



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael Gianaris

## Hunters Point Library Opens in Queens

MICHAEL GIANARIS September 25, 2019

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Queens Public Library (QPL) President and CEO Dennis M. Walcott, Deputy Mayor for Operations Laura Anglin, New York City Department of Design and Construction (DDC) Commissioner Lorraine Grillo, Queens Borough President Melinda Katz, Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer, New York State Senator Michael Gianaris, New York State Assemblywoman Catherine T. Nolan, New York State Assemblywoman Aravella Simotas and hundreds of customers, QPL staff and volunteers, community leaders, and members of the public today celebrated the grand opening of Hunters Point Library.

Located at 47-40 Center Boulevard and designed by Steven Holl Architects, the \$41.5 million library brings to 66 the total number of QPL locations across the borough. It is the first new branch since the completion of Long Island City Library in 2007, and New York City's 217<sup>th</sup> branch library.

The opening ceremony held this afternoon featured students from PS/IS 78 greeting guests in several languages plus the Hunters Point Community Middle School band entertaining guests inside. A boat from the New York Fire Department (FDNY) provided a water show from the nearby shoreline before the traditional ribbon cutting at the library's main entrance.

*The New York Times* recently called the brand new structure "one of the finest public buildings New York has produced this century." The 22,000-square-foot building is 82 feet high and oriented vertically, with interior stairs that rise from an open-spaced entry through six levels up to a rooftop bleacher-style seating and reading area. The building's concrete shell is load-bearing to allow for a large open atrium in the interior, with cantilevered floors extending from the ends of the building containing adult, teen and children's reading areas, as well as a cyber center and a ground floor meeting room that can seat up to 140 people.

The concrete structure of the building is exposed and aluminum painted, giving the exterior a subtle sparkle. Inside, warm bamboo creates an inviting social space, open to the

community and offering engaging spaces for all ages. Natural light enters through the large irregularly shaped glass cut-outs in the sides of the building offering spectacular views of the East River, the United Nations and the east side of Manhattan on one side and the growing community of Long Island City on the other. The project also includes a separate structure for New York State Parks staff, plus landscaping along North 47<sup>th</sup> Road adjacent to the site. The building is located on a redeveloped brownfield site and is designed to achieve LEED Silver certification for environmental sustainability.

“We are incredibly grateful for the teamwork, talent and tenacity of library staff, government agencies, elected officials and the community that brought this spectacular building to life,” said Queens Public Library President and CEO Dennis M. Walcott. “As remarkable as this building is, there is far more to a library than its design and physical structure that makes it soar. It is the experience of coming to a place that welcomes you, no matter who you are or where you are from, and interacting with other people who are striving for something more, and staff who want only to help. That is the promise we are committed to fulfilling not only at Hunters Point Library, but also at every location across our system.”

**“At long last, Hunters Point Library will finally open as the jewel of our neighborhood we envisioned when we first drew the plans. I’m proud to have provided support to make this project a reality and look forward to our community enjoying it for years to come,” said Senate Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris.**

Part of the [Queens Public Library](#) system, the new branch is one of 66 locations across the borough and offers a collection of more than 50,000 books, periodicals and other materials in

several languages, including more than 2,800 items in Chinese and over 2,200 in Spanish. The library provides numerous educational and cultural programs for people of all ages and includes QPL's first-ever environmental center.

The new library will be manned by 22 staff members, including three Children's Librarians, three Adult Librarians, and one Teen Librarian. To accommodate the growing number of families with young children in the neighborhood, the Children's Room features an early childhood area with toys and board books. The Library will also offer robust programming for its young visitors and their caregivers.

The new library includes a [Percent for Art](#) installation by artist Julianne Swartz. Entitled *Four Directions from Hunters Point*, it is comprised of four circular portals in various positions around the building with lenses and reflective materials that disorient viewers and offer abstract views of the site and surrounding areas. The portals are intended to mirror the fundamental purpose of the library, where visitors seek out information but then find themselves transported to new realities with varying perspectives.

Both the design of the library and the Percent for Art installation have reviewed awards for Excellence in Design from the [NYC Public Design Commission](#).

Hunters Point Library was designed by Steven Holl Architects under the Department of Design and Construction's [Design and Construction Excellence program](#), which pre-selects

and pre-qualifies design firms to work on certain DDC public buildings projects. The program is designed to decrease the amount of time required for DDC to procure design services, while ensuring the highest levels of quality and professionalism in construction projects managed by the agency. Landscape design was by Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, Inc.

The general contractor for the project was Triton Structural; structural engineering services were by Robert Silman & Associates; mechanical, electrical and plumbing engineering was by ICOR Associates, Inc.; lighting was designed by L'Observatoire International; LEED status was by ADS Engineering; and civil engineering services were provided by Langan Engineering & Environmental Services.

**Hunters Point Library Hours:**

Monday: 9am-8pm

Tuesday: 1pm-6pm

Wednesday: 10am-6pm

Thursdays: 12pm-8pm

Fridays: 10am-6pm

Saturdays: 10am-5pm

Sundays: Closed

## **About Queens Public Library**

Queens Public Library is one of the largest and busiest public library systems in the United States, dedicated to serving the most ethnically and culturally diverse area in the country. An independent, non-profit organization founded in 1896, Queens Public Library offers free access to a collection of more than 5 million books and other materials in multiple languages, technology and digital resources, and more than 87,500 educational, cultural, and civic programs a year. It consists of 66 locations, including branch libraries, a Central Library, seven adult learning centers, a technology lab, two universal pre-kindergartens, and two teen centers.