Minor Structures

Installation of prefabricated structures or small-scale additions of specific elements such as photovoltaic panels, HVAC units, or lighting

Rehabilitation

An upgrade for the purpose of making a building functional today, such as improvements to life safety and HVAC systems

Reconstruction

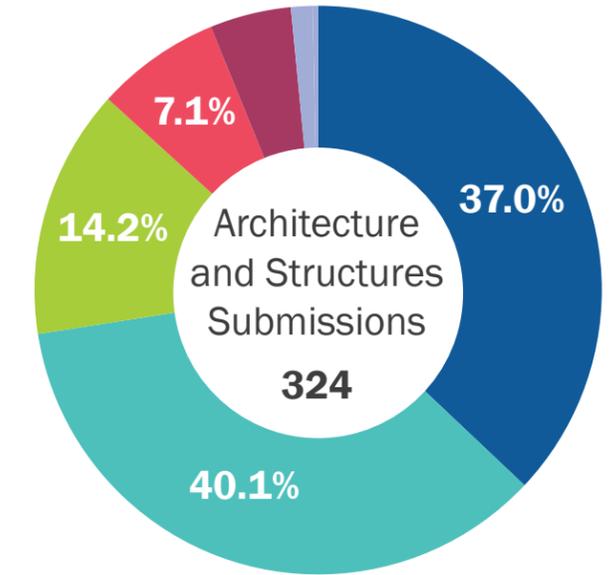
Replacement of an existing structure with a new one of the same function

Renovation

Significant changes to an existing structure

Restoration

Bringing a structure back to its condition at a specific period in time using the same construction materials and methods as the original



- Constructions 37.0% [120]
- Building Modifications, Minor Structures, Installs 40.1% [130]
- Rehabilitations 14.2% [46]
- Reconstructions 7.1% [23]
- Renovations 1.2% [4]
- Restorations 0.3% [1]

NOTE: All numbers have been rounded to the nearest tenth of a percent.

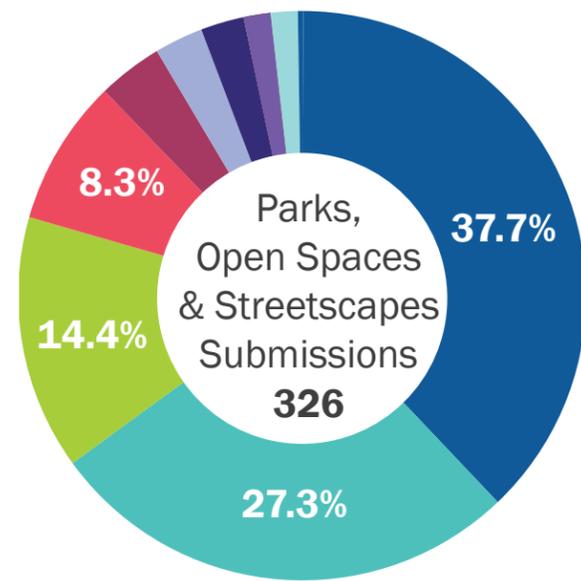
Comfort Station Submissions

The pandemic underscored the importance of having publicly accessible handwashing and restroom facilities in our public realm. In 2020, PDC reviewed **42 comfort station submissions**, including submissions for 25 new constructions, 3 modular installations, and 14 rehabilitations.



Parks, Open Spaces, and Streetscapes

Landscape projects range in scale from master plans for large-scale open spaces and streetscapes to the installation of specific site furnishings, such as benches or newsstands. The most common type of landscape architecture submission is the reconstruction of parks, including playgrounds and athletic fields. Projects may also include parking lots, dog runs, path reconstructions, streetscapes, planter installations, esplanades, flood mitigation measures, and shoreline stabilizations.



■ Reconstructions	37.7% [123]
■ Constructions	27.3% [89]
■ Minor installations	14.4% [47]
■ Street Furniture	8.3% [27]
■ Master Plans	3.7% [12]
■ Newsstands	2.8% [9]
■ Distinctive Sidewalks*	2.8% [9]
■ Distinctive Lighting	1.5% [5]
■ Rehabilitations	1.5% [5]

NOTE: All numbers have been rounded to the nearest tenth of a percent.

*: One submission involved the replacement of an existing distinctive sidewalk with standard paving

Minor Installation

The addition of specific elements, such as artificial turf, tennis bubbles, or adult fitness equipment

Street Furniture

Amenities installed on a sidewalk

Master plan

A framework for a large site that often includes landscape as well as structures

Newsstand

Prototypical street furniture approved for sidewalk vending

Distinctive Sidewalk

Non-standard sidewalk treatments, materials, scoring patterns, or tints

Distinctive Lighting

Light fixtures distinct from the typical poles for a neighborhood

Rehabilitation

An upgrade for the purpose of making an open space functional today, such as improvements to pathways, and site furnishings

Reconstruction

Replacement of an existing park, plaza, or streetscape with a new one

Construction

An entirely new park, plaza, or streetscape

Artworks

Artwork projects include the installation of new artworks as well as the conservation, relocation, and removal of existing artworks. Artworks may be installed within buildings, on the facades of buildings or structures, or outside in public plazas or parks. Artworks may include but are not limited to sculptures, bas reliefs, engravings, paintings, mosaics, photographs, and electronic media.

The City typically commissions artworks for City-owned property through the Department of Cultural Affairs' Percent for Art Program. The sponsoring City agency and the Percent for Art Program are jointly responsible for the selection of the artist and the development of the work of art. A member of the Public Design Commission serves as an advisor on the Percent for Art artist selection panel. Once the proposal is approved by both the sponsoring agency and the Percent for Art Program, it is submitted to the Commission for review.

For projects that are not going through Percent for Art, the PDC requests that applicants follow the Percent for Art process, where a panel including art professionals selects the artist.

Installation

Commissioning of a new artwork for a site, usually through the Percent for Art program

Conservation

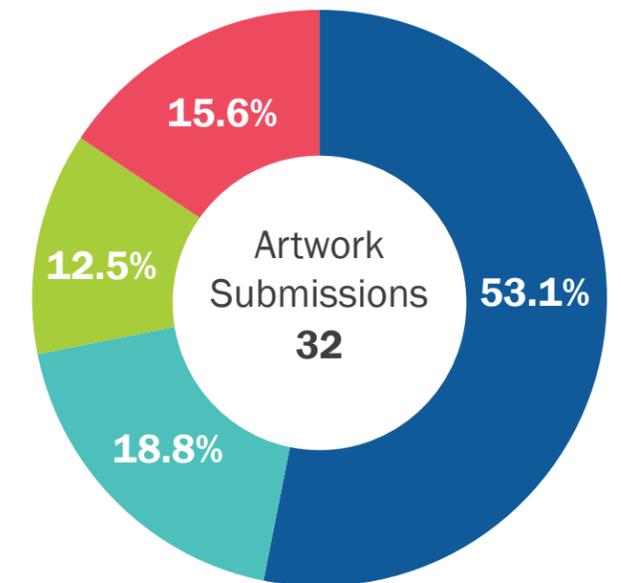
The treatment by a conservator to preserve an artwork, including but not limited to cleaning, recreation of missing elements, crack repairs, stabilization, repainting and repatination

Relocation

The moving of an artwork from one site to another site

Restoration

Treatment procedures intended to return an artwork to its known or assumed original state



■ Installations	53.1% [17]
■ Conservations	18.8% [6]
■ Restorations	12.5% [4]
■ Other*	15.6% [5]

NOTE: All numbers have been rounded to the nearest tenth of a percent.

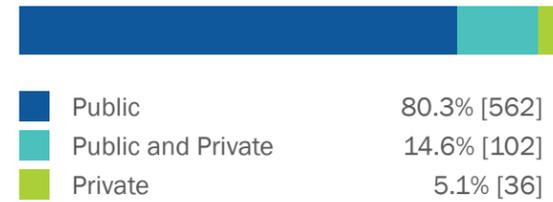
* Other submissions include the temporary loan of *Oliver Hazard Perry* (1816) to Peabody Essex Museum and Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, the relocation of *Charging Bull* by Arturo Di Modica, and the demolition of *Design Team Project* (1994) by Scott Burton, as part of the reconstruction of the Sheepshead Bay Piers.

Private Structures on or over City-owned Land

The PDC reviews privately-owned and/or operated structures and installations sited on or over City-owned land. Examples may include a concessionaire such as a restaurant or a recreation facility within a park, a mixed-use development on leased City-owned land, a newsstand, a distinctive sidewalk, or a stoop that extends onto the public right-of-way.



1. East River Science Park tower and site work, Manhattan
 Economic Development Corporation
 OMA, West 8 Urban Design, Strook, Alexandria Real Estate
2. McCarren Park House cafe addition, Brooklyn
 Department of Parks & Recreation
 KTISMA Studio



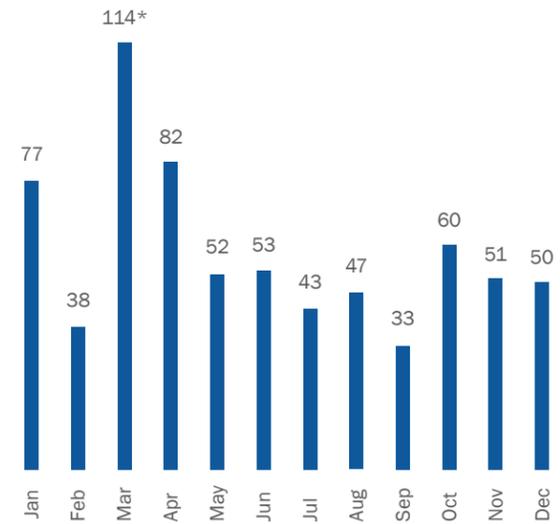
In 2020, the PDC reviewed 17 submissions for private structures or installations on or over City-owned property.

Carry-over Projects

The PDC works year-round and typically the submission deadline for the January meeting is in December, so this one-month review cycle extends into the following year. In late March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic led to a New York State mandate that paused nonessential work. This resulted in a significant reduction in submissions for the remainder of the year.

In 2019, 77 submissions were submitted in December for the January 2020 meeting. All of these submissions were either commented upon or approved in January 2020.

In 2020, 50 submissions were submitted in December and were then reviewed in January 2021.



2020 Submissions by Month

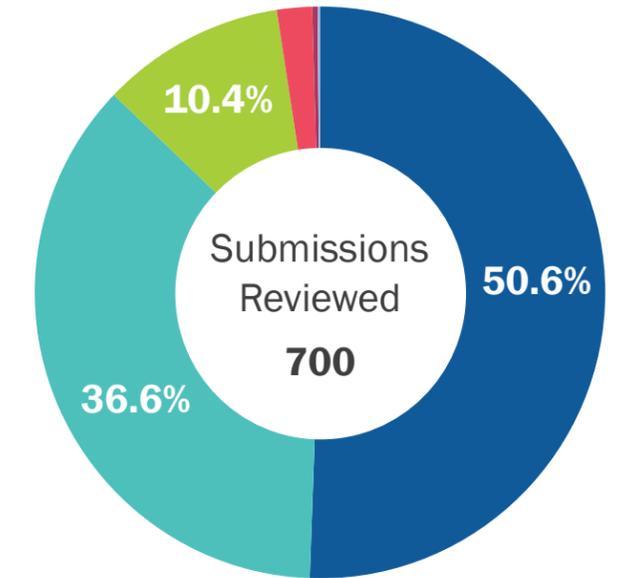
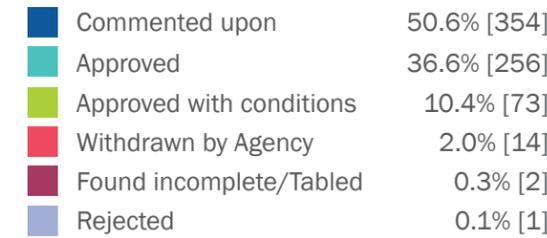
* The number of submissions reviewed in March 2020 were higher than usual because 33 submissions were deferred from the February 2020 meeting due to a lack of quorum.

