



# **THE NEW NEW LOTS LIBRARY**

Engagement Report Back // June 16, 2022

Beginning in Summer 2019, BPL and Hester Street embarked on a process to gather ideas and inspiration for a reimagined New Lots library.

The following is a summary of what we heard from hundreds of stakeholders. This feedback serves as the foundation for our discussion today, as well as the initial design concepts.

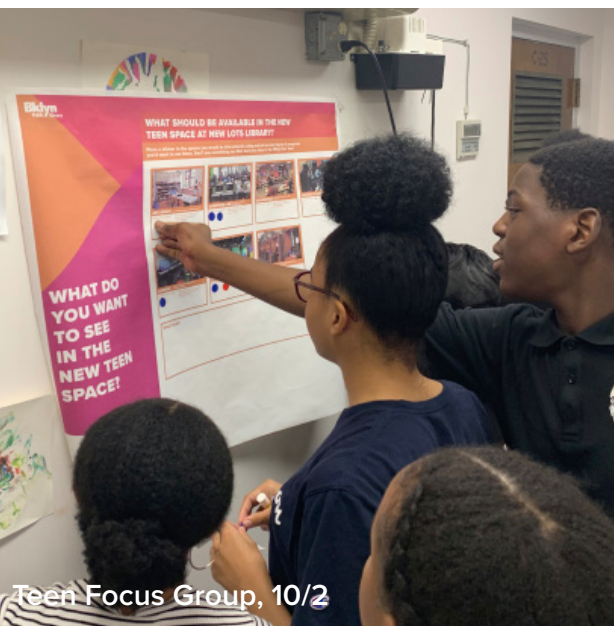
Beginning in the 1650s, East New York was colonized by the Dutch who brought with them enslaved people from Africa. Dutch colonists were buried next to the New Lots Reformed Church while free and enslaved African residents were buried in an unacknowledged burial ground in the area underneath the current New Lots Library and the adjacent NYC City Park.

In 2010, community members discovered historical documents that demonstrated the existence of this African Burial Ground. The area is now officially recognized as African Burial Ground Square and the City park has been named Sankofa Park. The reimaged New Lots Library will incorporate recognition of the area's unique history.

# PROJECT TIMELINE



# WHAT WE DID



Teen Focus Group, 10/2



East NY Farms Farmers Market, 8/31



Public Workshop #1, 10/15



Community Photobooth, 10/15



Workshop #1

10/15

**150**

**SURVEYS**

**16**

**ONE ON ONE  
MEETINGS**

**4**

**FOCUS  
GROUPS**

**3**

**TABLING AT  
COMMUNITY  
EVENTS**

**2**

**PUBLIC  
WORKSHOPS**

**420+**

**PEOPLE  
ENGAGED**

RESEARCH ABOUT SPACES OF CULTURAL MEMORY AND LEGACY IN NYC AND AROUND THE COUNTRY

# KEY TAKEAWAYS

**CREATE  
DESIGNATED  
AREAS FOR  
DIFFERENT  
ACTIVITIES AND  
USERS**

**STRENGTHEN  
LIBRARY  
SAFETY**

**EXPAND SENSE OF  
INCLUSION AND  
COMMUNITY**

**IMPROVE AND  
ENHANCE  
TECHNOLOGY  
FEATURES**

**CELEBRATE LOCAL  
CULTURE AND HONOR  
AREA'S UNIQUE  
HISTORY**

# KEY TAKEAWAYS

## SPACE

- Areas Designated for Age-Specific Activities
- Spaces Designated for Quiet Activities
- Improved Workspace for Staff
- Flexible Community Spaces
- Robust Computer and Technology Labs
- Improvements to the Adult Learning Center
- Improvements to Outdoor Spaces to host programs and events



# KEY TAKEAWAYS

## FEATURES

- Improved Bathroom Facilities
- Expand and Enhance Technology Features
- Enhance and Broaden ADA Accessibility
- Improve Basic Amenities
- Create a Safe and Welcoming Environment





# KEY TAKEAWAYS

## PROGRAMS

- Expand Educational Programming
- Increase Programming with City and Community Partners
- Broaden Opportunities for Career Development and Capacity Building
- Expand Programs Focused on Art, Health and Wellness



# KEY TAKEAWAYS

## CULTURE

- Include Spaces that Highlight East New York Specific Culture, History and Initiatives
- Showcase History and Culture of the African Diaspora throughout Library
- Make the Library a space that celebrates triumphs and resilience, and not one that just highlights the experience of suffering.
- Develop Celebratory Cultural Events and Programs
- Develop Educational Resources on the African Burial Ground



# PROJECT TIMELINE

