

BRONX CIVIC CENTER

Downtown Revitalization Initiative
Strategic Investment Plan

Prepared for New York State
Downtown Revitalization Initiative
New York City
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CONTENTS

Foreword	5
Executive Summary	7
Section I: Downtown Profile and Assessment	15
• An Overview	17
• Planning Context	31
• Major Nodes of Activity	48
Section II: Downtown Vision, Goals, and Strategies	69
Section III: Downtown Management and Implementation Strategy	73
Section IV: Public Involvement	77
Section V: Projects Proposed for DRI Funding	86
Section VI: Other Priority Projects	156
Section VII: Appendix	178

FOREWORD



“A thriving downtown can provide a tremendous boost to the local economy. The Downtown Revitalization Initiative will transform selected downtown neighborhoods into vibrant places for people to live, work and raise a family, which will also help attract new investments and business for years to come.” – **Governor Andrew M. Cuomo**

Nationally and globally, business and development leaders recognize that the creation of new downtown communities with public amenities and a high quality of life can provide a catalyst for increased economic development, re-population (particularly by young professionals) and urban vibrancy. Governor Andrew Cuomo recognized this potential and launched a major new initiative in the spring of 2016 – the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI).

The Governor’s ten Regional Economic Development Councils (REDCs) each identified one community in which to invest \$10 million to improve the vitality of those urban centers. The Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) funding supports a community planning and implementation process where each community develops the key ingredients needed for successful downtown revitalization: a clear vision for the downtown; goals and strategies to accomplish the vision; and a strategic plan to implement catalytic projects identified in the plan.

Communities selected in Round One included:

- Elmira (Southern Tier Region)
- Geneva (Finger Lakes Region)
- Glens Falls (Capital Region)
- Jamaica (NYC Region)
- Jamestown (Western NY Region)
- Middletown (Mid-Hudson Region)
- Oneonta (Mohawk Valley Region)
- Oswego (Central NY Region)
- Plattsburgh (North Country Region)
- Westbury (Long Island Region)

In 2017, the enacted State budget included another \$100,000,000 for downtown revitalization. DRI Two is again supporting a community planning process, conducted by staff from the Department of State Office of Planning, Development, and Community Infrastructure and the NYS Homes and Community Renewal. This multi-agency effort, led by Secretary of State Rossana Rosado, also includes staff from Empire State Development and assistance from other agencies like the State Department of Transportation and State Department of Labor based on projects identified by the communities.

Communities selected in Round Two included:

- Watkins Glen (Southern Tier Region)
- Batavia (Finger Lakes Region)
- Hudson (Capital Region)
- South Bronx (NYC Region)
- Olean (Western NY Region)
- Kingston (Mid-Hudson Region)
- Rome (Mohawk Valley Region)
- Cortland (Central NY Region)
- Watertown (North Country Region)
- Hicksville in Oyster Bay (Long Island Region)

The program emphasizes using DRI investments to reinforce and secure additional public and private investment within and near downtown neighborhoods, building upon growth supported by the REDCs. To fully leverage the impact of the DRI, Local Planning Committees identified projects that totaled in excess of the available DRI funds to ensure a continued pipeline of projects ready for funding within the community in the event that alternate funding sources are identified for projects; additional State funds become available; or projects drop from consideration. The most transformative and catalytic projects from those identified for each downtown will receive DRI funding.

With the assistance of the State, leadership from within the communities, and public and private investors, these communities will become vibrant communities where people will want to live, work and raise families.

One of the major thoroughfares of the South Bronx, 161st Street connects Yankee Stadium, the Bronx's courts and main civic buildings, and Melrose Commons.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

New York State's Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) seeks to "transform communities ripe for development into vibrant neighborhoods where the next generation of New Yorkers will want to live, work, and raise a family." The program allocated \$10 million to the Bronx Civic Center – one of 10 communities selected state-wide – to support the implementation of catalytic investment projects and the development of strategies that will attract additional public and private investment to support downtown revitalization.

This Bronx Civic Center Strategic Investment Plan recommends 13 transformative, ready-to-implement projects that support revitalization of the Bronx Civic Center, with the potential to create or attract more than 800 jobs and leverage more than

\$21 million in public and private funds. The plan also outlines broader strategies to support long-term revitalization of the Bronx Civic Center, and a list of projects that represent priorities for future public and private funding.

This plan is the product of a five-month, collaborative process that included deep engagement with South Bronx elected leaders, community organizations, residents, businesses, and other stakeholders. The process was led by an 18-person Local Planning Committee (LPC), co-chaired by Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr., and Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation (BOEDC) President Marlene Cintron, and built on more than a decade of past planning by New York City and Bronx organizations.



The Bronx Civic Center was awarded \$10M to advance catalytic projects, and create strategies to attract additional investment.

Study Area Overview & Opportunity

The Bronx Civic Center is one of the borough's most populous and culturally diverse areas, one of its largest employment centers, and an area well positioned for future investment and development as it continues to outpace population and job growth of the city amid overall reinvestment in the borough. The Civic Center – bounded by 139th Street and Third Avenue to the south, St. Ann's Avenue to the east, 165th Street and McClelland Street to the north, and the Harlem River to the west – encompasses several distinct commercial, civic, and recreational districts within what is colloquially known as the South Bronx. They include The Hub, an historic retail and office cluster; the Civic Core, which houses Bronx County's courthouses and government buildings, as well as Yankee Stadium; Melrose Commons, a 3,000+-unit community-planned urban renewal area; and an emerging mixed-use district known as Lower Concourse that is anchored by the City University of New York's Hostos Community College and Lincoln Hospital, and is attracting a mix of residential, retail, office, and hotel development.

Originally part of the Town of Morrisania, the South Bronx was incorporated into New York City in 1874 and emerged as a stable, working class community that welcomed a succession of immigrant groups and upwardly mobile families. Urban decline in the 1960s and 1970s had a significant impact on the South Bronx, resulting in concentrated poverty, high crime rates, and disinvestment by private property owners. The early 1980s saw the South Bronx as the focus of borough and citywide plans to address urban poverty, with Bronx-based community groups playing a meaningful role in new housing development and public improvements. Revitalization efforts have accelerated over the last decade, as record public and private investment occurs in the Bronx Civic Center. These investments – detailed later in this plan – include more than \$4 billion of public and private investment, the restoration of critical public assets such as the Grand Concourse, more than 3,000 affordable housing units, and more than 1.5 million SF of new retail and office space within key districts.

A 'De Facto' Downtown

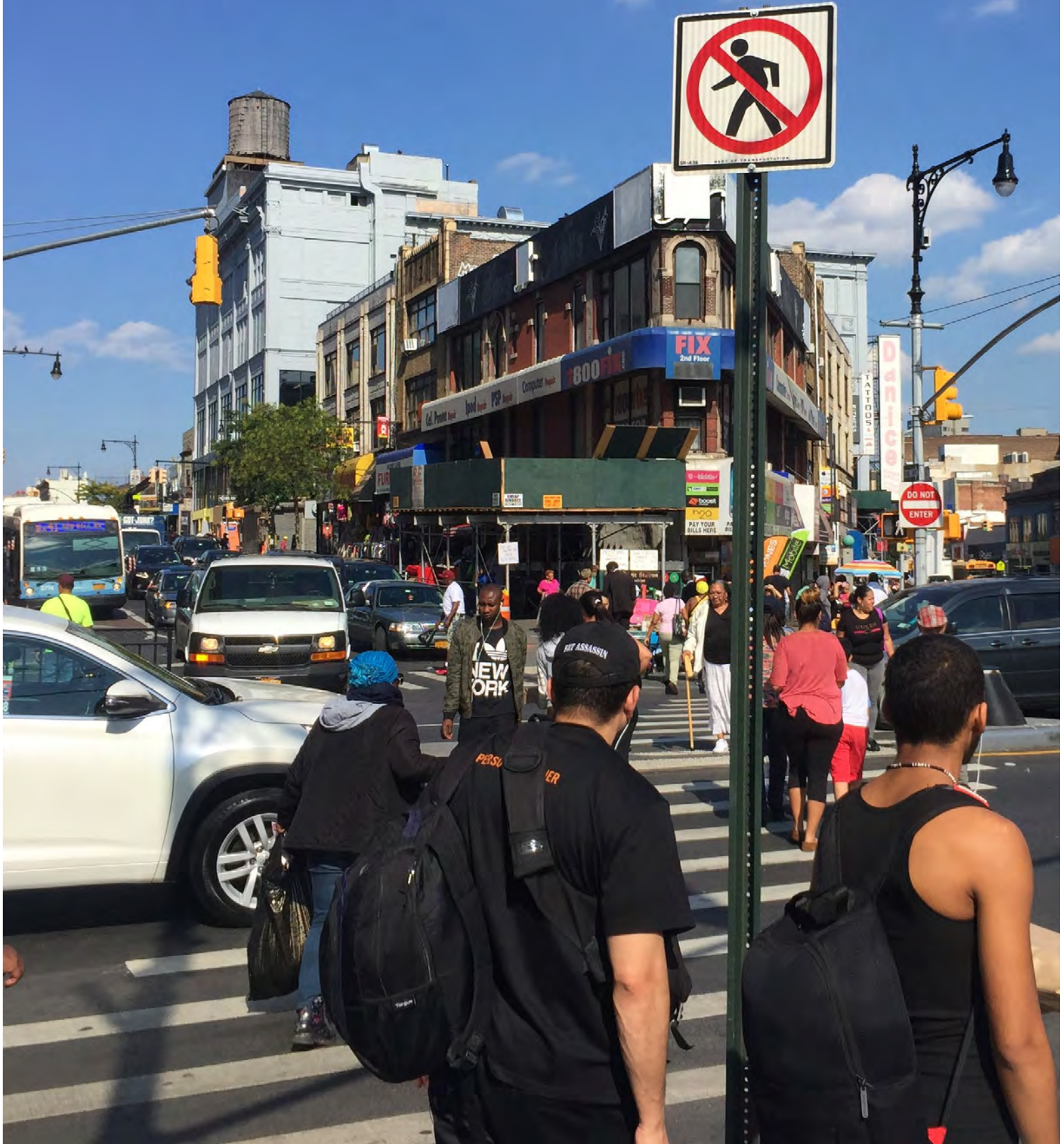
The Bronx Civic Center today is home to more than 86,000 Bronxites, supports more than 41,000 jobs, and welcomes more than 4 million annual visitors, representing an important and evolving population center, employment hub, and destination. Key highlights include:

