

Making the Amsterdam Avenue Side of Campus More Welcoming

Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts
Planning Process

Community Engagement Update

March 2024



NYC Parks

Lincoln Center

Project Partners

HESTER ST

NADAAA

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Introduction

Our Lincoln Center

Add on to the community portrait!

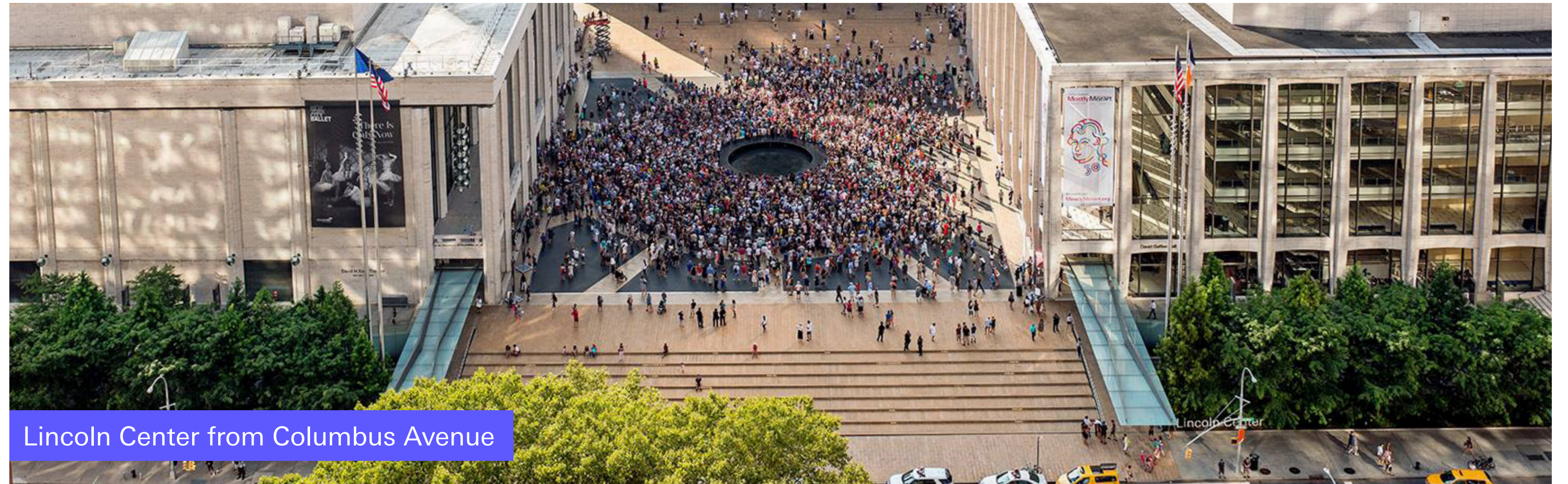
Nuestro Lincoln Center - añadir al retrato de la comunidad!



A participant adding their portrait to a community artwork activity at a planning process pop-up event during the Big Umbrella Festival at Lincoln Center on July 1, 2023.

Home to 11 performing arts organizations presenting an array of programming, Lincoln Center is recognized around the world as a cornerstone of New York City, known for its iconic Revson Fountain, open Josie Robertson Plaza, and the famous facades of its performance halls—all oriented to the east.

But for those approaching from the Amsterdam Avenue side, the view of Lincoln Center is far less inviting, with little to no direct access to the campus.



Lincoln Center from Columbus Avenue

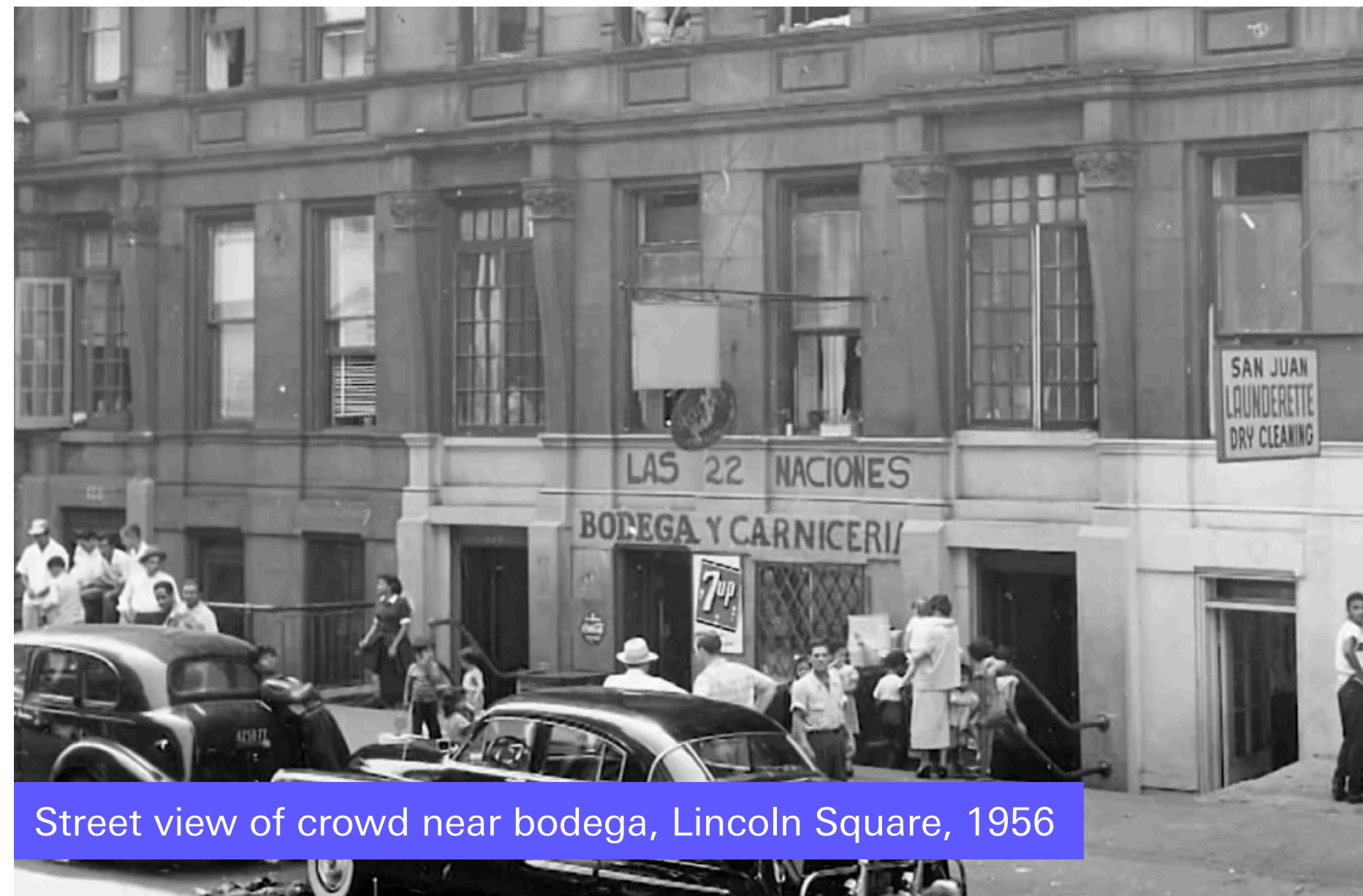


Lincoln Center from Amsterdam Avenue

"The wall feels like a barrier separating the complex from the NYCHA buildings. It literally looks like Lincoln Center is 'turning its back' on anywhere west of the Amsterdam Ave wall."

NYCHA Resident

Lincoln Center's campus was originally developed in the 1950s as part of the Lincoln Square Development Plan. One of many "urban renewal" programs across the country, the plan razed a huge swath of the area known as San Juan Hill, and displaced more than 7,000 families and 800 businesses. In their place, a series of superblocks, including Fordham University, Lincoln Towers, and Lincoln Center changed the face of the neighborhood.



Street view of crowd near bodega, Lincoln Square, 1956



Lincoln Square residents picket, 1956



Residential housing along 63rd Street, 1956



Portrait of James P. Johnson, pianist-composer, 1946

Many mid-century designers were brought to the table to help shape Lincoln Center—Phillip Johnson, Wallace Harrison, Eero Saarinen, Gordon Bunshaft, and Dan Kiley among others. Lincoln Center has a modernist architecture throughout its campus with clean lines and minimal ornamentation.

These design choices are felt very differently today, especially along Amsterdam Avenue, where a wall acts as a barrier and sends a message of exclusion rather than connection, most directly to residents of New York City Housing Authority's Amsterdam Houses.



Dedication of Damrosch Park and Guggenheim Bandshell, May 22, 1969, New York City Parks Photo Archive



Damrosch Park, Goldman Concert, 1969, New York City Parks Photo Archive



Street view of Lincoln Center along Amsterdam Avenue, with NYCHA's Amsterdam Houses across the street.

In an effort to make its physical environment more welcoming, Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts (LCPA) has undertaken an ambitious participatory planning process with local community members and stakeholders across New York City to reimagine the Amsterdam Avenue side of the Lincoln Center campus. This includes Damrosch Park, an open space adjacent to Amsterdam Avenue, which occupies the largest footprint on the west side of Lincoln Center's campus and does not currently accommodate performance needs. Damrosch Park is mapped parkland, under the jurisdiction of NYC Parks, operated and maintained by LCPA.

Beginning the planning process with Damrosch Park, Lincoln Center will be better able to serve its immediate neighbors – New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) residents and high school students – offering both an outdoor performance space and a park throughout the year. This planning process is part of Lincoln Center's commitment to change in examining its role in the neighborhood's history and how Lincoln Center can build a more just and inclusive cultural home for all.

With robust stakeholder input, the planning process initiative aims to:

Physically transform Lincoln Center's Amsterdam Avenue side to extend welcome to communities approaching from the west

Better serve close neighbors, including residents of New York City Housing Authority campuses at Amsterdam Houses and Addition, as well as students of LaGuardia High School of Music and Performing Arts and the six high schools at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Educational Complex

Create an improved performance park to meet artistic and community goals

Commemorate the history and public memory of San Juan Hill and historic Lincoln Square

With feedback to date from the first phase of the participatory planning process (June 2023 through December 2023), Lincoln Center's design team is integrating the robust community feedback into future plans for a welcoming and inclusive west side of campus. This community engagement and feedback is ongoing and will continue to inform decisions throughout the project.



