



Flushing Meadows-Corona Park

7

Length: 5.2 miles
Estimated travel time: Biking—1 hour; walking—3 hours
Attractions: Flushing Meadows Corona Park, Unisphere, New York State Pavilion, Ederle Terrace, Queens Zoo, Queens Museum of Art, Hall of Science, neighborhoods of Kew Gardens, Forest Hills, and Briarwood
 Historic Flushing (side trip)

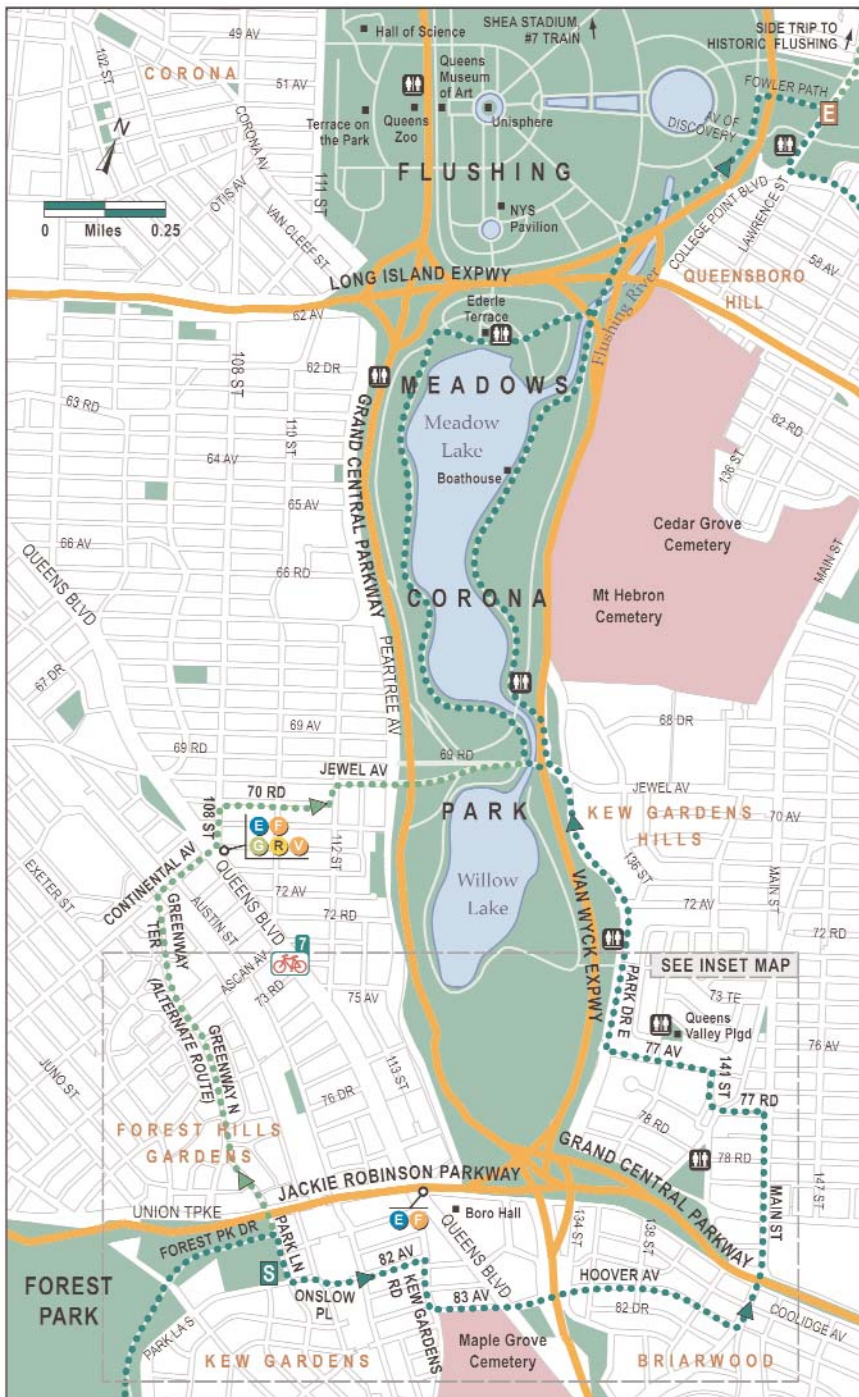
Character: A combination of on-street traveling and sheltered park route.

