

A Brief History of Flushing Meadows Corona Park

Flushing Meadows Corona Park (FMCP) is the largest park in Queens, comprising 897.5 acres of athletic fields, landscaped meadows, lakes, fountains, playgrounds, stadia, museums and a zoo.

Prior to 1939, the park was a massive dumping ground for ashes. Parks Commissioner Robert Moses and other city planners laid out an elaborate scheme to replace these ashes with beauty and excitement. They proposed transforming the site into a World's Fair.

A substantial percentage of the Fair's profits were to be allocated toward the creation of FMCP. Unfortunately, the 1939 World's Fair failed as a financial venture, leaving the dream for a park unrealized. Subsequently, in the early 1960's a new World's Fair Corporation formed to sponsor a sequel to 1939, with Robert Moses again at the project's helm. Like the first one, the 1964 Fair failed to yield profits, but it left behind several prominent structures, which have provided a foundation for the unique urban oasis Moses had envisioned. In 1967, the fairgrounds were officially turned over to NYC Parks.

Today, FMCP hosts an array of recreational amenities. FMCP is home to the Al Oerter Recreation center that offers various programming for all ages. A computer resource center at the site offers both free and instructional time slots. There are racquetball courts, an open fitness track and adaptable sport and fitness opportunities. You can also enjoy the Aquatic Center and World Ice Arena. This facility contains a state-of-the-art indoor Olympic-sized swimming pool and regulation-sized ice hockey rink. The Queens Wildlife Center, Queens Museum, Queens Theatre and Hall of Science have all undergone major renovations. Of course, the park remains a haven for the millions that play, picnic, read, relax and bathe in the sun.

There is a Park Administrator and administration staff who oversee all facets of the daily operations, programming and planning of the Park. For more information, visit the NYC Parks website at nyc.gov/parks or call (718) 760-6565.

Professional Sports Facilities

Citi Field (F8): Built in 2008, Citi Field is home to the New York Mets professional baseball club. For ticket information, visit newyork.mets.mlb.com or call (718) 507-TIXX.

USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center (D-E11-12): This sporting complex consists of both the Louis Armstrong Stadium and the Arthur Ashe Stadium. The National Tennis Center is home to the US Open, one of the four prestigious grand slam tennis tournaments. During the rest of the year, courts are available for public play, instructional programs and tournaments. For more information, visit the United States Tennis Association's website at usta.com or call (718) 760-6200.

Concessions

World Ice Arena public ice skating rink (G11-12): Open all year. Call (718) 760-9001.

Pitch N Putt Golf and Miniature Golf (G12): Open all year. Call (718) 271-8182.

Carousel (B14): Open to the public from April through November. Visit fantasyforestnyc.com or call (718) 788-2676.

World's Fair Marina Restaurant (B5): Open all year. Call (718) 898-1200.

Terrace on the Park Catering Hall (B13): Open all year. Call (718) 592-5000.

Wheel Fun Boat & Bike Rental (D-E17): Visit wheelfunrentals.com or call (917) 231-5519.

Cultural Institutions

New York Hall of Science (B12): Built for the 1964 World's Fair, this facility is New York City's only hands-on science and technology museum. Visit nysci.org or call (718) 699-0005.

The Queens Museum (C13): This visual arts center is located in the New York City Building. It is home to the Panorama of New York City, the World's largest architectural scale model of an urban area. Visit queensmuseum.org or call (718) 592-9700.

Queens Wildlife Conservation Society (Queens Zoo) (C13): North American animals are exhibited on naturalistic grounds, allowing an unusual intimacy between visitor and wildlife. The Children's Farm offers exhibitions of domestic animals. Visit queenszoo.com or call (718) 271-1500.

Queens Theatre (D14): The theatre presents a variety of professional performing artists and serves as a showcase for local arts groups. visit queenstheatre.org or call (718) 760-0064.

Queens Botanical Garden (I13): The 39-acre botanical garden is filled with garden displays and tree and flower collections. Visit queensbotanical.org or call (718) 886-3800.

Sports and Recreation

Aquatic Center & Ice Rink (G11-12): Open all year. Call (718) 271-7572.

Al Oerter Recreation Center (H12): Open all year. Call (718) 353-7853.

Athletic Fields: The Park contains baseball diamonds, soccer fields, tennis courts, volleyball courts and cricket fields, all available by permit. Basketball and handball courts are also located in the park. For permit information, visit nyc.gov/parks or call (718) 393-7272.