Planning process pop-up event during a Deaf Broadway performance at Lincoln Center on August 3, 2023.

What We've Done



Close up of stickers placed on a map of Lincoln Center representing people's memories.

LCPA kicked off a robust participatory planning and public engagement process in Summer 2023 that began to gather broad input from the local community on how to create greater access along its Amsterdam Avenue side.

LCPA has been leading the process in partnership with the planning firm NADAAA and the nonprofit Hester Street (HST), whose work focuses on centering the voices of people who are historically and currently excluded from decision-making processes in their neighborhoods and cities.



People answering survey questions at a planning process pop-up event during Big Umbrella Festival at Lincoln Center on July 1, 2023.

To date, approximately 3,400 neighbors, advocates, community groups, staff and students from nearby educational institutions, elected officials, civic leaders, and other members of the New York City community have shared their ideas, interests, questions, and feedback through interactive pop-up events, in-person and online surveys, a community artwork and memory wall, community gatherings, interviews, and focus groups.

What follows is a summary of the first phase (June through December 2023) of the participatory planning process and the key learnings that will help guide future design projects to better serve all of Lincoln Center's neighbors and visitors to its campus for generations to come.



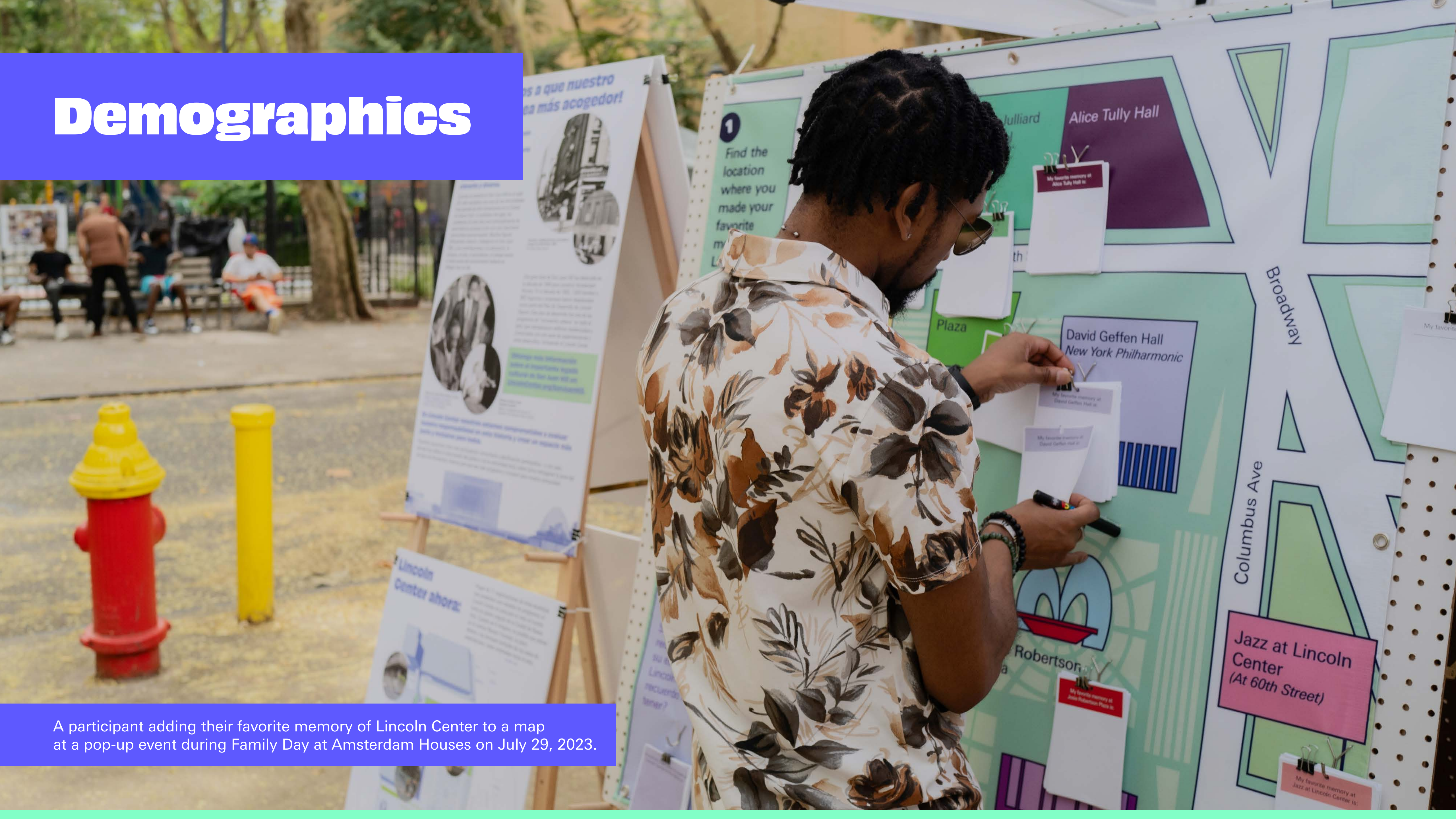
3,400+
community members
engaged so far

"This process is about community inclusion, meeting more of my neighbors, being a part of the planning and construction here, and carrying on a family legacy by representing and giving input."

Workshop Participant

Planning process pop-up event during globalFEST at Lincoln Center on August 5, 2023.

Demographics

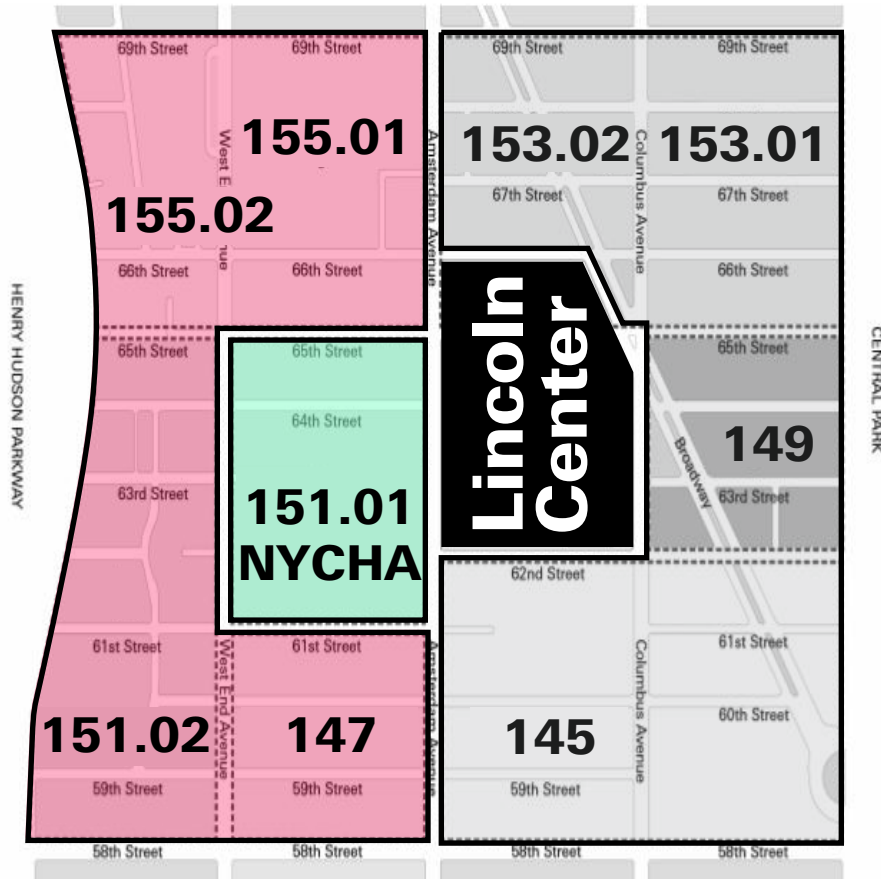


A participant adding their favorite memory of Lincoln Center to a map at a pop-up event during Family Day at Amsterdam Houses on July 29, 2023.

There is a wide discrepancy between Census tract 151.01 (containing NYCHA housing) and the rest of the neighborhood surrounding LCPA.

Almost half of all NYCHA residents identify as Black/African American, and 39% as Hispanic Latino.

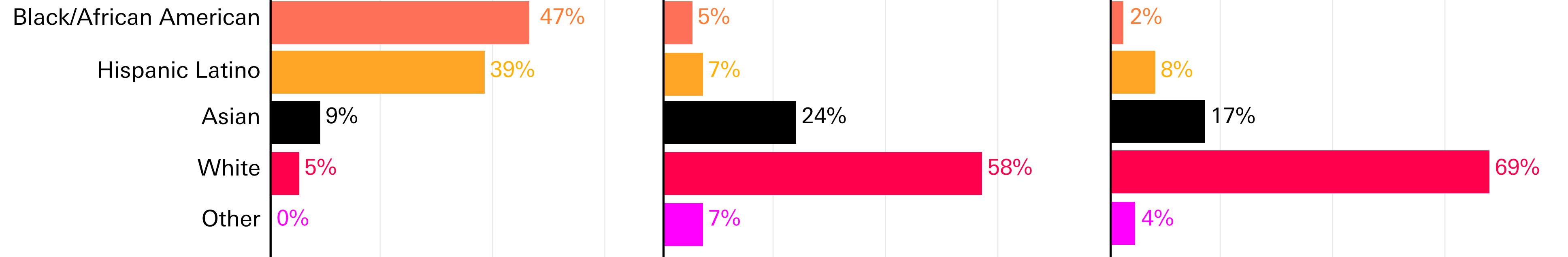
The highest median income for census tract 151.01 is \$45k, which is 5.2 times less than neighboring tracts.