- The Study Area is a dense, diverse, and growing community. The Civic Center has played a historical role as a destination for immigrants: first from Western Europe, then the Caribbean,

and today Central and South America, Africa and Asia; it is also a historically significant home to Bronxites of Puerto Rican descent. Since 2010, the population has increased by 9% versus 6% in the Bronx and citywide. Much of this growth has been among young families with children, a population group that has formed and settled in the area for successive generations. Median household incomes within the Study Area are significantly lower than in the Bronx or the city, with a large concentration of very low-income households and few upper-income households – emphasizing the need for strategies that focus on connecting low-income residents to jobs and other assets, and that are mindful of potential for displacement.

- The South Bronx is a significant and growing job center. The two zip codes comprised by the Study Area represent 10% of the Bronx's total jobs (versus 5% of its population). The area added nearly 10,000 jobs between 2010 and 2017, representing 30% growth versus 23% citywide. Major industries are health care and social assistance, government and education, and retail trade. The health and government/education sectors represent significant growth sectors in the Study Area and provide a significant share of the Bronx's well-paying jobs. More than 40% of jobs are held by Bronxites and more than 80% are held by city residents. In addition to its role as a job center, the Civic Center serves an important function connecting students and jobseekers to employment. One of the Study Area's primary anchors is the City University of New York's Hostos Community College, which serves 7,000 students. Additionally, Metropolitan College of New York operates an extension campus in the Hub, serving 300 undergraduate and graduate students, and several community nonprofits offer career training and placement services.
- The Civic Center serves as a key gateway into the Bronx for millions of annual visitors, including those seeking recreation and culture. It is home to some of the largest tourism venues in the Bronx, including Yankee Stadium, which attracts 3 to 4 million visitors annually. Additionally, the Civic Center contains a diverse mix of cultural venues and institutions that attract visitors from the region and especially the Bronx and Upper Manhattan, including the Bronx Museum of the Arts, Pregones Theater, the Hostos Center for Arts & Culture, and the Andrew Freedman Home. Three more destination cultural institutions are in planning: the Universal Hip-Hop Museum and Bronx Children's Museum on the Harlem River waterfront, and the Bronx Music Hall in Melrose Commons.
- Finally, the Civic Center is a major retail destination, with

Major nodes of activity within the Bronx Civic Center, such as The Hub, attract significant foot traffic during daytime hours, creating a bustling street environment.



just under 4.5 million SF of neighborhood and regional retail space, representing 15% of the Bronx's total inventory. Retail space spans a variety of business types, from national retailers at the Bronx Terminal Market shopping center, to regional mid-box chains at The Hub, to mom-and-pop businesses along Third Avenue, Melrose Avenue, 149th Street, 161st Street, and surrounding blocks. Primarily this retail consists of discount goods, convenience, and limited-service dining. There is unmet demand for restaurants and other specialty uses.

Vibrant, Accessible, but in Need of Investment

While physical character varies across the Civic Center, the chief downtown nodes – The Hub, the Civic Core, Lower Concourse, and Melrose Commons – are dense and active, and feature a diversity of land uses. Across the Study Area, there are 30,500 housing units predominantly in medium- to high-density residential development, including five public housing developments containing more than 11,000 units. There is a large concentration of commercial space, with 4.5 million SF of retail and 2 million SF of leasable office space, which is predominantly Class B space. This mix of uses – combined with institutional anchors including Hostos Community College, Lincoln Hospital, and the court system – supports a steady flow of activity during daytime hours. This activity is supported by key assets and yet faces several important challenges:

- The Civic Center is well served by public transit, with travel times of less than 30 minutes to Midtown Manhattan and direct access to much of the borough, Upper Manhattan, and Lower Westchester (giving commercial areas some of the best access among outer-borough office or retail hubs). Major connections include the B, D, 2, 4, and 5 subway lines, the Metro-North Hudson and Harlem lines, and dozens of bus lines, including the newly introduced Bx6 and Bx41 Select Bus Service (SBS) routes. Yet service is unevenly distributed, with large residential pockets, including Melrose Commons and Concourse Village, more than 10 minutes to the nearest subway by foot.
- Streetscapes are of highly varying quality and, despite significant foot traffic, do not foster a welcoming sense of place within and between the four major nodes of activity. The physical condition of the four major connective corridors – 161st Street to the north, Third Avenue to the east, 149th Street to the south, and the Grand Concourse to the west – heavily influence perceptions of the Civic Center. Challenges include building facades in need of repair, oversized and chaotic business signage, a lack of street trees and other green improvements, a general lack of street cleanliness

related to maintenance, and gaps in street-level activity between destinations, including on 149th Street between Lower Concourse and The Hub.

- Rents across uses have been on the rise within the Study Area, but (except for retail) are not sufficient to support market-rate development or substantial improvement of vacant space. All new housing development within the Study Area has been publicly subsidized affordable housing, mainly serving households earning between 30% and 80% of Area Median Income, with newer developments testing higher income levels. Office rents, at \$25 to \$30 per SF, are higher than for the Bronx overall but not high enough to finance renovations for the estimated millions of SF of warehoused office space in the Study Area. The lack of new or renovated space constrains the market in that approximately 90% of leasable space was built before 1980, and nearly 40% was built before 1940, resulting in office stock that lacks modern amenities.

Opportunities

Recommendations in this plan are driven by the area's demographic, economic, land use, and real estate contexts, including the key factors summarized above. The plan's revitalization strategies seek to respond to several key opportunities and challenges:

1. While the Bronx lacks a traditional downtown core, the Civic Center's dense and dynamic mix of uses has served as a de facto downtown for the Bronx for generations, and investment in this area impacts a population beyond immediate residents and workers.
2. There has been substantial development and job growth in the Study Area in recent years, requiring new infrastructure and amenities, and efforts to protect current residents and businesses from displacement.
3. Commercial corridors are vibrant but in need of physical upgrades, limiting their ability to attract and support businesses, and extend the stay of workers, visitors, and residents.
4. Major growth is occurring across the Study Area, requiring stronger connections to stitch downtown nodes together.

A Community-Informed Process

The Bronx Civic Center Strategic Investment Plan builds on existing public and private plans for investment in the area. Members of the Local Planning Committee (LPC) – composed

of residents and civic leaders – served as the leaders of this process and created a unified vision for the role that DRI investment should play in shaping the future of the Bronx. Ensuring that the community was actively engaged throughout the DRI planning process was a key goal of the LPC and was essential to producing a Strategic Investment Plan that accurately reflects the community’s needs and vision. Community engagement included a website (BronxCivicCenter.com); two public open houses attended by over 150 people; and targeted street canvassing to reach residents, workers, and visitors at 13 high-traffic locations throughout the area. The LPC also solicited input from elected officials and leaders of community organizations.

Guided by this outreach, and the opportunities and challenges identified in the Downtown Profile & Assessment chapter below, the LPC developed the following vision statement to guide investment in the Bronx Civic Center and support revitalization and economic development:

The Bronx Civic Center will draw on its proud history as a cultural, educational, retail, and employment hub to develop a unified downtown that: 1) enhances quality of life for residents and visitors; 2) preserves and promotes the borough’s unique heritage and identity; 3) supports economic growth and opportunity; and 4) serves as a model for inclusive, community-led economic development.

To support this vision, the LPC identified four primary goals for downtown revitalization, each supported by a set of revitalization strategies that are reflected by the recommended Priority Projects:



1. Strengthen neighborhoods as livable, inclusive communities. DRI investments should ensure that revitalization directly benefits those currently living in the area by supporting investment in public and civic spaces, enhanced quality of life, and new models for delivering services to economically diverse communities.

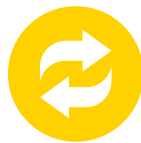


2. Develop attractive, vibrant commercial corridors to support businesses and attract jobs. DRI investments should provide economic support to local businesses to help them thrive and expand, while also laying the groundwork to attract new employers and

build connections that connect residents to employment opportunities.



