

Dear Community Gardeners:

As a show of solidarity with the Black Community and commitment to do its part to end systemic racism, NYC Parks announced some of the things our agency is doing to address issues within our parks system, in celebration of Juneteenth 2020. We are sharing Parks' recent press release below and also identifying other opportunities that may interest community gardeners who are interested in showing additional support. GreenThumb stands in solidarity with everyone who demands justice for those who have suffered from systemic racism and police brutality.

NYC PARKS PRESS RELEASE

Mitchell J. Silver,
FAICP
Commissioner, NYC
Parks
www.nyc.gov/parks

Press Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE
RELEASE**

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NYC PARKS DECLARES SOLIDARITY WITH BLACK COMMUNITY

*Plans to rename tranche of parks across NYC for Black Americans announced
Creation of “Juneteenth Grove” at Cadman Plaza celebrates historical emancipation
and the lives of those lost*

NYC Parks Commissioner Mitchell J. Silver, FAICP, today announced that the agency stands in solidarity with the Black Community and the fight to end systemic racism, and is demonstrating its commitment by taking a responsive step at addressing related issues within the park system. The agency is reviewing park names across New York City with the goal of renaming a selection in each borough for Black Americans with local, national or historical relevance. The parks and their new names will be announced November 2, 2020.

“In my six years as commissioner I have been committed to creating safe, inclusive spaces for staff and parkgoers, alike. Striking at the heart of this commitment, we must acknowledge at this time the history of our nation, recognize the inequities laid to bare in the course of the creation of our parks system, and recommit to be active agents for change, progress, and equity,” said Commissioner Silver. “NYC Parks believes Black lives matter—our review of park names and the planting of our Juneteenth Grove is only the beginning of our renewed efforts to address inequities in our system for the city and for our employees. We are doing this, if for no other reason than, our Black lives matter.”

In celebration of Juneteenth and to celebrate the homegoing of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor and countless others, Parks created a grove in Cadman Plaza, Brooklyn, in dedication: named “Juneteenth Grove.” Adding to an existing tree

presentation at this location, the agency planted 19 new flowering trees—as they fortify life—that flank the park’s main entry path on Tillary St. (between Cadman Plaza E. and W.) and has displayed newly designed banners marking the area. The Juneteenth Grove features a temporary painting of 19 existing benches in the colors of the globally recognized Pan-African Flag (Red, Black, and Green). As the steward of nearly three million trees, Parks recognizes the Black community’s complicated relationship with trees—they represent thousands lynched and their roots symbolize the depth and connectivity the Black community has to this Nation.

In concert with the November renamings, Parks will temporarily change out its official park signs with specially designed signs in the colors of the Pan-African flag. These signs will be placed at select parks, to be announced on November 2, widely known as “Black Solidarity Day”—they will be on display through the end of the year.

These efforts are just the first step in Parks’ recommitment to addressing related issues of concern at the Agency brought forth by the community and most importantly by staff. Parks has been hosting private listening sessions with its 6,000+ workforce, of which approximately 34% are Black. The sessions are primarily to provide employees with a safe space to share the emotional challenges they are having in light of the recent deaths across the country and the response around the world. As the circumstances and understanding evolve, so will Parks’ support and efforts.

ABOUT JUNETEENTH (via National Museum of African American History & Culture)

“Juneteenth (June 19, 1865) marks our country’s second Independence Day. Though it has long been celebrated among the African American community, it is a history that has been marginalized and still remains largely unknown to the wider public. The legacy of Juneteenth shows the value of deep hope and urgent organizing in uncertain times.”



HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT NYC Parks

We invite you to explore volunteer projects occurring in parks across New York City by contacting [Partnerships for Parks](#).

In addition, the garden group can come together and consider painting a bench or other appropriate structure in the community garden with the colors of the globally recognized Pan-African Flag (Red, Black, and Green). If you choose to participate, please try to use NYC Parks' color scheme below if possible.

COLORS

Red

[Benjamin Moore Vermilion \(2002-10\)](#)

Green

[Benjamin Moore Peppermint Leaf \(2033-20\)](#)

Black

[Benjamin Moore Black \(2132-10\)](#) or similar