Census tracts
west of Amsterdam Ave, excluding NYCHA housing
 155.02, 155.01, 151.02, 147

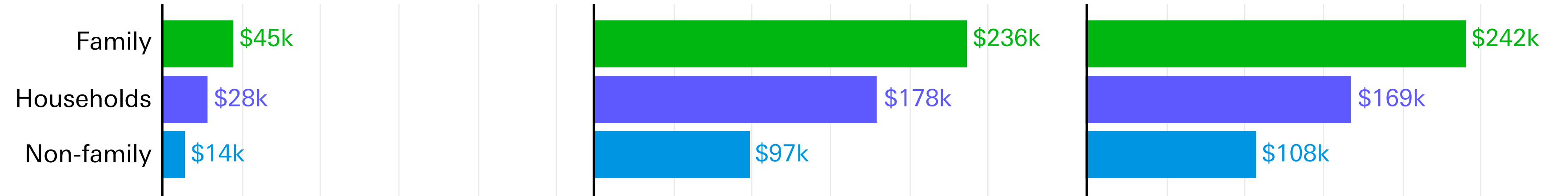
Census tracts
east of Amsterdam Ave
 153.02, 153.01, 149, 145

Race + Ethnicity



Source: Census Reporter. (n.d.). Census Tract 151.01, New York, NY. Retrieved from <https://censusreporter.org/profiles/14000US36061015101-census-tract-15101-new-york-ny/>

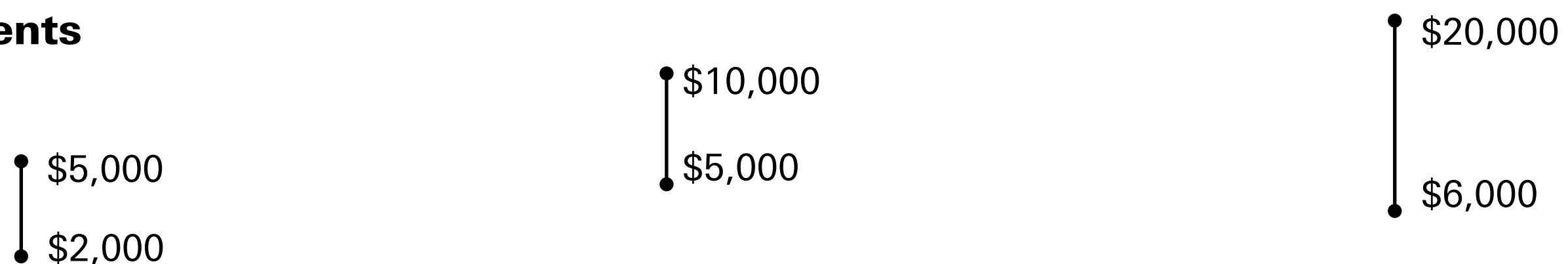
Median Income



Source: Census Reporter. (n.d.). Census Tract 151.01, New York, NY. Retrieved from <https://censusreporter.org/profiles/14000US36061015101-census-tract-15101-new-york-ny/>

Highest + Lowest Rents

*for two bedrooms



Source: Zillow. (n.d.). Zillow. Retrieved from <https://www.zillow.com/>

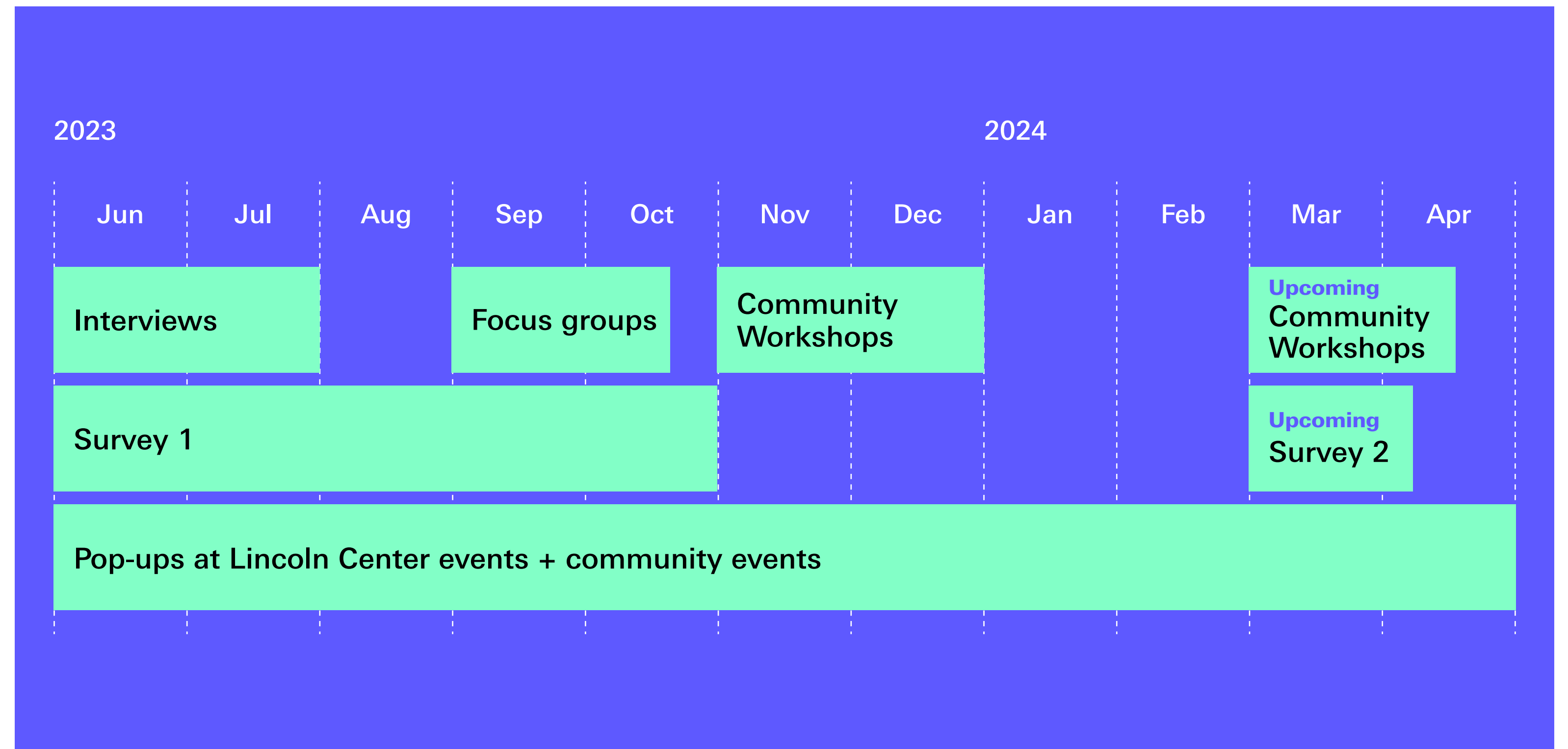
Engagement Timeline



People indicating where they spend the most time on the Lincoln Center campus, at a Back to School pop-up event at Amsterdam Houses on August 26, 2023.

Community engagement for this phase of the participatory planning process began in June 2023 and culminated in a series of workshops in November and December 2023.

The project team gathered input from community members and stakeholders regarding their current use of Lincoln Center’s spaces, the challenges they face when accessing and navigating the LCPA campus, and ideas for desired services.



We received strong interest across stakeholder groups and communities in exploring ways to make Damrosch Park, which occupies the largest footprint on the west side of Lincoln Center’s campus, a more inviting, multi-functional, and accessible space.

Responding to community feedback heard in the first stage of engagement, workshops in November and December 2023 focused

on ideas for how Damrosch Park could better serve the community, particularly Lincoln Center’s neighbors to the west. Exploring alternative design opportunities within Damrosch Park, in partnership with NYC Parks, will be key toward reimagining a more accessible, inclusive, and welcoming Amsterdam Ave for all.

Community-Driven Planning Process



A facilitator speaking to a group of Amsterdam Houses + Addition residents at a NYCHA residents' planning process workshop at Lincoln Square Neighborhood Center on December 11, 2023.

The planning process was guided by the following principles to ensure an inclusive and expansive engagement process:

Employ visually engaging and comprehensive tools suitable for a wide range of participants

Be transparent about the engagement process' parameters, timeline, and opportunities for participation and feedback

Create opportunities for participants and stakeholders to adjust and validate feedback at various stages of the engagement process

Ensure engagement options are accessible and value community members' time

Strengthen and build relationships with existing and new collaborators that reflect the diversity of visitors to Lincoln Center's campus

Currently, along the Amsterdam Avenue edge of Lincoln Center's campus, there is a continuous wall starting at 5-feet tall at 62nd Street and rising to over 20-feet tall at 65th Street that cuts Lincoln Center off from the rest of the neighborhood. By exploring alternative opportunities along Amsterdam Avenue and within Damrosch Park, we can work to collectively reimagine a more accessible, inclusive, and welcoming space for all.

"There is no curb appeal. The entire Amsterdam Avenue/Lincoln Center should be grand and artistic befitting of Lincoln Center and its status in the world of arts. Currently, the Amsterdam Avenue area is nondescript and banal."

Workshop Participant



Street view of Lincoln Center along Amsterdam Avenue.

It is important to acknowledge that this planning process did not start with a blank slate. Lincoln Center recognizes its campus is home to existing buildings and services that support the performing arts. Additionally, there are technical and infrastructural considerations that are currently being uncovered by LCPA's design team and technical consultants.

The participatory process has kept these considerations in mind and engagement has centered on:

- **Increasing inclusion and access while maintaining the original uses of Damrosch as a performance park**
- **Considering back-of-house and loading zones along Amsterdam Avenue**
- **Keeping in mind building-specific programming, such as the neighboring library**



A participant answering survey questions at a planning process pop-up event at Harlem Arts Festival on August 20, 2023.