Number of Submissions Acted or Commented Upon

Design review is an iterative process and the PDC works to provide applicants with feedback and guidance so that their submissions can be approved in the shortest number of review cycles. Even if a submission is not formally acted upon by the Commission within a cycle, the PDC typically provides feedback that will help the agencies revise their proposal so that it may be approved the following month. Submissions that were commented upon but not acted upon may have been submitted for conceptual or informal review and include final sign-off and amendments to approved designs.

The term "acted upon" means an action was made by the Commission on a submission in the form of an approval, approval with conditions, or a rejection.

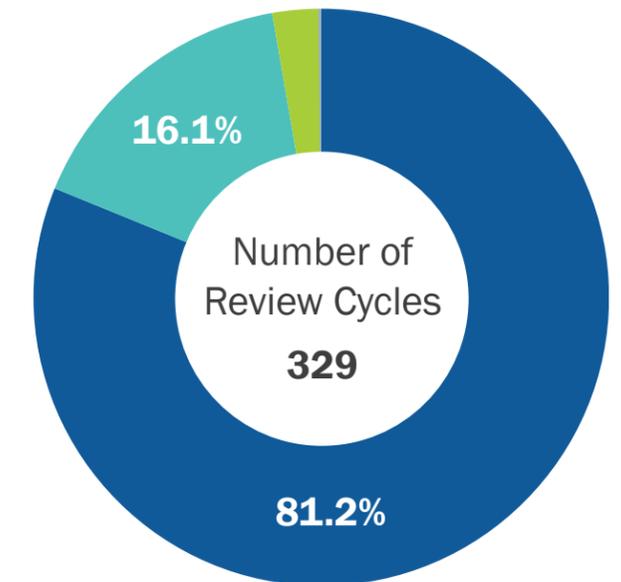
The term "commented upon" means written comments were provided to the sponsoring agency by the Commission, a special committee within the Commission, or the Executive Director as designated by the Commission.



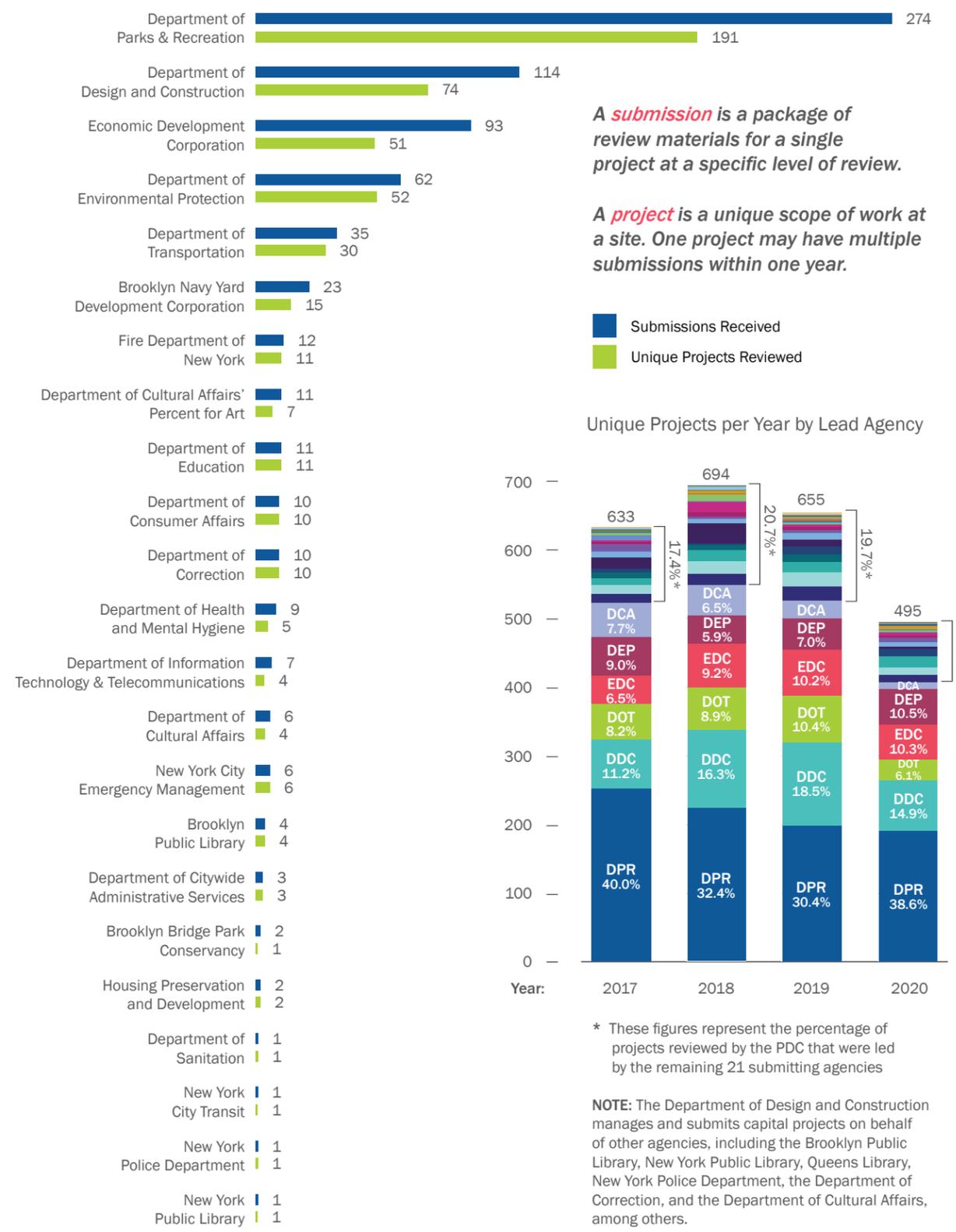
Review Cycles

The PDC reviewed 97.3% of the 329 acted upon projects in two or fewer cycles.

The term "review cycle" means the time between the deadline for the filing of a submission to the Commission and the scheduled date of the next public meeting of the Commission.



2020 Submissions and Projects by Lead Agency

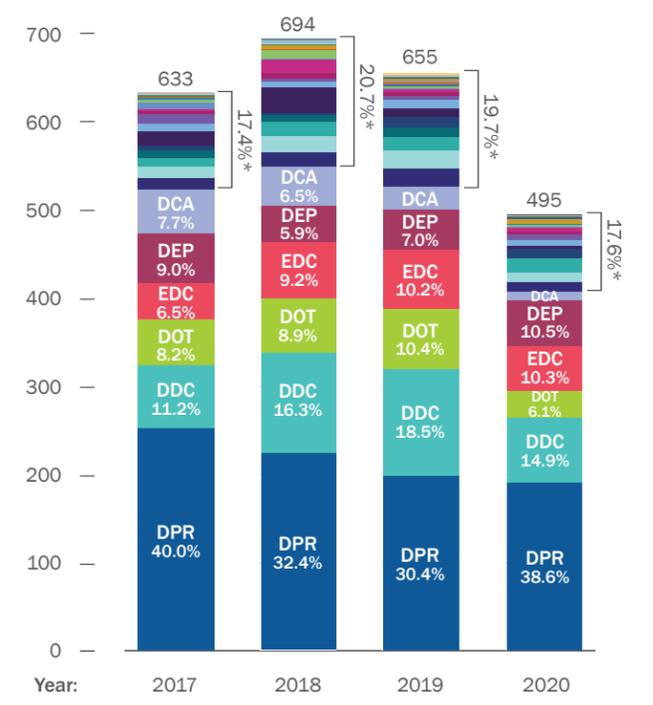


A **submission** is a package of review materials for a single project at a specific level of review.

A **project** is a unique scope of work at a site. One project may have multiple submissions within one year.

