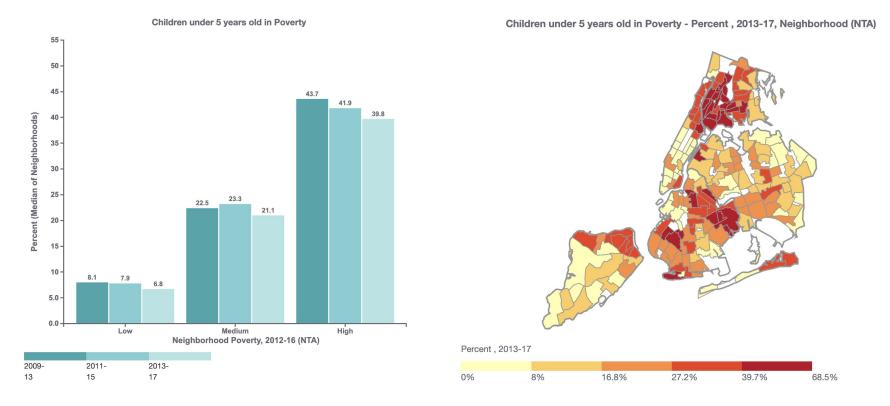


# FOR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

## Lead in NYC

WFACTAF.

### Housing as a Health Determinant: Lead



Source: NYC Environment & Health Data Portal (Housing Quality)

## Solutions: Public & Private Housing

- Local Law 1 has extensive measures that NYCHA must take to identify children under the age of 6 residing in NYCHA apartments. Under current City law, the term resides covers children under 6 who routinely spend 10 or more hours per week within a dwelling unit.
- Abatement Upon Apartment Turnover: Local Law 1 requires NYCHA to perform abatement before a new resident moves into an apartment.

### NEW YORK CITY'S GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE



### Our Parks are Critical Infrastructure: We Should Treat Them That Way

- Crucial contributors to New Yorkers' health and wellbeing
- Make our city more resilient to climate change
- Provide space for robust civic and community engagement
- Drivers of local economic development



NYC Parks by the Numbers

## 30,000 [6]

acres of land (14% of entire city) miles of waterfront (including 14 miles of beaches)

**1800** Basketball Courts

1700

parks

550 Community Gardens

ardens Playgrounds

15

65 Public Pools

2M Trees in Parks

Recreation Centers

51

nters Nature Centers

Golf Courses



NYC Parks Partners

Department of Parks and Recreation

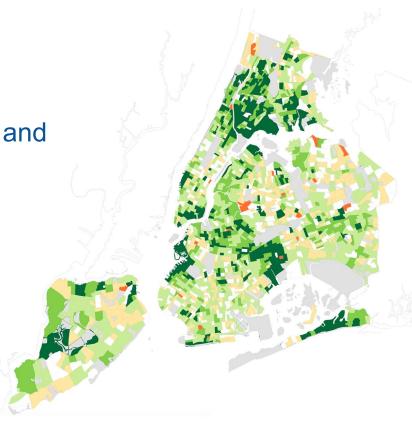
Nonprofit Conservancies and Alliances

**Friends of Groups** 

Licensees

Volunteers

**Advocates** 



### THE CHALLENGES

### History of Neglect

- NYC Parks Dept is chronically underfunded and understaffed.
- We have \$6 billion in deferred parks infrastructure maintenance. \*
- Maintenance has not kept pace with park usage and development.
- Park acreage has not kept pace with population growth and community needs.

### Inequitable System: How NYC Compares

- NYC is ranked outside of the top 10 urban parks systems overall.
- NYC is outside of the top 50 parks systems in playgrounds for children.\*
- Open space is on average two times smaller in low-income communities\*
- Open space is significantly smaller in majority Black neighborhoods.\*

\*TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND

### **COVID** Tipping Point

- More than ever, New Yorkers are relying on parks--in record numbers.
- NYC Parks got hit with a14% budget cut--second largest of any city agency.
- Park conditions are the worst reported since DPR started keeping track.
- 1 million New Yorkers lost access to local park during pandemic.
- Frozen procurement process has stalled \$1B in funded parks projects.