Model Airplane Field (D-E20): This field is located by Meadow Lake.

Playground for All Children (B15): This play facility provides recreation for all youngsters and is ADA accessible.

Playgrounds: The Park has six other playgrounds: Buzz Vollmer Playground (F12), Jurassic Playground (C18), Triassic Playground (E21-22), Lawrence Street Playground (H13-14), Mauro Playground (F25) and Saturn Playground (E12).

On the Waterfront

Meadow Lake (D18): This 93-acre manmade lake is New York City's largest, where recreation seekers can enjoy boating, biking, barbecuing, picnicking, a model airplane field and the Jurassic and Triassic Playgrounds. For groups of more than 20 people, a permit is required to picnic and barbeque. For permit information, visit nyc.gov/parks or call (718) 393-7272.

TASCA (E18): The American Small Craft Association. Learn to sail on Meadow Lake. For nominal fees, expert

volunteers offer lessons for beginners. To register or for more information, visit sailtasca.org.

ROW New York (E18): ROW NY teaches competitive rowing paired with rigorous academic support to empower youth from under-resourced communities. For more information, visit rownewyork.org.

Hong Kong Dragon Boat Festival NY (E18): HKDBF-NY organizes a yearly dragon boat racing competition held at Meadow Lake. For more information, visit hkdbf-ny.org.

Willow Lake (D24): This 46.7-acre lake is the park's designated freshwater wetland. While the lake is open year-round, there are seasonal kayak and canoe programs offered by the Urban Park Rangers and the FMCP Conservancy. The Pat Dolan Trail (C-F25-26), which traverses the park from 72nd Rd/Grand Central Pkwy to 73rd Terrace/Van Wyck Expy, connects park users with the nature trail and a diverse ecosystem of plants, wildlife and migratory birds. There is a Bird Blind (E25) at the southern tip of the lake. For a listing of scheduled tours in this area, visit nyc.gov/parks.

Flushing Bay Promenade (E6): A greenway along the river front, it extends from LaGuardia Airport to the Van Wyck Expy.

World's Fair Marina (E6): Open all year. For more information, visit nyc.gov/parks or call (718) 478-0480.

Special Events

There are many free events and celebrations offered in the park during the entire year. To obtain a permit application, visit nyc.gov/parks or call (718) 760-6560.

Safety and Education

The Passerelle Building, located directly opposite the National Tennis Center parking lot, is the headquarters of the Parks Enforcement Patrol (PEP). These Parks Department peace officers patrol the park, enforce rules and regulations, and are present to ensure your visit to the park is safe. The Urban Park Rangers also patrol the park to protect its natural resources. The Rangers offer free nature tours and educational programs. To learn more about Ranger programs, visit nyc.gov/parks.

Flushing Meadows-Corona Park Conservancy

The Flushing Meadows-Corona Park Conservancy was founded in 2002 by Patricia (Pat) M. Dolan and a group of civic leaders from the Borough of Queens in recognition of the need for an organization devoted to the restoration and preservation of the Park. The primary purpose of the Flushing Meadows-Corona Park Conservancy is to advance the restoration, maintenance and safety of the Park and to foster public awareness of and support for the Park.

In April 2012, the nature trail at Willow Lake was dedicated as the Pat Dolan Trail, in recognition of Patricia M. Dolan and her 20 years of service and advocacy on behalf of local communities. Pat was instrumental in working with former Borough President Helen Marshall in raising millions of dollars for the Kew Gardens Hills Library, founded the Kew Gardens Hills Civic Association, directed the Queens Network at the Queens Community House for 15 years, and served for 20 years on Community Board 8.

Following Pat's examples, the mission of the Flushing Meadows-Corona Park Conservancy is to preserve, maintain and restore the natural, historical and cultural integrity of Flushing Meadows Corona Park in order to ensure continued recreational and educational opportunities for the surrounding communities. The Flushing Meadows-Corona Park Conservancy works closely with NYC Parks through the FMCP Administrator and Parks Queens Commissioner.

For more information: www.fmcp.org

 **Flushing Meadows-Corona Park Conservancy**

To volunteer with the Conservancy in beautifying our park, please email Jean C. Silva, President of the Flushing Meadows-Corona Park Conservancy, at jeanfmcp@gmail.com.