3. Promote local culture and visitation to the Civic Center. A recurring theme heard from the community was a desire to preserve and celebrate local culture, art, and heritage. DRI investments should therefore improve the visibility of cultural activities and emerging cultural centers, while creating new opportunities for public art and the work of local artists.



4. Enhance neighborhood gateways and connections. As the Study Area experiences significant growth, DRI investments should improve the physical connections between centers of activity.

These goals are aligned with the goals articulated by the New York City Regional Economic Development Council (NYC REDC) in its strategic plans to date, including: improve quality of life; create a pro-growth, pro-jobs environment; invest in the future; and foster innovation and inter-regional cooperation.

Strategic Investment Plan And Projects

Consistent with the goals outlined above, 13 transformative projects are recommended for DRI funding that support revitalization of the Bronx Civic Center. These projects – representing over \$13 million of potential DRI funding – have been prioritized based on their relative impact, cost, feasibility, and public support. Collectively, they would create or attract more than 800 jobs and leverage \$21 million of other public and private funding. The LPC also identified 10 additional projects that represent priorities for the Civic Center, but which require additional study or planning to move forward and/or for which other funding sources may be available or more appropriate to support implementation.

Projects Recommended for DRI Funding

Project Name	Description	DRI Funding Request
1. Upgrade Railroad Park with a Café Kiosk and Park Redesign	Rehabilitate an unused comfort station at Railroad Park into an active café concession by making core-and-shell and utility improvements to accommodate food-related use. This project coincides with a NYC Parks Department RFP process expected to conclude in May 2018. Should no concessionaire be selected, a portion of funds will be reallocated to enhance lighting, signage, and visibility of Railroad Park.	\$4,000,000
2. Relocate a Prominent Catering Company to Lower Concourse	Provide gap financing to Great Performances, a prominent New York City food services company, to relocate their headquarters, including production facilities and a groundfloor café and bar, to a new commercial development at E. 149th Street and Gerard Avenue.	\$2,000,000
3. Expand the Andrew Freedman Home Cultural Art Center	Renovate the Andrew Freedman Home Cultural Art Center to accommodate theater, visual arts, music, dance, and other art productions, and expand workforce development and after-school programming. Additionally, enhance the outdoor areas to enhance public awareness of programming inside the historic center.	\$1,720,000
4. Beautify Streetscapes at the Hub and 149th Street with Plantings, Banners, and Art	Invest in a series of streetscape improvements on Third Avenue, Melrose Avenue, and 149th Street including sidewalk planters, street pole banners, public art, enhanced lighting, street trees, rain gardens, bike racks, and pedestrian improvements to foster a stronger local identity, improve safety, and encourage private investment.	\$1,040,000
5. Create a Business Improvement Fund to Modernize Commercial Districts	Create a Business Improvement Fund available to business owners and property owners along the Study Area's major commercial corridors to fund façade and storefront improvements, upper-floor renovations, and development of full-service restaurants and cafés.	\$1,000,000+
6. Create Active, Resilient Community Gardens with Solar Lighting and Wi-Fi	Outfit three community gardens in Melrose Commons with solar power, enhanced lighting, wi-fi access, and rainwater harvesting to strengthen the area's open space network, community resilience, and sustainability.	\$630,000
7. Support the Opening of the Bronx Kreate Space Artist-Maker Hub	Provide gap funding to build out low-cost workspace, public gallery, and a café at the new Bronx Kreate Space, a planned artist-maker coworking space in Mott Haven.	\$595,000
8. Activate the New Roberto Clemente Plaza with Two Food Kiosks	Install two food concessions at Roberto Clemente Plaza to activate the soon-to-be-completed public space and provide new dining options for local workers and shoppers.	\$520,000
9. Expand Low-Cost Broadband Access in Melrose Commons	Create a point-to-multi-point, rooftop-based wireless broadband network serving residents, businesses, and visitors in Melrose Commons. The network would offer: 1) free wi-fi in and around select public spaces; 2) free access to an internet-enabled local resource portal for residents within networked buildings; and 3) low-cost broadband service for residents within networked buildings.	\$437,000
10. Complete an Upgrade of the BronxWorks Public Swimming Pool Facility	Build on recent investment in a community swimming pool located at BronxWorks' Carolyn McLaughlin Community Center with physical improvements that would enable expanded use for all-ages programming and public use.	\$429,000
11. Enable Construction of a New Pregones Theater Space	Demolish the existing, out-of-code, wood-frame house at 571 Walton Ave. to enable the development of a new building for community programs and administration.	\$260,000
12. Refresh the Bronx Walk of Fame with Updated Signs and Branding	Update the Bronx Walk of Fame by redesigning, replacing, and regrouping signs along the Grand Concourse between 149th Street and 167th Street, and creating a digital directory to draw visitors.	\$250,000
13. Create a More Welcoming Gateway at the 161st Street Station	Enhance the existing concrete medians outside the E. 161st Street-Yankee Stadium subway station with improved landscaping to create a modern, attractive gateway to the Bronx.	\$227,000
Subtotal		\$13,108,000

Other Priority Projects

Project Name	Project Description	Responsible Entity
A. Reconstruct the 153rd Street Bridge	Replace the 153rd Street Bridge over the Metro-North rail tracks to improve traffic and pedestrian flow, and better connect the Melrose community with the emerging activity node at Lower Concourse.	NYCDOT
B. Convert the 149th Street Bridge into a Public Plaza	Create an expanded, programmable sidewalk plaza on the 149th Street Bridge, connecting Lower Concourse to the Hub and providing space for vendors, art, and other activities.	Third Avenue BID
C. Rehabilitate Mullaly Park's Historic Skate Park	Renovate and rehabilitate Mullaly Park's skate park, the first ramp park established in New York City to serve skateboarders, BMX freestylers, and other "extreme sports" enthusiasts.	NYC Parks
D. Create a Gateway Plaza at the 161st Street McDonald's	Partner with McDonald's to build an enhanced plaza at the McDonald's site directly across the street from Yankee Stadium.	McDonald's/ Franchisee
E. Create a Permanent Home for the Bronx Innovation Factory	Identify a location for the Bronx Innovation Factory (BXIF), a center for advanced manufacturing led by, and focused on serving, women and people of color.	CommonWise Education
F. Transform the MTA Control House at 149th Street into a Colorful Icon	Refurbish and install decorative lighting and signage on the historically significant MTA control house located on the southwest corner of the Grand Concourse and 149th Street.	MTA
G. Upgrade the Conference Center at NYC Health + Hospitals Lincoln	Invest in upgrades to the existing meeting rooms and auditorium at NYC Health + Hospitals Lincoln to create a conference center that can host events sponsored by nonprofits, educational institutions, businesses, and others.	Health + Hospitals Lincoln
H. Develop a Network of Public Art Across the Civic Center	Install a network of public art and wayfinding signage to promote local culture, enhance the Civic Center's brand, and point visitors and residents to key cultural and historical sites.	TBD
I. Create a Gateway into the Bronx Walk of Fame	Create a distinctive gateway to the Bronx Walk of Fame that attracts visitors and creates a strong sense of place for the Walk.	BOEDC
J. Improve Accessibility to Franz Sigel Park	Open up access to Franz Sigel Park, an important local asset that is walled off and elevated from the street, to increase use and enhance safety along the Grand Concourse.	NYC Parks/ NYCDOT

Implementation

As a neighborhood within a large metropolitan area, the organizational capacity of the South Bronx differs from other DRI communities that have a centralized local government supporting project execution. Responsibility for implementing DRI Priority Projects rests primarily with a group of nonprofit organizations that have a vested interest in the long-term development of the Bronx, as well as several private entities that have elected to invest in Bronx locations. To ensure effective coordination among DRI project leads, the Office

of Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. – led by the Office of Planning and Development – will serve as an informal organizing entity responsible for monitoring project implementation, facilitating communications among project leads and partners, and serving as a central touch-point for New York State funding entities, including the Department of State, Empire State Development, and Homes and Community Renewal.

The Hub, located at the intersections of 149th Street and Melrose and Third Avenues, is a vibrant commercial corridor and transit hub.



Section I: DOWNTOWN PROFILE & ASSESSMENT

The Bronx Civic Center is a diverse residential, employment, and cultural hub that has served as a de facto Bronx downtown for generations.

The Bronx County Courthouse, constructed in the early 1930s, represents the important cultural and civic legacy of the South Bronx.



An Overview

Located in the heart of the South Bronx

in New York City, the Bronx Civic Center is one of the borough's most populous and culturally diverse areas, and one of its largest employment centers. The Civic Center is well positioned for future investment and development as it continues to outpace population and job growth of the city amid overall reinvestment in the borough.

The Civic Center encompasses several distinct commercial, civic, and recreational districts, including The Hub, an historic retail and office cluster; the Civic Core, which houses Bronx County's courthouses and government buildings, as well as Yankee Stadium; Melrose Commons, a more than 3,000-unit community-planned urban renewal area; and an emerging mixed-use district known as Lower Concourse that is anchored by the City University of New York's Hostos Community College and Lincoln Hospital, and is attracting a mix of residential, retail, office, and hotel development.

