

# Scope Meetings and How to Prepare for Them

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Physical changes happening in parks are a great opportunity for community involvement, and residents can have a tangible impact on the public space in their neighborhood by contributing ideas about park design. Community participation in the design process leads to better parks in two ways: parks are built that better serve the needs of their users, and people who share their ideas get invested in the park and become long-term stewards.

The Capital Projects division of the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation designs new parks and plans renovations for existing ones. One of the best opportunities to get involved in the planning and design process is at the **scope meeting**. At scope meetings, Parks staff, the designer, elected officials, residents, and community board representatives come together at the site to share ideas about the future park or park to be transformed. The designer gathers ideas from everyone present and considers them when preparing the park's design.

**Volunteers and community organizations are encouraged to attend scope meetings and contribute their ideas. Contact your Partnerships for Parks Outreach Coordinator or you local Community Board to learn about upcoming scope meetings.**

If you're planning on attending a scope meeting, it's best to spend some time before the meeting reflecting on the park space and its uses—and thinking about how to communicate your observations to the designer.

## **Suggestions to help you prepare for the scope meeting:**

- Instead of bringing specific designs, share general ideas and observations about your park's users, uses, and resources for the designer to interpret. Spend some time watching how the park is used at different times and by different people; looking carefully is the first step to understanding what should be improved and what should be preserved.
- Talk to people in your community and find out what they want. Partnerships for Parks can provide survey templates and suggestions about how to collect information and ideas from other park users.
- Encourage people to come to the scope meeting, and if they can't make it record their observations and share them with the designer.
- Ask the following questions as you're preparing for the meeting:
  - ✓ How do you and your community use the park now? What are your favorite places or the most well-used spots?
  - ✓ What parts of the park are underused? Why? Are there problem areas that flood, need lighting, or contain unused equipment?
  - ✓ Who uses the park the most: children, teenagers, dog-walkers, the elderly?
  - ✓ What neighborhood resources are nearby? What is lacking? Does your community need active recreational facilities like ballfields, or benches and picnic tables for relaxation?