■ Submissions Received
■ Unique Projects Reviewed

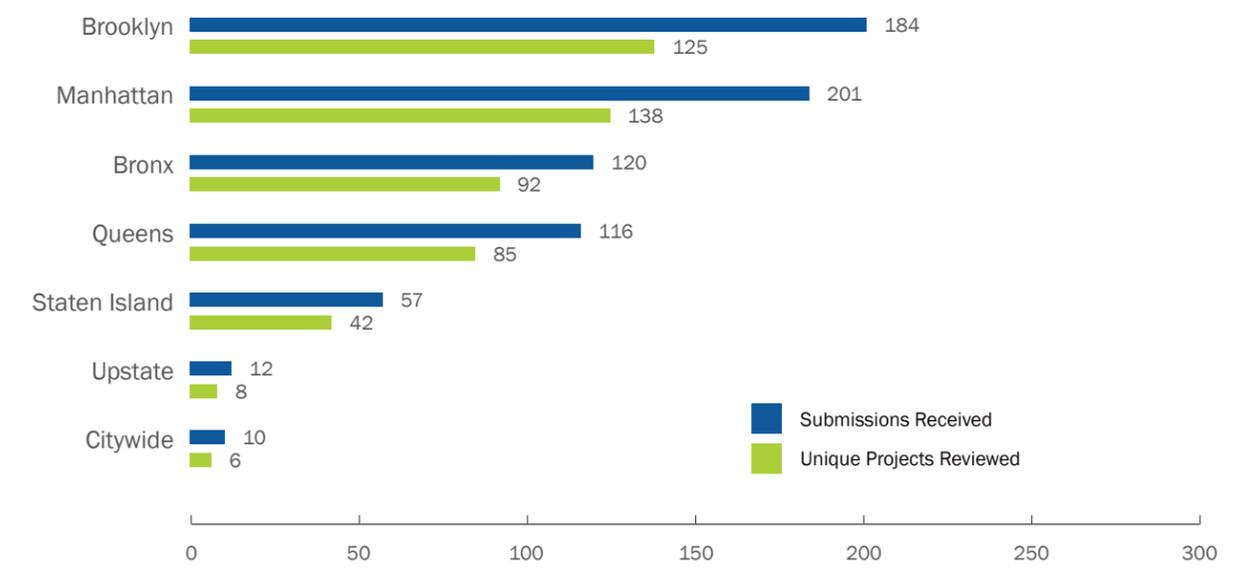
Unique Projects per Year by Lead Agency



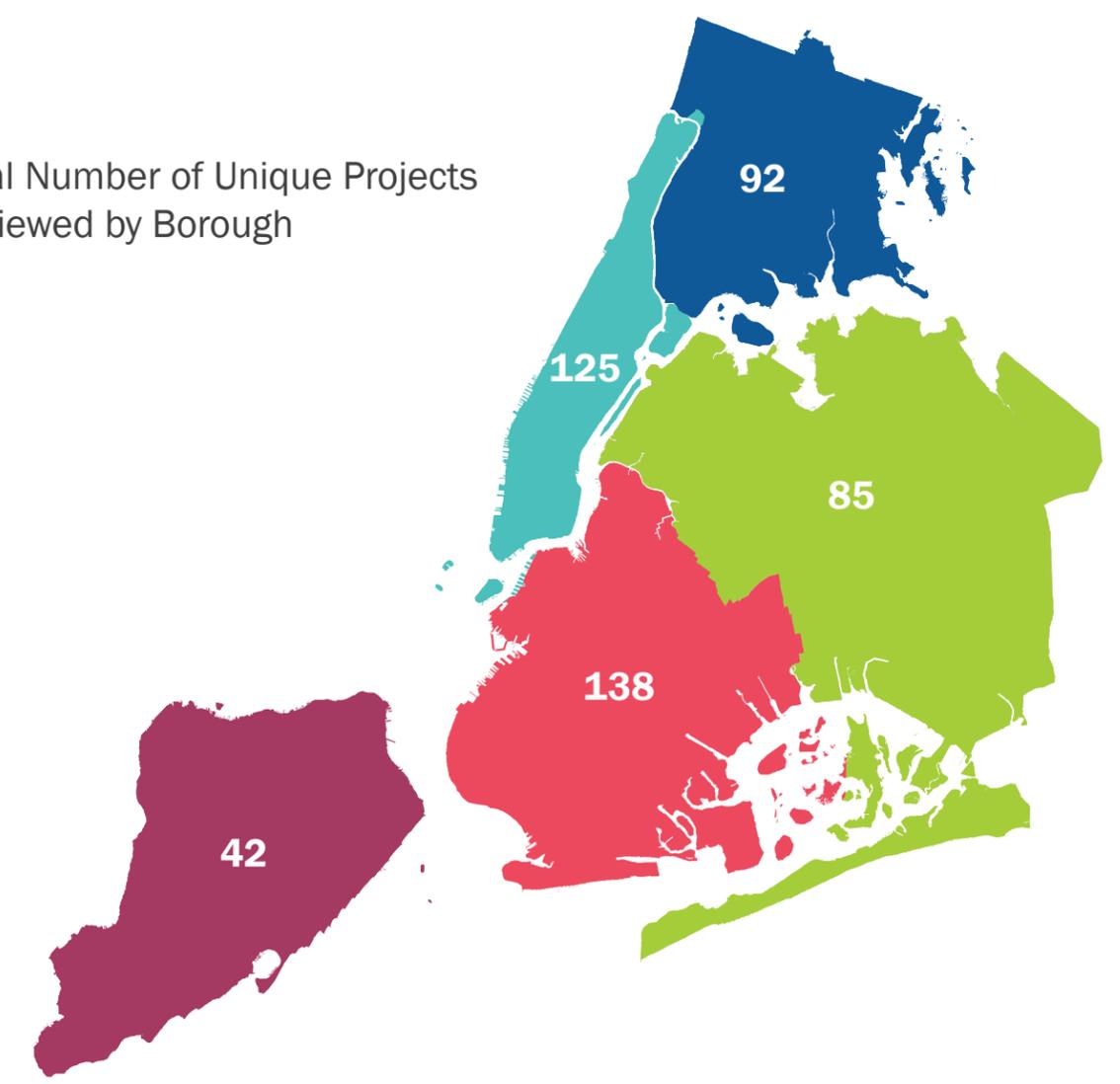
* These figures represent the percentage of projects reviewed by the PDC that were led by the remaining 21 submitting agencies

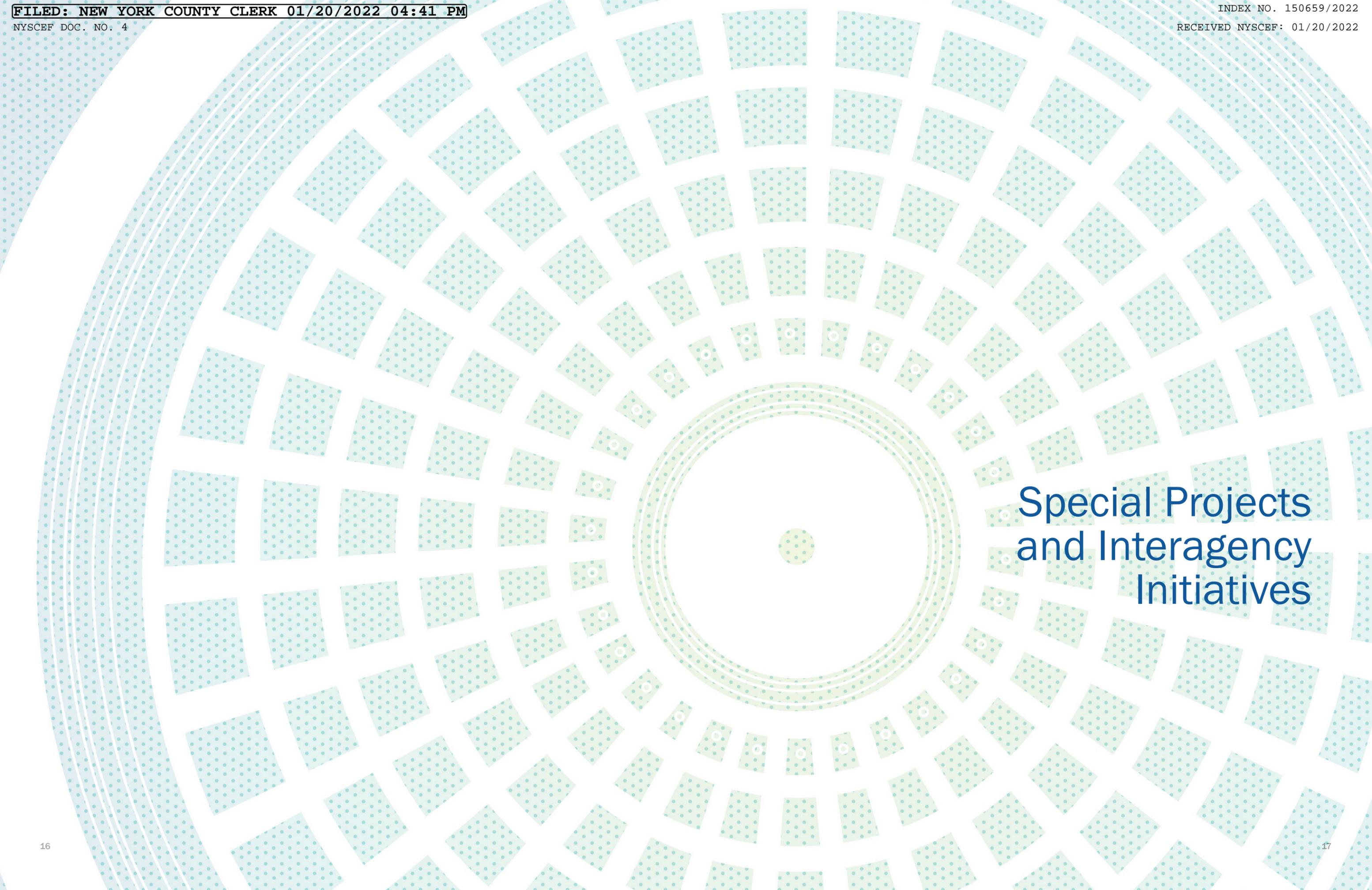
NOTE: The Department of Design and Construction manages and submits capital projects on behalf of other agencies, including the Brooklyn Public Library, New York Public Library, Queens Library, New York Police Department, the Department of Correction, and the Department of Cultural Affairs, among others.

2020 Submissions and Projects by Borough



Total Number of Unique Projects Reviewed by Borough





Special Projects and Interagency Initiatives

Annual Awards for Excellence in Design

Since 1983, the Public Design Commission has celebrated exemplary public projects with its Annual Awards for Excellence in Design. The winning projects are selected by the Commission from the hundreds of submissions reviewed the previous year and exemplify how innovative and thoughtful design can enhance the public realm, serve communities, inspire neighborhood pride, and provide durable and resilient spaces for New Yorkers.

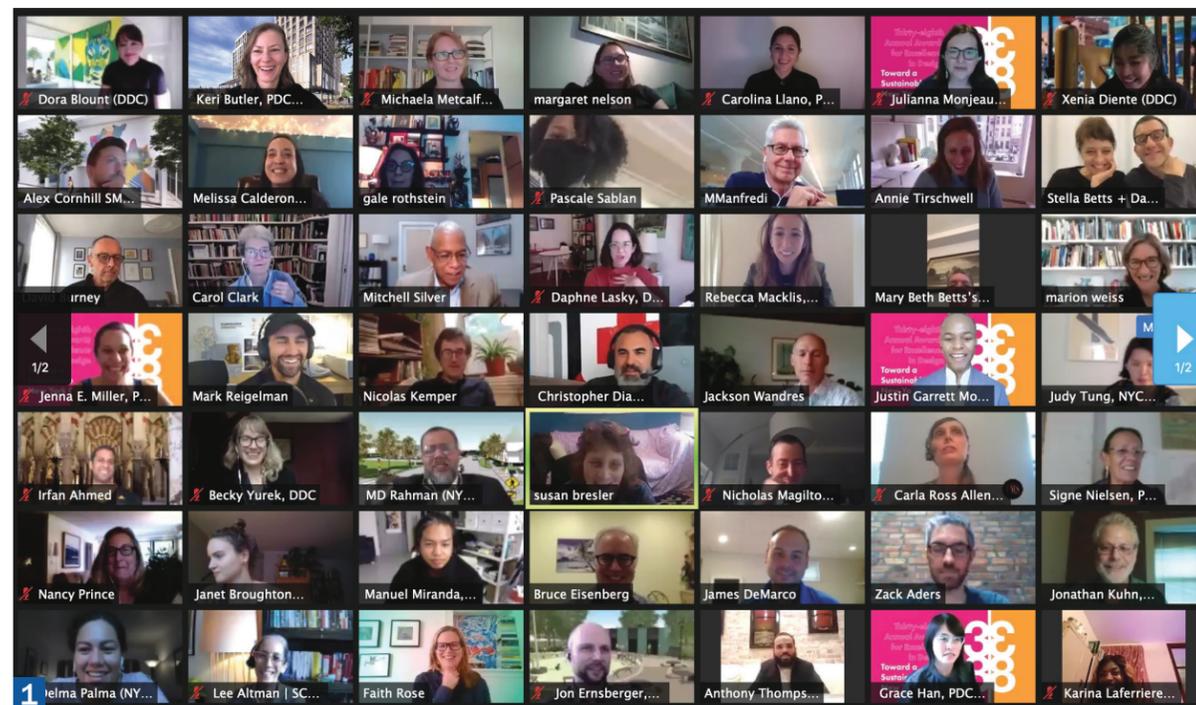
Typically, the Design Awards are held in a newly constructed or renovated building that typifies high standards of design. However, as the COVID-19 pandemic ravaged New York City, the 38th annual event was restructured to a virtual celebration, hosted on October 28, 2020. Awards were given to nine projects including a large mixed-use development, infrastructure, libraries and artworks, and parks, as well as two special recognition awards.

The virtual program included interactive polls, videos of award-winning projects, and conversations with commissioners from several City agencies. Commissioner Mitchell Silver from NYC Parks reflected on how parks have been essential spaces for people to safely gather during the pandemic. Commissioner Polly Trottenberg of the Department of Transportation highlighted how the Open Streets initiative,

launched in 2020, provided additional public outdoor spaces for recreation. Commissioner Lorraine Grillo from the Department of Design and Construction shed light on DDC's efforts to design and build critical health projects to fight the pandemic; and Commissioner Vincent Sapienza shared insight into how the Department of Environmental Protection is utilizing wastewater to trace the virus.

At the end of the event, attendees were able to connect via video and chat for casual conversations. Although physically separated, the 38th Annual Awards for Excellence in Design was a testament to the strength and resilience of the public design community.

