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MAYOR BLOOMBERG ANNOUNCES CONTEST TO NAME NEW OPEN SPACE IN QUEENS PLAZA

New Yorkers Should Submit Ideas Online Between Now and October 26th, Winner Will Be Chosen by Committee of City Representatives and Local Community

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, New York City Economic Development Corporation, the Department of Parks & Recreation and the Department of City Planning today launched a contest that will give New Yorkers the opportunity to leave a mark on a piece of the city by proposing a name for the new open space at Queens Plaza in Long Island City. Thanks to more than \$45 million in roadway, pedestrian and bicycle improvements, Queens Plaza now offers a refuge for commuters, workers, residents, and cyclists. The plaza's eastern end, at the site of the former John F. Kennedy commuter parking lot, has been transformed into a new, sustainably designed 1.5 acre open space – including wetlands, plantings, millstones and artist-designed benches – but the space lacks a name. New Yorkers should consider names that reflect the site history, local neighborhood, natural environment, and location and submit their suggestions by October 26. The new name will be unveiled on a permanent sign during an official ribbon-cutting event when the Queens Plaza project is completed.

"Everyone knows that New Yorkers are full of opinions, so who better to ask to come up with a great name for the greatest new open space in Queens?" said Mayor Bloomberg. "The improvements we've made to Queens Plaza are making it into a welcoming entrance to the borough for visitors, residents and local businesses."

"We believe that the new recreational elements, bikeways and pedestrian improvements made to Queens Plaza in our recent streetscape project will not only make this important hub a more desirable place in which to live and do business, but will also complement the many developments planned and underway in the area," said Economic Development Corporation President Seth W. Pinsky. "As we move to completion, we invite New Yorkers to help us with one critical remaining element: Choosing an appropriate name for the 1.5-acre open space that will be the heart of the Plaza. This is a rare opportunity for New Yorkers to leave a permanent mark on the map of their City and we look forward to benefiting from their creativity."

"Long Island City is a unique, dynamic neighborhood with enormous potential," City Planning Commissioner Amanda M. Burden said. "The transformation of Queens Plaza into a lush and welcoming oasis will give residents and workers a gorgeous new public open space for respite and enjoyment. I look forward to learning the unique names New Yorkers come up with for this vibrant new park."

"Queens Plaza is an unofficial landmark in the city as thousands of cars and hundreds of runners, cyclists and pedestrians cross over the bridge daily to get to work, visit parks and enjoy the view," said Parks Commissioner Adrian Benepe. "This newly landscaped public space epitomizes the movement toward a greener, greater New York City that has been at the heart of this administration's PlaNYC program. We look forward to see the creative suggestions New Yorkers have for renaming this important location in Queens."

"I'm delighted that the City is soliciting suggestions from the public for the name of the new park in Queens Plaza," said Representative Carolyn B. Maloney. "This park will serve the community and should be named by the community."

"The transformation of Queens Plaza, once dominated by an unsightly parking structure, will gain more momentum when a new park with lots of green space opens soon. This landscape sea change is a reflection of the local community's demand for positive changes. Thousands of new employees work in the area and new residents move into the neighborhood every day. I am pleased to seek input from the community as we decide on an appropriate name for this space. Including the community in this decision helps develop a sense of ownership and pride among the people who will use it most," said Council Member Van Bramer.

"This is a great opportunity to be creative, inspired and remembered for naming this living and green space at the gateway to Queens. Let the nominations begin!" said Queens Borough President Helen Marshall.

"The new Queens Plaza Park will be a tranquil oasis for office workers, residents and visitors alike. The park, along with the other capital improvements underway, will contribute to the quality of life of the neighborhood while raising property values and encouraging private and public sector investment in services and facilities. Participation in the naming of the park will allow New York City residents to take ownership and brand the park as theirs," said Gayle

Baron, President, Long Island City Partnership.

Queens Community Board 2 Chair Joe Conley said, "This is a much needed improvement to Queens Plaza that will improve the quality of life in and around the area. We are looking forward to a new name to the area that celebrates the pedestrian and landscape improvements in the new plaza."

Starting with the rezoning of the district in 2001 to enable high-density, mixed-use development in the business core, there has been a number of initiatives focused on realizing Long Island City's full potential as a major central business district and City neighborhood, leveraging its transit assets and proximity to midtown. To revitalize the face of the district's main boulevard, Jackson Avenue, NYCEDC completed a full \$17 million streetscape project in fall 2010 that features a tree-lined median, new lighting and a series of new and enhanced open spaces. At the critical intersection of Queens Plaza and Jackson Avenue, an unsightly municipal garage building was turned into an attractive LEED-certified, 21-story mixed-use tower and new home for the City's Department of Health. The building was completed in 2010 and is the first phase of a larger Gotham Center development. Queens Plaza is also the new address for the corporate headquarters of JetBlue - the company will be moving some 950 employees into the historic Brewster building at 27-01 Queens Plaza North (shared with MetLife) in 2012.

For a complete list of rules and details on entering the naming contest, please go to www.nyc.gov. Online submissions will be accepted until Tuesday, October 26 at 5:00 PM. The winning name will be selected by a committee comprised of City representatives and members of the local community. For the latest contest updates, find NYCEDC on Facebook, follow @NYCEDC on Twitter, or visit NYCEDC on Tumblr.

Department of City Planning

The Department of City Planning (DCP) promotes strategic growth, transit-oriented development, and sustainable communities in the City, in part by initiating comprehensive, consensus-based planning and zoning changes for individual neighborhoods and business districts, as well as establishing policies and zoning regulations applicable citywide. It supports the City Planning Commission and each year reviews more than 500 land use applications for actions such as zoning changes and disposition of City property. The Department assists both government agencies and the public by providing policy analysis and technical assistance relating to housing, transportation, community facilities, demography, waterfront and public space.