FLUSHING MEADOWS CORONA PARK

is the largest park in Queens.

JOIN US

in making it the World's Park!



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for PARKS**

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Map: Meira Berkower, NYC Parks Photographs: Jean C. Silva
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FLUSHING MEADOWS CORONA PARK

"The World's Park"

Map & Guide

Flushing Meadows Corona Park

MONUMENTS AND SCULPTURES

The following Monuments and Sculptures can be located on the map by their corresponding coordinates. On one axis, you'll find alphabetical letters; on the other, numbers. Use the coordinates to find the approximate location of listed items. Please visit our park to take advantage of this free, self-guided tour of amazing examples of public art.

- A THE UNISPHERE (D13)** This monumental stainless steel globe, standing 140 feet tall, was presented to the 1964 World's Fair by U.S. Steel. Today, it is the park's centerpiece, Queens' most recognizable symbol, and a designated NYC Landmark.
- B FORM (D12)** Designed by Jose Dirivera for the 1964 World's Fair. This sculpture consists of a stainless steel curve which sits atop a polished granite base.
- C FREEDOM OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT (C12)** This bronze figurative sculpture, which stands 28 feet tall, was fashioned by Marshall M. Fredericks for the 1964 World's Fair.
- D GEORGE WASHINGTON (E12)** This cast of a Donald DeLue sculpture, which originally appeared at the 1939 World's Fair, is surrounded by newly planted cherry trees.
- E WORLD'S FAIR FLAGPOLES (F13)** Topped by two stylized art deco American Eagles, these poles stand as a tribute to the 1939 World's Fair. They are the tallest flagpoles in City parks and stand 140 feet tall.
- F THE ROCKET THROWER (E13)** This work of art was created by Donald DeLue for the 1964 World's Fair.
- G UNTITLED (D13)** Images from the two World's Fairs and the present day park were sandblasted in black granite by Matt Mulligan as part of the 1993 reconstruction of the Unisphere's landscape.
- H THE WHISPERING COLUMN OF JERASH (E13)** This marble column, from an ancient Roman Temple built in the Middle East, was a gift from King Hussein of Jordan to the 1964 World's Fair.
- I THE EXCEDRA (D15)** A Semicircular stone bench commemorates the location of the Vatican Pavilion at the 1964 World's Fair.
- J TIME CAPSULES (D14)** A granite monument marks the spot where two time capsules are buried underground. These historic capsules, deposited September 23, 1938, and October 16, 1965, are a record of the 20th Century meant to endure for 5,000 years.
- K FORM IN TRANSIT (B11)** Created by Theodore Roszak for the 1964 World's Fair, this 43-foot long piece of steel and aluminum was designed to convey movement in space.

L TERRACE ON THE PARK (B1) During the 1964-1965 World's Fair, this building had the Port Authority Heliport and the "Top of the Fair" restaurant. Today, it is a private catering hall with a ballroom and a penthouse suite, featuring an outdoor reception chapel area in a garden setting.

M BOATHOUSE (E18) Built for the 1939 World's Fair with some facade upgrades completed for the 1964 Fair. This facility on Meadow Lake is used by TASCAR, ROW NY and the Hong Kong Dragon Boat Festival of NY.

N CANDELA STRUCTURES (D-E7) Two open air modern structures built for the 1964 World's Fair. They are based on the designs of Felix Candela.

O OLMSTED CENTER (C10) Designed by the architectural firm of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, it was originally built as the 1964-1965 World's Fair Corporation's administrative offices.

P CAROUSEL (B14) It was combined from two Coney Island Carousels for the 1964-1965 World's Fair.

Q PASSERELLE (E-F11) The ramp above the Passerelle building was built as the main entrance gate to the 1964-1965 World's Fair. Today, it houses the Queens Recreation, Parks Training, Parks Enforcement Patrol (PEP), Parks Opportunity Program (POP), and the City Parks Foundation.

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Legend

- Park Land
- Water
- Roads
- Paths
- Park Buildings
- Playgrounds
- Tennis
- Soccer Fields 1-9
- Baseball Fields 10-16
- Cricket Fields 17-19
- ♠ Restroom
- ♠ Picnic/BBQ
- ♠ Parking Lot
- ♠ Subway/Train
- ♠ Bus
- ♠ Handball
- ♠ Basketball
- ♠ Volleyball
- ♠ Entrance