Directions at a Glance

Start at Park Lane and Forest Park Drive

Mile	<i>See also inset map.</i>	Mile	
0.0	Turn right onto Park Lane.	3.0	Cross left on Jewel Avenue as it crosses Flushing Meadows Corona Park.
0.1	Left on Onslow Place, then short right on Grenfell Street, then immediately turn left onto 82nd Avenue.	3.2	Turn right onto trail alongside Meadow Lake. Follow trail around southern edge of lake (right side).
0.5	Right on Kew Gardens Road.	4.2	Exit trail before it curves to the left around north end of Meadow Lake.
0.6	Left onto 83rd Avenue.	4.3	Cross parking lot heading towards small, slightly arched bridge that crosses tiny Flushing River. Follow on marked trail that roughly follows the river.
0.8	At 134th Street, travel straight ahead on Hoover Avenue. Pass Maple Grove Cemetery on your right.	5.1	After crossing under the Long Island Expressway, turn right at Meridian Road. Follow Meridian Road to Fowler Path. Turn right onto Fowler Path, past Lawrence Playground to the Park exit on College Point Boulevard.
1.3	Left on Main Street.		
1.8	Left on 77th Road.		
2.0	Right on 141st Street.		
2.1	Left on 77th Avenue.		
2.3	Right on Park Drive East.		

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Subways

The E, F, G and R get you close to the southern and middle part of Flushing Meadows-Corona Park. Take the E or F train to Union Turnpike/Kew Gardens and travel south to pick up the route at Kew Gardens Road and 83rd Avenue.



Greenway alongside Meadow Lake

The 7 train runs along the northern end of the Park, with stops at 111th Street, Shea Stadium, and in downtown Flushing. (For the latest information, visit the MTA website at www.mta.info or call 718-330-1234).

Where to Eat

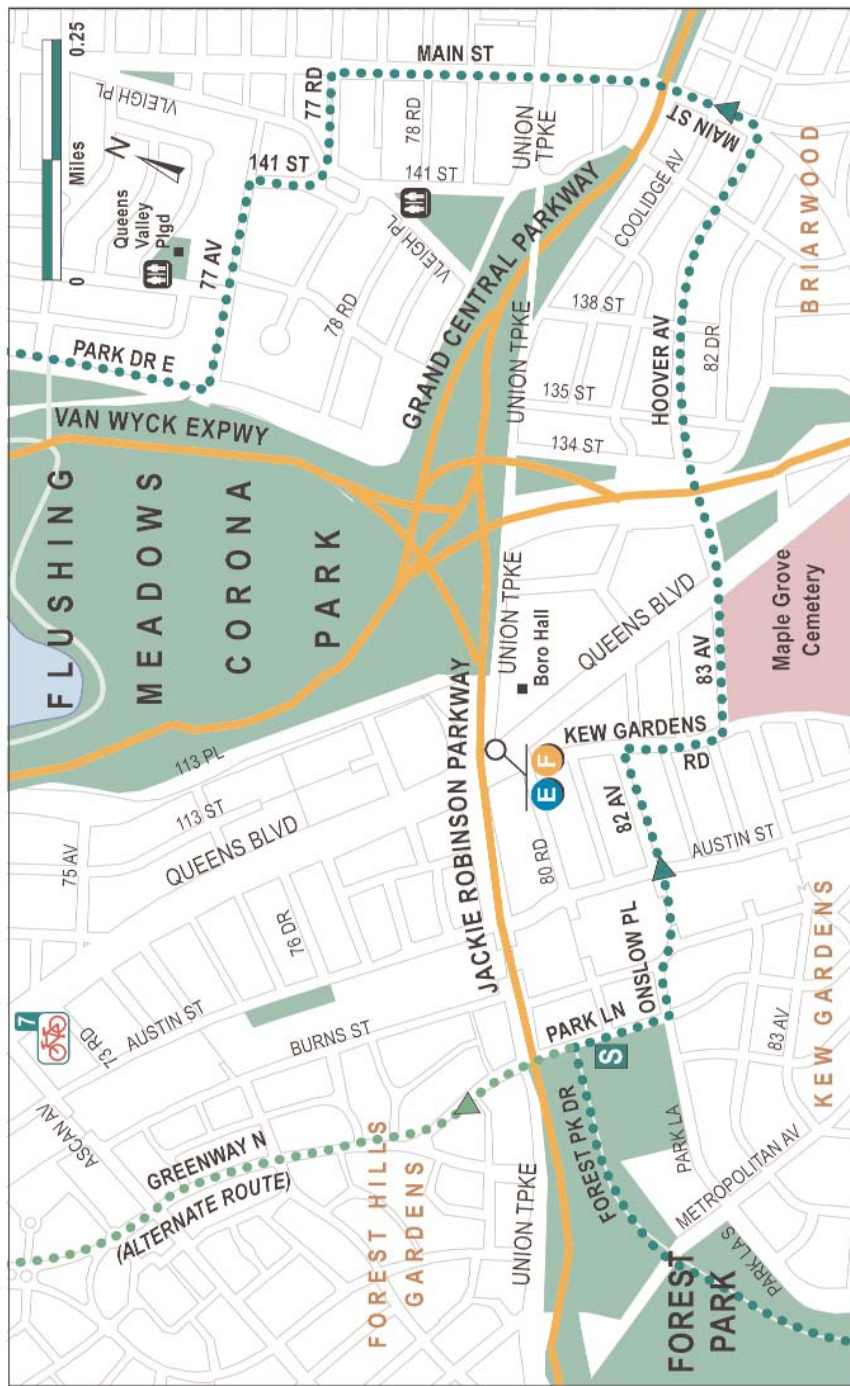
Ederle Terrace is home to a New York City institution, Knish Nosh, or save your appetite for the many ethnic stores and restaurants in Flushing, which is 10 minutes away from the end of the route. You can also find restaurants and food stores along Queens Boulevard and Austin Street.