1. PDC Commissioners, Staff, and guests connect virtually at the end of the Design Awards event.
2. The Third Street Men's Shelter Garden and Greenhouse provides equitable access to healthy food and career training and was highlighted for its contributions to a sustainable NYC.
3. *Waterfront Nature Walk* by George Trakas transformed an industrial shoreline into an inspirational artwork that highlights the natural and industrial history of the area.
4. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the global blueprint adopted by all countries of the United Nations to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all.



Toward a Sustainable NYC

As part of the 38th Annual Awards for Excellence in Design, the PDC highlighted 16 award-winning projects from the previous five years that contribute to the strategic plan of New York City's OneNYC 2050 and the global Sustainable Development Goals that were developed by the United Nations.

"The pandemic and Black Lives Matter protests bring broader awareness and acknowledgment that longstanding social and environmental justice issues, including the design of the built environment, affect us all. We need to do more and better for our people, places, and the planet, whether that is creating moments of beauty, healing, and joy through public art and landscapes or designing for better housing and clean water. The projects highlighted this year show that our City agencies and a diverse group of designers, artists, builders, and stakeholders are working creatively and innovatively to make our city better."

— Justin Garrett Moore, Former Executive Director, NYC Public Design Commission



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Annual Awards for Excellence in Design

2020 Award-Winning Projects

The following nine projects were recognized with awards in 2020 and exemplify best practices in public design. These projects range in size from large scale mixed-use developments to prototypical bioswales, and incorporate green infrastructure, waterfront resiliency, accessibility, innovative materials, creative planning, and sustainability. Two additional projects were given special recognition for their dedication to equity, sustainability, and quality design.

Eastern Parkway Branch Library Addition

1044 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn

Department of Design and Construction, Brooklyn Public Library, Allied Works Architecture, Starr Whitehouse



1

Monsignor Kett Playground Reconstruction

West 204th Street between Nagle Avenue and Tenth Avenue, Manhattan

Department of Parks & Recreation, DPR In-house



2

Para Roberto by Melissa Calderon

Roberto Clemente Plaza, Third Avenue, East 147th Street, East 149th Street, and Willis Avenue, Bronx

Department of Cultural Affairs' Percent for Art Program, Department of Design and Construction, Department of Transportation, Third Avenue BID, Melissa Calderon, Garrison Architects



3

Red Hook Library Renovation

7 Wolcott Street, Brooklyn

Economic Development Corporation, Brooklyn Public Library, LevenBetts, SCAPE



4



5

Primary Settling Tanks Pre-houses Rehabilitation

3rd Drive between B Road and H Road, Wards Island Wastewater Resource Recovery Facility, Wards Island

Department of Environmental Protection, DEP In-house, CDM Smith



6

Michaelis-Bayswater Park Reconstruction

Bay 32nd Street, Beach Channel Drive, Beach 38th Street, and Norton Avenue, Far Rockaway, Queens

Department of Parks & Recreation, NV5



7

Curiouser by Mark Reigelman

Charleston Branch Library, Tyrellan Avenue and Bricktown Way, Staten Island

Department of Cultural Affairs' Percent for Art Program, Economic Development Corporation, New York Public Library, Mark Reigelman II, ikon.5 architects



8

Bronx Point Mixed-use Development

575 Exterior Street, Bronx

Economic Development Corporation, Department of Parks & Recreation, L+M Development Partners, TypeA Projects, S9 Architecture, Marvel Architects, Abel Bainnson Butz



9

Colorful Companions by Olalekan Jeyifous

Brooklyn Animal Care Center, 832 Shepherd Avenue, Brooklyn

Department of Cultural Affairs' Percent for Art Program, Department of Design and Construction, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Animal Care Centers of NYC, Olalekan Jeyifous, Smith-Miller + Hawkinson Architects

Annual Awards for Excellence in Design

2020 Special Recognition Projects



The Department of Cultural Affairs' Percent for Art Program

Established in 1982, the Percent for Art Program has commissioned more than 400 artworks that enhance civic spaces throughout the five boroughs of New York City, with a focus on serving underrepresented communities and under-resourced and growing neighborhoods. Guided by the principles of the OneNYC strategy to build a strong and fair city, the Percent for Art Program utilizes a fair and equitable artist selection process that reflects the diversity of New York City. The process is collaborative and iterative, resulting in artworks that have been created in a variety of materials, including mosaic, glass, textiles, and bronze. All of the installations are site specific, with some works completely integrated into infrastructure or architecture. By bringing artists into the design process through this program, the City's civic and community buildings are enriched beyond measure. Located in accessible venues outside of the traditional museum or gallery settings, Percent for Art installations serve as expressions of their communities and inspiration to all New Yorkers.



Hunter's Point South Waterfront Park & Streetscape
Long Island City, Queens

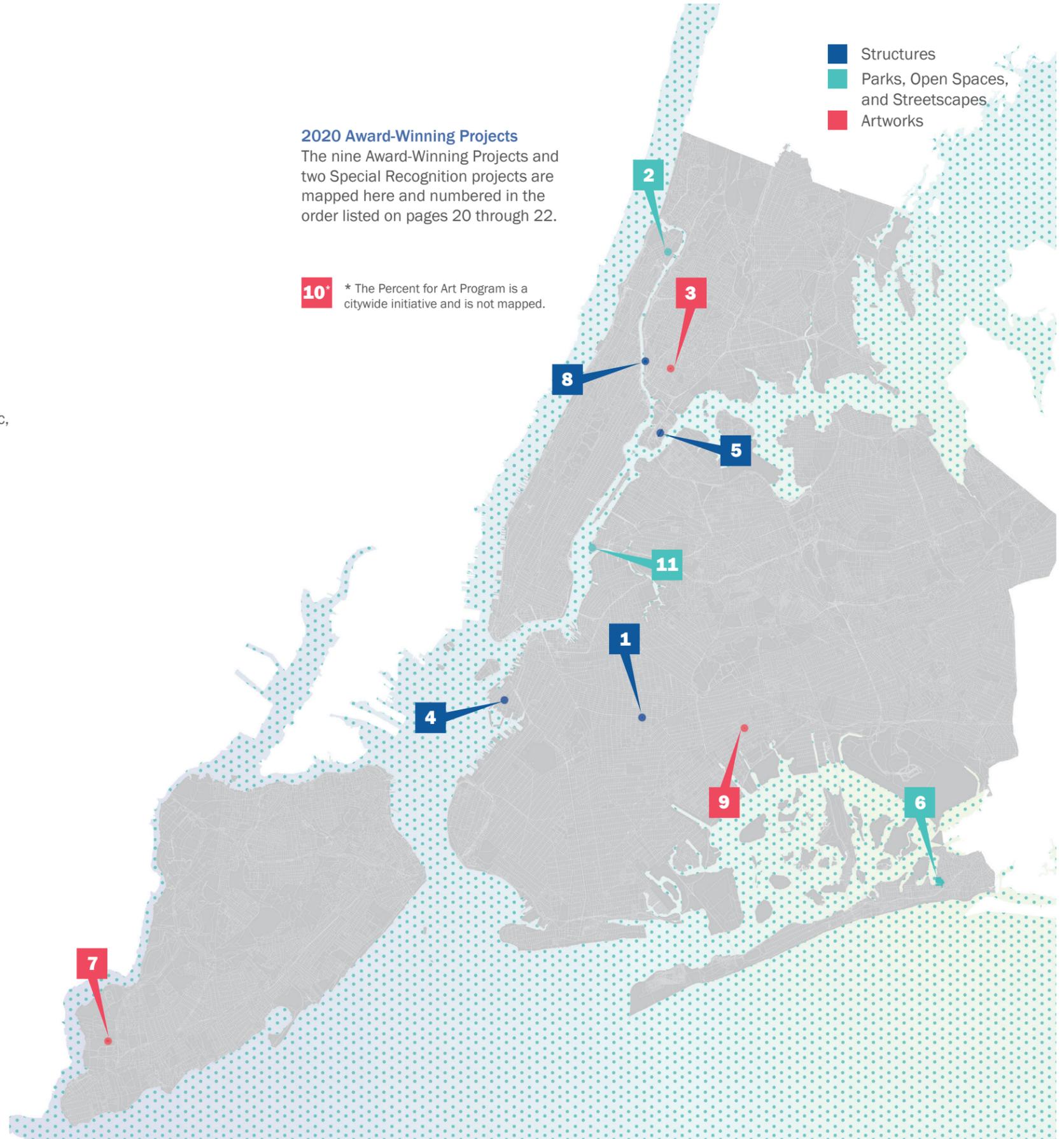
Economic Development Corporation, Department of Transportation, Department of Parks & Recreation, SWA/Balsley, Weiss/Manfredi, ARUP

Transforming a former industrial site along the Long Island City waterfront, this ambitious development has become a model of urban ecology and a laboratory for innovative sustainable design. Created using infill from the site, the landscaped forms provide storm buffers and stifle street noises. The water's edge was returned to a natural wetland habitat with salt marsh plants that also clean the river, and the adjacent streetscapes were improved with new infrastructure and plantings. Active recreation spaces, pedestrian and bike paths, public artwork, and shaded areas for respite provide a community anchor to serve the adjacent largely affordable residential buildings and school with critical open space and unrivaled views of the Manhattan skyline and East River.



2020 Award-Winning Projects
The nine Award-Winning Projects and two Special Recognition projects are mapped here and numbered in the order listed on pages 20 through 22.

10* * The Percent for Art Program is a citywide initiative and is not mapped.



City Hall Tour Program



Since it was founded as the Art Commission by the 1898 City Charter, the Public Design Commission has been located within City Hall and has exercised curatorial advisory supervision over all works of art belonging to the City of New York. With its unique position and mandate, the Commission closely manages City Hall's collection of artworks, antiques, and decorative objects. The Commission also organizes regular tours to highlight the building's architectural history, function, and unique historic collection.

In March 2020, the City Hall tours were put on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to the pandemic shutdown, PDC's volunteer docents led tours for **647 visitors**. The final tour of the year occurred on March 12th.

To allow for virtual tours, the PDC website features an online exhibit highlighting the history of City Hall's spaces, including the landmarked rotunda, City Council Chamber, and Governor's Room, a reception room that houses part of the City Hall Portrait Collection and historic furnishings.

- 1. A tour group explores the City Hall Rotunda.
- 2. A photograph by Glenn Castellano from the PDC's online exhibit of City Hall spaces. This shows the City Council Chamber following its 2012 restoration.



Epicenter: The Black Experience through the Eyes of City Hall

The PDC first presented *Epicenter: The Black Experience through the Eyes of City Hall*, an interactive tour developed by Black Gotham Experience, during Black History Month of 2018. The tour unveils the lives of enslaved and freed Black people under Dutch and British rule, the early days of the Republic, the rebellions of 1712 and 1741, and the hidden stories of revolutionary New York.

During the pandemic, PDC staff continued the collaboration with Black Gotham Experience and began developing a series of forthcoming short films, which will continue the goals of the *Epicenter* tours and explore the African Diaspora's impact on City Hall and lower Manhattan from the 1600s through the early 1800s.

Started by Kamau Ware in 2008, Black Gotham Experience has been giving walking tours of lower Manhattan since 2010, combining history and visual storytelling to celebrate the impact of the African Diaspora on New York City.