### WINNING SOLUTIONS

### Parks in Crisis: What is Needed Today

- The parks budget is critical and needs to be restored.
- Restore Parks Seasonal Staff Plan to ensure parks are open, clean and safe.
- Parks and Parks employees are essential prevent further staff cuts.
- Ensure NYC Parks volunteer networks have the resources they need.
- Fast-track shovel-ready parks construction projects.

## Long-Term Recovery:

### Take Care Of Our Green Infrastructure

- Increase the Parks Budget -- NYC spends far less on parks than most major cities.
- Pursue innovative public funding models for our parks.
- Help our nonprofits and volunteers do their work.

### Long-Term Recovery: Build Equitable Access For All New Yorkers

- Create a comprehensive cross-agency open space vision.
- Expand Open Streets, Schoolyards to Playgrounds and Greenways.
- Build new parks and playgrounds in areas that need them most.
- Increase access to our natural areas and waterfronts.
- Repair crumbling parks infrastructure.
- Fix the capital process: Make it faster and less costly to build and repair

### References & Resources

2021 NY4P Community Board District Profiles (Coming February 2021)

2020 NY4P & NYBC Report "Building the Future of New York – Parks and Open Space"

2015 NY4P City Council District Profiles

2018 Center for an Urban Futures <u>A New Leaf</u>

Trust for Public Land Park Scores Index

NY4P Home Page

### **THANK YOU**



## Benchmarking NYC Parks – ParkScore

FOR PUBLIC





## Community Revitalization MS 354 in Crown Heights







## Community Revitalization

MS 581 in East Flatbush





## Parks and Public Health

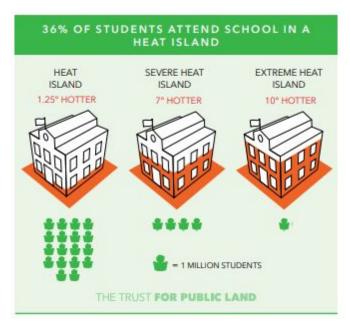
- Access to close-to-home nature is an integral part of healthy, livable neighborhoods.
- In the U.S., the strongest determinants of life expectancy are where people live and their socioeconomic status.
- Low-income neighborhoods and communities of color are disproportionately affected by poor health outcomes and are also more likely to lack access to high quality parks and open space, exacerbating those outcomes.

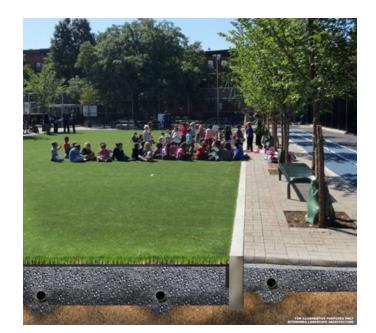
The New Hork Times PERSONAL HEALTH The Secret to Good Health May Be a Walk in the Park In Minneapolis-St. Paul, the nation's healthiest urban region, almost everyone lives within a 10minute walk of a good public park. Shouldn't we all?

La Cima Playground Opening in Bedford-Stuyvesant

THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC

## **Climate Resilience**







## **Outdoor Learning**





Posted by TBRIERY on SEPTEMBER 3, 2019



## **Outdoor Learning**



THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND

## Park Equity Plan

#### **1. ACHIEVE 100% OF RESIDENTS WITHIN A 10-MINUTE WALK TO A PARK**

- Boston and San Francisco reached 100%
- New York is at 99%, just 75,000 short
- Targeted creation of 70 parks in the Bronx, Queens, South Brooklyn, and Staten Island