Research and Discovery

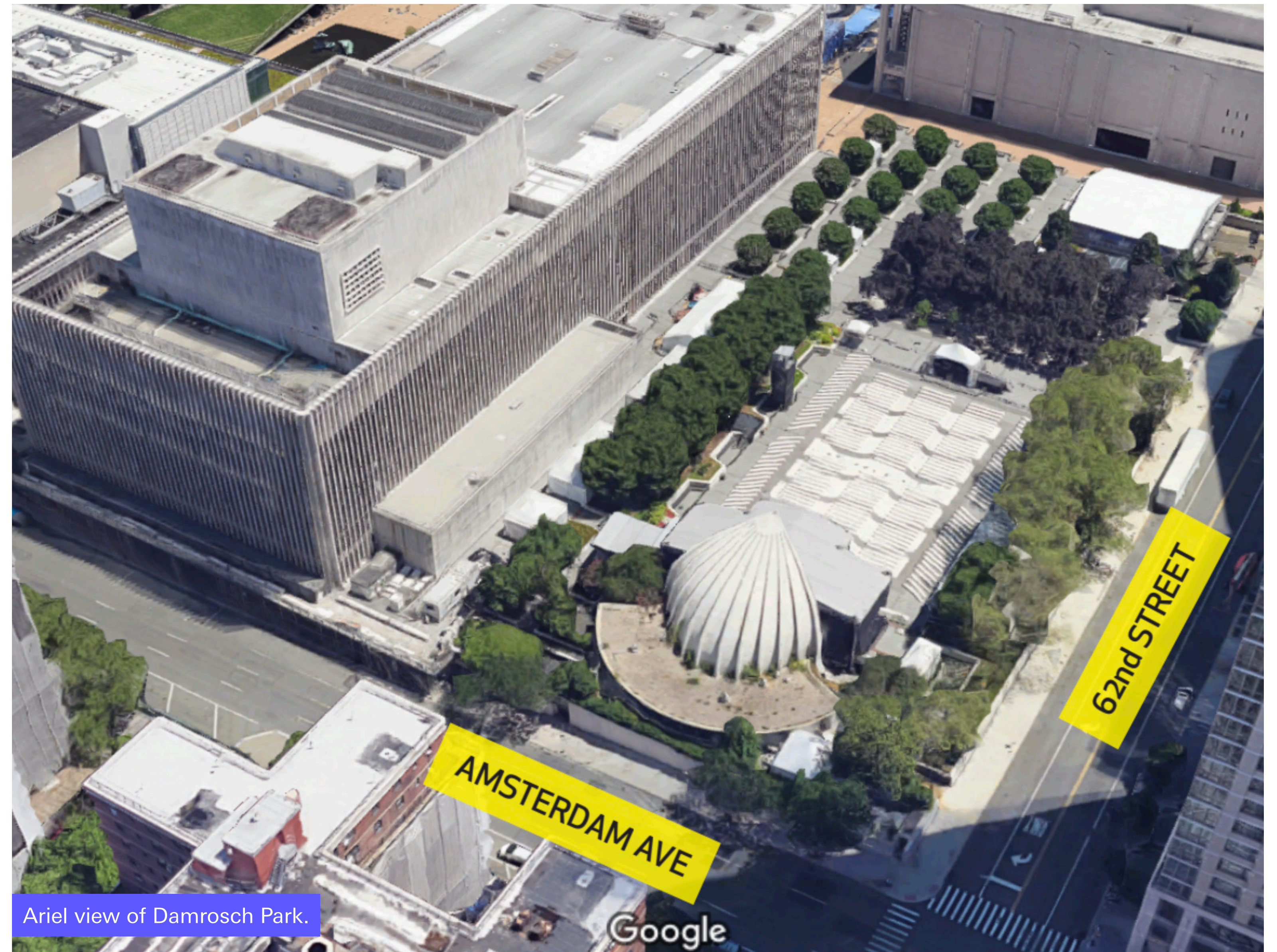


Street view of Damrosch Park from 62nd Street.

To better understand the physical conditions of the Lincoln Center campus, LCPA kicked things off with a “Discovery Phase” in collaboration with the planning team.

This involved a thorough assessment of the existing conditions, as well as gathering valuable insights about current limitations, deficiencies, and future needs. For example, this includes mechanical, electrical, and plumbing upgrades to address systems that have not been updated since the 1960s; sustainability planning for the campus; and accessibility upgrades.

As noted, the first area to be studied is Damrosch Park, including its border walls along Amsterdam Avenue and 62nd Street.

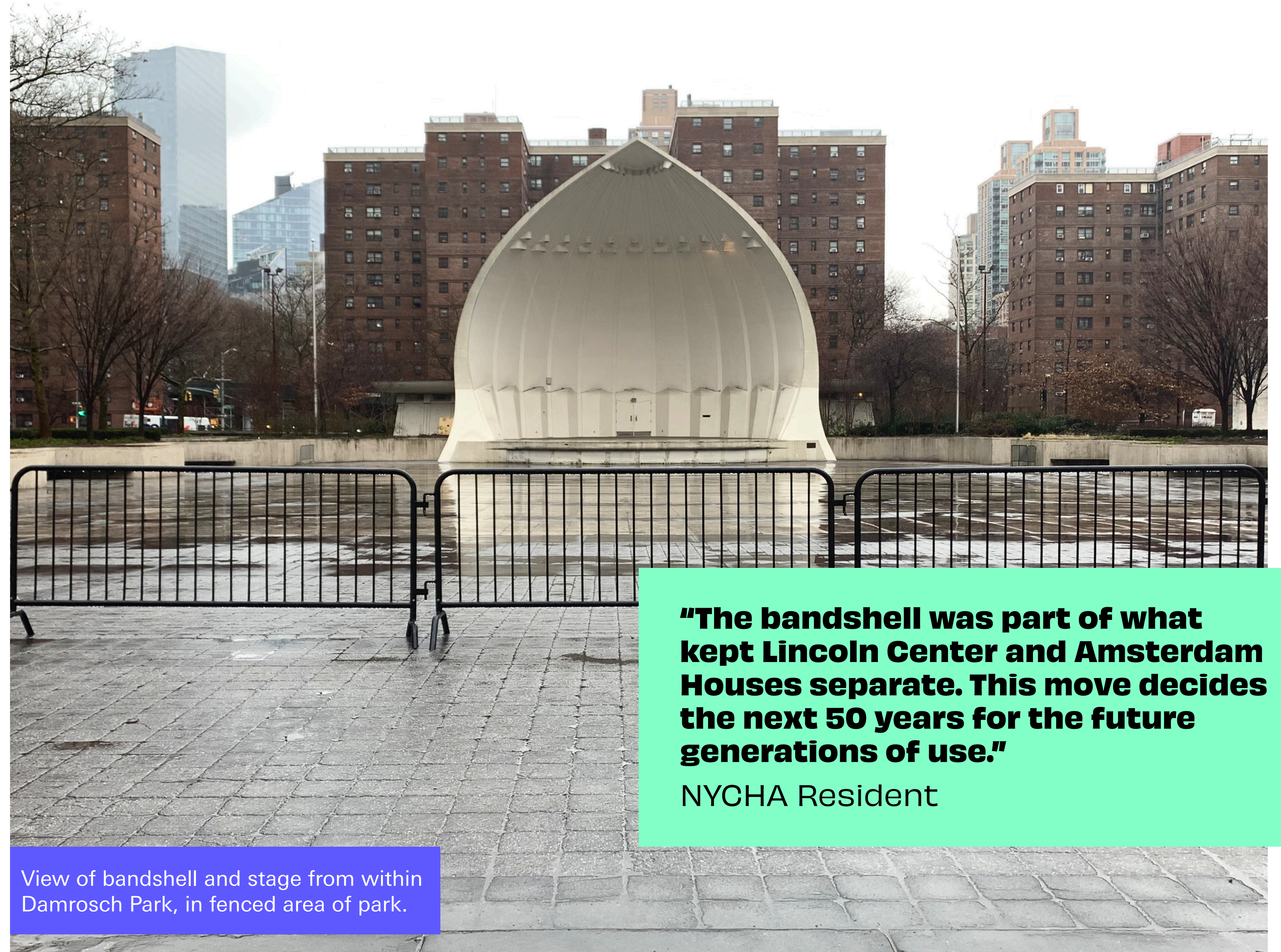


Ariel view of Damrosch Park.

Google

Performance Area

Damrosch Park hosts a significant amount of outdoor arts programming. Current infrastructure limits the types of performances and experiences it can accommodate. An enhanced park will provide for improved logistics and usage for performances and recreation. Additionally, an upgraded performance facility will improve the quality of performances with attention paid to studying sound impacts, as well as meeting contemporary production needs and incorporating the needs of the community.



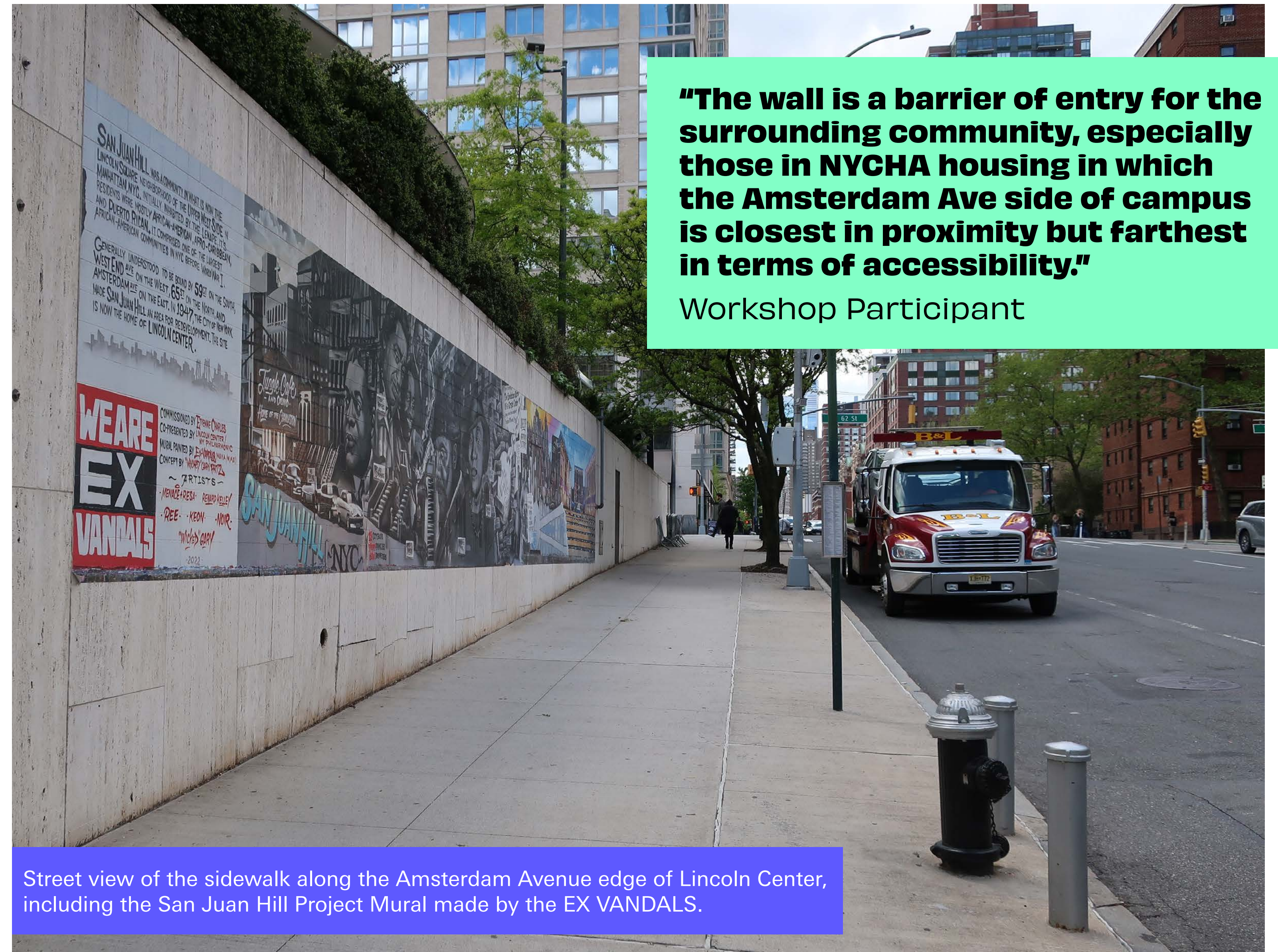
"The bandshell was part of what kept Lincoln Center and Amsterdam Houses separate. This move decides the next 50 years for the future generations of use."