- 3. Kamau Ware of Black Gotham Experience plans a shot for one of the forthcoming films
- 4. Black Gotham Experience meets with PDC staff member, Carolina Llano, in the City Hall Governor's Room during a film planning meeting



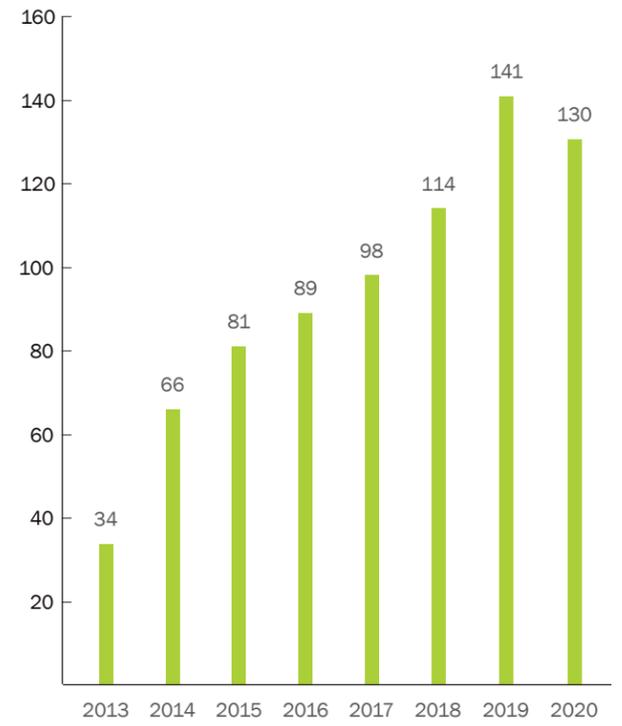
The Archive

The Public Design Commission maintains an archive of projects reviewed by the Commission since 1902, documenting more than 7,000 sites throughout New York City and providing a unique view into the history of the City's public works. Containing original documents, drawings, and architectural plans, the Archive informs the Commission's review of current projects and provides a valuable resource to other City agencies as well as to researchers from around the world.

In 2020, the archive facilitated 130 research requests.

In addition, the Archive holds special collections that were acquired by Commission members and staff. These photographs, postcards, letters, books, and artifacts provide additional insight into the history of the public spaces and buildings of New York City.

In 2020, the PDC was unable to facilitate its usual in-person tours of the Archive due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We look forward to continuing to provide monthly tours of our historical records as soon as it is safe to do so.



Research Requests by Year

Open Data

NYC Open Data is an online portal that makes the public data generated by various New York City agencies and other City organizations available for public use. As part of the initiative to improve the accessibility, transparency, and accountability of City government, NYC Open Data offers access to a repository of government-produced, searchable data sets available for download. The PDC submits a list of projects that were reviewed by the Commission on a monthly basis (PDC Monthly Design Review), as well as a list of projects that were submitted to and reviewed by the Commission on an annual basis (PDC Annual Report).

1. "Mother Goose Rhymes" (1938) by Selma Da, photograph by FAP/WPA Photographic Division, for the Children's Medical War in Harlem Hospital, Manhattan; Approved March 8, 1938.



1

Urban Archive

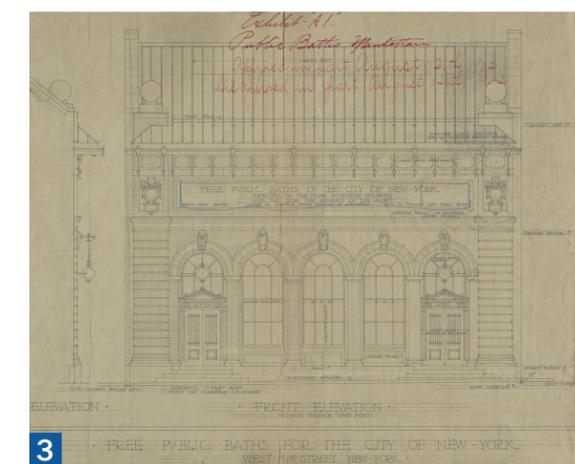
To provide more public access to PDC's archival records while in-person City Hall and Archive tours were on hold during the pandemic, PDC staff aimed to make its work more publicly accessible. PDC staff teamed up with Urban Archive, a Webby Award winning technology non-profit that promotes digital storytelling connecting maps and historical records and photographs. In 2020, PDC staff published eight story maps on the Urban Archive platform.

As of March 2021, these PDC stories and images have gathered over 65,000 total views.

2. "Circus" (1936) by Anton Refregier for the Children's Medical Ward, Greenpoint Hospital, Brooklyn; Approved February 11, 1936. This is an example of a Works Progress Administration Federal Art Project, many of which were installed within public health and hospital facilities.
3. West 41st Street Public Baths, Manhattan, designed by architect York & Sawyer; Approved October 14, 1902. This is an example of one of the early bathhouses approved by the Commission following the New York State Senate's 1895 requirement for cities with greater than 50,000 residents to establish free bathing facilities for public health reasons.
4. Urban Archive's website features a searchable map and collection of archival content contributed by the PDC.



2



3

COLLECTION
NYC Public Design Commission

The Public Design Commission is New York City's design review agency, with jurisdiction over permanent structures, parks, and open spaces, streetscapes, signage, and art proposed on or over City-owned property.

The Commission is an advocate for excellence and innovation in the public realm, ensuring the viability and quality of public programs and services throughout the city for years to come.

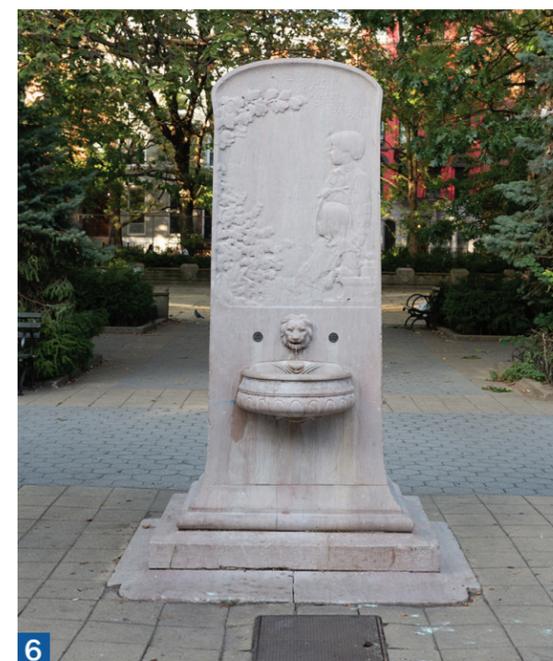
All Content

- WPA Hospital Murals: Roosevelt Island (Feb 24, 2021)
- WPA Hospital Murals: Brooklyn, Queens, and the Bronx (Dec 8, 2020)
- WPA Hospital Murals: Manhattan Hospitals (Dec 8, 2020)
- WPA Hospital Murals: Harlem Hospital (Dec 8, 2020)
- Hospital for Chronic Diseases, Welfare Island (Nov 30, 2020)

URBAN ARCHIVE

4

The City's Outdoor Public Art Database



The Public Design Commission has general and curatorial supervision over works of art belonging to the City and its approval is required for any permanent installation of artwork on City-owned property as well as any relocation, conservation, or removal of City-owned artworks. The collection dates back to the early 1800s and is installed throughout the city's five boroughs in outdoor spaces, such as parks and plazas, as well as on or inside public buildings such as libraries, courthouses, and fire departments.

Since 1982, New York City's Percent for Art law has required that one percent of the budget for eligible City-funded construction projects be spent on public art. Managed by the City's Department of Cultural Affairs, the Percent for Art program has commissioned hundreds of site-specific projects in a variety of media, including painting, new technologies, lighting, mosaic, glass, textiles, sculpture, and works that are integrated into infrastructure and architecture.

In 2018, in response to the report from the Mayoral Advisory Commission on City Art, Monuments, and Markers, the PDC staff began the first phase of a public art inventory, creating a database and hiring professional photographers, Natalie Conn and Glenn

Castellano, to document the artworks, beginning with Manhattan and Staten Island. PDC staff have continued to compile and review the data on these artworks for accuracy.

In 2020, PDC staff completed the review of the data and published it in the NYC Open Data portal, where it is publicly accessible and searchable. The data set includes geodata on the locations of these artworks, artist information, artwork typology, material, and subject matter, as well as PDC approval, creation, and dedication dates.

The PDC would like to thank the Department of Cultural Affairs and the Associates of the Art Commission for their generous support of the public art database project.

1. *A Bird Named Goldilocks* (1995) by Ann Marie McDonnell; Clove Lakes Park, Staten Island; Photograph by Glenn Castellano
2. *Arthur Brisbane Monument* (1939) by Richmond Barthe; Central Park, Manhattan; Photograph by Natalie Conn
3. *William Tecumseh Sherman* (1902) by Augustus Saint-Gaudens and Charles F. McKim; Central Park, Manhattan; Photograph by Natalie Conn

4. *Columnade* (1973) by Eduardo Ramirez Villamizar; Fort Tryon Park, Manhattan; Photograph by Natalie Conn
5. *Night Presence IV* (1972) by Louise Nevelson; Park Avenue Malls, Manhattan; Photograph by Natalie Conn
6. *Slocum Disaster Memorial* (1906) by Bruno Louis Zimm; Tompkins Square Park, Manhattan; Photograph by Natalie Conn
7. *Ralph Ellison Memorial* (2002) by Elizabeth Catlett; Riverside Park, Manhattan; Photograph by Natalie Conn

Streetscapes for Wellness

Designing New York: Streetscapes for Wellness is a research initiative and forthcoming publication that is a collaboration of the New York City Public Design Commission, The Fine Arts Federation of New York (FAF), the New York Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA-NY), the Department of City Planning Urban Design Office, and a larger interagency steering committee of key City agency partners involved in the design and health of the city, including representatives from the Department of Transportation, Department of Parks & Recreation, and the Department of Health & Mental Hygiene, among others.

Streetscapes have long helped define the public life of New York City, a crossroads of culture and commerce where the city comes together. Yet amid the COVID-19 global pandemic, our streets, sidewalks, and adjacent public spaces have become critical to the promotion of physical and mental health, social cohesion, and community resilience. To address the need for outdoor recreation, the de Blasio Administration acted by implementing the Open Streets and Open Restaurants programs, which prioritize pedestrians and cyclists over vehicular use and have allowed community members and small businesses to transform their streets into spaces for a surge of new uses—from outdoor dining and shopping to yoga, dancing, and more. This

spurred fresh thinking about how sidewalks and roadways can advance community wellness while enhancing mobility, social infrastructure, and environmental health.

Focusing on the urban response to holistic wellness and public health since the beginning of the pandemic, as well as to growing security concerns and rapidly-shifting technologies within the public realm, PDC staff hosted visioning sessions with its partner organizations and led interagency urban design working group meetings to brainstorm guiding principles and strategies for achieving quality planning, design, and maintenance processes.

By drawing inspiration and lessons from case studies at a range of scales and addressing public health inequities as well as issues of social, racial, and climate justice that were brought to the fore in the public consciousness, the forthcoming publication aims to inspire the future, equitable design of our public spaces.

1. Live-capture drawing by Zara Fina Stasi of NYC-based creative studio Good for the Bees was created during the December 2020 *Streetscapes for Wellness* event.



Fine Arts Federation Annual Meeting

The *Streetscapes for Wellness* project was publicly launched with a panel discussion at the Fine Arts Federation's annual meeting in December. Panelists included PDC Commissioner Deborah Marton, Erick Gregory of the NYC Department of City Planning, Joshua Langham of the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's Active Design Program, Delma Palma of the New York City Housing Authority, and Karen A. Phillips, an established Landscape Architect and community advocate.