#### 2. CREATE 100 NEW COMMUNITY PLAYGROUNDS & OUTDOOR LEARNING CENTERS

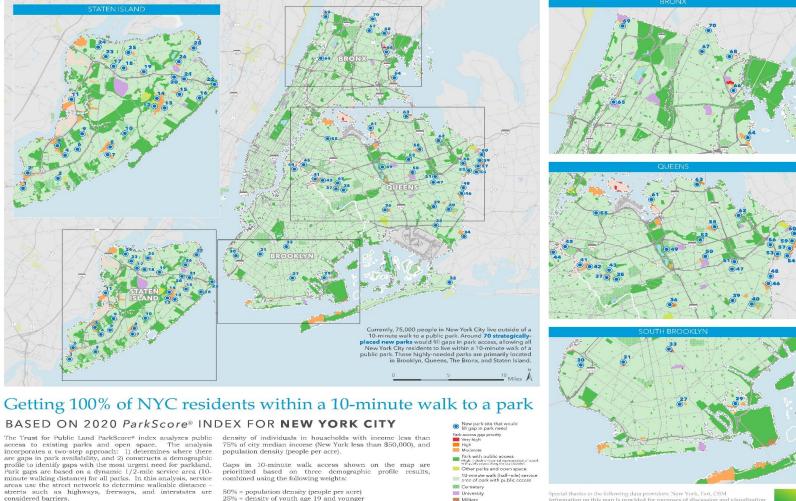
- NYC has only 2.1 playgrounds per 10,000 people, fewer than 68 of the top 100 cities.
- 2013 commitment of 290 green schoolyards in NYC not fully realized
- 200+ more opportunities at schools
- Extend TPL's proven model to Jointly Operated Playgrounds (260+)

#### 3. MORE PARK SPACE IN HIGH-NEED NEIGHBORHOODS

Develop plan to expand open space in high-need neighborhoods to address inequities:

- Open space in majority low-income communities is on average two times smaller than open space in majority high-income communities
- Open space in majority non-white communities is on average 3.2 times smaller and each open space acre serves 1.4 times more people than open space in majority white communities
- Open space in majority Black neighborhoods is on average 3.8 times smaller than open space in majority white neighborhoods





Demographic profiles are based on 2019 Forecast block groups provided by Esri to determine park need for density of youth,

25% = density of youth age 19 and younger

25% = density of individuals in households with income less than \$50,000

- Military
- Vacant zero population areas - City boundary
  - · County boundary

Information on this map is provided for purposes of discussion and visualization only, Map created by The Trust for Public Land on February 10, 2021. The Trust for Public Land and The Trust for Public Land logo are federally registered marks of The Trust for Public Land. Copyright © 2020 The Trust for Public Land. www.tpl.org



## Park Equity Plan and Jobs

How We Could Do It

An increase in capital funding for parks of **\$1 billion** over four years, which can be from:

- \$400 million in additional federal funding
- \$100 million in additional state funding
- \$150 million in new city funding for parks
- \$100 million in other city agency funding that can help parks
- \$50 million in funding from the health industry
- \$100 million in time-value of money and process savings from process streamlining
- \$100 million in efficiency savings through procurement reform and design-build

An increase in the parks baseline operating budget to **1% of the city budget**, up from 0.6% currently, so that existing and new parks are better staffed, maintained, and programmed.



### THE POTENTIAL OF

### NEW YORK CITY'S NATURAL AREAS



### What Are Natural Areas

#### FIGURE 2 NYC's Land Cover: 40.5% of NYC Is Green



Source: Natural Areas Conservancy Ecological Covertype Map7

#### FIGURE 3 NYC's Natural Areas: 11.6 % of NYC's Land Cover Is Natural Areas



Source: Natural Areas Conservancy Ecological Covertype Map<sup>8</sup>

## QUALITY OF LIFE

Improve Air Quality Cool Neighborhoods Capture Stormwater

## QUALITY OF LIFE

## CLIMATE RESILIENCE

Forested natural areas sequester 85% of carbon

### Wetlands mitigate flooding

## CLIMATE RESILIENCE

## **ACCESS AND EQUITY**

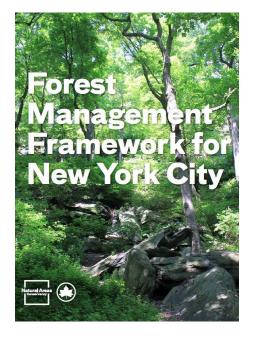


50% of New Yorkers experience nature only in NYC Parks.

