

## MAS Testimony on the Executive FY27 Budget for the Department of Parks & Recreation

June 10, 2026

The Municipal Art Society of New York (MAS) is a longtime advocate of New York City's public realm, championing the equitable design and maintenance of open spaces citywide. As a member of the Play Fair for Parks Coalition and the Forest for All NYC Coalition, **we continue to urge Mayor Mamdani to fulfill his campaign promise to allocate 1% of the City budget to the Department of Parks & Recreation (NYC Parks).**

We commend the mayor's decision to baseline an additional \$15 million for NYC Parks staffing and \$2 million in temporary funding for tree planting capacity in the May Executive Budget for Fiscal Year 2027 (FY27). These are significant improvements in funding from the January Preliminary Budget, but still a reduction from what was allocated in the FY26 Adopted Budget.

We also applaud the Mayor's Office of Climate and Environmental Justice (MOCEJ) for the recent release of the city's first-ever Urban Forest Plan. The publication of this plan, which includes a goal of 30% city tree canopy coverage by 2040, represents a meaningful effort to preserve and expand our urban forest. However, the Executive Budget lacks dedicated funding to implement the plan.

NYC Parks is responsible for the care of over 30,000 acres of parkland across the five boroughs, and more than half of the city's tree canopy. Between rising temperatures, flood risks, and concerns over our air quality, investing in the urban forest is essential to maximizing New York City's livability for generations to come. Our tree canopies also have the capacity to disrupt climate inequities across our city, lowering emissions and mitigating flooding in our most vulnerable neighborhoods.

**MAS stands with the Forest for All NYC Coalition to call for \$150 million to fund the Urban Forest Plan in FY27 so that our city can reach its 30% tree canopy goal by 2040.** This funding will be allocated toward sufficient staffing, tree maintenance, new tree planting, workforce development programs, and tree health research and monitoring. Without adequate investment in our parks, it becomes increasingly challenging to kickstart new initiatives like the Urban Forest Plan, as well as to maintain existing public open spaces. The plan's dual mission to both plant and preserve trees further underscores the need to fund our parks and public spaces holistically. With this new roadmap in hand, it's time that the City commit funding for the Urban Forest Plan and 1% for NYC Parks for a resilient and healthy future for New Yorkers across the five boroughs.

Sincerely,



Keri Butler  
President, Municipal Art Society of New York