Public Restrooms

Public restrooms can be found in Flushing Meadows Corona Park near Ederle Terrace, the Paserelle Plaza, the Queens Zoo and several other locations.

Area History

This segment of the Greenway explores Flushing Meadows-Corona Park, one of the great examples of urban land reclamation. The area started out as a vast salt marsh. A salt marsh is a low coastal grassland that is covered periodically by the rising tide. Salt marshes are found on the edges of estuaries, places where a river flows into the ocean. The predominant plant species is *Spartina*, a tough grass that excretes salt, and thus is adapted to the edge between the land and the sea. While eaten by very few creatures, *Spartina* shelters a rich array of life. Before urbanization, Flushing and the other salt marshes that rimmed the estuary served New York City well. Salt hay was harvested for the market gardens, where it was used as a winter mulch.



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But by the end of the nineteenth century, the biological richness of Flushing Meadows was eschewed for the convenience of having a nearby dump. By the 1920s, trainloads of garbage arrived daily from Brooklyn, including carloads of still smoldering furnace ashes. The surreal, smoking landscaped earned the area the name “the Valley of the Ashes” in F. Scott Fitzgerald’s novel, *The Great Gatsby*.

In an early case of environmental restoration, the land was painstakingly reclaimed. In the 1930s, Robert Moses, who was the Parks Commissioner at the time, directed the relocation of over 50 million cubic tons of garbage. The dump was transformed into a showpiece site for both the 1939 and 1964 World’s Fairs. Today, the park is the cultural and sporting heart of Queens.

This park is used every day by people from the entire region. People come to play, stroll along the Flushing Bay

promenade, to enjoy the sounds of a summer concert, to visit one of the park’s outstanding cultural institutions, or simply to relax in a beautiful garden. The many recreational playing fields and playgrounds in the park are used for activities that reflect the vast ethnic mix of Queens; soccer and cricket are especially popular.

Presiding at the center of the fair site, the **Unisphere** is awe-inspiring. This twelve-story iconic monument of the globe represents Queens like nothing else. Even though you’ve probably seen hundreds of images of this work, nothing prepares you for the sheer enormity of it. The Unisphere was built in 1963 out of 350 tons of steel for the 1964 fair. Not surprisingly, the U.S. Steel Corporation was the Unisphere’s sponsor.