 $\frac{1}{3}$  of NYC Parks lack access.

## **ACCESS AND EQUITY**







Wetlands Management Framework for New York City

# Luckily, We Have Plans!



# How Do We Make This a Reality?

**Prioritize care and access** to natural areas as a win/win for addressing climate change and increasing parks equity.

**Increase policy support** for forests and wetlands.

**Invest in Parks** (capital and expense), including natural areas.

Expand **job training** and create permanent **green jobs**.

Vatural Area



#### Natural Areas Conservancy

#### **THANK YOU!**

Sarah Charlop-Powers, Executive Director

EMAIL: sarah.charlop-powers@naturalareasnyc.org WEBSITE: naturalareasnyc.org

**Masoom Moitra** 

Community Planner- Designer & Director, El Puente's Green Light District February 18, 2021 NYLCV Candidate School



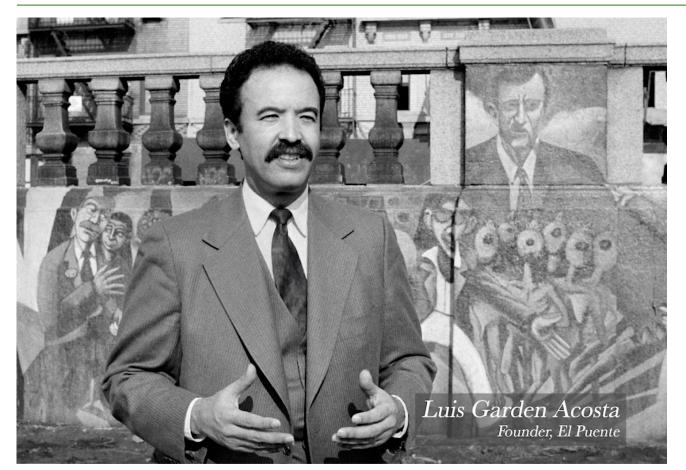
# "Our Air! / **Nuestro Aire!**" Parks & **Environmental Justice:** Equity is more than a **Buzzword**

Demonstrating the urgent need for equity and self-determination centered EJ policy and action around Parks & Toxic Air



## **EL PUENTE HISTORY & LEGACY**





El Puente is a community human rights institution that promotes leadership for peace and justice through the engagement of members (youth and adult) in the arts for social change, education, social justice organizing, wellness and environmental advocacy.

Founded in 1982 by Luis Garden Acosta, with Eugenio Maldonado and Frances Lucerna, El Puente was originally created as a response to an epidemic of gun violence among young people in the Southside of Williamsburg, Brooklyn.



## EL PUENTE LEGACY: ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE & AIR QUALITY

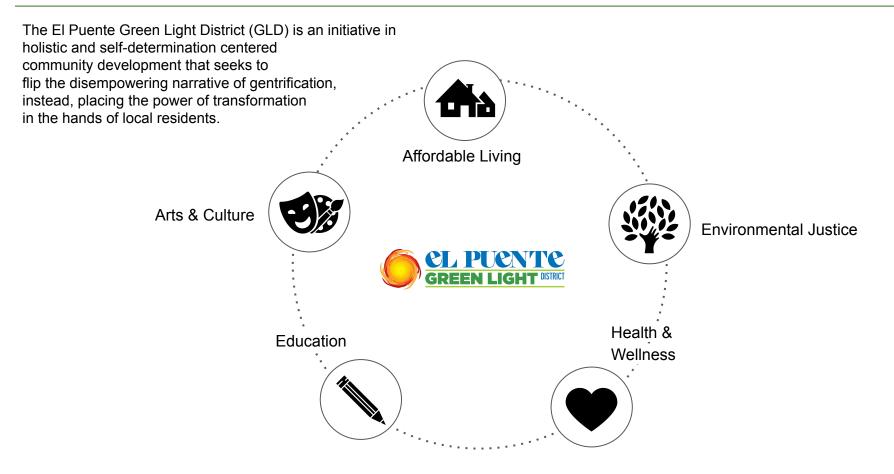


El Puente is a co-founder of the New York City Environmental Justice Alliance, to fight for waste equity, cleaner public transportation, and green infrastructure.

