



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Daniel L. Squadron

# **Squadron: Mayor's Community Parks Initiative Addresses Most Glaring Inequities in Parks Around Nyc**

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### **Senator Highlights the Impact of Having all Stakeholders Invested in Parks Equity**

NEW YORK—Today, State Senator Daniel Squadron joined Mayor Bill de Blasio at Bowne Playground in Flushing, Queens to announce the Mayor's new Community Parks Initiative. Squadron said:

"A year and a half ago, folks were simply not talking about parks equity, but even then we already faced a parks equity crisis. First, across the city and the whole system, parks, especially those in the communities with the greatest need, suffered from chronic underfunding. Second, an unintended consequence of the success of some of the conservancies and some of the marquee parks in the city meant that New Yorkers fortunate enough to live near one of those parks probably didn't realize that overall the system was not being taken care of as much as it needed to be. Those parks are doing better than ever – and we celebrate that – but we can't let some of the system fall behind while other parts of the system create the appearance that there's no problem at all.

Fortunately, a couple of things changed. For starters, Mayor de Blasio made a clarion call on the equity crisis and made clear that he would not allow it to stand. And, for the first time in years, everyone, including the most successful conservancies, came to the table and were truly invested in solving the equity crisis.

Now Mayor de Blasio is addressing the most glaring inequities in neighborhood parks around the city. Today's announcement creates a dramatic, coherent, need-based system to address the equity crisis. In an unprecedented way, it treats every park in every neighborhood as an integral part of the entire system. The Community Parks Initiative goes to the heart of what it means to care about equity. These are parks that haven't seen any significant capital investment in a generation in the neighborhoods that need them most.

This year's renewed push for parks equity is a credit to the Mayor and a sign that having everyone – government, conservancies, and stakeholders – at the table is critical for building healthy parks across the city, and where they are most needed.

I thank the Mayor, Speaker Mark-Viverito, Councilmember Levine, Assemblymember Kavanagh, Commissioner Silver, and all of the advocates – especially the often overlooked volunteers in small neighborhood parks."