

**PROJECT PROFILE**

(Please limit answers to the space available on these pages)

Project Name Brooklyn/Queens GreenwayLocation Brooklyn and Queens, New York CityOwner City of New YorkProject Use(s) Bicycle/pedestrian trail, connects cultural, recreational, environmental, historical & educational resources.Project Size 40 miles (5,000 acres) Total Development Cost \$3-17 million, exclusive of separate

Application submitted by:

Name Tom Fox Anne McClellanTitle Executive Director Project DirectorOrganization Neighborhood Open Space CoalitionAddress 72 Reade Street; New York, New York 10007Telephone ( 212 ) 513-7555

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Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate how you learned of The Rudy Bruner Award in Urban Excellence. capital projectSomeone sent us an application last year.

Key Participants\* (who were instrumental in the development of this project)

Organization	Key person	Telephone
Public agencies		
NYC Department of Transportation	John Benfatti	212-566-0751
NYC Department of Parks and Recreation	Joseph Chu	212-360-3404
Developer		
Neighborhood Open Space Coalition	Tom Fox/Anne McClellan	212-513-7555
Professional consultants:		
Architect		
Landscape architect	Trowbridge Associates	Rick Manning
Urban designer		
Planner		
Lawyer	Dewey Ballantine	Mark Baker
Other		
Community group(s)		
Alley Pond Environmental Center	Bill Neiter	718-990-6161 X5389
Flushing Meadows-Corona Park Redevelopment Corp.	Martin Gallent	718-446-0666
Sponsor		

\* If necessary, attach an additional sheet, to identify others who should be credited in the development of this project.

1. Describe the characteristics of this project: the important aspects of the project's design, development, and public approval process.

The Brooklyn/Queens Greenway is both visionary and practical -- it is a continuation of the work begun by Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux in the 1860-70's in Brooklyn, and that of Robert Moses in Queens in the 1930-60's. The BQG completes a chain of green across Long Island and finalizes their visions of a linear park system. It connects a host of historical, cultural, environmental and recreational facilities and links 13 parks.

The BQG is an ambitious project -- it creates linkages and establishes an extensive bicycle/pedestrian trail system through the two most populous boroughs in the most densely developed city in the United States. To accomplish this, a significant amount of research was conducted to determine how the route could be connected. The designs had to fulfill a number of important roles including: 1) Provide safe and continuous bicycle and pedestrian paths that meet federal, state and local criteria; and separate cyclists from pedestrians, and both from vehicular traffic along the route. 2) Incorporate measures to enhance landscape and natural systems along the route. 3) Connect a variety of facilities and ecosystems with the path. 4) Design simple and cost-effective solutions. 5) To ensure the project's long-term success, elected officials, city and state agencies, cultural facilities, civic organizations, and bicycle and pedestrian advocacy groups had to be involved in the design process.

To create the BQG, the Coalition organized a diverse and talented Advisory Committee which included many of the best planning, landscape architecture, engineering, urban design and transportation experts in New York City. The design recommendations were examined from social, political, and technical perspectives, and included strategies for resolving difficult problems. Public presentations and meetings allowed neighborhood residents to participate in the planning process, local community boards were consulted as sections were implemented, and the Coalition works with advocates for the disabled, as well as bicycle and pedestrian advocacy organizations to ensure that the route is safe and pleasant and meets the needs of a broad audience.

2. What makes the project exemplary? Why does it merit The Rudy Bruner Award for Excellence in the Urban Environment?

The Brooklyn/Queens Greenway accomplishes the seemingly impossible. It creates a new recreational and educational facility for the 4 million residents of Brooklyn and Queens. New York City has limited opportunities -- both space and financial resources -- to create new parks and open spaces. The BQG is an innovative, low-cost means of enhancing the quality of urban life, expanding the two borough's recreational opportunities and linking natural and cultural resources.

The project is New York City's first attempt toward implementing a major recommendation of the President's Commission on Americans Outdoors which envisions a new effort "to tie our country together with threads of green that everywhere grant us access to the natural world". The BQG has played an important role in encouraging other New York organizations, such as the Regional Plan Association and Transportation Alternatives to explore other greenway opportunities.

Another exemplary quality of the project is that it has been endorsed and is being implemented by a large and diverse public/private partnership. Our small nonprofit has been responsible for coordinating a successful planning, implementation and public awareness campaign, circumventing considerable bureaucratic red tape that boggles down many public works projects. Elected officials, and City and State agencies immediately embraced the project and have committed most of the necessary resources to complete all phases of the project by 1995. Volunteers have spent tremendous amounts of time helping to publicize the BQG, introduce others to the route by leading walks and rides, and maintaining sections of the route with clean-up projects.