In the 90s, El Puente reached out to 5,000 of its Southside neighbors in a three-year asthma study that resulted in the first scientific, peer-reviewed article written by a community organization ever published by The American Journal of Public Health.

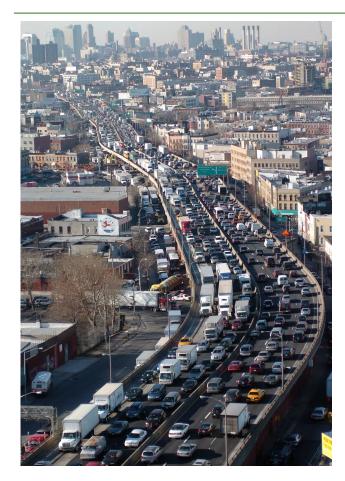
Building on this study, El Puente also studied indoor air pollution, as part of a major grant from the EPA.

## **EL PUENTE LEGACY: GREEN LIGHT DISTRICT**



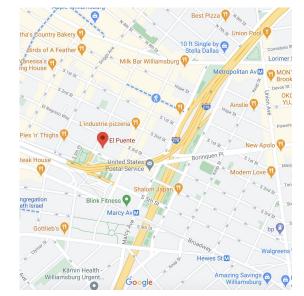
### AIR POLLUTION in SOUTHSIDE WILLIAMSBURG





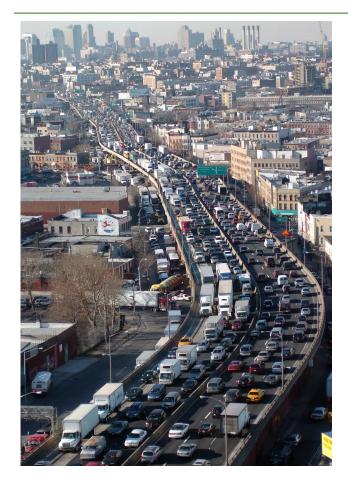
Poor air quality in Williamsburg is caused by:

- Traffic from Brooklyn Queens Expressway, Williamsburg bridge, and Bus depot
- Emissions from Industrial activities
- Lack of trees and greenery, which clean the air



### AIR POLLUTION in SOUTHSIDE WILLIAMSBURG

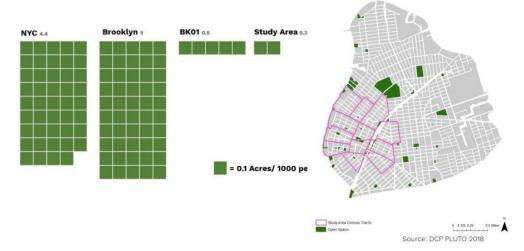




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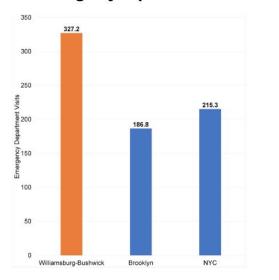
The study area has significantly less open space in comparison to other parts of NYC.



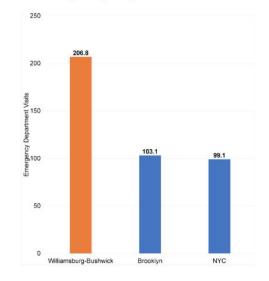
## **EFFECTS OF AIR POLLUTION**



Child Asthma Emergency Department Visits



#### Adult Asthma Emergency Department Visits



As a result, rates of asthma-related hospitalizations for children and adults <u>in</u> <u>Williamsburg and Bushwick are</u> <u>double those of Brooklyn and</u> <u>New York City</u> overall

Poor air quality is an equity issue because sources of pollution are more likely to be sited in communities of color and low income communities.