NYCHA Resident

View of bandshell and stage from within Damrosch Park, in fenced area of park.

The Wall

The wall along Amsterdam Avenue was built to house many of Lincoln Center's back of house functions like loading docks, garage entrances, and mechanical and infrastructure spaces. As part of the planning process we are exploring how we can shift some of these functions in order to create a more welcoming and accessible entrance directly from Amsterdam Avenue.



"The wall is a barrier of entry for the surrounding community, especially those in NYCHA housing in which the Amsterdam Ave side of campus is closest in proximity but farthest in terms of accessibility."

Workshop Participant

Street view of the sidewalk along the Amsterdam Avenue edge of Lincoln Center, including the San Juan Hill Project Mural made by the EX VANDALS.

Who We've Engaged



working-class community. At the turn of the 20th century, when the neighborhood was established, it was home to the largest Black community in New York City. By midcentury, its residents were primarily of European descent along with a sizable Puerto Rican community. Many iconic and influential figures lived and worked in San Juan in the years, and their contributions to music and art, journalism, social justice still resonate today.

Residential buildings and commercial establishments along 53rd Street, 1930s

A huge swath of the area was razed in the 1940s to build Amsterdam Houses, and in the 1950s a further 7,000 families and 800 businesses were displaced as part of the Lincoln Square Development Plan. Two of many "urban renewal" programs across the country, these plans replaced existing residential and commercial buildings with a series of superblocks and other developments, including Lincoln Center.

Learn more about the important cultural legacy of San Juan Hill at: LincolnCenter.org/SanJuanHill

Where do you spend the most time at Lincoln Center?

¿Dónde pasa más tiempo en el Lincoln Center?



People engaging at a planning process pop-up event during a Back to School event at Amsterdam Houses on August 26, 2023.

As site and stakeholder research and discovery was happening, project goals and principles were established, and work was done to understand the neighborhood context and the relationships between LCPA, local and citywide organizations and stakeholders, service providers, schools, community-based organizations, community and senior centers, government agencies, and elected officials.

The following organizations and individuals are those who have been engaged to date. LCPA is always open to more conversations around the planning process.

If you would like to take part in the planning process, please reach out to:

planning@lincolncenter.org

Schools and Parent Associations

- Fordham University—Office, Community Engagement
- John Jay—Office, Community Engagement
- Kaufman School of Music
- LaGuardia High School
- LaGuardia High School Parents Association
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Educational Complex
- PS 191 PTA
- PS 199 PTA
- PS 252 PTA

Arts, Architecture, and Cultural Organizations

- Association for a Better NY
- Central Park Conservancy
- CENTRO, the Center for Puerto Rican Studies
- Landmark West!
- Manhattan Community Board 7
- Municipal Arts Society
- New Yorkers for Parks
- Riverside Park Conservancy
- Schomburg Center
- The Trust for Public Land

Neighborhood Services and Block Associations

- Association of Tenants at Lincoln Towers
- Goddard Riverside Community Center
- Lighthouse Guild
- Lincoln Square District BID
- NYCHA Amsterdam Addition
- NYCHA Amsterdam Houses
- NYCHA Harborview Terrace
- NYPL Riverside Branch
- NYC Society for Ethical Culture
- Positive Influence!

Artists

- Carl Hancock Rux
- Jared Michael Nickerson
- Mahogany L. Browne
- Marc Goldberg
- Mimi Lien

Government and Elected Officials

- Assemblymember Linda B. Rosenthal
- Council Member Gale A. Brewer
- Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine
- NYC Department for the Aging
- NYC Department of Cultural Affairs
- NYC Department of Planning
- NYC Department of Transportation
- NYC Economic Development Corporation
- NYC Parks
- NYC Public Design Commission
- NYS Historic Preservation Office
- Office of the Mayor of New York City
- Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal



People engaging at a planning process pop-up event during Family Day at Harborview Terrace on July 22, 2023.

Engagement Strategy



A participant adding their portrait to a community artwork activity.

"I love that we are given the opportunity to shape our community."

Participant

"One thing I loved about today's workshop is that we were allowed to pitch ideas without being judged."

Participant

Engagement by the Numbers

2,220+

Surveys collected

1,200+

Memories shared

1,000+

Sticker exercises completed

19

Stakeholders interviewed

3

Community workshops attended by **170 participants**

5

Focus Groups attended by **39 participants**

Engagement Methods

Multiple engagement methods were utilized to provide community members of all ages with a wide range of options and formats to share their ideas.

Beginning in Summer 2023 through one-on-one interviews, focus groups, a paper and online survey, pop-up events, and workshops, feedback was gathered from over 3,400 people to make the planning process reflective of Lincoln Center's diverse users and immediate neighbors to the west.

Engagement materials were translated into Spanish and Simplified Chinese, and when workshops were held, Spanish, Mandarin, and American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters were provided and assisted listening devices (ALDs) were made available. Engagement events were held on weekdays and weekends during daytime and evening hours with childcare and refreshments made available during workshops.

After summer engagements and the November and December 2023 workshops, feedback was synthesized and engagement findings were documented and shared with LCPA and the planning process team

to inform potential design ideas, future engagement events, and next steps in the participatory planning process.





Front and back of a survey outreach postcard mailed out to neighborhood residents in summer of 2023.

Outreach Materials

As part of the engagement process, colorful postcards and informational one-pagers were created in English, Spanish, and Simplified Chinese to keep stakeholders informed and engaged throughout the process. These materials were distributed to residents of Amsterdam Houses, Amsterdam Addition, and Harborview Terrace by LCPA. Additionally, materials were distributed during pop-up events. The postcards and one-pagers provided people with relevant information about the project and encouraged them to participate in the survey.

Interviews

The planning process team engaged in one-on-one conversations with local community leaders to seek guidance and gather comprehensive feedback to help guide the participatory planning process. Through these meetings, the team gained insights into various concerns and priorities expressed by the local partners’ constituents.

Focus Groups

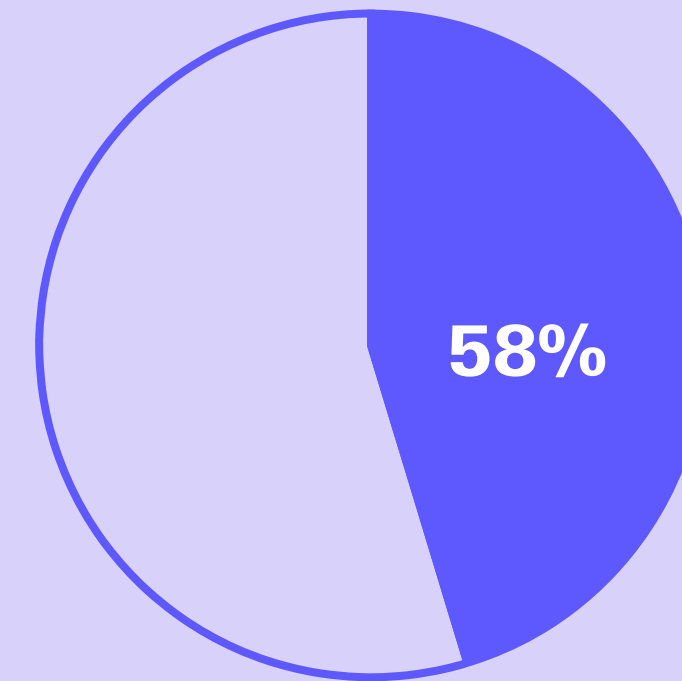
Focus groups of 10-15 people were formed to gather feedback from various community stakeholders, including accessibility groups, seniors, NYCHA residents, community organizations, school leadership, and members of Community Board 7. The discussions centered on connectivity, the built environment, and the public realm. Specific questions addressed needs, access, outdoor space use, inclusivity, and hopes and goals for the planning process.

Survey

To reach a wide audience, online and paper surveys were used to gather feedback from stakeholders and users of Lincoln Center's campus. The survey was conducted from June to October 2023 and was distributed at Summer for the City pop-up events, other Lincoln Center programs, off-campus events, and on the Lincoln Center website.