The area is well served by transit, with five subway lines converging at two key nodes, two stops on the Metro-North commuter

rail, and dozens of bus lines, providing commutes of under 30 minutes to Midtown Manhattan and direct access to much of the borough, Upper Manhattan, and Lower Westchester.

Over the last 10 years, the Civic Center has seen over \$4 billion in public and private investment, including the final phases of Melrose Commons, the new Yankee Stadium and surrounding parkland, and more than 1.5 million SF of retail and commercial space. An additional \$2 billion of investment is presently underway or planned in the near term, presenting historic opportunity to guide development and strengthen key centers of activity to support long-term economic development and neighborhood revitalization.

The Civic Center has seen more than \$4 billion in public and private investment, with \$2 billion more underway or planned.

STUDY AREA

The primary Study Area of the Bronx Civic Center is bounded by 139th Street and Third Avenue to the south, St. Ann's Avenue to the east, 165th Street and McClelland Street to the north, and the Harlem River to the west, an area encompassing approximately 2 square miles.

History

During the mid-19th century, the South Bronx was an important industrial and maritime hub due to its proximity to Manhattan. Early borough leaders such as Jordan Mott, who established Mott Iron Works in present-day Mott Haven during the 1840s, advocated for rail and infrastructure access to the area, which spurred growth in population and business activity



over subsequent decades. Originally part of the Town of Morrisania, a subdivision of Westchester County, the area was incorporated into New York City in 1874. Unlike the boroughs of Manhattan and Brooklyn, which were independent cities prior to incorporation, the Bronx existed as a series of towns and estates, and therefore has never had a traditional downtown core.

The Study Area was a popular destination for newly arrived European immigrants who worked in the ports and iron works during the turn of the 20th century. During this period of growth in the early 20th century and postwar period, historical landmarks such as the Art Deco Bronx County Courthouse and the Grand Concourse were constructed, and the Hub emerged as a retail and entertainment destination, home to famed department stores Hearn's and Alexander's, the Bronx Opera House, and numerous theaters.¹

Urban renewal, the rise of suburbanization, and destabilized City finances during the mid-20th century contributed to the decline of the Civic Center from a stable, working class community to, by the 1970s, an area challenged by concentrated poverty, high crime rates, and disinvestment by private property owners. This era was characterized by the infamous broadcast of the 1977 World Series, during which sportscaster Howard Cosell commented on a building engulfed in flames near Yankee Stadium, which became a symbol of disinvestment in the South Bronx.² This image – and the broader phenomenon of rampant arson – cast the South Bronx as a national symbol of urban decay, and has by many accounts contributed to a lag in recognition of the Bronx's resurgence over the last three decades.

Renewal & Reinvestment

Beginning in the 1980s, Bronx and citywide community organizations and elected leaders began laying the groundwork to rebuild the South Bronx and restore its historic significance to the borough. This period also saw the start of borough and citywide plans to help address the area's high vacancy rate and lack of economic development. Beginning in the early 1980s, supported by significant commitments by the federal government, Mayor Ed Koch budgeted nearly \$4.5 billion in subsidies for nonprofit groups and community development corporations to revitalize communities throughout the city primarily through housing development, of which \$1.5 billion was distributed in the South Bronx.³ Significant housing investment continued under Mayors David Dinkins, Rudy Giuliani, and Michael Bloomberg.

One notable case of community revitalization occurred

at Melrose Commons, a 33-block area devastated by disinvestment, pockmarked with vacant and rubble-strewn lots, and largely depopulated. Amid concerns that a City-led urban renewal plan would displace remaining residents, a grassroots campaign led to the creation of Nos Quedamos/We Stay, which successfully challenged the City's plan, co-created a new master plan reflecting the community's concerns, and has played an active role in developing nearly 3,000 mixed-income rental and homeownership units since 1994 – a plan that is now nearly complete and stands as a model of community-led urban planning.

Broader efforts at downtown investment include numerous studies led by former Borough Presidents Fernando Ferrer and Adolfo Carrión, Jr., including a \$3 billion Ferrer plan in 1993 to invest in new high schools, court buildings, municipal buildings, and transit centers; as was typical of such plans, some projects were realized, while others remain aspirational.⁴ Revitalization efforts accelerated in the last decade, as record public and private investment has taken place in the Bronx, including in the Bronx Civic Center. These investments – detailed later in this chapter – include the \$1.2 billion Yankee Stadium redevelopment and surrounding park reconstruction, the \$500 million Bronx Terminal Market shopping center, the beautification of the Grand Concourse, nearly 1,500 affordable housing units, and more than 250,000 SF of new office and ground-level retail within key nodes. The Bronx Civic Center DRI investment will build upon both past and recent efforts at revitalization and investment.

Current revitalization builds on decades of community-led planning and local investment.

RECENT PLANS & INVESTMENT

Recent Plans

Significant recent planning efforts have laid the groundwork for the Civic Center's revitalization and economic development. The studies include:

The South Bronx Initiative, 2008

An initiative of the Bloomberg Administration in partnership with local organizations, this plan created a long-term strategy for development and infrastructure investment in a geography similar to the DRI Study Area. Recommendations included development of the remaining parcels of Melrose Commons for mixed-income housing and open space; a plaza reconstruction and new commercial development on City-owned lots at the Hub; broad rezonings of the River Avenue/161st Street area and Lower Concourse, including the Harlem River waterfront, to encourage higher-density, mixed-use development; and streetscape improvements throughout the Study Area. Most of the plan's recommendations have since been completed or are underway.

Port Morris Harlem Riverfront Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) Step 2 Nomination Study, 2010

Led by SoBRO, this study focused on the portion of the South Bronx south of 149th Street and west of Morris Avenue, and identified demand in the community for new housing, open space, job creation, and job training. The study identified as prime reinvestment opportunities the Harlem River waterfront and the portion of Mott Haven between 138th Street and the Major Deegan Expressway, identifying abandoned or contaminated areas.

Lower Grand Concourse BOA Phase 1 Visioning,

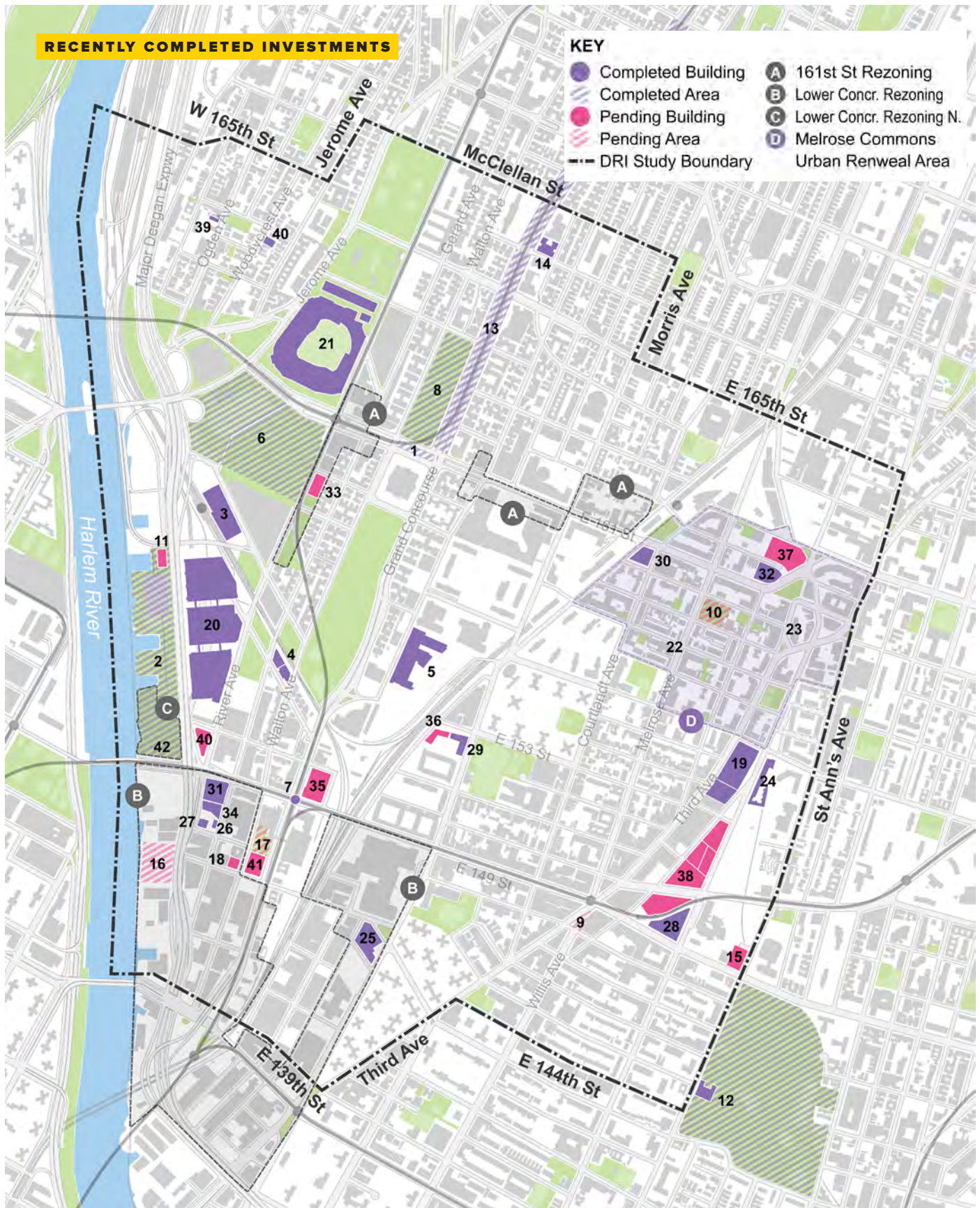
2013 Focused on parcels along the Harlem River waterfront, this study, also led by SoBRO, recommended a series of transit investments and land use and urban design guidelines to shape development in this largely industrial zone. Recommendations included creating a shuttle route to connect the waterfront and neighboring parcels to subway and bus lines, expanding Citi Bike to the development area and locating a ferry dock at the shoreward edge of the northern portion of the district.