# People of color live with 66% more air pollution, US study finds

African Americans in the north-east and mid-Atlantic are exposed to 61% more pollution particles from burning gasoline

Source: NYCCAS, 2016

# **PROJECT ACTIVITIES**



### YOUTH-LED AIR QUALITY MONITORING



The air quality studies show us which are the safest and most polluted areas in the neighborhood and also the times of day that are most harmful.

Though we do not have our full results yet, we know that the state of air quality in our community is alarming. According to the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, while air quality has steadily improved across most of the city, improvements have been slower in North Brooklyn, comparatively.

# **ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE**



Communities like ours have an unfairly high risk of developing serious health issues from pollution.

Air pollution becomes an even more urgent issue in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Like air pollution, COVID also attacks respiratory systems and has been shown to disproportionately affect people of color.

According to a new nationwide study by Harvard University coronavirus patients in areas that had high levels of air pollution before the pandemic are more likely to die from the infection than patients in cleaner parts of the country.

Breathing in polluted air can cause many other respiratory diseases and chronic health conditions, including cancer, and has even been shown to shorten life expectancy.

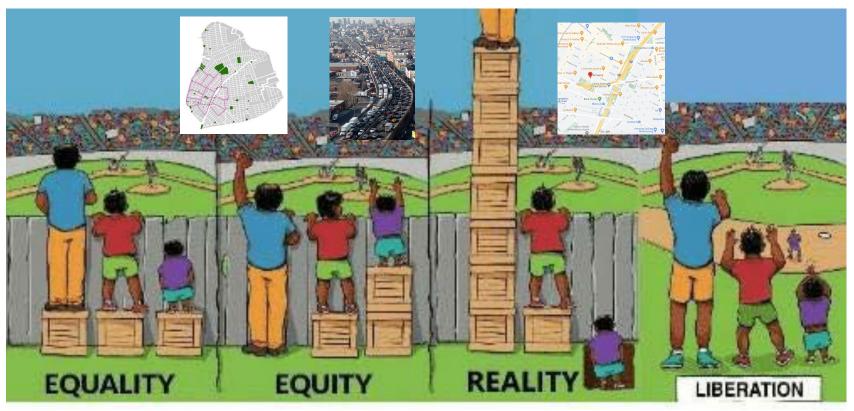




Mural titled "Living with Asthma," at the corner of Hewes St. and South 4th by Los Muralistas, El Puente

# **ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE**





PARKS IN EJ COMMUNITIES HAVE DIFFERENT ISSUES FROM OTHER PARKS IN NYC AND SERVE A UNIQUE PURPOSE IN TERMS OF MITIGATION AND PUBLIC HEALTH

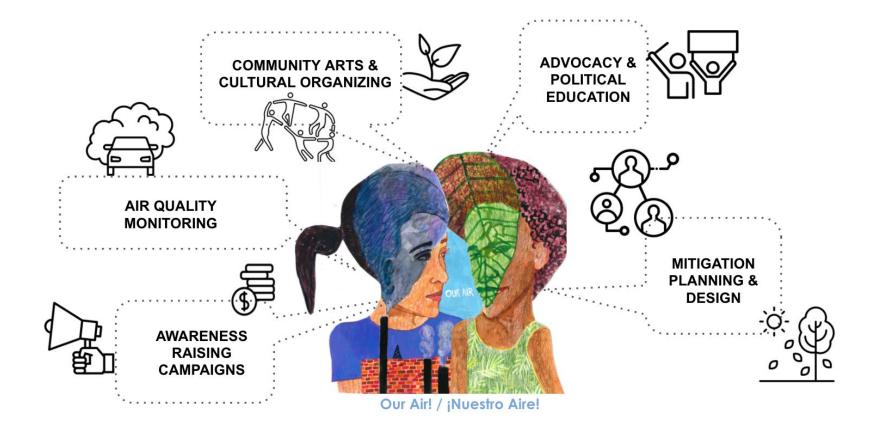


#### PUBLIC HEALTH & PARKS IN EJ COMMUNITIES LIKE OURS CAN ONLY BE TRANSFORMED THROUGH <u>DEDICATED</u> POLICIES AND ACTION THAT ACCOUNT FOR THE UNIQUE ISSUES AND NEEDS OF EJ COMMUNITIES AND