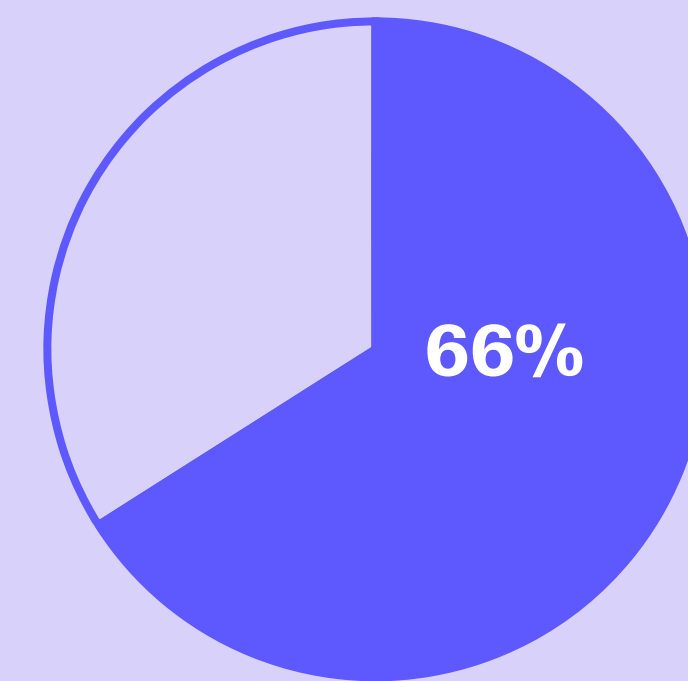
The anonymous surveys collected basic geographic location of respondents' place of residence, captured memories of respondents' experiences at Lincoln Center, and asked respondents' opinions about Lincoln Center's physical campus. The survey also explored respondents' use of the campus and captured feedback about the current appearance of the wall along Amsterdam Avenue, the design of Damrosch Park, and the uses (both actual and desired) of the park and the campus' outdoor spaces. Specific questions about site navigation, wayfinding, locating amenities, and food options were also asked.

From the survey:



Only 58% of west-side locals are daily or weekly users of the campus, compared to 70% of non-west locals.

Finding affordable food and drink is the biggest challenge for people, followed by finding amenities (such as water fountains and restrooms).



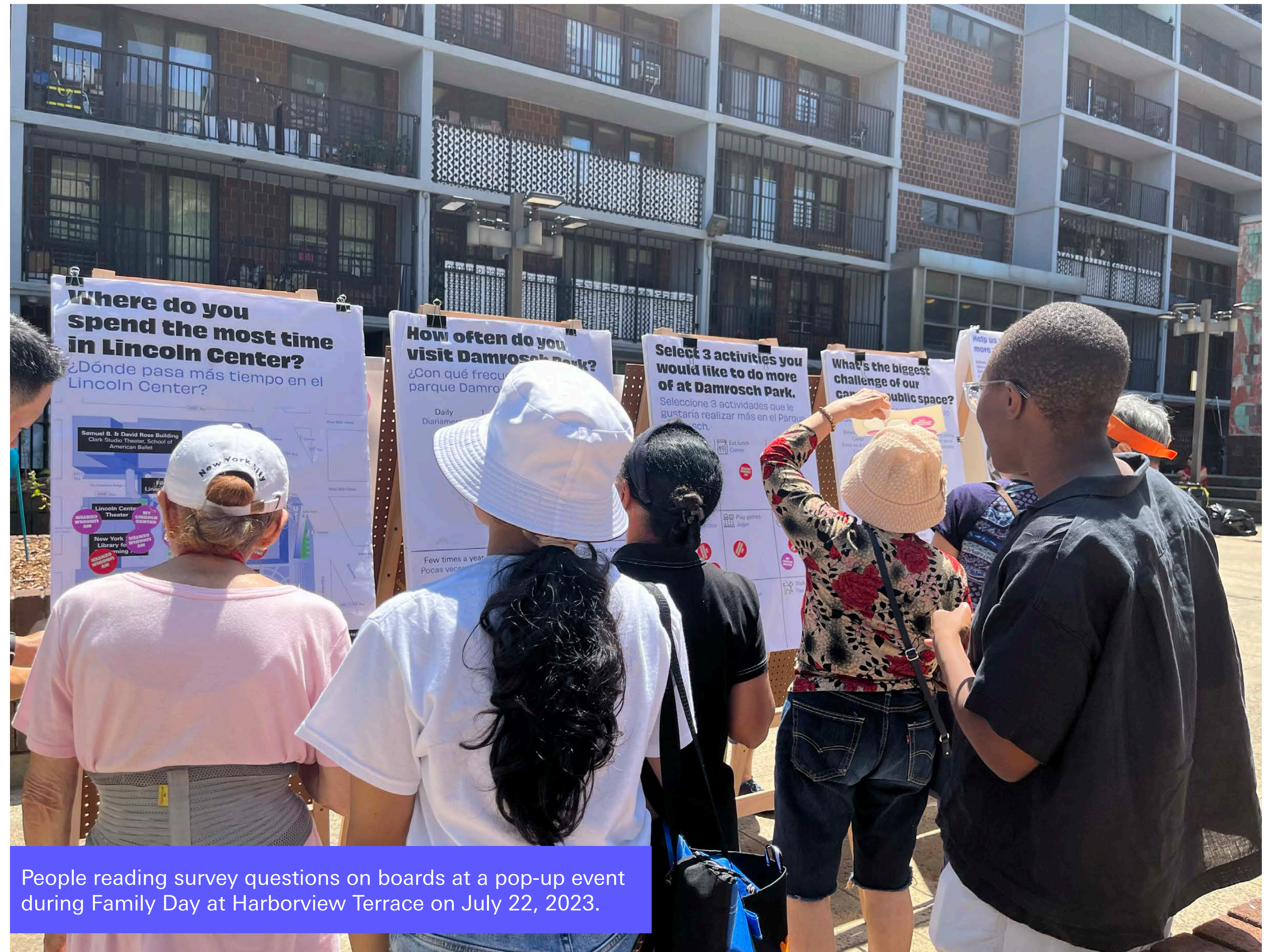
West-side locals have strong negative reactions to the Amsterdam Avenue side of Lincoln Center. 66% don't find the view appealing.

Enjoying performance art and relaxing are the two most desired uses for Damrosch Park.

Pop-up Engagement Events

Pop-up engagement events took place both on- and off-campus from June to August 2023. During this time, we hosted a total of 20 pop-up engagement events. 15 of these events were held on-campus, taking advantage of crowds at Lincoln Center's Summer for the City free events, while 5 events were held off-campus to reach community members in their neighborhoods.

Pop-up events included opportunities to participate in a sticker activity, create community artwork, and contribute to a community memory wall.



People reading survey questions on boards at a pop-up event during Family Day at Harborview Terrace on July 22, 2023.



Sticker Activity

The sticker activity enabled participants to share their feedback through a dot-voting exercise to respond to 4 prompts:

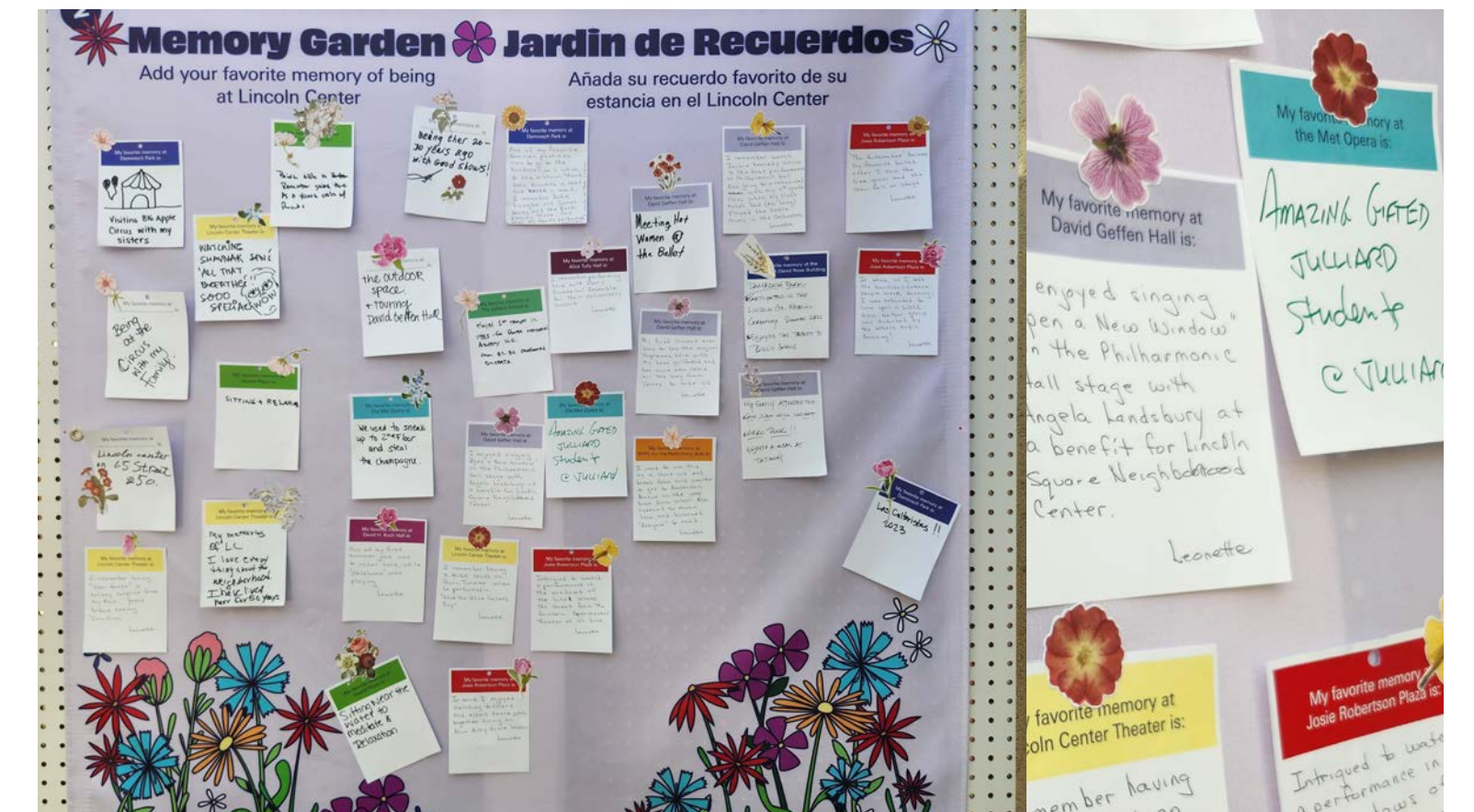
- How often do you visit Damrosch Park?
- Select 3 activities that you would like to do more of at Damrosch Park.
- What's the biggest challenge of our campus' public space?
- Where do you spend the most time in Lincoln Center?