The park houses four other leading cultural and educational institutions. The active **Queens Museum of Art** (www.queensmuseum.org) is housed

The Unisphere stands behind a walking tour in Flushing Meadows-Corona Park.



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The Science Playground at the New York Hall of Science

in the former New York City Building, built for the 1939 World's Fair. The museum features both forward-looking art and a fascinating panoramic model of New York City, showing all of our rivers, parks and bridges and more than 800,000 teeny-tiny buildings. The **Queens Theatre in the Park** (www.queens theatre.org), dedicated to the performing arts, is due south of the museum. You'll find the **Queens Zoo** and the **New York Hall of Science** on 111th street, on the other side of the Grand Central Parkway.

The Queens Zoo (www.queenszoo.com) is managed by the Wildlife Conservation Society and devoted to the critters and habitats of North America. Architecture and 60's buffs take note of the geodesic dome, now used as an aviary, which was designed by Buckminster Fuller. The New York Hall of Science (www.nyhallsci.org) is New York

City's only museum dedicated to hands-on, interactive science and technology exhibitions and education. The permanent exhibitions include the *The Search for Life Beyond Earth* and *The Sports Challenge*.

The northern end of the park is a center of world-class sports facilities, including both the **USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center**, home to the U.S. Open Tennis Tournament, and **Shea Stadium** (soon to be redeveloped as Citi Field stadium), home to the New York Mets, as well as the new state-of-the-art pool and ice rink, which is scheduled to open in 2007 as the largest recreational facility in a City park. Shea Stadium has gone down in rock and roll legend as the venue for the Beatles concert in August 1965 that was the first stadium rock show in history.

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Trip Description

You have a short but complex hop to the beginning of Flushing Meadows-Corona Park (see inset map, page 45). The route takes you past the Queens County Courthouse and through some lovely, leafy areas, including the pleasant, middle-class neighborhoods of **Kew Gardens** and **Kew Garden Hills**. The stretch of 83rd Avenue to Hoover Avenue borders **Maple Grove Cemetery**. Maple Grove was established in 1875. It is still in use and is well tended. While you're on 83rd Avenue, as you cross Queens Boulevard you see Queens Borough Hall and the Queens Court Building, two pleasant modernist buildings.

Once you're in Flushing Meadows-Corona Park, you'll be making your way northwards towards the site of both the 1939 and 1964 World's fairs. It may be preferable to stay on the path bordering the lake, but beware, it can get muddy after heavy rain. This is a great park for both bird and people watching. The lake is a popular spot for all kinds of aquatic fowl, especially during the spring and autumn migration seasons. The terrain here is large grassy fields around substantial Meadow Lake.

The action picks up at the end of Meadow Lake. Follow the Greenway signs that direct you underneath the Long Island Expressway into the World's Fair site. Spend some time exploring this fascinating corner of the city, taking in the Unisphere, a varied assortment of statues and pocket

gardens, and perhaps the Queens Museum of Art, the Queens Zoo, or the Hall of Science.

After you've had your fill of exploring, get back on the Greenway by finding the road that parallels the Flushing River along Meridian Road (the Park service road). Watch for a Park sign for Fowler Path. Turn right onto Fowler Path, past Lawrence Playground, which will take you out of the Park to College Point Boulevard.

Side Trip - Historic Flushing

Directions at a Glance:

- | Mile | |
|------|---|
| 0.0 | Starting at College Point Boulevard outside Flushing Meadows-Corona Park. Turn left onto College Point Boulevard. |
| 0.2 | Turn right on 41st Road. |
| 0.4 | Turn left on Main Street. |
| 0.5 | Turn right on 41st Avenue. |
| 0.8 | Turn left on Bowne Street. |
| 0.9 | Just past Bowne House at 37 th Street, turn right into Margaret Carman Green. Continue through Margaret Carman Green onto 37th Street (to see Kingsland Homestead and Weeping Beech Park). |
| 1.0 | Backtrack through Margaret Carman Green and turn right onto Bowne Street. |
| 1.1 | Turn left on Northern Boulevard. |
| 1.2 | Turn right on Leavitt Street to 137th Street. |
| 1.3 | Backtrack on Leavitt one short block and right onto 35th Place. |
| 1.4 | Left on Linden Place. |
| 1.5 | Cross Northern Boulevard and go right past Main Street. |
| 1.7 | Turn left on Prince Street. |
| 1.9 | Turn left on 38th Avenue. |
| 2.0 | Turn right on Main Street. |
| 2.2 | End at Roosevelt Avenue and Main Street, at subway stop for #7 line. |

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This side trip takes you into the old town of Flushing, providing a glimpse both into its long and important history and its rich cultural present.

