(the lack of)
Public space in Corona

Henry Mei - August 4th, 2022

All photos by Henry Mei unless otherwise noted. Aerial satellite maps by Nearmap.
Mapping Public Space in Corona

**Key**
- **Orange** Neighborhood Border
- **Green** Park (NYC Parks)
- **Red** Playground (NYC Parks)
- **Blue** Other spaces owned by NYC Parks
- **Light Blue** Corona Plaza (NYCDOT)
- **Light Teal** 34th Ave Open Street/Paseo Park (NYCDOT)

Base map from OpenStreetMap
Demographics

- Heavily working class & immigrant
  - Approx. 60% of residents are foreign-born *
  - Over 85% of residents speak a language other than English at home *

* From "NYC Population FactFinder" using data on the Corona and North Corona NTAs from the 2015-19 ACS
Demographics

- Historically home to European immigrants, Black Americans & Afro-Caribbeans
- Today, **Latinos make up >75%** of Corona. The largest groups include: *
  - Mexicans
  - Ecuadorians
  - Dominicans

* From "NYC Population FactFinder" using data on the Corona and North Corona NTAs from the 2015-19 ACS
Housing in Corona

- Approx. **80%** of housing units are renter-occupied*
- Corona’s houses and apartments are extremely overcrowded
  - 4-6 people can be sharing a single bedroom

* From "NYC Population FactFinder" using data on the Corona and North Corona NTAs from the 2015-19 ACS
Corona Plaza

- Former parking lot
- Transformation into a plaza took over a decade
  - Began with block parties in 2007
  - Interim plaza installed in 2012
  - Capital reconstruction permanently rebuilt the plaza starting in 2016
- Community partners, public engagement, and street vendors integral to its success

From Corona Plaza Es Para Todos
Programming on the interim plaza

"I think that this space is the most beneficial for kids. Because kids always need open space and a place to flourish and develop their skills, and above all they need a place to breathe fresh air, to be social and to meet other children, to share something... And that’s what I’ve seen in Corona Plaza.

In the screen printing workshop, the kids made their own designs. Seeing what they can do, at just five years old, that’s an incredible sense of power and security that we give to the kids, and they need it a lot."

Installation of interim plaza (epoxy gravel)
Sunburst pattern; Green market

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Banner from Make the Road NY’s
Trans Latinx March

Today
Mapping Public Space in Corona

Key

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- **Corona Plaza (NYCDOT)**
- **34th Ave Open Street/Paseo Park (NYCDOT)**

Base map from OpenStreetMap
“Limited Local Access” - No thru traffic; local access only
26 blocks (69 St to Junction Blvd) - Everyday from 7AM to 8PM
Community Partner - 34th Ave Open Streets Coalition
Parents were wondering why PS212 on the @34_ave #openstreet why their school wasn’t taking advantage of the street as much as others along the corridor. So they held a fun dismissal event! @dawnsiff @NYC_DOT @OpenPlans @StreetsblogNYC @QnsBPRichards @voteshekar @KathyParkPrice
34th Avenue Corridor Design

Create fully pedestrianized programmable plazas on 34th Ave from:
- 69th St to 70th St on the north side
- 73rd St to 74th St on the north side
- 77th St to 78th St on the north and south sides
- 79th St to 79th St on the south side
- 83rd St to 84th St on the north and south sides
- 94th St to Junction Blvd. on the north side

Convert 78th St to 2-way from 34th Ave to 35th Ave.

Create shared streets on 34th Ave from:
- 69th St to 70th St on the south side
- 73rd St to 74th St on the south side
- 74th St to 75th St on the north side
- 78th St to 79th St on the north side
- 82nd St to 83rd St on the north and south sides

Create traffic diverters at the intersections of 34th Ave and:
- 71st St, 72nd St, 73rd St, 76th St, 81st St, 84th St, 85th St, 86th St, 87th St, 88th St, 89th St, 90th St, 91st St, 92nd St
- Convert traffic signals to stop controls at the intersection of 34th Ave and:
- 70th St, 71st St, 72nd St, 73rd St, 76th St, 77th St, 78th St, 79th St, 80th St, 84th St, 85th St, 86th St, 87th St, 88th St, 91st St, 92nd St, 93rd St, 94th St.

From NYCDOT
Ongoing plaza + shared blocks implementation (77 to 80 St)
Ongoing plaza + shared blocks implementation (77 to 80 St)
What does this have to do with Corona?
- 800+ students
- Annex was built onto schoolyard, meaning more students but less playspace
- Title I public school
PS 92 Q parents and Corona residents expressed:

- Lack of public space in Corona
- Dramatic difference in safety on 34th Ave between the sections west and east of Junction Blvd
- Junction Playground (on 34th Ave between Junction Blvd and 96 St) is chronically overcrowded
- PS 92 Q's already downsized schoolyard is closed during the summer; not part of DOE's Community Playgrounds program
- Parents in Corona prefer going to Travers Park in Jackson Heights rather than Flushing Meadows Corona Park because of the Open Street
- Living in a house ≠ home ownership
Corona residents already use the Open Street!

- Food pantry
- English classes
- Mexican folkloric dancing
- Kids programming
- Fresh Air Fund
- Going to Travers Park
Upcoming pedestrian plaza (93 to 94 St) & shared block (94 St to Junction Blvd)
34th Ave looking east from Junction Blvd
Corona >>>

<<< Jackson Heights

34th Ave Open Street/Paseo Park

From University of Richmond's "Mapping Inequality"
Thank you.