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**DESIGN TRUST FOR PUBLIC SPACE AND GRAND ARMY PLAZA COALITION
LAUNCH *REINVENTING GRAND ARMY PLAZA*
AN IDEAS COMPETITION TO IMPROVE NEW YORK CITY'S GREATEST UNREALIZED ASSET**



New York (February 26, 2008) - To catalyze Grand Army Plaza's rebirth, the Design Trust for Public Space, in partnership with the Grand Army Plaza Coalition, has launched an international ideas competition, *Reinventing Grand Army Plaza*, to generate new visions for every aspect of the plaza's design. "Currently an underdeveloped public amenity, a redesign will invigorate Brooklyn's Grand Army Plaza and unite surrounding communities," said Deborah Marton, Design Trust Executive Director, "Grand Army Plaza is Brooklyn's High Line."

Grand Army Plaza is New York City's greatest unrealized asset. Home to powerful architecture, the Soldiers' and Sailors' Arch, the elegant Bailey Fountain, the entrance to Frederick Law Olmsted's greatest achievement, Prospect Park, and a transit hub, the sum of these parts is emphatically less than the whole. Rob Witherwax, Coordinator of GAPCo said, "The Grand Army Plaza Coalition is very proud to partner with the Design Trust in this Ideas Competition. Grand Army Plaza was wonderfully conceived by Olmsted and Vaux but has failed its purpose since inception. With a new design, Grand Army Plaza can be transformed into a top-notch urban space that serves all of its users better."

Organizers anticipate hundreds of innovative and high-quality competition entries. "Thousands logged onto the competition website in the first weekend of its launch, and leading design firms in the U.S. and abroad have expressed interest in submitting," said Deborah Marton, Design Trust Executive Director. The winning entry will receive \$5,000, 2nd Place: \$2,000, and 3rd Place: \$1,000. Top submissions will be exhibited outdoors at Grand Army Plaza in the fall of 2008. Submissions will also inform the program for a new schematic plan for the Plaza, to be created in late 2008 in partnership with the New York City Departments of Parks and Recreation and Transportation.

Competition entries will be accepted until April 25th, 2008 and judged by a jury comprised of architects, planners and local civic activists. Jurors include: Michael Van Valkenburgh, Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates (Jury Chair); Jonathan Butler, Brownstoner.com; Elizabeth Meyer, University of VA; Benjamin Perez, Parsons Brinckerhoff; Milton Puryear, Brooklyn Greenway Initiative; Ellen Salpeter, Heart of Brooklyn; Elizabeth Streb, Streb Lab for Action Mechanics; Ken Smith, Ken Smith Landscape Architects; Alex Washburn, NYC Dept. of City Planning; Rob Witherwax, Grand Army Plaza Coalition.

For more information, including neighborhood profiles, area photography, and competition rules and regulations, visit <http://www.ReinventingGAP.org>. Community input on the future of the Plaza is being collected through the website's 'Comments' section, available from the 'Resources' page: <http://designtrust.org/projects/gap/comment>.

The Design Trust (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 over two-dozen projects, improving the urban experience for all New Yorkers.

The Grand Army Plaza Coalition (www.grandarmyplaza.org) is an alliance of Brooklyn community groups and cultural organizations working together to improve Grand Army Plaza.