Lower Concourse Planning Initiative, 2016

In 2015, Mayor Bill de Blasio allocated \$200 million to promote development along Lower Concourse waterfront, and initiated a study to guide investment. The study analyzed the cost and feasibility of redeveloping two City-owned lots along the Harlem River, developing a waterfront community park, and expanding infrastructure capacity along Exterior Street. It also identified needs for improved lighting and streetscapes to enhance safety, and barriers to industry growth, including broadband connectivity. Following the study, the City led a site disposition and rezoning process to pave the way for a 1,000-unit development, known as Bronx Point, at 149th Street and Exterior Street, and has advanced plans for a waterfront park at 144th Street and Exterior Street.



Teekay Keeya



RECENT INVESTMENT

Over the last decade, the Civic Center has seen historic levels of investment by both public and private entities.

Recent public sector investment was spearheaded by the Bloomberg Administration's South Bronx Initiative in 2008, with over \$690 million in public spending since that time. In addition, the State has made sizable investments in and

around the Civic Center, including \$20 million awarded through the Consolidated Funding Application process. The latter investments are outlined later in this chapter.

Recently completed, underway, and planned public investments in and near the Study Area include:⁵

Project	Investment	Year	Description
1. Lou Gehrig Plaza	\$55,000,000	2009	Redevelopment of a former surface parking lot into a public plaza located between Joyce Kilmer Park and Bronx Borough Hall.
2. Mill Pond Park	\$64,000,000	2009	An 11.5-acre park that fronts the Harlem River and contains the planned location for the Bronx Children's Museum.
3. 153rd Street Metro-North Station	\$91,000,000	2009	Development of a new Metro-North station servicing the new Yankee Stadium and surrounding neighborhood.
4. PATH Homeless Shelter	\$65,500,000	2011	The City's primary intake center for homeless families seeking shelter.
5. Mott Haven Campus	\$137,000,000	2011	A four-school complex housing 2,310 students on a 6.5-acre site.
6. Heritage Field	\$50,800,000	2012	New baseball fields built on the site of the old Yankee Stadium.
7. 149th Street Subway Rehab	\$19,000,000	2013	Major repairs and cleaning of the 149th Street-Grand Concourse Subway station.
8. Joyce Kilmer Park Renovation	\$3,500,000	2015	Reconstruction of the historic Lorelei Fountain and the playground.
9. Roberto Clemente Plaza Reconstruction	\$11,185,042	2018	Reconstruction of Roberto Clemente Plaza in the Hub to reorient traffic and include space for public programming and concessions.
10. Melrose Commons Park	\$5,584,000	2019	A new park within the Melrose Commons district located on 160th Street and Melrose Avenue.
11. Bronx Children's Museum at the Powerhouse	\$15,500,000	2019	Repurposing of the City-owned decommissioned powerhouse in Mill Park Pond as a children's museum.
12. St. Mary's Park	\$30,000,000	-	Capital investments to St. Mary's Park including reconstructed pathways and ballfields, and rec center upgrades.
13. Grand Concourse Malls - Phases I & II	\$52,000,000 (Phase I)	2008, 2017	Multi-phase rehabilitation of the Grand Concourse that includes the transformation of its center malls into traffic-calming green space and bike lanes. Phase I included East 161st to 167th Street. Phase II includes East 167th to 171st Street.
14. Bronx Museum of the Arts	\$25,000,000	Planned	A major upgrade for the museum that would create more gallery and exhibition space.
15. NYPD 40th Precinct	\$43,000,000	Planned	A new station for the 40th Precinct planned for 156th Street and Melrose Avenue.
16. Harlem River Waterfront Park	-	Planned	A new waterfront park at 144th Street, planned as part of the Special Harlem River Waterfront District.
17. Garrison Playground	-	Planned	Reconstruction of the seating area and playground on East 146th Street and Walton Avenue.
18. CUNY Hostos Community College Allied Health Science Building	\$200,000,000 (approx.)	Planned	A planned 170,000-square-foot facility for Hostos College's Allied Health and Natural Science programs, including lab, classroom, and student support space.

Completed in 2012, Via Verde is an award-winning mixed-income housing development near The Hub that earned a LEED Gold rating and is a national example of well-designed affordable housing.



There has also been significant private sector investment. Since 2009, more than 1,800 units of multi-family housing have been delivered within the Study Area, representing an 8% increase over that period. More than 75,000 SF of office space has come online, as well as just under 1.3 million SF of retail, 1 million of

which was part of the Bronx Terminal Market shopping center. In addition, just under 1,500 housing units and \$500 million of investment is underway, with an additional 2,000 units and over \$1 billion worth of investment planned for the near term.⁶

Photo Courtesy of Jules Antonio

Significant **private developments** that were recently completed, underway, or planned include:⁷

Project	Investment	Year	Description
19. HUB Retail and Office Center	\$56,700,000	2007	A 173,000-square-foot mixed-use office and retail building.
20. Bronx Terminal Market	\$500,000,000	2009	A 1 million-square-foot shopping center.
21. Yankee Stadium	\$1,600,000,000	2009	The New Yankee Stadium seats more than 50,000 people and hosts at least 82 annual events, including MLB baseball, Major League Soccer matches, concerts, and the annual NCAA Pinstripe Bowl.
22. El Jardin de Selene	\$17,000,000	2010	A 124-unit mixed-use residential project developed as part of the Melrose Commons plan.
23. La Terraza	N/A	2011	A 107-unit mixed-use residential project developed as part of the Melrose Commons plan.
24. Via Verde	\$91,000,000	2011	An award-winning mixed-income housing development located just south of Melrose Commons containing 151 rental apartments and 71 affordable co-ops.
25. Morris Court	69,700,000	2014	A 201-unit mixed-use residential development serving residents earning between 40%-100% AMI.
26. 477 Gerard Avenue	\$11,770,200	2016	A 66-unit residential development.
27. Holiday Inn Express		2016	A 69-key hotel along East 146th and Gerard Avenue
28. Triangle Plaza Hub	\$35,000,000	2016	An 88,000-square-foot retail development providing a variety of additional community facilities, including the home of Metropolitan College of New York.
29. 655 Morris Avenue	\$63,800,000	2017	A 176-unit development serving residents earning 60%-100% AMI.
30. 3160 Park Avenue	\$66,500,000	2017	A 152-unit development with 19,500 square feet of retail space.
31. 530 Exterior Street	\$59,100,000	2018	A 157-unit affordable housing development.
32. Elton Crossing	\$90,000,000	2018	A two-building 260-unit affordable housing development within the Melrose Commons district.
33. 810 River Avenue	\$57,800,000	2018	A 134-unit mixed-use residential building featuring retail and community space. The first project to take advantage of the 161st Street-River Avenue rezoning.
34. 491 Gerard Avenue	\$58,980,000	2018	A 134-unit affordable housing development.
35. Bronx Post Place	\$43,000,000	2018	An adaptive reuse project that will transform the landmarked Bronx General Post Office into a mixed-use office, retail, and dining facility.
36. Morris II Passive House Apartments	\$48,000,000	2019	A 154-unit residential building.
37. Bronx Commons	\$160,000,000	2019	A 277-unit affordable housing development within Melrose Commons that includes set-asides for artist residences, retail space, and the Bronx Music Hall.
38. La Central	\$450,000,000	2019	A multi-phased 1,000+ unit affordable housing project that will include a YMCA branch and 45,000 square feet of retail
39. 987-989 Ogden Ave.	N/A	-	A 28-unit market-rate apartment complex.
40. 984 Woodycrest Ave.	\$12,000,000	N/A	A 48-unit supportive housing development.
41. 425 Grand Concourse	\$140,000,000	Planned	A 241-unit affordable housing development that will house a charter school, medical facility, cultural and community spaces, and an 11,000-square-foot supermarket.
42. Bronx Point - Phase I	N/A	Planned (2022)	A 600-unit affordable housing development that will contain the Universal Hip-Hop Museum and is part of a larger multi-phased, 1,000+-unit project.