Over the past year, the BQG has received significant national attention. The National Endowment for the Arts included it in a book on eight innovative projects funded by its Design Arts Program, the American Society of Landscape Architects has given the BQG a Merit Award for Analysis and Planning, and National Geographic included the BQG in its May 1990 article on Greenways. It is frequently cited in Charles Little's new book *Greenways for America* as an outstanding example of an urban greenway.

3. What were the significant dates of the project's development and when was it completed?

See attached.

Project Title Brooklyn/Queens Greenway  
 Location New York City

Describe the important characteristics of the project, how it was developed, and in what ways it is exemplary. This Abstract will be among the materials sent to Selection Committee members prior to the Committee's first meeting.

The Brooklyn/Queens Greenway (BQG) was initiated to create a major recreational resource for New York City, tying together an incredible landscape and cultural heritage in Brooklyn and Queens. The BQG is a 40-mile bicycle/pedestrian path running from the Atlantic Ocean at Coney Island to the Long Island Sound at Fort Totten. It connects 13 parks, two botanic gardens, three museums, the New York Aquarium, Shea Stadium, the National Tennis Center, the 1939/64 World's Fair site, three lakes and a reservoir. It maximizes accessibility to a vast array of cultural, recreational, environmental and historical resources for a population that is underserved in terms of open space opportunities. It is an invaluable resource for the over 4 million residents of Brooklyn and Queens who suffer from a severe deficiency of recreational resources. Of the 32 Community Board districts in the two boroughs, only 7 meet the NYC Department of City Planning guideline of 2.5 acres of open space per 1,000 people. To help reduce this inequity, projects such as the Brooklyn/Queens Greenway are essential.

The Neighborhood Open Space Coalition, a nonprofit organization comprised of over 130 organizations dedicated to improving the quantity and quality of New York City's parks and open spaces, envisioned the Brooklyn/Queens Greenway five years ago. Since that time, its has turned a hypothetical line on a map into an increasingly well-used route that has elicited tremendous support and recognition not only in New York City, but around the country. The BQG has elicited considerable support from the press, including all of New York City's major newspapers. The *New York Daily News* has equated the BQG to the "urban version of the Appalachian Trail". It has recently been included in a book of the eight best projects funded by the National Endowment for the Arts' Design Arts Program, and has just received a national Merit Award from the American Society of Landscape Architects.

The route presents the widest possible array of urban situations, including fragile woodland and wetland ecosystems, historic parks and sports stadia, and diverse communities from stable historic districts to neighborhoods awaiting revitalization. In addition, there is a wonderful assortment of cultural opportunities such as museums, zoos and botanic gardens to educate and entertain BQG users. The route is planned to bring people through the entire spectrum of activities, and close relationships have been established with facilities along the route.

In addressing obstacle areas, some highly innovative solutions were developed to establish the route. For example, the Interborough Parkway, connecting the boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens once had a bicycle/pedestrian path paralleling it. The widening of the highway in the 1960's removed the path and severed the connection for non-motorized transportation between the two boroughs. The New York State Department of Transportation is conducting an Engineering Study and has committed to building what could be the world's first veloway (elevated bicycle/pedestrian path running parallel to a roadway).

The project is enormous in its scope and is supported by a large and diverse number of individuals, agencies and organizations. The field studies, designs and exhibition have been supported by foundations, corporations and the New York State Assembly. City agencies involved have pledged their support, and municipal financing has been included in the ten year capital plan. Nonprofit organizations are leading walks and bicycle rides, and cultural institutions are promoting the project. It recently provided the spine for New York City's first Century (100 mile bicycle ride), and many of the 400 participating cyclists indicated the BQG was the best part of the ride.

The Brooklyn/Queens Greenway will benefit all New Yorkers, contribute to the revitalization and stabilization of neighborhoods, present an array of attractions for New York City's 17 million tourists each year, and enhance local real estate values. It will be a resource for children to explore and adults to appreciate. It can perform a small role in the quest to reshape New York City as a place where people live, work and play as we enter the 21st century. It provides an excellent model for future greenway planners, and proves that a small nonprofit organization can expeditiously undertake a major planning initiative, eliminating much bureaucratic red tape. It also demonstrates that a strong public/private partnership can be created and cultivated to bring an exciting and much-needed project to a well-deserved fruition. As many people from all over the country have commented "if you can build a 40-mile greenway in the Big Apple, we can build one anywhere!"

