



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brian Kavanagh

## Emily Warren Roebling Plaza Opens, Completing Brooklyn Bridge Park as Designed

BRIAN KAVANAGH December 9, 2021

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**Mayor de Blasio, Brooklyn Bridge Park President, Elected Officials, and Community Cut Ribbon on Final Section of Brooklyn Bridge Park**

*The space underneath the iconic Brooklyn Bridge is named for Emily Warren Roebling*

NEW YORK—Mayor Bill de Blasio, Brooklyn Bridge Park President Eric Landau, elected officials and community leaders today cut the ribbon on the final section of Brooklyn Bridge

Park (BBP), completing the Park as originally designed, a significant milestone for BBP and New York City. The new section of parkland pays tribute to the rich history of the Brooklyn Bridge and is named in honor of Emily Warren Roebling who is known for her work ensuring the completion of the Brooklyn Bridge.

This flexible public plaza space adds two acres of parkland and connects the DUMBO section of Brooklyn Bridge Park with the southern piers, a crucial connection point that enhances the flow of pedestrian traffic in the park and provides a moment to observe the incredible Brooklyn Bridge from below. Emily Warren Roebling Plaza features a large hardscaped area designed with concrete pavers that echo the pattern and engineering of the Bridge above, and is surrounded by landscaped trees, lawns, and benches. The adjacent Empire Fulton Ferry lawn reopened earlier this year after renovations to better connect the two spaces. This project also includes the installation of over one hundred protective bollards stretching from Old Fulton Street and Furman Street to Water Street and New Dock Street, for enhanced pedestrian safety.

“Brooklyn Bridge Park is a spectacular example of how our administration has delivered unprecedented public access to New York City’s waterfront,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “The completion of Brooklyn Bridge Park with the addition of this iconic new space beneath the Brooklyn Bridge, fittingly named for Emily Warren Roebling, is a tremendous accomplishment for the borough and the City. Just over 10 years ago, this was an abandoned waterfront, and today it’s an 85 acre urban oasis enjoyed by millions of people.”

“Today, we cut the ribbon on Emily Warren Roebling Plaza, the long-awaited connection between DUMBO and the rest of Brooklyn Bridge Park. The addition of the Plaza transforms the Brooklyn waterfront remarkably, granting Brooklynites greater accessibility to public space, which generations of friends and families can enjoy,” said **Deputy Mayor for Housing and Economic Development Vicki Been**. “As we celebrate the final phase of Brooklyn Bridge

Park, we honor the legacy of lead engineer Emily Warren Roebling, a New Yorker who made history as the woman who brought the construction of the Brooklyn Bridge to completion.”

“Exactly one year after breaking ground, Emily Warren Roebling Plaza is now open to the public, completing Brooklyn Bridge Park as originally designed. We are grateful to Mayor de Blasio, elected officials, our Board of Directors, community partners, Michael Van Valkenberg and Associates, Kelco Construction, and Park staff, all of whom have been dedicated to ensuring the success of Brooklyn Bridge Park,” said **Eric Landau, Brooklyn Bridge Park President**. “We look forward to welcoming visitors into this richly historic and iconic space. The Brooklyn Bridge would not have been completed without Emily Warren Roebling and it’s quite fitting that Brooklyn Bridge Park is now completed with the Plaza that bears her name.”

“The opening of the final section of Brooklyn Bridge Park is a dream realized. Increasing public access and adding open space is integral to improving the quality of life for New Yorkers throughout our city, and that is not a luxury, but a necessity,” said **NYC Parks Commissioner Gabrielle Fialkoff**. “With the addition of this space under the majestic Brooklyn Bridge, this park fortifies itself as a coveted destination for those seeking recreation, relaxation, and an opportunity to admire history. We are thrilled that this section will bear the name of Emily Warren Roebling, so we can never forget her role as the woman responsible for bringing the construction of the Brooklyn Bridge to the finish line.”

“It is fitting to name this final portion of the park under the Brooklyn Bridge after the woman who saw through the completion of one of the greatest bridges the world over,” said **Congresswoman Nydia Velázquez**. “Like this park, it took 14 years to build the Brooklyn Bridge and there’s a pattern here: women got the job done! Emily Warren Roebling Plaza marks the completion of a continuous 1.3 mile-long waterfront park for residents, families, and tourists alike to enjoy. Congratulations on this milestone for Brooklyn’s greatest park under the

world's greatest bridge!"

