

# DESIGN TRUST FOR PUBLIC SPACE

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## DESIGN TRUST FOR PUBLIC SPACE SELECTS NEW PROJECTS ON NEW YORK'S URBAN AGRICULTURE AND THE GARMENT DISTRICT



**NEW YORK, NY (Sept. 8, 2009)** – The Design Trust for Public Space announces the selection of new projects that will chart the future of two important and dynamic local resources. **Five Borough Farm**, a collaboration with the Brooklyn-based urban farm Added Value, will develop an urban agriculture kit-of-parts designed to replicate Added Value's highly successful, community-oriented model throughout New York City. **Made in Midtown**, a landmark study on the Garment District, undertaken in partnership with the Council of Fashion Designers of America, will recommend place-based strategies to strengthen and preserve creative industries in New York.

For **Five Borough Farm**, the Design Trust will partner New York City's most successful urban farm with New York's largest landowner—the City itself—to create the nation's first citywide plan for urban agriculture. Tying together issues of sustainability, public health, economic development, and social justice, this initiative will help transform underutilized lots in all five boroughs into urban farms. With a focus on low-income families, participants will provide healthy, locally grown produce in food deserts, gain job skills and earn living wages, and learn how to become stewards of the land. The program will kick-off with a high-visibility pilot farm and exhibit showcasing agriculture's importance to the future of cities.

"The presence of agriculture—from urban farms to farmer's markets—has become integral to New Yorkers' everyday lives, and in a larger sense has helped us understand the connection to urban sustainability," said Deborah Marton, Executive Director of the Design Trust for Public Space. "The challenge now is to engage the community and City resources needed to create urban farms in all five boroughs."

**Made in Midtown** will commission a comprehensive study of the fashion industry's presence in the Garment District and its place in New York's creative economy. New York remains a global fashion leader, but few outside the industry understand the vast networks and ecologies that establish both its competitive edge and the unique character of its physical spaces. Synthesizing findings about the fashion industry's specific strengths and challenges, and its evolving role in the Garment District, **Made in Midtown** will recommend place-based strategies designed to respect and support New York City's industrial identity, while balancing the many competing interests of Midtown's stakeholders. The resulting study will help guide policies towards light manufacturing industries citywide.

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“New York City’s dynamic can-do spirit rests in part on our history as the seat of manufacturing for some important industries, including fashion,” said Deborah Marton, Executive Director of the Design Trust for Public Space. “The interdependent, idiosyncratic collection of business that give the Garment District its unique identity—trim and button stores, pattern makers, piecework shops, elite design ateliers—allow established and emerging designers to create the work that makes our city the fashion capital of the world.”

## **About the Design Trust for Public Space**

The Design Trust selects research and design projects from across the five boroughs through an open Request for Proposals (RFP) process approximately every 18 months. Selected projects receive assistance in project planning and management, advocacy, and fundraising. The Design Trust also will convene Advisory Committees for both projects, inviting representatives from local Community Boards, think tanks, and other expert groups to help guide project development. The outcome of all Design Trust projects is a positive shift in the way New York's public space is created, managed, or used.

This year, sixteen groups submitted proposals, from which five finalists advanced to a jury whose distinguished members included: Deborah Berke (Deborah Berke Architects), Jim Biber (Pentagram), Victor Body-Lawson (Body-Lawson Associates), Tessa Huxley (Battery Park City Parks Conservancy), and Eric Rothman (HR+A Advisors).

The Design Trust for Public Space ([www.designtrust.org](http://www.designtrust.org)) is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality and understanding of New York City's public realm – from parks and plazas to streets and public buildings. Since its inception in 1995, the Design Trust has successfully completed more than two dozen projects, improving the urban experience for all New Yorkers.

## **About Added Value and the Council of Fashion Designers of America**

Added Value ([www.added-value.org](http://www.added-value.org)) is a nonprofit organization promoting the sustainable development of Red Hook by creating opportunities for the youth of South Brooklyn to expand their knowledge base, develop new skills, and positively engage with their community through the operation of a socially responsible urban farming enterprise.

The Council of Fashion Designers of America ([www.cfda.com](http://www.cfda.com)) is a nonprofit trade association dedicated to promoting the fashion industry. The membership includes more than 340 fashion and accessory designers.

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