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## BROOKLYN/QUEENS GREENWAY

### SIGNIFICANT DATES

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|----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1866           | Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux create Prospect Park in Brooklyn.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 1874           | Olmsted and Vaux create Eastern Parkway in Brooklyn, the World's first parkway                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 1876           | Olmsted and Vaux create Ocean Parkway in Brooklyn, the World's second parkway                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| June 15, 1895  | America's first bicycle path on Ocean Parkway. The inaugural ride is attended by 10,000 League of American Wheelman members.                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 1895           | Forest Park is constructed in Queens.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 1902           | Kissena Park is completed in Queens.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 1908           | Highland Park is completed in Queens.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 1923           | Coney Island Boardwalk is opened.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 1926           | William K. Vanderbilt, great-grandson of Cornelius Vanderbilt builds the Vanderbilt Motor Parkway to reach the estates on the north shore of Long Island. (Later destroyed by Robert Moses and remnants converted to parkland)                                                                           |
| 1928           | Cunningham Park completed in Queens.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 1929           | Alley Pond Park completed in Queens.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 1934           | Robert Moses begins construction of World's Fair site on an ash dump in Flushing.                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 1935           | Interborough Parkway opens connecting Brooklyn and Queens. The route originally included a bicycle/pedestrian path adjacent to the vehicular roadway.                                                                                                                                                    |
| 1939           | The World's Fair opens at what is later called Flushing Meadows-Corona Park.                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 1940           | The Peck Park Corridor is completed, linking Kissena and Cunningham Parks in Queens.                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 1964           | The World's Fair is held once again in Flushing, following the renovation of the 1939 site.                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 1985           | Neighborhood Open Space Coalition suggests the overall vision of a Brooklyn/Queens Greenway and begins to explore the potential.                                                                                                                                                                         |
| June 1987      | The Coalition releases <i>The Brooklyn/Queens Greenway - A Design Study</i> . All of New York City's major newspapers, and a host of local papers and organizational newsletters write favorable articles about the project shortly thereafter.                                                          |
| 1988           | Brooklyn/Queens Greenway Advisory Committee is formed to assist with project planning and development.                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| October 1988   | The Coalition releases <i>The Brooklyn/Queens Greenway - A Design Study</i> at the opening reception of <i>Shore to Shore and So Much More</i> , an exhibition celebrating the BQG. The exhibition is hosted by a variety of organizations over the next couple years.                                   |
| November 1988  | The first ten mile segment of the route is completed (from Coney Island to Prospect Park) and is officially opened by Mayor Ed Koch.                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 1989           | New York City Department of Transportation and Parks and Recreation have 12 major capital projects and 10 smaller projects to enhance facilities along the route, and the two departments begin work on a Preliminary Design Investigation to initiate remaining capital projects to complete the route. |
|                | The Coalition begins co-sponsoring a series of rides and walks with Transportation Alternatives, Appalachian Mountain Club, American Youth Hostels and New York Cycle Club.                                                                                                                              |
| Spring 1990    | <i>The Brooklyn/Queens Greenway - A Sign of the Times</i> , a half hour video tape about the BQG is completed by the Coalition and WNYE-TV.                                                                                                                                                              |
|                | The National Endowment for the Arts includes BQG as one of the eight best projects funded by its Design Arts program.                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| June 1990      | Logo contest culminates when a selection committee, comprised of prominent government representatives chooses logo to represent the BQG.                                                                                                                                                                 |
| September 1990 | 400 cyclists ride the route as part of a Century ride (100 miles)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| November 1990  | <i>The Brooklyn/Queens Greenway - A Design Study</i> receives a Merit Award from the American Society of Landscape Architects.                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Summer 1990    | New York State Department of Transportation agrees to complete engineering study for elevated bicycle/pedestrian path along Interborough Parkway, and to subsequently ensure its creation.                                                                                                               |

### PROJECTED DATES

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|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Spring 1991 | Volunteers designate the route by stenciling logo along the entire length of the path.                                                                                                    |
| Spring 1992 | Coalition releases a Brooklyn/Queens Greenway Guidebook.                                                                                                                                  |
| 1995        | New York City completes all enhancements to route, and the opening is celebrated with a gala event, marking the 100th anniversary of the first bicycle path in America, on Ocean Parkway. |