The route traces some of this history. Once you're there, you'll find a compelling array of other historical buildings, houses of worship, stores and restaurants, and bustling sidestreets.

A new historical trail system with signs highlighting historically significant sights within downtown Flushing, including the **Bowne House**, **The Lewis H. Latimer House**, **Kingsland Homestead**, **The Weeping Beech Tree**, and **Margaret Carman Green** was completed in 2007.

Flushing held a reputation for religious freedom almost from its founding. In 1657 Governor Petrus Stuyvesant declared the Dutch Reformed Church the official religion of the colony. A group of seventeenth century Quakers, the common name for members of the Religious Society of Friends, replied to Stuyvesant with a document entitled the *Flushing Remonstrance*, which is considered the first declaration of religious freedom in American history. Stuyvesant jailed the leading signers, and in 1662 exiled John Bowne, whose house was used for Quaker meetings. The Dutch West India company allowed Bowne to return, carrying orders to Stuyvesant to cease his persecution, thus codifying a certain level of religious freedom, at least in New York. The Quakers became an important

commercial and political force. Francis Lewis, a Quaker and Flushing landowner, was a signer of the Declaration of Independence.

Trip Description

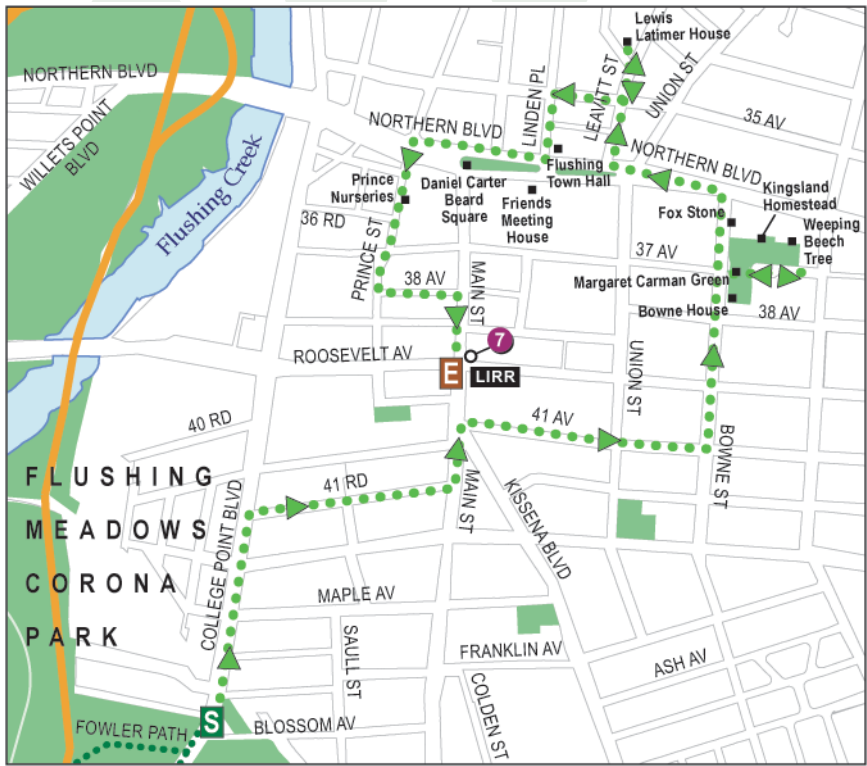
Starting at College Point Boulevard outside of Flushing Meadows-Corona Park, travel north to 41st Road, making a right turn to Main Street. Foot and vehicular traffic are quite heavy in the area; cyclists may want to walk bikes and enjoy the hustle, bustle, and history.