# AUTHENTIC EQUITY + SELF-DETERMINATION

THAT FOCUSES ON PARKS AS MITIGATION & PUBLIC HEALTH TOOLS

# **Our Air/ Nuestro Aire Campaign**



### YOUTH-LED AIR QUALITY MONITORING





The foundation of the Our Air campaign is youth-led citizen science. Sixty young people from El Puente's Williamsburg Leadership Center as well as students from El Puente Academy High School collected air quality data in South Williamsburg through mobile monitoring and counting trucks. We also partnered with Queens College's Barry Commoner Center and the NYC Department of the Health to install a network of stationary monitors throughout the neighborhood.

### YOUTH-LED AIR QUALITY MONITORING





In 2016, we led a pilot study of citizen scientists to study air quality in parks, called The Urban Lab for Open Spaces.

Our 2016 study found that peak levels of air pollution at Laguardia playground are dangerously high, **4-6 times higher** than peak levels recommended by national standards.

### **AWARENESS RAISING & POLITICAL EDUCATION**







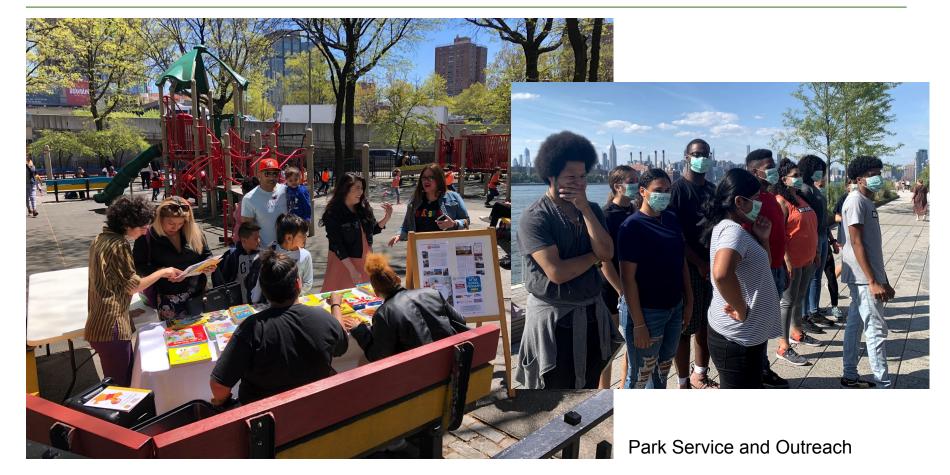






### **AWARENESS RAISING CAMPAIGNS**





### **AWARENESS RAISING & POLITICAL EDUCATION**





## **PROJECT ACTIVITIES**



### **AWARENESS RAISING, ADVOCACY & POLITICAL EDUCATION**



## **PROJECT ACTIVITIES**



### **AWARENESS RAISING, ADVOCACY & POLITICAL EDUCATION**



## **OUR AIR 5-POINT ACTION PLATFORM**



https://elpuente.us/our-air-nuestro-aire

El Puente's campaign for clean air and community wellness DEMANDS:



1.The Right to Breathe Clean Air
2. A Public Health Emergency Taskforce
3. Health as a Human Right
4. Cultural Organizing, Awareness Raising & Education
5. Greening for a Safe Future

## **OUR AIR 5-POINT ACTION PLATFORM**



#### https://elpuente.us/our-air-nuestro-aire



Figure 2.1.2 Existing Condition of Williamsburg Bridge-BQE On-Ramp Source: Google Earth Imagery (2019), with Original Annotations.





Next NYC Candidate School Heat & Coastal Resiliency Monday, February 22nd at 5:30pm - 7:30pm