



NEW YORK CITY'S PRIVATELY OWNED PUBLIC SPACES

Frequently Asked Questions

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Where do I find the current design standards for a public plaza?

For the full zoning text related to the public plaza design standards, which includes the 2009 follow-up text amendment, please read [**Article III Chapter 7 Section 70**](#) of the New York City Zoning Resolution. The “Current Standards” tab above provides explanations and examples of these provisions.

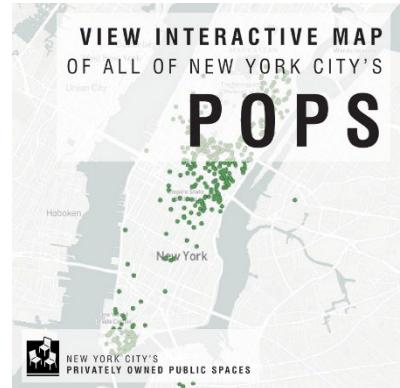
Where do I find the prior plaza design standards?

Please refer to [**Appendix E**](#) of the New York City Zoning Resolution.

Where are all of the POPS located, and what are the required hours and amenities at each?

[**View a map**](#) of all the POPS. Once the map is open, click on a marker for a specific location to find out the required open hours, amenities, and additional info.

Data Source: Privately Owned Public Space Database (2018), owned and maintained by the New York City Department of City Planning and created in collaboration with Jerold S. Kayden and The Municipal Art Society of New York.



Are plazas the only type of POPS?

No. Plazas are the most prominent because most common type of POPS are plazas located outdoors, and so they are the most visible. POPS also include arcades, covered pedestrian spaces, through block arcades, through block connections, sidewalk widenings, open air concourses, and gallerias, among others. This chart provides a breakdown of the different types of POPS built in the city.



Why do some plazas have basic amenities like seating, and some do not?

POPS must comply with the standards under which it was subject to at the time it was created and any City approval for the subject zoning lot. For example, a plaza built in the late 1960s is subject to the plaza standards as set forth in the 1961 Zoning Resolution. Today, if property owners wish to develop a new POPS, they must provide a POPS that meets today's standards as set forth in the Zoning Resolution. Property owners may voluntarily upgrade their existing plazas by bringing the design in greater accordance with today's standards.

To find out what amenities are required at a certain POPS, please [view a map](#) of all the POPS. Once the map is open, click on a marker for a specific location to find out the required open hours and the required amenities.

Data Source: Privately Owned Public Space Database (2018), owned and maintained by the New York City Department of City Planning and created in collaboration with Jerold S. Kayden and The Municipal Art Society of New York.

Why are these public spaces required to be provided on private property?

Developers chose to build these public spaces in exchange for being to build more usable space (also known as floor area) or receive special waivers for a building. Note that not all public spaces have resulted in additional floor area for a property owner; some spaces can be required for other reasons, such as open space mitigation. Because owners are granted permanent additional floor area, they must provide and maintain the public space in perpetuity.

How are POPS different from City parks?

While both are public spaces that can be found throughout the city, POPS are public spaces provided on private property and maintained by private owners, administered by the Zoning Resolution by the Department of City Planning, and City Parks are public spaces provided by the Department of Parks and Recreation.

Who is responsible for maintaining a POPS?

The building owners are responsible for maintenance of the POPS. If there is a POPS sign posted on-site, it may include the owner or maintenance designee's contact information for you to contact should you have any questions or comments.

If you have any questions or complaints about a POPS, please call 311 or fill out the [complaint form](#). Provide the location of the POPS of concern and include as many details as possible. The Department of Buildings will then inspect the POPS and determine if any violations shall be issued.

What is the Department of City Planning's role with POPS?

The Department is committed to ensuring that all POPS serve the public, and continually enhances design standards so that POPS are of the highest quality, useful and inviting for the public.

Property owners who wish to modify an existing POPS or build a new POPS must obtain approval by the Department of City Planning, prior to filing permits with the Department of Buildings. The Department of City Planning reviews all applications related to POPS to ensure that they are meeting the appropriate standards. It also maintains all POPS data and files, including drawings.

Who enforces that POPS are open during its required open hours and are providing all of the required amenities?

The [Department of Building \(DOB\)](#) is charged with enforcement of POPS. If you have any questions or complaints about a POPS, please call 311 or fill out the [complaint form](#). Provide the location of the POPS of concern and include as many details as possible. The Department of Buildings will then inspect the POPS and determine if any violations shall be issued.

How do I submit a complaint for a POPS?

The building owners are responsible for maintenance of the POPS. If there is a POPS sign posted on-site, it may include the owner or maintenance designee's contact information for you to contact should you have any questions or comments.

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Must building owners obtain approval by the Department of City Planning to modify or develop a new POPS?

Yes. Property owners who wish to modify an existing POPS or build a new POPS must obtain approval by the Department of City Planning, prior to filing permits with the Department of Buildings. The Department of City Planning reviews all applications related to POPS to ensure that they are meeting the appropriate standards.

I am a building owner, and would like to build a new public plaza. How do I begin the process?

Review Zoning Resolution Section 37-78 (a) for new public plazas, and Section 37-70 et al. to understand the regulations that the plaza will be subject to. Then, please refer to the Department's [Applicant Portal](#) to request an Informational Interest Meeting to discuss your proposal.

I am a building owner with an existing POPS on site, and would like to modify it. How do I begin the process?

For an existing plaza, review Zoning Resolution Section 37-625 for design changes to an existing plaza, and Section 37-70 et al. to understand the regulations that the plaza will be subject to. For all other types of POPS, refer to the prior approvals or regulations under which it was approved. Then, please refer to the Department's [Applicant Portal](#) to request an Informational Interest Meeting to discuss your proposal.

I am a building owner and need to submit a design review package for signage at my POPS. How do I begin the process?

Find out how and by when at [DCP Applicant Portal - POPS Signage website](#).

Where can I download POPS data?

POPS data is available through the [City of New York's Open Data website](#).

Data Source: Privately Owned Public Space Database (2018), owned and maintained by the New York City Department of City Planning and created in collaboration with Jerold S. Kayden and The Municipal Art Society of New York.

How was the POPS data collected?

Starting in the late 1990's, Harvard professor Jerold S. Kayden, the Department of City Planning, and the Municipal Art Society (MAS) joined forces to conduct a comprehensive analysis of New York City POPS and jointly developed an electronic database with detailed information about each POPS. Based on this work and published in 2000, "Privately Owned Public Space: The New York City Experience," describes the evolution of incentive zoning in New York City from 1961-2000, and profiles 503 public spaces at 320 buildings that had been granted additional floor area or related waivers in exchange for providing these spaces. A qualitative analysis of these spaces found that some POPS were well used, serving as destinations or neighborhood gathering spaces, while others were primarily for circulation purposes or of minimal usability.

This initial POPS database served as the basis for the Department's current database, on which it maintains all POPS data, and which is critical to the Department meeting its obligations to report on the data and make it publicly available. The Department would like to give special thanks to Jerold Kayden and MAS for their financial support and ongoing contributions to the collection and dissemination of information about POPS, and for their advocacy work, overall.

Where can I download the new POPS logo?

The new POPS logo adopted in December 2019 can be downloaded at [DCP's Required Signage Symbols](#) page.