The cross-disciplinary conversation, moderated by FAF President, Jeff Byles, explored how creative new uses of streets and public spaces can shape a more livable and equitable New York City. PDC staff led interactive engagement

activities throughout the event, and artist Zara Fina Stasi of NYC-based creative studio Good for the Bees visually captured the event in a live drawing that highlighted themes of community partnerships, active design, equity, transparency and trust—themes which have carried through the ongoing research and will inform the forthcoming publication.

2. PDC staff and Commissioner Deborah Marton virtually join FAF President Jeff Byles and other event panelists for the *Streetscapes for Wellness* public launch event.
3. An excerpt from the *Streetscapes for Wellness* presentation shows the impromptu community use of a NYC Open Street during the COVID-19 pandemic.
4. PDC staff led various interactive engagement activities throughout the event, encouraging attendees to respond to live polls about their public realm.

WE Walk: Streets for Connection

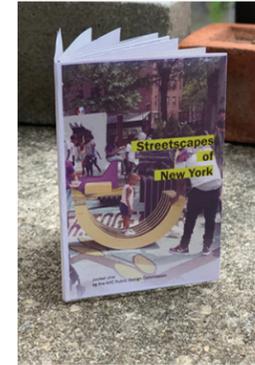


In September 2020, PDC staff were invited by the New York Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA-NY) to participate in WE Walk: Streets for Connection, an Open Streets activation organized at West End Avenue in Manhattan.

PARK(ing) Day is an annual international event where residents, artists and activists collaborate to temporarily transform curbside parking spots into public spaces. Activations often take the form of creating temporary parklets for community use and providing opportunities for art and civic engagement. The mission of these happenings is to call attention to the importance

of urban open space and generate a dialogue about the benefits of public green space to elevate the health and quality of urban life for the surrounding neighborhood.

With the participation of a number of other local organizations, including the Student Chapter of City College of New York, the American Planning Association New York Metro chapter (APA-NYM), Time Lapse Dance, Streetopia, Community Board 7, MET Orchestra, and several other organizations, the activation of the existing Open Street created a pop-up linear park that included socially-distanced performance art, painting activities, voter registration, and live



music. WE Walk celebrated equitable, inclusive public streetscapes and provided a space for connection during a year that had made such interactions difficult.

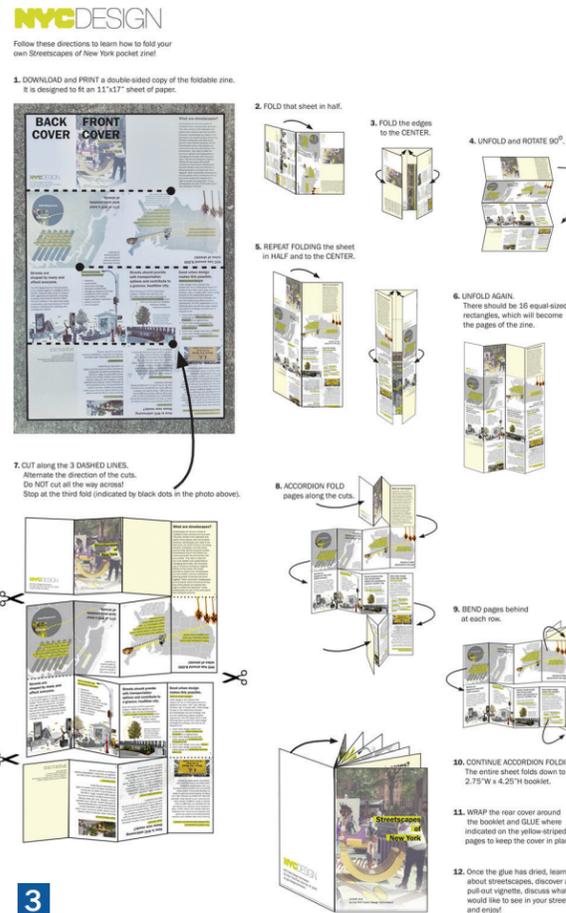
Streetscapes of New York A Pocket Zine



PDC staff teamed up with staff from the NYC Department of City Planning Urban Design Office to plan and implement community engagement activities about streetscapes and principles of good urban design. As part of this effort, PDC staff published an educational pocket-sized zine, *Streetscapes of New York*, filled with graphic illustrations and fun facts about NYC's streets. The tiny publication is folded from a single sheet of paper and opens to reveal fold-out engagement activities about changes to the space of the street since the pandemic began.

By sharing fun facts about NYC's streets and proposing that streets should contribute to a greener, healthier city, PDC and DCP staff were able to engage community members in fruitful conversations about lessons that the pandemic had revealed and discuss ideas for the future of their streets beyond the pandemic.

The pocket zine and folding instructions are available for free public download under the Resources tab on the PDC's website.



1. PDC and DCP Urban Design staff host community engagement activities for people of all ages at WE Walk: Streets for Connection on West End Avenue; pictured here are Jenna E. Miller and Julien Sneek.
2. PDC staff self-published an illustrated pocket-sized zine, *Streetscapes of New York*, to facilitate community conversations about the space of the street.
3. A downloadable folding diagram is available on the PDC website to teach people how to fold their own printable copy of the *Streetscapes of New York* publication.

Quality Affordable Housing



Innovative Housing

In June 2020, the Public Design Commission partnered with the AIANY Housing Committee on its sixth program in a series that showcased exemplary international housing design, focused on affordable housing. The focus of the event, *Innovative Housing: Delivery, Distance, and Density*, was to feature practitioners who take on unique approaches to addressing questions around project delivery, density, and overall affordable housing design, before and during the pandemic.

PDC staff provided opening remarks and shared updates to our agency's Quality Affordable Housing database and larger *Designing New York: Quality Affordable Housing* initiative. Speakers included Brendan MacFarlane of Jakob MacFarlane based in Paris, France; Paul Karakusevic of Karkusevic and Carson based in London, England; and Shirley Blumberg of KPMB based in Toronto, Canada, with a panel moderated by Brian Loughlin of the AIANY Housing Subcommittee and Magnusson Architecture & Planning in New York City.

A full video of the event can be located online at both the PDC and the Center for Architecture website event pages.



Housing Database

Additionally, during 2020, PDC staff continued to update and add information to the interactive online Quality Affordable Housing database, which was originally launched in 2019. The database, which is intended to grow and evolve, provides a platform to advance the national and global dialogue surrounding affordable housing design and to make PDC's research-to-date fully accessible to the general public and professionals alike. In 2020, PDC staff conducted a series of conversations with Glavovic Studio, based in Florida, to learn more about their mid-density mid-rise projects, such as Kennedy Homes, and add this information to the database. PDC staff also updated the database with ongoing projects in New York City, such as Casa Celina (Sotomayor Houses), by Magnusson Architecture & Planning, which was bid in 2019 and is anticipated to be completed in 2022.

1. Panelists discuss quality affordable housing precedents at the Innovative Housing virtual event on June 16, 2020

Permanent Affordability Commitment Together

PACT (Permanent Affordability Commitment Together) is an ongoing NYCHA program that leverages public-private partnerships and converts existing NYCHA developments to more stable federally funded programs, allowing for more funding to complete comprehensive repairs, while also ensuring homes remain permanently affordable and residents have the same basic rights as they possess in the public housing program.

As part of the community visioning and resident information sessions for NYCHA's PACT program, PDC staff presented open space design considerations developed as part of our agency's ongoing body of research for *Designing New York: Quality Affordable Housing*. The considerations were intended to inspire conversations among residents and present holistic approaches to affordable housing design. Although NYCHA development sites are not within PDC jurisdiction, this partnership was an interagency collaboration that advocated for thoughtful, cost effective, and quality enhancements across NYCHA's housing portfolio, including open spaces and broader public realm.

- Strengthen open spaces within NYCHA campuses
- Connect and integrate NYCHA campuses into the surrounding neighborhoods
- Enhance residents' quality of life with attention to design and details

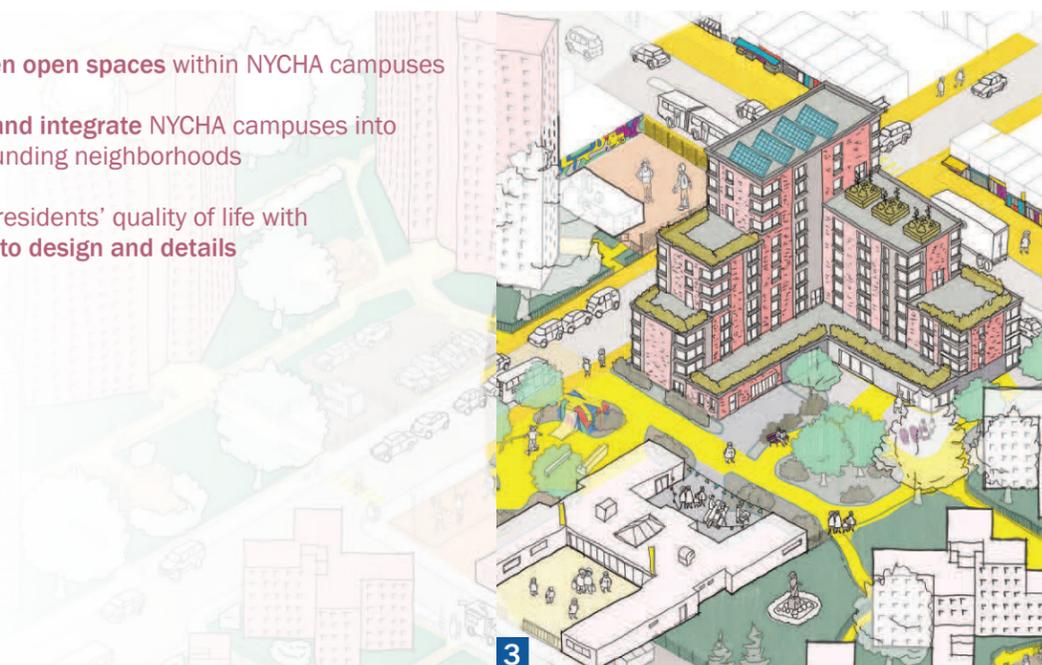
What would you like to do at your development that you can't do right now?

When it's nice outside, I like to _____.

Is there something for everyone?

2

2. PACT presentation excerpt about incorporating *Connected Communities* into the development process
3. Excerpt from *Connected Communities* about designing for NYCHA's open spaces and implementing the principles



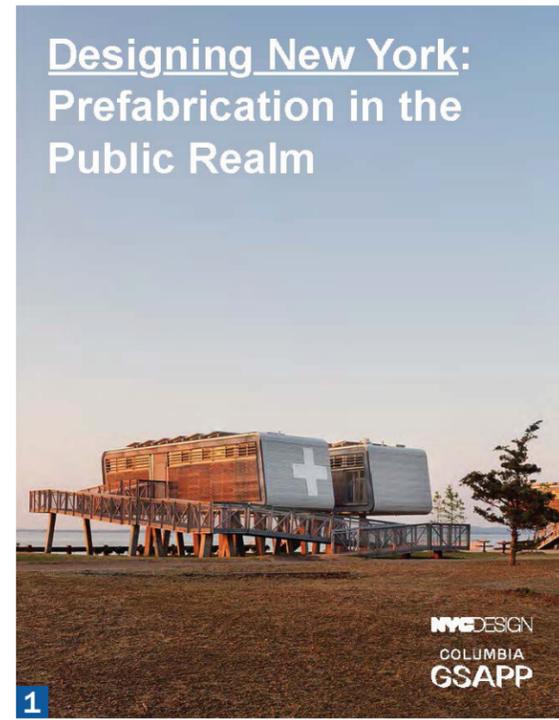
Prefabrication in the Public Realm

Following research conducted as part of a technology seminar *Prefab, Modular, and Flatpack* at Columbia University GSAPP led by Commissioner Laurie Hawkinson with guest instruction by PDC staff, the PDC launched the second publication in the *Designing New York* series: *Designing New York: Prefabrication in the Public Realm*.