The late 2000s saw a new era of public and private investment in the South Bronx, with the redevelopment of Yankee Stadium and Macombs Dam Park.



The New York City Regional Economic Development Council (NYC REDC) identified the South Bronx as an area of focus for future investment in its 2011 Strategic Plan. Recent REDC-funded projects that are within the Study Area include:

- **G.A.L. Manufacturing Corporation, 2014:** G.A.L., a leading global manufacturer of non-proprietary elevator components located immediately south of Yankee Stadium, with more than 350 employees, received a \$350,000 ESD grant to expand its facility, purchase machinery, and equipment, and make other capital investments.
- **Bronx Music Hall, 2016:** WHEDco received a \$2 million ESD grant to develop the Bronx Music Hall, a performing arts center located at the Bronx Commons development that will host musical performances and educational programming, building on the success of the existing Bronx Music Heritage Center. Design work for the façade treatments, public plazas, interiors, and exhibits underway, with the final project completion expected by late 2019 or early 2020.

Recent REDC-funded projects that are just outside the Study Area but are relevant to Bronx Civic Center context include:

- **Silvercup Studio, 2016:** The studio received a \$1.6 million ESD grant to expand to a new 115,000 SF location in Port Morris. This grant transformed a vacant warehouse into a

full-service film, television, and commercial production facility. The project, which cost \$17.5 million, opened in August 2016. Silvercup has created 16 new jobs and provides studio space for an additional 400 production jobs annually.

- **Per Scholas, 2015 & 2017:** In June 2017, the tech nonprofit, Per Scholas, created a Port Morris-based job training program to help New Yorkers access career opportunities in the growing IT and digital tech sectors, with support from a \$1 million ESD grant and a \$2 million ESD Excelsior Jobs Program tax credit. The training program will provide no-cost technology skills training and career development resources for as many as 650 New Yorkers over the next 18 months. The program provides workforce development training to individuals underrepresented in the tech industry.
- **Ghetto Film School, 2017:** The Ghetto Film School is an educational and workforce development organization headquartered in Mott Haven that operates a public high school and works with the film and television industry to prepare low-income and minority students for job positions that are growing in New York. The organization received a \$180,000 ESD grant to build a Culture and Media Center that will provide a 3,600 SF venue for community events, educational programming, screenings and other programs that connect South Bronx residents and students with filmmakers and other professionals.

Relationship to Regional Economic Development Council Priorities

In addition to locally driven studies and investments, Civic Center revitalization efforts build on and are aligned with the goals articulated by the New York City Regional Economic Development Council (NYC REDC) in its strategic plans to date. Since 2012, NYC REDC has focused on preparing youth and unemployed adults with the necessary workforce skills to succeed in the 21st century. The DRI Investment Plan for the Bronx Civic Center aligns with the following economic development goals identified by NYC REDC:

- **Improve quality of life** – Creating vibrant and affordable communities that have the amenities and employment opportunities to support the next generation of New Yorkers.
- **Create a pro-growth, pro-jobs environment** – Continuing the growth and diversification of the City’s economy by enhancing the competitiveness of industries and businesses, while also facilitating private sector and City investments that support increased business growth.
- **Foster innovation and inter-regional cooperation** – Directing State funding to projects and programs that lead to gainful employment and upward mobility in growing industries through ongoing inter-regional working sessions, analysis and thought leadership.
- **Invest in the future** – Building more robust partnerships between employers, the public-school system, and the public university system to ensure that public education is relevant to the demands of the modern workplace.



REDC contributed \$2 million to support the construction of Bronx Commons and the Bronx Music Hall, a project led by WHEDco in partnership with BFC Partners.



Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr., at an event hosted by WHEDco at Railroad Park, the focus of a Priority Project that would rehab the shuttered comfort station into a café.

MANAGEMENT & ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

The Bronx Civic Center has an expansive network of public and nonprofit entities that support downtown revitalization and economic development, and have the capacity to contribute to the implementation of DRI's vision, goals, and strategies.

Significant recent planning and investment has been coordinated by the **Office of Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr.** The Borough President is one of five elected leaders in New York City with a mandate to influence major planning and budgetary actions, and to advocate for their borough's needs with City agencies, the City Council, State government, and the private sector. Borough President Diaz, in office since 2009, has played an active role in attracting and promoting local development and investment. His office has published an annual Development Report and commissioned studies in support of investment along the Harlem River waterfront, expansion of Metro-North rail service, and decommissioning the Sheridan Expressway. A close partner of the Borough President's Office is the **Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation (BOEDC)**, a nonprofit entity that

plans and coordinates economic development activities in the borough. Services include business and tourism attraction, and incentive and financing programs for starting or expanding a business or making investments.

In addition, several agencies of the **City of New York** have played an active recent role in local economic development. They include the New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC), which led the South Bronx Initiative and Lower Concourse Investment Strategy, referenced above; the Department of City Planning, whose rezoning plans for Lower Concourse and River Avenue-161st Street study areas, also referenced above, have influenced recent development; the Department of Transportation, which is completing Roberto Clemente Plaza and is a stakeholder in several recent

transportation and streetscape studies and improvements; the Department of Housing Preservation and Development, which has helped plan and finance thousands of completed, underway, and planned affordable housing units within the Study Area; and the Department of Parks and Recreation, which is responsible for several park improvements underway or pending, including Melrose Commons Park and Garrison Playground.

Within the nonprofit sector, organizations playing lead roles in local economic and community development include:

- **BronxWorks:** BronxWorks is a community nonprofit founded in 1972 to serve individuals and families who face a variety of economic and social barriers, including food instability and homelessness. Their programs support predominantly South Bronx residents through public benefits assistance, youth education and programming, foster care, eviction prevention, homeless services, senior services, and job training and placement assistance, among other related services. BronxWorks is headquartered on the Grand Concourse at East 167th Street.
- **CUNY Hostos Community College:** Established in 1968 to meet the needs of students from the South Bronx and similar communities historically excluded from higher education. Hostos graduates 800 students per year from nearly 30 associate's degree and two certificate programs. In addition to its academic role, Hostos plays an important role in workforce development – with the Division for Continuing Education and Workforce Development, which offers free professional development courses and training – and the arts, as home to the Hostos Center for the Arts & Culture, which hosts musical, dance, and theatrical performances, and is home to the Longwood Art Gallery.
- **Nos Quedamos:** Founded in 1992 to successfully challenge the City's planned urban renewal plan for Melrose, Nos Quedamos/We Stay, a nonprofit community development corporation, has played a central role in developing over 2,600 mixed-income rental and ownership units over the last 20 years through community planning. The organization supports planning and advocacy to address housing, open space, and sustainability needs in the South Bronx.
- **SoBRO:** Founded in 1972 by a group of business and community leaders, the nonprofit South Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation (SoBRO) works to enhance the quality of life in the community by strengthening businesses and creating innovative economic, housing,

educational, and career development programs for youth and adults. SoBRO manages workforce training programs, leads community planning studies such as the Port Morris and Harlem River BOA studies, and manages hundreds of affordable housing units and several commercial properties in the South Bronx, including a business incubator in Mott Haven. Its headquarters are located at The Hub, from which its 150 employees work.

- **Third Avenue BID:** The BID was formed in 1988, and comprises 47 properties and 107 businesses ranging from major chains to locally owned establishments. The BID district encompasses Third Avenue from 148th Street to 153rd Street and sections of 149th Street and Westchester Avenue between Third and Bergen Avenues, of Willis Avenue between 148th Street and 149th Street, and of Elton Avenue between Third Avenue and 153rd Street. The mission of the BID is to promote the growth, vitality, and visibility of the district through public safety and sanitation services; a strong working partnership with city agencies, elected officials, and local organizations; and quality of life improvements. The BID sponsors music festivals throughout the summer that have attracted consumers from outside areas to strengthen the local shopper base. The BID is in discussions with the City and local property owners to expand boundaries to include additional portions of Third Avenue, Morris Avenue, and other adjacent blocks.
- **WHEDco:** As a woman- and family-focused community development organization, WHEDco develops and manages housing, operates youth and community services, and leads community planning in three communities in the Bronx, including Melrose Commons. In addition to two existing developments, WHEDco is developing Bronx Commons, a 277-unit affordable housing development at Melrose Commons that will include the 300-seat Bronx Music Hall. The organization serves nearly 35,000 South Bronxites each year, and has been active in advocating for improvements along 161st Street.
- **161st Street BID:** The 161st Street BID includes properties extending from Yankee Stadium to Concourse Plaza, including sections of River Avenue south of Yankee Stadium. The BID was formed in 2005, and conducts general maintenance and promotes the corridor through special events and planning studies, including a 2015 market study to identify opportunity sites for future development and enhanced retail to cater to area workers, residents and stadium attendees.

Melrose Commons is a 3,000+-unit community-planned urban renewal area that is a nationally recognized example of participatory urban planning.



Planning Context

Local Population, Employment & Visitation

The Bronx Civic Center today serves a diverse set of residents, workers, and visitors, representing an important – and evolving – population center, employment hub, and destination.

Residents

The Study Area is a dense, diverse community of almost 86,000 residents. The population has steadily increased since 2010, growing by 9% compared to 6% in the borough and the City overall, amid significant growth in the area's housing stock, as discussed below. Today, the average density of the area is 1.5x greater than the Bronx.

