

June 15, 2020

Commissioner Mitchell J. Silver, FAICP
New York City Department of Parks & Recreation
830 Fifth Ave
New York, NY 10065

Dear Commissioner Silver,

We need 50 Kent open now.

50 Kent is a 1.8-acre green space that is part of the long-awaited Bushwick Inlet Park. It has been used as a popup space for intermittent use during the park's development phase, but we need it open for wider community use today.

Greenpoint and Williamsburg have amongst the lowest levels of open space per person in the city. One of the community wins during the Bloomberg-era rezoning was a waterfront park surrounding the Bushwick Inlet to help mitigate the area's severe shortage of open space. We've been waiting 15 years and the park is not close to being completed. How much longer must we wait?

At North Brooklyn Neighbors, we have fought alongside allies and residents to transform the waterfront to preserve this space for community use and provide access to the natural environment. The city's foot dragging on the project essentially amounts to negligence.

We understand the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic is having unprecedented impacts on the city's budget, but officials have an obligation to make social distancing safe and accessible for New Yorkers. Opening an underused green space is a no-brainer when our goal is to stop the spread. We're counting on our city's leadership to think differently about how we successfully get through this moment and opening 50 Kent is one important step in ensuring we have the open space we need.

The budget crisis caused by the pandemic puts the timeline for the park's completion further into the distant future. And as you know, other parks in the neighborhood are overflowing with residents looking to enjoy the outdoors. It is critical this usable space is available to the community.

We greatly appreciate your thoughtful consideration and look forward to seeing you at the open 50 Kent in the coming days.

Sincerely,



Anthony Buissereth
Executive Director

cc: Mayor Bill de Blasio, City of New York
Public Advocate Jumaane Williams, City of New York
Council Member Stephen Levin, NY City Council
Martin Maher, Brooklyn Borough Commissioner, NYC Parks
Mary Salig, Director of North Brooklyn Parks, NYC Parks