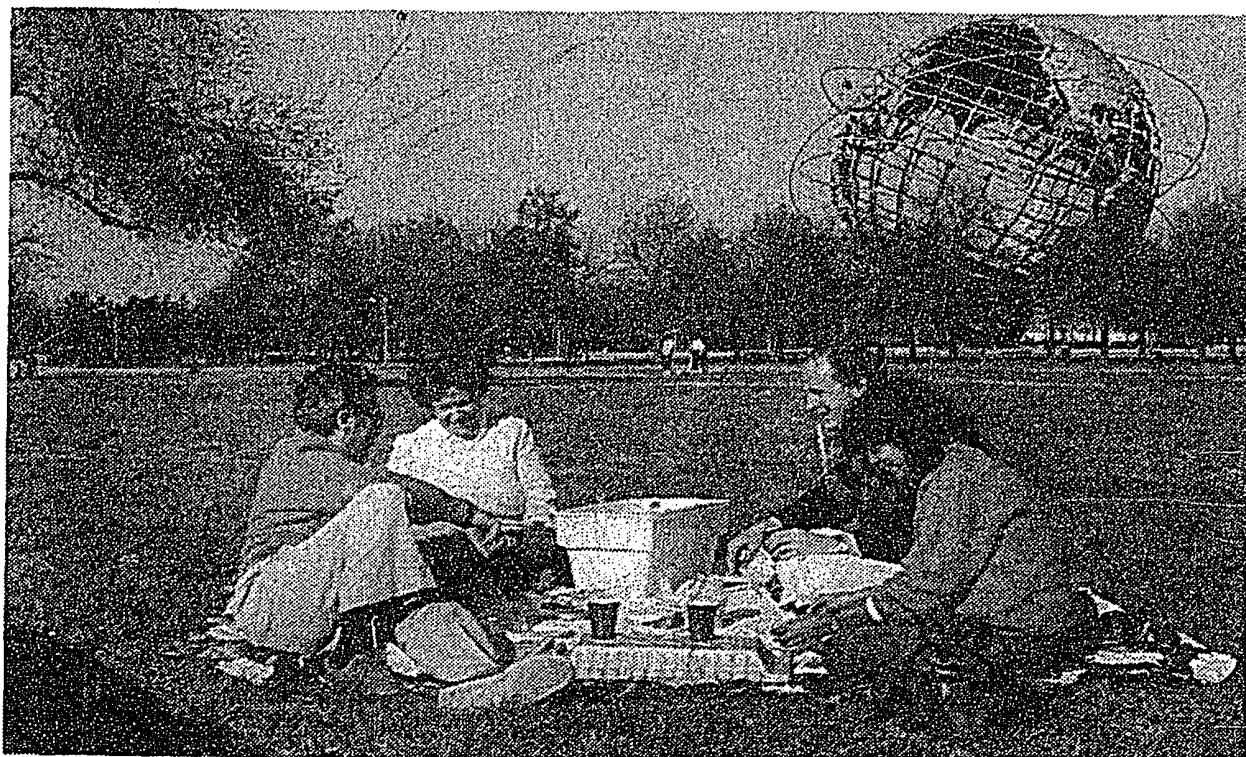


## Park in Queens to Get \$80 Million Restoration

By SUSAN HELLER ANDERSON

New York Times (1857-Current file); Nov 19, 1987; ProQuest Historical Newspapers The New York Times (1851 - 2001) pg. B3



Visitors to Flushing Meadows Corona Park in Queens picnicking near the Unisphere.

The New York Times/Ruby Washington

## Park in Queens to Get \$80 Million Restoration

By SUSAN HELLER ANDERSON

A 10-year restoration of Flushing Meadows Corona Park, at a cost to New York City of \$80 million, is to be announced today by Mayor Koch.

Flushing Meadows was built for the 1939 World's Fair and was also the site of the 1964 World's Fair. Since then, nobody has done much to improve it.

Now, the city's goal is to create "a master plan for the conversion of a fairground into a park," said Clifford Chanin, a spokesman for the Mayor.

Ringed by roadways and covered by concrete, Flushing Meadows is not a leafy, wooded glade. Shea Stadium hulks above it. During the United States Open, it is invaded by tennis fans. Throughout the year, ethnic festivals, enthusiastic soccer players and extended families fight for inches of its worn grass.

Of the city's parks, only Van Cortlandt in the Bronx is bigger, and only Central Park is more heavily used.

### Park as 'Home of Champions'

Within the park are such institutions as the Queens Museum, the Hall of Science, a zoo, a playground for disabled children, the World's Fair Marina, a 1910 Coney Island carousel, a theater and several restaurants.

As home to the New York Mets and the Open, Flushing Meadows generates \$3.7 million in income for the city in the baseball and tennis seasons alone, according to the city comptroller's office.

"The success of the U.S. Open and the 1986 Mets has focused attention on the park as the home of champions,"

said Henry J. Stern, the Parks Commissioner. "It's also home to a dozen institutions. Now, we're trying to give it some identity and unity, and make a park out of what has been a collection of structures and plains."

Already, about \$43 million of work is in progress or in the design stage. Paved paths and roadways for the fair are being replaced by grass. Coordinated signs outside the park and inside will replace inadequate signs.

### Reviving Grass and Fountain

The zoo is to be closed this winter for redesign by the New York Zoological Society, which will take over operations. It is scheduled to reopen in 1990. A promenade for strollers along Flushing Bay is to be created, encouraging better use of the waterfront next to the World's Fair Marina.

The Art Deco Gertrude B. Ederle Amphitheater and Pool complex, built for the Billy Rose Aquacade in 1939, is to be rebuilt for use as a public pool. And the heavily used ballfields are to be redesigned and improved.

The second phase of restoration, to cost an additional \$40 million, will continue landscaping of the core area around the Unisphere, a steel representation of the globe. The two large bodies of water that make up one-third of the 1,257-acre park, Willow and Meadow lakes, are to be dredged and landscaped.

The park is ringed by several neighborhoods — Forest Hills, Flushing, Elmhurst, Corona, Kew Gardens and Jamaica. "Linkage with the com-

munity is a problem," said William H. Cook, Queens Borough Parks Commissioner, "because of the highways." One plan includes footbridges into the park.

The boathouse on Meadow Lake is being rebuilt. "We hope to have it opened by summer," said Arne Abramowitz, the park's administrator.

As for the new signs, the Queens Borough President, Claire Shulman, and Mr. Stern were not in accord on the symbols. The Parks Commissioner wanted a leaf. The Borough President wanted the Unisphere.

New signs will show a big leaf. And a small Unisphere.

## Police Still Searching Park for a Young Girl

More than 30 police officers are to search a park on the Brooklyn-Queens border for a fourth day today in response to a report from three children that they had seen a young girl carried there and left by a man.

A police spokesman, Officer Joseph M. Gallagher, said the search would resume at 8 A.M.

Officers began combing the park Monday afternoon, after the children, ages 8, 12 and 14, said they saw the man enter Highland Park with a child slumped over his shoulder and leave without her. The 141-acre park straddles the East New York section of Brooklyn and Glendale, Queens.