The South Bronx is ethnically and culturally diverse, playing a historical role as a destination for immigrants from Western Europe, the Caribbean, Central and South America and, most recently, Africa and Asia. It is a historically significant home to Bronxites of Puerto Rican descent. The population today is predominately Hispanic (59%) and African American (36%). Nearly two-thirds of residents speak a language other than English at home, compared to 49% citywide; Spanish is most common, but other languages spoken locally include French, Urdu, and Mandarin. About 31% of all residents are foreign born;

leading nations/regions of origin are the Dominican Republic (42% of foreign-born residents), Mexico (26%), Central America (9%), Western Africa (9%), and Ecuador (8%).⁸

The South Bronx, like the Bronx overall, is a place where young families have formed and settled for successive generations. 38% of Study Area households include at least one child under 18 (compared to 39% for the Bronx and 31% for the city). 22% of Study Area residents are under the age of 15 (compared to 21% in the Bronx and 18% in the city). Youth have also accounted for a relatively high share of population growth: 19% within the Study Area compared to 11% for the Bronx and 9% for the city. As Baby Boomers age, the senior population is also growing, though at a relatively slower pace: 33% of the Study Area's population growth is residents aged 65 and older (compared to 44% for the Bronx and 49% for the city).⁹

Median household income within the Study Area, \$27,000, is significantly low: less than half of the city's (\$55,000) and 25% lower than the Bronx's (\$35,900). Additionally, there is a large concentration of very low-income households, with 31% of households earning incomes less than \$15,000, compared to 24% for the Bronx and 16% for the city, and very few upper-middle or upper-income households, with only 13% of households earning more than \$75,000, compared to 22% in the Bronx and 39% in the city. The proportion of working and lower-middle-class households is consistent with the Bronx and city overall.

KEY OBSERVATIONS

Supported by the land use, demographic, economic, and real estate market contexts detailed below, several opportunities and challenges provide the context for downtown investment:

1

The Civic Center's 1,100 acres have served as a de facto downtown for the Bronx for generations.

From the Hub retail district to the civic core at 161st Street to Hostos College to Yankee Stadium to cultural attractions such as the Bronx Museum of the Arts and Pregones Theater, millions of Bronxites and other New Yorkers visit the Study Area every year. As a significant transportation hub for the Bronx, hundreds of thousands more pass through every day. Nearly 86,000 Bronxites call the area home. Investment in the Civic Center is driven both by the historic relevance of the area to the borough and city, and by the importance of the area as a gateway to the Bronx and a foundation upon which future growth will occur.

2

There has been substantial development and job growth in the Study Area in recent years, requiring new infrastructure and amenities.

With the influx of new housing, jobs, and cultural uses to the area comes the need to enhance and modernize the area's infrastructure, including open space and transportation, and to provide a mix of new public and private amenities, such as convenience retail and dining options, to serve new residents and workers. As new developments take shape, it will be equally important to ensure that the area's long-time residents – who are predominantly low-income, with a high proportion of young families, senior citizens, and new immigrants – retain amenities, including retail and cultural assets, and that local businesses remain competitive in the face of rising rents.

3

Commercial corridors are vibrant but in need of physical upgrades, limiting their ability to attract and support businesses.

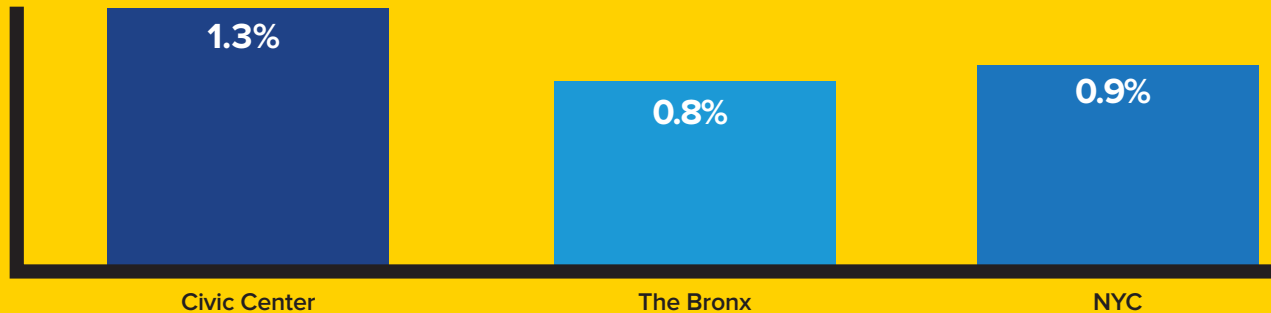
The streetscapes along major commercial corridors such as 149th Street and 161st Street are lined with facades and storefronts that appear dated or in poor repair, and the public realm is characterized by narrow sidewalks, heavy bus traffic, and poorly maintained traffic medians and dividers. Despite low commercial vacancy, substantial upper-floor office space is being warehoused and the inventory of Class A and large-footprint office space is low, constraining the area's job growth. Building amenities, including lobby, elevator, and internet services, generally do not meet modern requirements. These factors – and the gap between market rents and the rents required to justify building upgrades – may constrain commercial growth as the market improves.

4

Major growth is occurring across the Study Area, requiring stronger connections to stitch downtown nodes together.

While benefiting from excellent subway access, the Study Area has poor connections from local node to local node. North-south connecting streets between Lower Concourse and Civic Core are interrupted by parking lots and inhospitable streetscapes. The major east-west connector East 149th Street is interrupted by the Metro-North railway trench and fenced-off Lincoln Medical Center. Melrose Commons is well connected to the Hub via Third Avenue, but the adjacent portions of East 161st Street are largely un-programmed at the ground level and blank street-fronts at Morrisania Air Rights Houses, Railroad Park, and Concourse Plaza contribute to an unpleasant pedestrian experience.

Annual Population Growth, 2010-2017



SOURCE: ESRI

Employment¹⁰

The South Bronx is a significant job center within the Bronx and has seen substantial job growth in diverse sectors.

The two zip codes comprising the Study Area collectively contain 41,000 jobs, representing 10% of the Bronx's total job market. This area is relatively job dense, with just over 38 jobs per acre compared to 16 for the Bronx and 29 for the city, confirming its status as a significant employment hub. Additionally, it is a growing job center, having added just under 10,000 jobs between 2010 and 2017, growing 30% compared to 23% citywide.

Most job activity is focused in health care and social assistance, government and education, and retail trade sectors. These three sectors collectively represent 62% of total jobs, with health care employing 12,900 people (31% of total jobs), government and education employing 8,200 people (20%), and retail trade employing 4,500 people (11%). Within these sectors, standouts include public education and hospitals (5,200 jobs), driven by the presence of Hostos College and Lincoln Hospital; individual and family services (4,600 jobs); restaurants and other eating places (1,200 jobs); legal services (900 jobs); and grocery and related product wholesalers (750 jobs). Additionally, while manufacturing jobs are in decline, other industrial sectors, such as wholesale trade, construction, and transportation and warehousing are still significant, employing collectively 5,700 people (14%).

These industries, outside of retail, provide a significant share of the Bronx's well-paying jobs, including many with incomes well above the Bronx average. Jobs in health care and social assistance pay on average \$51,000. Government and professional services jobs (which includes finance, information,

and professional services) pays on average \$86,000. Industrial and manufacturing jobs pay on average \$58,000. Retail trade has a much lower average wage at \$29,000. Overall, the median average earning for jobs in this community is \$56,000.

The vast majority (96%) of local jobs are filled by people commuting to the area versus those residing there. However, 41% of Study Area jobs are filled by people living in the Bronx, making it an important employment hub for the borough. Additionally, 81% of jobs are filled by city residents.

The fastest growing industries between 2010 and 2017 were government and education, which added 4,500 jobs (a growth rate of 157%); health care and social assistance, which added 1,210 jobs (11%); retail trade, which added 813 jobs (22%); transportation and warehousing, which added 465 jobs (41%); and arts, entertainment, and recreation, which added 345 jobs (58%) driven by a 293-job increase (71%) in the spectator sports subsector.