As with other densely populated and expanding urban metropolises, New York City is exploring unconventional methods of designing and constructing to meet growing needs for public infrastructure while also addressing pressures to reduce costs. As a result, prefabricated, modular, and flatpack methods of construction are being explored as alternatives to traditional construction methods across the city.

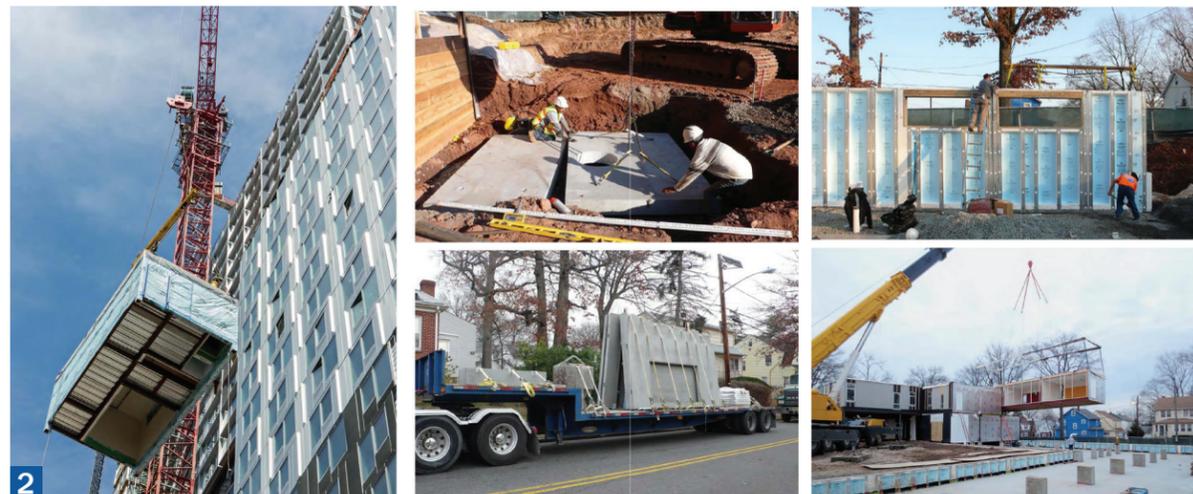
The hope is that this body of research can be a living document and continue to grow with the ever-evolving conversations surrounding prefabrication practices. The long-term goal is to give public agencies, designers, developers, and the community at-large, tools to incorporate and advocate for economical and quality comprehensive approaches to prefabrication across a diverse set of programs and typologies.

Through a selection of 22 case studies, six of which are located in NYC and two of which respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, the document examines how prefabrication practices can be applied to small-scale urban infrastructure projects to have a large public-realm impact. It also highlights current



1. Publicity cover image featuring NYC Parks Beach Restoration Modules by Garrison Architects.
2. Excerpts from the publication show photographs of modular construction sequences.

best practices for prefabrication and analyzes both technical and logistical nuances of these systems in order to further understand their viability in New York City.



Guideline Recommendations for Pandemic Resilience and Neighborhood Change

In response to recommendations from the Racial Inclusion and Equity Task Force Community Voices Survey, the Public Design Commission, the Department of Housing Preservation and Development, and the Department of City Planning collaborated to develop design guidelines targeted to improve public health and community resilience and enable positive long-term neighborhood change. Developed through PDC staff research, mapping, and workshops conducted over the summer and fall, the guidelines were launched on PDC's website in December 2020. The guidelines shift focus away from a fear of density toward a broader understanding of well-being and essential provisions throughout our housing stock and neighborhoods.

While much of the city's housing infrastructure is already built and may require improved code compliance, maintenance or even building retrofits to achieve health and community benefits, the city can also incorporate considerations for health and well-being into the design and development of new housing in the project pipeline. After pandemic-related requirements for physical distancing and limited contact are no longer in place, the holistic consideration of public health—both physical and mental wellbeing—in the development of housing will be critical, particularly in the communities most severely impacted by COVID-19.

The housing development projects in these communities offer opportunities to use design to maximize co-benefits for health and well-being, and to improve and sustain resilience and equity. Additionally, these guidelines and corresponding case studies are intended to inspire sensitive and holistic approaches to quality affordable housing design, which is critical for our neighborhoods and communities across all five boroughs. Housing is one of the most critical components of city and neighborhood infrastructure, and the design of housing directly impacts our personal, family, and community health.

A full copy of the document, including guidelines, recommendations, and case studies, can be found within the Resources section of the PDC website.



3. Via Verde Housing in the Bronx is featured as a case study that calls attention to the importance of quality open space and residential access to light and air.
4. St. Augustine Family Housing in the Bronx demonstrates the importance of wide public areas that allow for flexibility of use and ample space for distancing.



Other Interagency Collaborations and Professional Development

In 2020, PDC staff continued to work collaboratively with other City agencies to improve the design review process, inform good design practices, and provide continuing educational development for staff and commissioners.

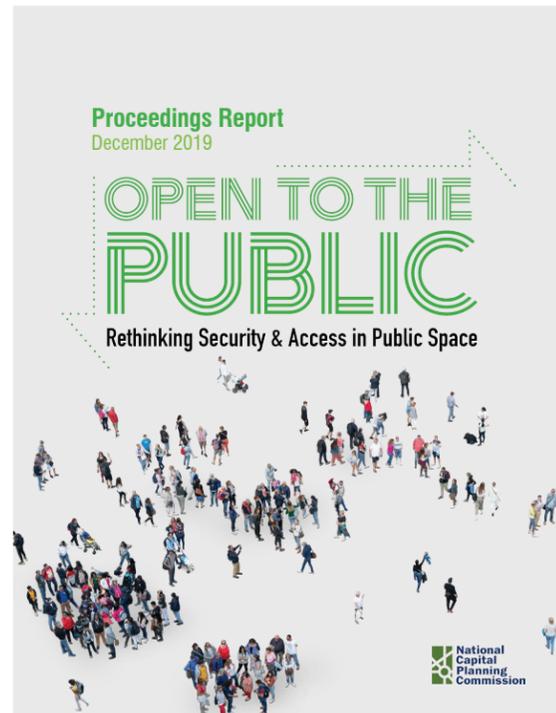


As an active member of the City's interagency Security Infrastructure Working Group, PDC staff spearheaded an urban design subcommittee that workshopped ideas for how to better incorporate necessary security infrastructure into the public realm.



Following two interagency urban design charrettes hosted by the Department of City Planning and the New York City Housing Authority, PDC staff continued to serve on an interagency advisory committee that offered input on design principles and content prior to launching the **Connected Communities Guidebook** in early 2020.

In addition, the PDC staff have been involved in various other urban design initiatives surrounding streetscapes and the public realm, including the Department of City Planning's interagency **Holistic Approach to the Public Realm** working group, which coordinated public space initiatives during the pandemic.



Continuing a close working relationship with Washington, D.C.'s National Capital Planning Commission (NCP), PDC staff participated in the NCP's virtual **Farragut Square Workshop**, testing urban design principles and criteria identified in the national organization's **Open to the Public: Rethinking Security and Access in Public Space** Proceedings Report.

Commissioner Biographies (2020 - 2021)

Signe Nielsen

Signe Nielsen is the Landscape Architect member and President of the Public Design Commission. As founding principal of her firm for 25 years, she has designed and supervised the construction of more than \$240 million worth of projects, including waterfront parks, large campuses, urban design and transportation improvements, and corporate facilities in the United States and abroad. Her design work has received more than two dozen national design awards, has been published extensively in professional journals and books on landscape architecture and has been exhibited in New York, Washington, DC, and Chicago. A Fellow of the American Society of Landscape Architects, Signe holds degrees in Urban Planning from Smith College, in Landscape Architecture from City College of New York, and in Construction Management from Pratt Institute.

Philip E. Aarons

Philip E. Aarons is a lay member and Vice President of the Public Design Commission and a partner at Millennium Partners, a developer of large-scale, mixed-use properties in major cities throughout the country. Prior to co-founding Millennium Partners in 1990, he was President of the real estate subsidiary of the General Atlantic Corporation, a pioneer in the construction of low-income housing. From early 1978 until 1983, Phil worked in the Koch Administration, first as an Assistant to the Mayor, and then, in mid-1979, as President of the Public Development Corporation overseeing projects including the South Street Seaport and Carnegie Hall restoration. An avid art collector, Phil is active on the boards of a number of cultural and civic organizations, including Friends of the High Line, where he is Founding Board Chair, Creative Time, MoMA PS1, Printed Matter, The Museum of Modern Art's Library Council, and Ballet Tech. Phil graduated from Columbia College where he majored in Art History and the Columbia University School of Law where he was an Editor of the Law Review.

Kenseth Armstead

Kenseth Armstead is an artist whose works have been exhibited at the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Brooklyn Museum and Guggenheim Museum, among numerous others. Over the last three years, he has served as a member of the New York State Council on the Arts, Visual Arts Panel which awards grants to support the visual arts statewide. This year he will be a Lecturer at Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, Preservation and Planning. He will also be a guest lecturer at Oberlin College and Harvard University Graduate School of Design. Armstead studied at the Corcoran College of Art & Design, the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, the Whitney Museum of American Art's Independent Study Program, and the NYU Tandon School of Engineering.

Laurie Hawkinson

Laurie Hawkinson is the architect member of the Public Design Commission. She is a partner at Smith-Miller + Hawkinson Architects (SMH+); Professor of Architecture at Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation; and serves on Columbia University's Professional Schools' Diversity Council. Previously, she taught at Georgia Institute of Technology's School of Architecture, Southern California Institute of Architecture, Yale University's School of Architecture, the Institute for Advanced Architectural Studies in Venice, Harvard University's Graduate School of Design, Parsons School of Design's School of Environmental Design, and the University of Miami's School of Architecture. She has served on the Space Planning Committee of Columbia's Manhattanville Campus and on the Dean Search Committee of Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation. She holds a Bachelor of Architecture from The Cooper Union, a Bachelor of Fine Arts from UC-Berkeley, a Master of Art in Department of Art Practice from UC-Berkeley, and was a recipient of the Whitney Museum of American Art's Independent Study Program fellowship.

Karen Kiehl

Karen Kiehl serves on the Public Design Commission as the representative of the Brooklyn Museum. From 2008 to 2011, Karen Kiehl was a Senior Vice President within the Investment Banking Division at Barclays Capital, where she was responsible for the creation of customized taxonomies for online storage and retrieval of institutional knowledge as well as automatic downloads of financial data into presentation format. From 1995 to 2008, Ms. Kiehl worked at Goldman Sachs, where she served as the CIO of the Merger Department and eventually became head of the Investment Banking Division's Knowledge Management group. Prior to Goldman Sachs, Ms. Kiehl was a consultant and Director of Training at FactSet Data Systems. Ms. Kiehl holds a B.A. from Colgate University and an M.S. from Columbia University. She is a mother of two boys and served as the Co-Chair of the Poly Prep Spring Gala from 2014 to 2018 at their school.

