

Faces and Places: Brooklyn's Neighborhood Nooks

The "**Faces and Places: Brooklyn's Neighborhood Nooks**" project is designed to transform underutilized urban spaces into vibrant, interactive areas that reflect the diverse identity of Brooklyn. By incorporating colorful murals, modular industrial frames with spinning tiles featuring community-painted faces and art, and repurposed steel drums serving multiple functions. The project addresses key community concerns such as safety and greenery through play and engagement. The goal is to create safe, green, and engaging spaces that resonate with residents, celebrate their unique identities, and promote a sense of community and security.

Proposed Interventions:



Concept Location: Site 4: 895 Underpass

Concept Description: The underpass, a key space for connecting local businesses and housing, has been marked as a priority site by the community due to poor lighting, litter, and refuge for people experiencing homelessness. The proposal includes dynamic, colorful murals on the road, sidewalks, and walls, along with interactive industrial frames featuring spinning squares with community members' faces and art. Repurposed steel drums will become weather-protected cabinets for books, artwork, and local resources. Colorful lighting strips, integrated with existing street lamps or solar power, will enhance safety. This revitalized underpass will be a vibrant transitional space that provides essential resources.



Concept Location: Site 5: Intersection of S. Hanover Street/Patapsco Avenue

Concept Description: Centrally located, this site maximizes the benefits of existing trees for play and rest. Interactive frame structures with spinning squares featuring Brooklyn's faces and community art serve as a play structure and seating. The ground mural encourages movement and gathering. Repurposed steel drums will serve as instruments, seating, and planters, addressing concerns around noise and pollution while connecting community interests in art and music. This site aims to foster vibrant play and interaction, integrating greenery. The design reflects Brooklyn's spirit through community-driven art, creating a central hub for engagement.



Concept Location: Site 7: Intersection of Potee/Hanover/Ritchie Highway

Concept Description: This major intersection, a key neighborhood landmark, will feature interactive frame structures with squares painted with Brooklyn's faces and community art. The ground mural will extend onto the asphalt to enhance safety and encourage gathering. Interactive frames will provide play and seating increasing community activity to prevent neglect and loitering. Repurposed steel drums will function as music elements, seating, and planters. This site will address community concerns around litter and overgrowth, promote community investment, and reflect Brooklyn's diverse identity and spirit toward play.

Community Feedback:

The initial community feedback highlighted concerns about safety, insufficient greenery, unpleasant odors, and littering. Residents struggled to identify a distinct Brooklyn character despite its rich ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity. They expressed a strong desire for vibrant colors, green spaces, clean environments, and safe areas for rest and play, with a focus on elements like art, food, dance, and music. Many also noted the presence of people experiencing homelessness in transitional spaces, which lacked safety features and contributed to a fractured neighborhood experience.

In the second hands-on engagement, community members reflected on their initial feedback, explored various design ideas, and provided detailed comments. With the opportunity to design and comment, conversations deepened, revealing specific concerns about pollution and neglect linked to environmental injustice. They emphasized the need for safe, clean, and engaging spaces, particularly in areas where homelessness was prevalent and safety was lacking. The desire for green spaces, community gatherings, art expression, and colorful murals was evident, with central sites and the underpass identified as key intervention areas.

In response, the approach focuses on creating dynamic, interactive spaces that address safety and environmental concerns while reflecting Brooklyn's diverse identity. By incorporating community-driven design elements, the goal is to foster safe, engaging environments that encourage expression and strengthen neighborhood cohesion.



(Collages Crafted by Community Members on July 20th Using AI-Generated Design Programs)