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Brooklyn Children’s Museum Holds Groundbreaking to Launch Garden Renovation



Rendering credit: Gans and Company; Photo credit: Winston Williams

[You can access images of the event and renderings here.](#)

[Watch an Instagram post of the ceremony here.](#)

(Brooklyn, NY)—[Brooklyn Children’s Museum \(BCM\)](#) today held a groundbreaking ceremony to mark the commencement of the Museum’s garden renovation project. This project, undertaken in partnership with the Department of Cultural Affairs and the Department of Design and Construction, addresses critical infrastructure needs while setting the groundwork for enhancing the Museum's outdoor spaces, ultimately creating 20,000 square feet of accessible, outdoor, programmable space for young people and their families from across Brooklyn and all five boroughs. The project is being supported by more than \$15 million in City funds from the Mayor’s Office, City Council, and Brooklyn Borough President’s office.

The project will reconstruct the existing retaining wall along the Museum's south and east perimeter bordering Brower Park – a public space which will also be strengthened by the project while also removing the existing decommissioned greenhouse and several trees in the work area. These changes pave the way for an innovative green space that will feature multiple zones designed to support a variety of activities and needs.

The new space, which will be fully ADA accessible, is set to include:

- Dedicated areas for Museum programs and exhibits
- Large gathering and activity spaces
- Garden resting areas with seating
- Interactive activity installations
- Planted, stabilized slopes
- Climbing paths
- Group meeting spots
- A wash station
- An overlooking terrace

This renovation work is the first stage of the Museum's Earth Science Garden project, a highly anticipated outdoor exhibit designed to engage visitors in an immersive exploration of geology, soil science, ecology, hydrology, and meteorology through interactive activities such as climbing, digging, and water-play. Built elements, landscaping, exhibits, and play areas are meticulously crafted to provide a platform for discovering the geological wonders of Brooklyn's landscape.

“At Brooklyn Children’s Museum, we believe in the power of experiential learning to spark curiosity and ignite a lifelong passion for discovery,” said **Atiba T. Edwards, President and CEO of Brooklyn Children’s Museum**. “We’re excited for this to be a transformative space where children and families can connect with the world right here in their own community.”

“The Brooklyn Children’s Museum was the first children’s museum in the United States, and we’re proud of the long-term public-private partnership between the city and the museum that has created this incredible resource for young New Yorkers and their families,” said **Cultural Affairs Commissioner Laurie Cumbo**. “I’m so proud of the City’s significant investment in this project to re-open 20,000 square feet of accessible outdoor space for programming and enjoyment of all. A city with extraordinary cultural assets that are open to all residents is a safer, healthier, more vibrant city. Together, we can make sure the legacy and mission of BCM continues to serve New Yorkers for generations to come.”

“We are delighted to break ground on this much-needed project that will convert the unusable outdoor space at the Brooklyn Children’s Museum into vast green and modern outdoor areas for everyone to enjoy,” said **Department of Design and Construction Commissioner Thomas Foley**. “This project will allow the museum to offer more programming and resting areas, and

will fix the courtyard's deteriorating wall. These upcoming renovations will greatly benefit the people of Crown Heights and all New Yorkers that visit this wonderful museum."

"It is a beautiful day to celebrate this groundbreaking," said **New York State Assemblymember Stefani Zinerman**. "We are going to usher in the next generation of environmental stewards and that is critical at this time where we are looking at the impact of climate change."

"I am thrilled that we will be breaking ground on this garden renovation project," said **New York City Councilmember Chi Ossé**. "The Brooklyn Children's Museum is a crown jewel of our borough, and this project will continue to demonstrate that there is no limit to the museum's full potential. I was proud to allocate funding and look forward to being a continued partner as the garden blooms. Thank you to the Department of Cultural Affairs, the Department of Design and Construction, Gans & Company, and Museum President Atiba Edwards for the partnership and dedication necessary to bring us to this moment."

"The Brooklyn Children's Museum is a truly unique and wonderful cultural institution located right in the heart of central Brooklyn," said **New York State Senator Andrew Gounardes**. "I'm excited for these upgrades that will mean additional programming and better amenities. Can't wait to bring my kids when it's all done!"

The garden renovation has been made possible through a collaborative effort with partners including Gans and Company, Nancy Owens Studio, and the Children's Museum of Denver. Anchor support for the project is provided by the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the New York City Council, Council Member Robert Cornegy, the Regional Economic Development Council of the State of New York, New York State Assembly Member Diana Richardson, and New York State Assembly Member Stefani Zinerman.

About Brooklyn Children's Museum

Inspired by the energy and diversity of our borough, Brooklyn Children's Museum creates experiences that ignite curiosity, celebrate identity, and cultivate joyful learning. Founded in 1899 as the world's first children's museum, Brooklyn Children's Museum (BCM) is New York City's largest cultural institution designed especially for families. Proudly based in Crown Heights, Brooklyn, BCM serves 300,000 children and caregivers annually with exhibits and programs grounded in visual arts, music and performance, natural science, and world cultures. For more information, visit www.brooklynkids.org.

About NYC Department of Cultural Affairs

The NYC Department of Cultural Affairs (DCLA) is dedicated to supporting and strengthening New York City's vibrant cultural life. DCLA works to promote and advocate for quality arts programming and to articulate the contribution made by the cultural community to the City's vitality. The Department represents and serves non-profit cultural organizations involved in the visual, literary, and performing arts; public-oriented science and humanities institutions including zoos, botanical gardens, and historic and preservation societies; and creative artists at all skill levels who live and work within the City's five boroughs. DCLA also provides donated

materials for arts programs offered by the public schools and cultural and social service groups, and commissions permanent works of public art at City-funded construction projects throughout the five boroughs. For more information, visit www.nyc.gov/culture.

About the NYC Department of Design and Construction

The Department of Design and Construction is the City's primary capital construction project manager. In supporting Mayor Adams' long-term vision of growth, sustainability, resiliency, equity and healthy living, DDC provides communities with new or renovated public buildings such as firehouses, libraries, police precincts, and new or upgraded roads, sewers and water mains in all five boroughs. To manage this \$33 billion portfolio, DDC partners with other City agencies, architects and consultants, whose experience bring efficient, innovative and environmentally-conscious design and construction strategies to City projects. For more information, please visit www.nyc.gov/ddc.

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