Deborah Marton

Deborah Marton is Executive Director of Van Alen Institute, an independent non-profit working to create equitable cities through inclusive design, with a specific a focus on transformative community-driven projects that can benefit from Van Alen's global interdisciplinary network. Prior to joining Van Alen Institute, Deborah held the positions of Executive Director for the New York Restoration Project (NYRP), where she led the private component of New York City's MillionTreesNYC initiative, as well as Executive Director of the Design Trust for Public Space where she worked with municipal leaders and neighborhood change agents to empower communities of need by unlocking the potential of open space.

Manuel Miranda

Manuel Miranda is a lay member of the Public Design Commission and a graphic designer. His studio, MMP, works across an expansive media spectrum to make places and ideas visible, legible, and navigable to people. In addition to professional practice, Manuel is an adjunct faculty member in the graduate graphic design program at the Yale School of Art and Vice President of the AIGA New York board of directors. In 2015, he led a team that created the winning proposal for Van Alen

Institute's "National Parks Now", a competition to imagine new audience engagement strategies at urban parks for the National Park Service. Previously, Manuel was a design director at 2x4, Inc., and a senior designer at Brand Integration Group at Ogilvy. He earned a BFA from The Evergreen State College in Olympia, WA, and an MFA in Graphic Design from the Yale University School of Art.

Richard W. Moore

Richard W. Moore served on the Public Design Commission as the representative of the Brooklyn Museum, where he was a Trustee and a member of the Executive Committee of the Board and chairs its Building and Grounds Committee until April 2021. A retired trusts and estates lawyer, Dick was of counsel in the Individual Clients department of the law firm of Day Pitney LLP. He currently serves as a member of the board of the Brooklyn Community Foundation and has also served on the boards of the HOPE Program, the Brooklyn Historical Society, and the Packer Collegiate Institute. Dick graduated from Harvard College and the University of Pennsylvania Law School.

Susan Morgenthau

Susan Morgenthau serves on the Public Design Commission as the representative of the New York Public Library, where she has been a Trustee since 2010. She has been a co-Chair of the Library Council since 2004, and is a member of the NYPL's Program and Policy Committee, Audit Committee, Development Committee, Finance Committee, and the Privacy and Policy Working Group. Susan's volunteer activity outside of the Library includes serving on the board of the Lehman College Foundation, The Riverdale Nature Preservancy, as well as a founding board member and past president of the Friends of Van Cortlandt Park. She currently serves on the Friends of Horticulture Committee at Wave Hill, a public garden in the Bronx, and is President of the Riverdale Sanitation Corporation, a private sanitary sewer serving over 300 properties in the North West Bronx. Susan is a former Head Teacher at the Brearley School, and served in the admissions office both at Brearley and at the Fieldston Lower School. She is an alumna of Vassar College, where she received a BA in Philosophy, and completed her graduate work at the Bank Street College of Education.

Ethel Sheffer

Ethel Sheffer serves on the Public Design Commission as the Mayor's Representative. She is an urban planner, civic and community leader, and educator. Ethel heads Insight Associates, a small consulting group providing research services and advice in community planning and development, land use, and collaborations among government, nonprofits, and the private sector. In the 1990s, she headed the Columbus Circle Tri-Board Task Force of Community Boards 4, 5, and 7 and the Riverside South Task Force. Ethel also served as President of the New York Metro Chapter of the American Planning Association from 2002 to 2008. She is a Board Member of the Citizens Housing and Planning Council and a member of the Municipal Art Society's Planning Committee, and she teaches in Columbia University's Graduate Planning Program.

Dr. Merryl H. Tisch

Dr. Merryl H. Tisch serves on the Public Design Commission as the representative of the Metropolitan Museum of Art where she is a trustee. She is one of the nation's leading voices on education, having served at the helm of New York State's governing body for education from 2009 to 2016. As Chancellor of the New York State Board of Regents, Dr. Tisch was responsible for setting the State's education policy and overseeing both public and private education throughout New York. She currently holds a number of philanthropic and civic positions, including serving as co-chairperson of the Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty, a leading social services agency. Dr. Tisch also sits on the executive committees of The Washington Institute for Near East Policy and the Citizens Budget Commission. Additionally, she serves on the board of The International Rescue Committee, The Trust for Cultural Resources of the City of New York, and the Graduate School of Education's Board of Overseers at the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Tisch earned a B.A. from Barnard College, an M.A. in Education from New York University, and received an Ed.D from Teacher's College, Columbia University.

Mary A. Valverde

Mary A. Valverde is the sculptor member of the Public Design Commission. She is an interdisciplinary artist who uses ephemeral materials to reflect upon sacred spaces and rituals and politics of production, exploitation, social roles, culture, and tradition. Mary teaches at Hunter and was the 2011 MFA Lecturer at the ICA Philadelphia. She is the recipient of the University of Pennsylvania's Graduate School of Design's Full Dean's Diversity Fellowship and in 2010 received the Artist Fellowship, Inc., Individual Artist Award and the Mayer Foundation Grant. Mary's work has been exhibited at El Museo del Barrio, Queens Museum, Jersey City Museum, Momenta Gallery, Abrons Art Center, and Cuchifritos Gallery, among others. She received her MFA from the University of Pennsylvania and her BFA from the School of Visual Arts.

Hank Willis Thomas

Hank Willis Thomas served as the painter member of the Public Design Commission until March 2020. Hank's work is in numerous public collections including MoMA, the Guggenheim Museum, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Brooklyn Museum, the High Museum of Art, and the Museum of Fine Arts Houston. Hank has exhibited in galleries and museums throughout the United States and abroad, including Goodman Gallery in Johannesburg, Galerie Michel Rein in Paris, the Studio Museum in Harlem, and the Cleveland Art Museum. He is represented by Jack Shainman Gallery in New York City. Hank has acted as a visiting professor in the MFA programs at Virginia Commonwealth University, Maryland Institute College of Art, and ICP/Bard and lectured at Yale University, Harvard University, the Birmingham Museum of Art, and the Musée du Quai Branly in Paris. Hank earned a BFA from New York University and an MA and MFA from the California College of the Arts.

Staff Biographies

Keri Butler

Keri Butler is the current Executive Director of the Public Design Commission. She has 15 years of experience at the PDC in numerous roles, most recently as the Deputy Executive Director. As an advocate for excellence and equity in public art and design, she has developed and implemented policies and initiatives to guide the Commission's review of city projects and enhance the agency's mission. In addition to overseeing the PDC's design review process, Keri has represented the Commission on panels and public events that highlight the City's art collection and women designers. She has managed collaborative projects and events such as the Annual Awards for Excellence in Design, Women-Designed NYC, and Sustainable NYC. Additionally, Keri has worked with numerous agencies and private partners to preserve the City's art collection and expand the City Hall tour program to include underrepresented histories. She managed Superstorm Sandy recovery efforts and led the Commission through the abrupt transition to remote work during the COVID-19 pandemic, developing online events that have increased public engagement and participation in the design review process. Keri previously worked at the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and holds a Master of Arts in Arts Administration from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Mary Beth Betts

Mary Beth Betts is the Tour Manager at the Public Design Commission. She plans tours of New York City Hall, manages a team of four docents, and researches the diverse history of City Hall and its collections. She is an architectural historian and has worked at the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, The New-York Historical Society and taught architectural history at The Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture, The Cooper Union. She organized exhibitions on McKim, Mead & White, and New York City Hall and has published essays on Cass Gilbert, New York City Hall and the New York City waterfront. Mary Beth holds a Ph.D. in Art History from the Graduate Center, CUNY and a B.A. in Art History from the University of Virginia and is active in the Society of Architectural Historians and the Vernacular Architecture Forum.

Justin Garrett Moore

Justin Garrett Moore is a transdisciplinary designer and urbanist and served as the executive director of the Public Design Commission through December 15, 2020. He has extensive experience in architecture, urban design, and planning—from large-scale urban policies and projects to grassroots and community-based planning, design, and arts initiatives. At the Public Design Commission, his work focuses on prioritizing quality and excellence for the public realm and fostering accessibility, diversity, and inclusion in New York's public buildings, landscapes, and art. He is a member of the American Planning Association's AICP Commission, the Urban Design Forum, and the Black urbanist collective BlackSpace. Justin is an adjunct faculty member at Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation and the Yale School of Architecture. His social enterprise, Urban Patch, focuses on sustainable development through social and environmental design projects in the United States and Rwanda. He holds a Bachelor of Design from the University of Florida and a Master of Architecture and a Master of Science in Architecture and Urban Design from Columbia University.

Grace Han

Grace is an urban planner with over a decade of experience managing capital and planning projects, focusing on programming, place making, and civic vitality. Her projects have included cultural institutions, university campuses, and waterfront open space and development. As the Director of Capital Projects, she oversees the design review process, working closely with agency liaisons. Grace received her Masters' in Urban Planning from Columbia University, where she has also taught, and has an undergraduate degree from Washington University in St. Louis.

Carolina Llano

Carolina is a Project Manager at the Public Design Commission. At the Design Commission, Carolina reviews projects and proposals submitted by City agencies and assists with initiatives related to public art. She has prior experience on the project management of institutional, residential, and museum projects with architectural firms in New York City, and continues to pursue her interest in the intersection of art, architecture, and landscape. She holds a Master's Degree in Architecture from Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation, as well as a B.A. in Architecture from the University of Florida.

Rebecca Macklis

Rebecca is an urban designer and the Senior Urban Design Manager at the NYC Public Design Commission. Her work is concentrated on design policy and design review of architecture and urban design projects, with a focus on complex mixed-use developments, affordable housing, and urban systems. She leads the *Designing New York: Quality Affordable Housing* and *Prefabrication in the Public Realm* initiatives, and also manages the Commission's special projects such as Women-Designed NYC and the Annual Awards for Excellence in Design. Her prior experience spans architecture, urban design, and anthropology, where she has explored a continued interest in the intersection of planning, policy, and design of the built environment, championing the holistic, equitable, and resilient design of the public realm. Rebecca is a member of the Urban Design Forum (2019 Forefront Fellow), and holds a MArch in Urban Design from the Bartlett School of Architecture, University College London, and a BA in Architecture and Anthropology, with a minor in American Culture Studies, from Washington University in St. Louis.

Jenna E. Miller

Jenna is the Urban Design and Policy Manager at the Public Design Commission. A LEED Accredited Professional in Building Design and Construction and co-founder of RUEd' ARCH LLC, Jenna has designed and managed a breadth of public and private design/build and architectural projects in New York, Massachusetts, and abroad. She is an Urban Design Forum Fellow and a member of the Female Design Council and the Society of American Registered Architects. She holds a Master's Degree in Architecture from Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation and a B.A. in Architecture and Environmental Studies from Wellesley College and served on the Wellesley Board of Trustees and Columbia University Senate, impacting institutional planning and policy. At PDC, Jenna oversees interagency urban design and policy initiatives and working groups, particularly those with a focus on the public realm, new technology, security, and environmental justice. She leads the agency's geospatial analysis and data visualization, the PDC Annual Report, the *Designing New York: Streetscapes for Wellness* initiative, and special projects related to OneNYC 2050 and the Sustainable Development Goals. She strives to promote and develop strategies for improved equity and excellence of design in the City.

Julianna Monjeau

Julianna is the Archivist and Senior Records Manager of the Public Design Commission. She holds a Master's Degree in Archives & Public History from New York University. At the Public Design Commission, she manages the accession and preservation of all public records reviewed by the Commission and provides research services. She also manages the digitization of Design Commission records and posts selections of digitized records on our Tumblr and Flickr accounts. She is a member of the Society of American Archivists, Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference, and the Archivist's Roundtable of the Metropolitan New York.

Cover image: PDC staff and community members enjoy the WE Walk: Streets for Connection Open Streets activation in September 2020 in honor of PARK(ing) Day.