Participants selected colorful sticker dots that corresponded to their self-identified age group and placed them on boards with the prompts.



Community Artwork

The Community Artwork builds off the rich legacy of arts, cultural, and historical figures who lived and worked in San Juan Hill. With bold paint markers on large vinyl banners, participants added their portraits to the community artwork which was pre-populated with portraits of notable San Juan Hill figures including Nina Simone, Arturo Schomburg, Thelonious Monk, and Barbara Hillary to name a few. This tool helped create visibility for pop-up events, provided opportunities for children and adults to participate, and encouraged people to recognize themselves in Lincoln Center's future while uplifting the accomplishments of those who helped shape the San Juan Hill neighborhood.



Community Memory Wall

The Community Memory Wall allowed participants to share their personal memories of Lincoln Center with each other. Participants were encouraged to share positive memories they have from time spent on campus and connect them to the location where the memory took place. If they had not yet created any memories on campus, participants shared a memory they hoped to create. This activity encouraged participants to share decades of memories with each other and further build a sense of community over a shared love of the arts.

Guiding Principles

Following the Summer 2023 engagements, information was synthesized and developed into a set of four guiding principles that will serve as a compass for the planning and design process for Damrosch Park. These principles, fueled by community priorities, will transform into actionable ideas. Every step, from initial brainstorming to finalization, will be informed by the guiding principles, so that the community engagement process is embedded into our work.

Prioritize community needs: Accommodate kids, older adults, and people with disabilities; maximize affordability.

Damrosch park should continue to be about the arts:

- This isn't a typical park—it must take advantage of being in Lincoln Center
- **Infuse the park with the arts**—let art and the “magic of Lincoln Center” be felt, through:
 - Public art and Exhibits
 - Artistic touches everywhere
 - Feeling the things that are happening at Lincoln Center (i.e., rehearsals)

Damrosch Park should feel welcoming, especially from the West:

- The Park should be a space to **relax, enjoy, gather, and play**
- People **want to feel like they belong**
- The Park should be **accessible from the west side**

The park should be designed for the widest range of users:

- **Inclusive and accessible design** can be the inspiration for a more inviting park
- The park should be visually beautiful while also designed for a **multisensory experience**
- Design elements should be flexible and usable by **different people (including artists) with different needs**
- Flexible designs help bring **people of all ages and abilities together**

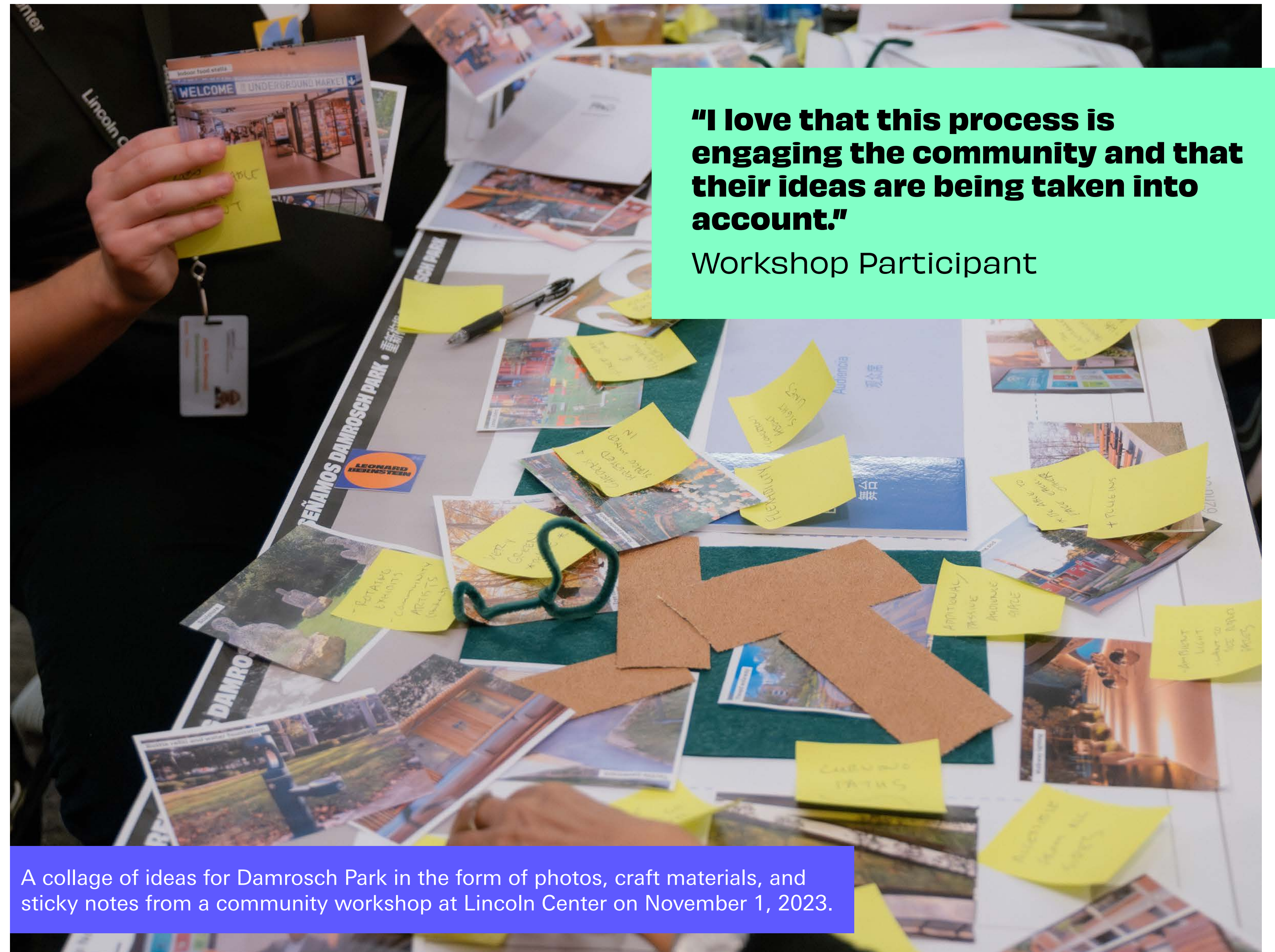
The park should have a flexible design:

- Flexible designs offer something **year-round**
 - Flexible design allows for different **kinds of programming** to take place
-

Community Workshop I

In November 2023, Lincoln Center hosted the first participatory planning community workshop to share the summer's engagement findings and further surface priorities and ideas for Damrosch Park. The workshop was attended by nearly 70 community members. Spanish, Mandarin, and ASL translation; refreshments; childcare; and participation stipends were provided. Elected officials, LCPA leadership, and NYC Parks welcomed participants, and NADAAA and HST presented a project overview and engagement process summary.

Facilitators guided participants in small breakout groups to create visions for their re-imagined Damrosch Park using inspiration images, art supplies, and sticky notes. The groups shared their visions, and the workshop concluded with next steps and the opportunity to ask questions. Feedback forms were also provided for participants to submit additional comments.



"I love that this process is engaging the community and that their ideas are being taken into account."

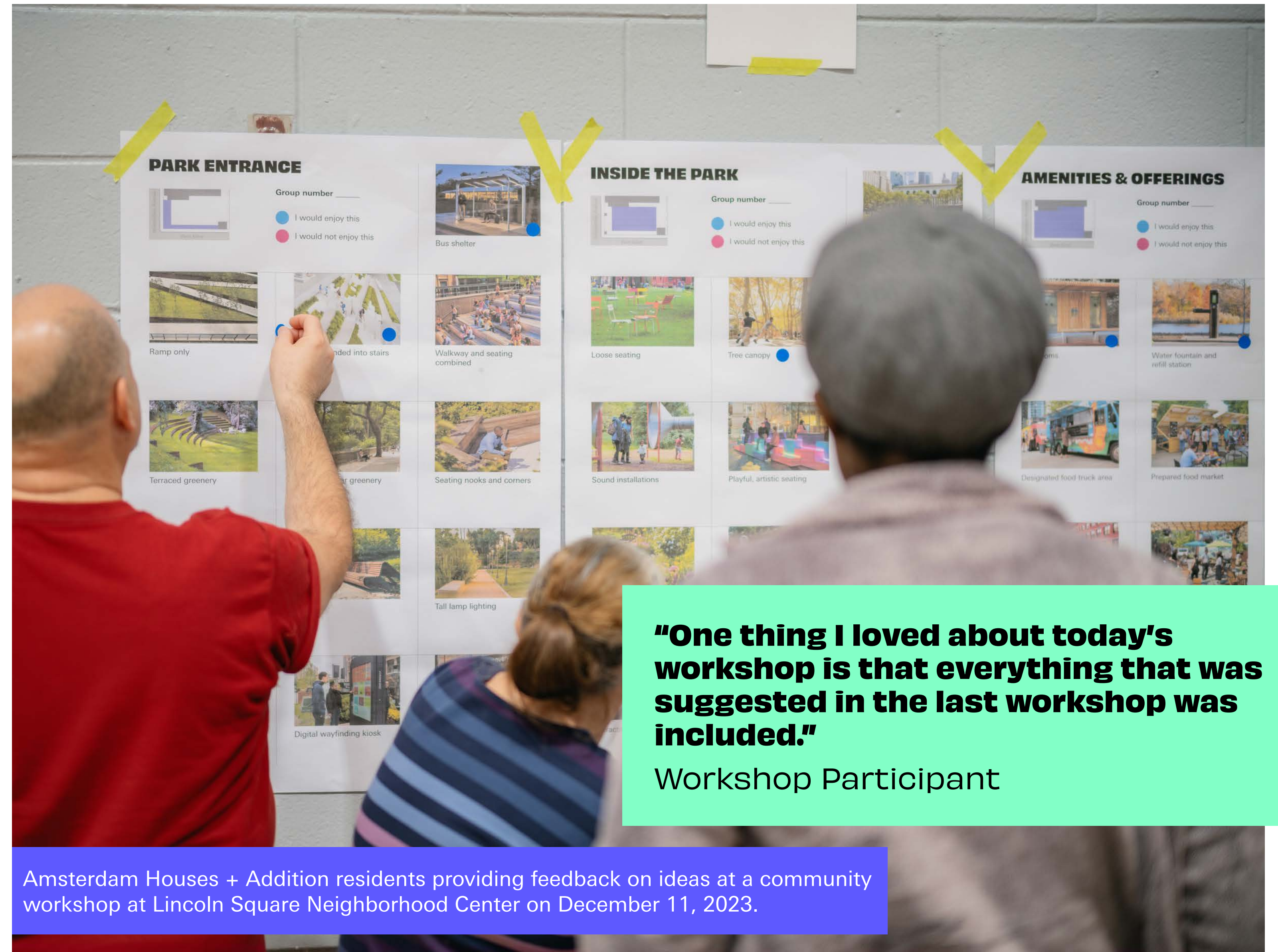
Workshop Participant

A collage of ideas for Damrosch Park in the form of photos, craft materials, and sticky notes from a community workshop at Lincoln Center on November 1, 2023.