"Brooklyn Bridge Park has long been an oasis for me and so many other visitors, in Brooklyn and beyond," said **Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams**. "The opening of Emily Warren Roebling Plaza today not only points to a vibrant future for this incredible space, but also pays homage to a historical figure whose contributions to our borough and city are often overlooked. I was proud to allocate \$1.5 million dollars toward making this day possible, and thank Brooklyn Bridge Park for their tireless efforts over the years to make this space an amenity for all Brooklynites."

"The opening of Emily Warren Roebling Plaza is cause for celebration," said **State Senator Brian Kavanagh**. "This marks the completion of the final section of Brooklyn Bridge Park, allowing local residents and visitors to fully enjoy all aspects of the park that was promised over a decade ago and has become one of New York's great public open spaces. It is a fitting tribute that this section of the park is named after Emily Warren Roebling, who was a driving force behind the construction of the Brooklyn Bridge more than a century ago, an astounding achievement in its time, that played a major role in uniting New York as one of the world's great cities."

"It's especially fitting that today's significant milestone – opening Brooklyn Bridge Park's final section of parkland – pays long-overdue homage to Emily Warren Roebling," said **Assemblymember Jo Anne Simon**. "Emily Warren Roebling was ahead of her time, a persistent woman whose vital role in building the iconic Brooklyn Bridge we enshrine with the beautiful Emily Warren Roebling Plaza. She was intelligent and savvy, an advocate for equal rights, and had an aptitude for navigating New York politics! Thank you to the Brooklyn Bridge Park for their incredible work to provide access to parkland and beautify our waterfront."

“We’ve all been thinking about this day for so long that it’s hard to believe that it is nearly here,” said **Michael Van Valkenburgh, President and CEO of Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, Inc.** “Everyone at MVVA is thrilled to see the final piece of Brooklyn Bridge Park, located on a portion of the waterfront inaccessible for more than 20 years, open to the public at last. We can’t wait to see people enjoy this new plaza, named in honor of the amazing builder who completed the iconic bridge just overhead.”

“This is a phenomenal day for New York City,” said **Nancy Webster, Executive Director of Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy.** “Back in the 1980’s, the Conservancy emerged as a leader in the citizens’ movement to advocate for the creation and funding of Brooklyn Bridge Park, and we are overjoyed to celebrate the opening of the Park’s final piece — Emily Warren Roebling Plaza. Congratulations to BBP President Eric Landau and his team for this extraordinary accomplishment, to past president Regina Myer who began park construction in 2008, and to all the City employees, local elected officials, and citizen advocates and supporters who came together and worked for so many years to realize the dream of this extraordinary Park on the Brooklyn waterfront.”

“It’s hard to believe that it’s been one year since we stood in the midst of a surprise early season snowstorm, shivering as we broke ground on this space which bares my Great-great-grandmother’s name, but here we are, one go-around of the sun later, and I am so delighted that this Plaza is opening, a place which recognizes the groundbreaking efforts of my ancestor, Emily,” said **Kriss Roebing, great-great grandson of Emily Roebing.** “I know that she would be delighted.”

### **About Brooklyn Bridge Park**

Brooklyn Bridge Park, one of the largest and most significant public projects to be built in New York City in a generation, has transformed a once dilapidated industrial waterfront into

a vibrant and thriving 85-acre civic landscape. Brooklyn Bridge Park stretches 1.3 miles from Atlantic Avenue in the south to Jay Street north of the Manhattan Bridge, spanning the neighborhoods of Brooklyn Heights and DUMBO along the East River. The self-sustaining park was designed by the award-winning firm of Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, Inc. and features expansive lawns, rolling hills, waterfront promenades, innovative playgrounds, a greenway, sports facilities, and the popular Jane's Carousel.

The Brooklyn Bridge Park Corporation (BBP) develops, capitally improves, maintains, and fully operates the Park as a 501 (c) not-for-profit, controlled by the City of New York. BBP is responsible for the day to day operations of the Park, including horticulture, maintenance, capital planning and construction, event permitting, and concession oversight.

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