Turn right onto 41st Avenue and left onto Bowne Street. The **John Bowne House** is at 37-01 Bowne Street. The kitchen wing, built in 1661, was the controversial meeting spot. This is also the oldest surviving structure in Queens. The Bowne House is owned and operated by the Bowne House Historical Society (www.bowne-house.org) and is a member of the Historic House Trust of New York City (www.historichousetrust.org).

Just past Bowne House, turn right into **Margaret Carman Green**. Situated in Weeping Beech Park, this plot was named after Margaret I. Carman, a Flushing native who devoted many years to preserving Flushing's history. Her efforts resulted in the opening of the Flushing Freedom Trail; the 1.3-mile trail stops along historical sites, many of which are associated with the underground railroad that lead southern slaves to freedom. After her death in 1976 this tree-lined square of Weeping Beech Park was named in



Fountain of the Fairs



Historic Flushing

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her memory. The green is landscaped with willow oaks.

Continuing through the Green to 37th Avenue, **Kingsland Homestead** is on the left. This Dutch-style house was built by Charles Doughty, a Quaker farmer, in 1774. It reflects the relatively greater prosperity of the colony after a century of development. Kingsland Homestead is owned and operated by the Queens Historical Society (www.queenshistoricalsociety.org) and is a member of the Historic House Trust of New York City.

Just past Kingsland Homestead is the site of the **Weeping Beech Tree**, one of two living NYC landmarks until its death in 1998. The Weeping Beech Tree was planted in 1847 by Samuel Bowne Parsons, owner of one of Flushing's large plant nurseries. The shoot was acquired in Belgium. All weeping beech trees in the United States are descended from this one. Though it died and was cut down in 1998, its daughters are still found fronting its remains here in Weeping Beech Park.

Backtracking through Margaret Carman Green, turn right onto Bowne Street where you will find **George Fox Stone** just before Northern Boulevard. This boulder was named after George Fox, the founder of the Society of Friends, who came to North America in 1672 and preached here under a stand of oak trees.

Turn left on Northern Boulevard. Turn right onto Leavitt Street to visit the **Lewis H. Latimer House**, which is at

the corner of Leavitt and 137th Street. Born the son of runaway slaves from Virginia, Latimer educated himself in the craft of drafting. Besides being the chief draftsman on Thomas Edison's team, he was a brilliant inventor himself, coming up with the carbon filament for the electrical light bulb. He also drew up the original drawings for Alexander Graham Bell's telephone. This was his house, but not at its original location—it used to be on Holly Avenue in Flushing. The house is owned by the City of New York, operated by the Lewis H. Latimer Fund and is a member of the Historic House Trust of New York City.

Backtracking on Leavitt Street one short block to 35th Avenue, turn right to Linden Place and left to Northern Boulevard. On the corner is **Flushing Town Hall** (www.flushingtownhall.org), erected in 1864, the Romanesque Revival style building is run by the non-profit Flushing Council on Culture and the Arts. It is home to exhibits, special events, opera, jazz and theater. It has long been a center of community life; entry to the building is free during normal business hours.

Cross Northern Boulevard to the **Friends Meeting House**. Liberated from having to meet in secret in their homes, the Quakers were finally able to build a place for open congregation. A portion of this austere structure was built in 1694, making it the oldest building in continuous use for religious purposes in New York City.



Flushing Town Hall reminds passersby that the plaza has a deep history.

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Continuing along Northern Boulevard to Main Street is **Daniel Carter Beard Square**. An 1841 map of the town of Flushing shows the site of Daniel Carter Beard Memorial Square (known as Flushing Park until 1942) as a public park, which makes the square one of the oldest parks in Queens. Daniel Carter Beard was a resident of Flushing, a civil engineer and an internationally known artist. He illustrated Mark Twain's *Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*. Beard is probably best remembered in Flushing as a founder and

first national Commissioner of the Boy Scouts of America. The square was dedicated in his honor in 1942. After the Square, turn left onto Prince Street, the site of **William Prince Nurseries**, established in Flushing in 1737, one of the first commercial nurseries in America.

Turn left on 38th Avenue, passing the grand old St. George's Episcopal Church just before you reach Main Street. Turn right to find the 7 train subway stop at Roosevelt Avenue.



A collage of color and texture is created by the retail signage in Flushing's tightly packed business district.

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