Community Workshop 2 + 3

In December, a workshop was held for NYCHA residents in Amsterdam Houses, Amsterdam Addition, and Harborview Terrace; and another workshop was held for teenagers from the MLK High School campus and LaGuardia High School. The NYCHA workshop had nearly 70 attendees and 30 high school student participants joining discussions at the MLK High School campus. Workshops were held at Goddard Riverside Community Center and the MLK High School cafeteria.

In these December workshops, participants provided feedback on components represented in the November 1 collage images and collectively discussed what they liked, disliked, and what was missing from the ideas generated during the November 1 workshop.



"One thing I loved about today's workshop is that everything that was suggested in the last workshop was included."

Workshop Participant

Amsterdam Houses + Addition residents providing feedback on ideas at a community workshop at Lincoln Square Neighborhood Center on December 11, 2023.

Key Learnings

A group of people collaging ideas for Damrosch Park in the form of photos, craft materials, and sticky notes from a community workshop at Lincoln Center on November 1, 2023.

Engagement Synthesis

Following the completion of the engagement activities and workshops, participant feedback was collected, transcribed, analyzed, and synthesized. This information was then clustered into themes, and key insights and trends were generated from common patterns and outlying considerations. This information has been shared with the future design team and LCPA to ensure that the community needs and priorities are reflected in the eventual design of Damrosch Park and uplift the values of accessibility, inclusivity, and belonging.

Here are the insights and key findings from the community's responses to the engagement activities and workshops about:

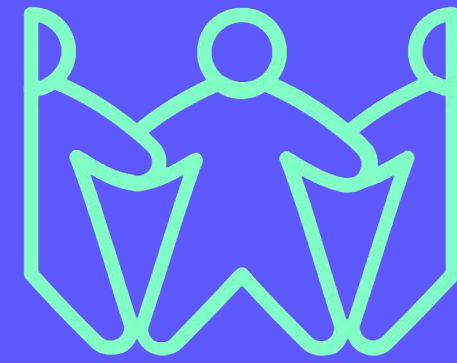
- **Entrance**
- **Community spaces**
- **Arts**

A welcoming entrance

The entrance should feel welcoming.

It should look like a formal entrance and be a place of gathering.

Create pathways that bring people together



89% of the November 1 workshop groups preferred an entrance where everyone can enter via the same path, regardless of physical ability along Amsterdam Avenue and 62nd Street as a way to bring people up to Damrosch Park to provide both traveling efficiency and the opportunity to meander. The opportunity to travel as well as rest in the entrance sequence was reinforced in the December workshops. Important to groups was the **prioritization of accessibility for all**, being especially mindful of ways design can better accommodate strollers and elders, as well as ensuring that the **steps allow ample space for gathering and activities**. Importantly, the entrance and new pathways should **prioritize greenery** and **be well-lit**.

Enable communal and artistic activities



Art should **celebrate the community and include local-area students and San Juan Hill residents** when thinking about exhibitions, murals, and programming. The west side entrance has the opportunity to **incorporate formalized LCPA programming** to draw people onto the campus.

Integrate comfortable + accessible seating and rest areas



Groups liked the idea of **benches and seating nooks with shade and potential water features** to encourage relaxation and hanging out. Additionally, **seating and shade should be made available at the base of the park along Amsterdam Avenue** to allow people to rest while waiting for public transportation. Some groups cited that they currently lean against the Amsterdam Avenue wall to rest while waiting for their bus.

Include accessible and inclusive signage

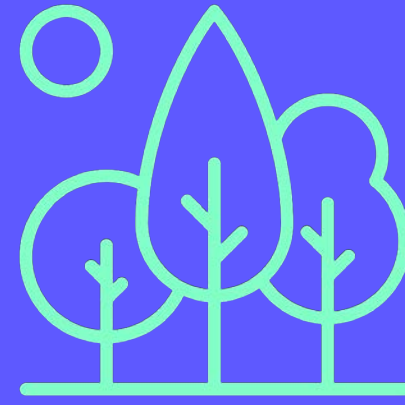


Signage should be **digital, multilingual, tactile**, while including information about Lincoln Center such as a campus map, neighborhood history, and information about arts and programming. Signage should be **artistic and not feel sterile**.

Inclusive community spaces

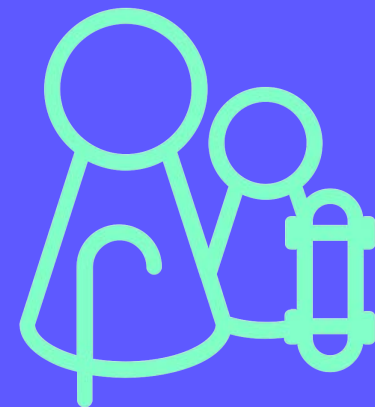
The community spaces should bring people together and be a green and inclusive park for the community to rest, play, and gather.

Prioritize greenery + sustainability



Damrosch Park is in need of a **variety of green spaces** to create areas of gathering and relaxation while simultaneously providing **shade, cooling, and sound mitigation**. There is a desire for **low plantings and planter beds** throughout the park, as well as **native trees and gardens** that will attract pollinators, create a sense of calm, and **draw inspiration from the arts**. This sense of nature should start at the street level and extend up to Damrosch Park.

Foster inclusive open spaces



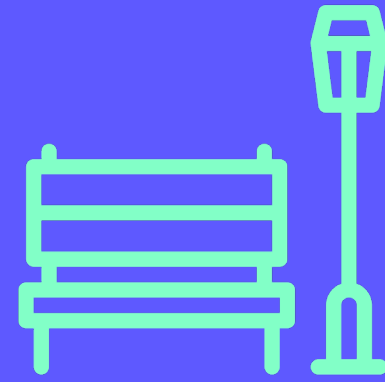
Damrosch Park should be a **multigenerational space** that feels **welcoming to all users**. Larger areas of the park should be made suitable for **gathering and a variety of programming**, while smaller areas should create spaces appropriate for **sitting**, especially during performances; **relaxation and interaction with nature**; and **exercise and play**. The use of **lawns and turf** should be explored.

Enhance comfort with accessible walkways and amenities



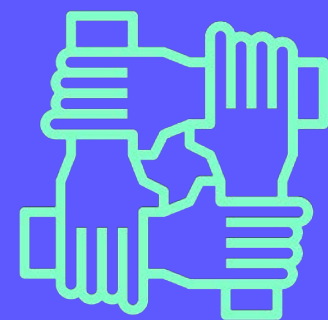
Maintain a balance between **curved pavement walkways and greenery** and provide tactile walkways where appropriate. Desired amenities include **non-gendered restrooms, charging stations, and water stations** with amenities delineated by **clear wayfinding**.

Integrate flexible seating and lighting



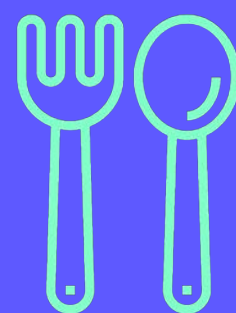
Prioritize **flexible seating with backs and tables** for adaptability and year-round use that can be easily re-arranged to accommodate both individuals and groups. **Wheelchair-accessible platforms** should be made available. Groups mentioned wanting seating areas to be **well-lit and shaded**, with designs being guided by an **artistic approach** while making sure to not obscure views or sightlines.

Adopt a modern community-centric approach



The park's community spaces should foster community interaction and communication through thoughtful design. There is the opportunity for seating to **incorporate existing materials** on campus as well as be **playful, colorful, and interactive**, but it is important to not compromise on comfort.

Include culinary diversity and variety



Food options during peak park usage in Damrosch Park should be **healthy, accessibly priced, quick, hassle-free, and reflect different cultures and ethnicities** to enhance the park experience and cater to diverse tastes, but food should not be the dominant activity in Damrosch Park.

Focus on the Arts

Art should be the **central focus** of Damrosch Park.

Elevate the arts as the focus of the park



Damrosch Park should be **immersed in the arts** and ensure that **all forms of art** are accessible to visitors, starting at the park's entrance and continuing throughout the park.

Curate artistic variety



Art should feature **interactive sculptures, sound installations, and community-driven exhibits** in rotation, as well as utilizing surfaces for **large scale murals and projections** that create a diverse and engaging cultural environment. Groups cited interactivity with nature, art, or programming as helpful in fostering connectivity with other people within Damrosch Park.

Prioritize community performances and artistic works



Groups expressed interest in a **secondary performance area that is more dedicated to the public**. Additionally, **flexible exhibit spaces** should **celebrate new talent and student artists**, as well as **community-generated artwork**.

Next Steps

LCPA will continue to survey its neighbors and major stakeholders about how they use Damrosch Park both as a performance space and a park. Ongoing pop-up events, conversations, and community workshops will happen as well as the launch of a follow-up survey to continue to inform the design team's development of planning and design ideas that are grounded in the months-long participatory planning process of hearing the community's needs, desires, and feedback to make Damrosch Park more publicly accessible while transforming it into a state-of-the-art performance park.

Acknowledgments

This participatory planning process would not have been possible without the contributions and generosity of Lincoln Center's community members, stakeholders, neighbors, advocates, community groups, educational institutions, elected officials, civic leaders, and other New Yorkers who shared their time, energy, and feedback. We are grateful for their dedication to ensuring this is a truly community-driven process.

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