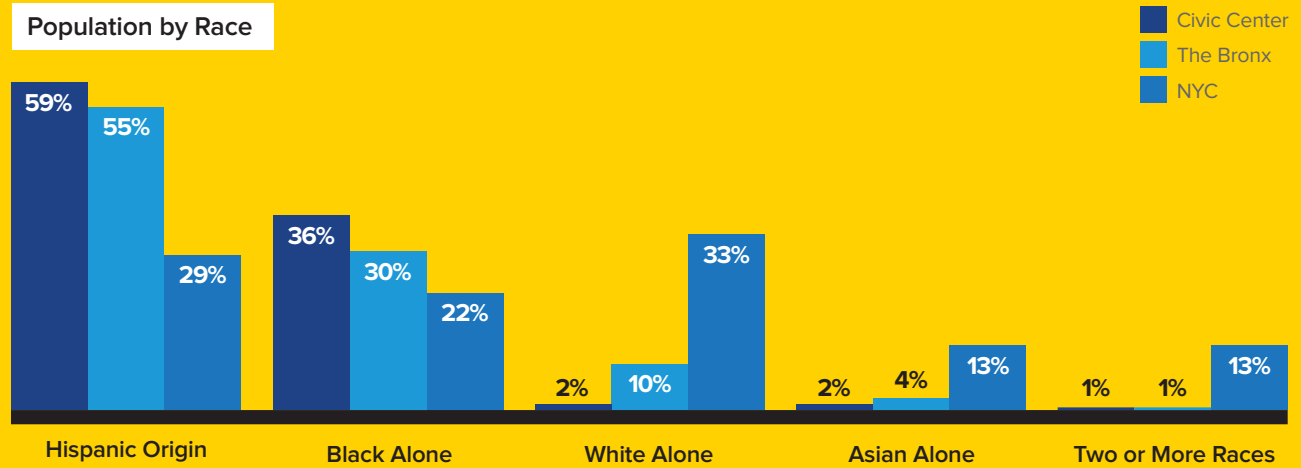
Most job activity is focused in the health care and social assistance, government and education, and retail trade sectors.



At a recent Immigrant Heritage Fair hosted by BronxWorks, attendees represented more than 20 countries. Nearly two-thirds of Study Area residents speak a language other than English at home.

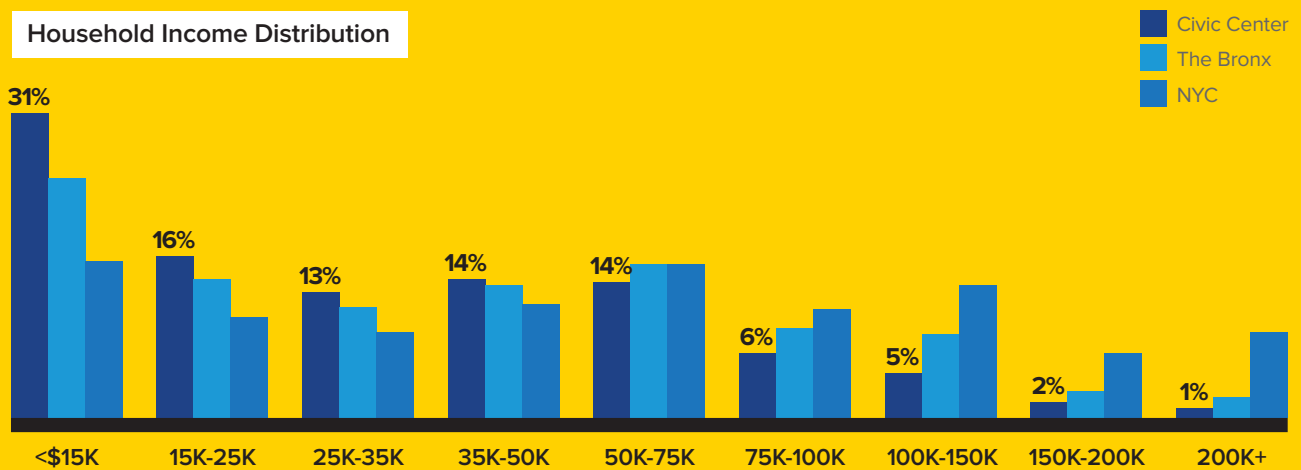
Photo Courtesy of Evan Hahn, BronxWorks

Population by Race



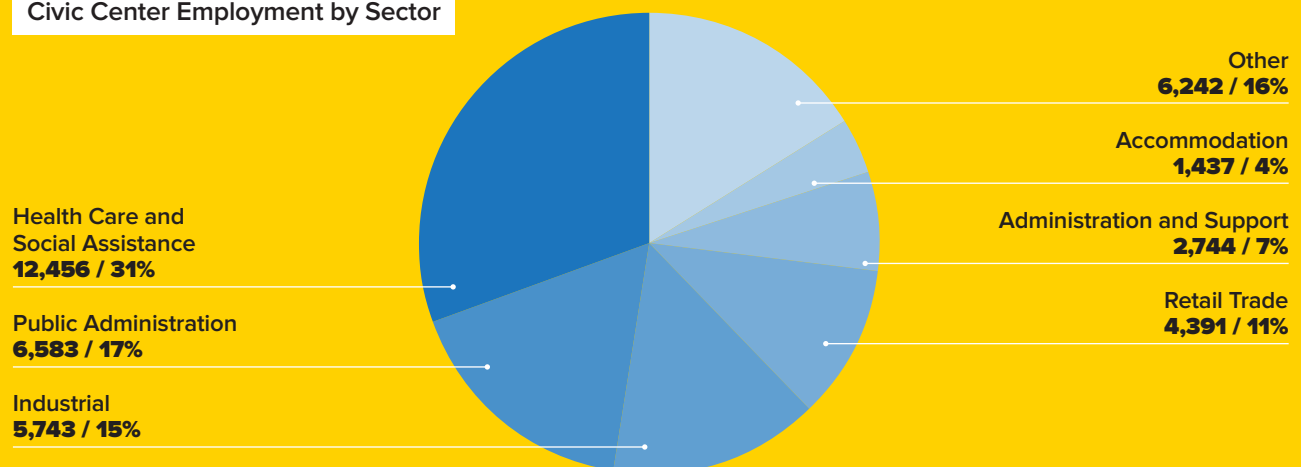
SOURCE: SOCIAL EXPLORER

Household Income Distribution



SOURCE: ESRI

Civic Center Employment by Sector



SOURCE: EMSI

Within the health care and social assistance industries, key subsectors driving growth included individual and family services (generally nonresidential social services), which added 859 jobs (23%); other residential care facilities, which added 163 jobs (77%); community food and housing, and emergency and other relief services, which added 131 jobs (68%), likely due to the new PATH homeless intake center in Lower Concourse; and home health care services, which added 88 jobs (39%).

Looking ahead, New York City and regional job growth is expected to be driven by several core industries. An assessment of the Bronx's current foundation within these industries – and its competitiveness in capturing a share of new businesses and workers – follows:¹¹

- **Health Care & Life Sciences:** Statewide, health care jobs are projected to grow by an additional 20% over the next decade, with similar trends expected in New York City, making health care one of the fastest growing sectors in the economy. Health care-related jobs in the Civic Center have grown 11% between 2010 and 2017, with Lincoln Hospital, Hostos Community College (which offers two associate degrees and certifications in its allied health program), and outpatient medical centers and clinics providing a steady foundation.
- **Hospitality, Recreation & Entertainment:** New York experienced a boom in accommodations and food services jobs between 2010 and 2015, with 88,000 jobs created. Arts and entertainment jobs also grew substantially during that period, by 15,000. Over the last 10 years, the Civic Center has seen increased employment opportunities in these sectors with the new Yankee Stadium, the expansion of major cultural institutions, and an increased demand for hotel and hospitality. Yankee Stadium and accommodation make up the majority of the nearly 2,200 arts and recreation jobs added since 2010.
- **Tech & Innovation:** Since 2006, the number of tech and tech-supported jobs in New York City grew by 76,000 jobs (30%), adding more such jobs than Washington D.C., Boston-Cambridge, and Atlanta combined. There is currently a limited tech industry presence in the Civic Center, with a roughly 500 positions; at 1.2%, the share of local jobs that are tech-related is around one-tenth of the share citywide, and significantly lower than for the city's tech hubs. Within the tech sector, the Study Area is strongest in computer systems and support, and software development.
- **Other Professional Services:** Between 2010 and 2015,

New York City added over 78,000 professional service and information jobs, which now account for 18% of citywide employment. The Civic Center's professional services employment is primarily related to public and civic uses, with a high concentration of legal aid, nonprofit, and social service organizations, which have seen an increase of nearly 300 jobs, or 39%, since 2010. However, employment is disproportionately concentrated in legal services; of the nearly 1,000 professional occupations in the Study Area, 56% are lawyers, paralegals, or legal assistants.

In addition to its role as a job center, the Civic Center serves an important function connecting students and jobseekers to employment. One of the Study Area's primary anchors is the City University of New York's (CUNY) Eugenio María de Hostos Community College. Established in 1968 to meet the needs of students from the South Bronx and similar communities historically excluded from higher education, Hostos draws 7,000 students and more than 1,300 full- and part-time employees, and Hostos graduates 800 students per year from nearly 30 associate's degree and two certificate programs. Its most popular programs are nursing, criminal justice, and liberal arts. The College's 2012 master plan amendment projected 40% growth in enrollment over the next decade, and includes plans for a 170,000-square-foot Allied Health Sciences Building. In addition to its academic role, Hostos plays an important role in workforce development, with the Division for Continuing Education and Workforce Development, which offers free professional development courses and training to community residents.

In addition, since 2016, Metropolitan College of New York (MCNY) operates a Bronx extension campus at the Hub, serving 300 undergraduates and graduate students. MCNY was founded in 1964 as a private, non-profit college by educator and activist, Audrey Cohen, and is best known for combining classroom learning with on-the-job experience. Of note, MCNY recently launched associate's and bachelor's programs in information technology to fill the demand for tech jobs in non-tech industries.

Local community organizations also play an active role in workforce development. Also at the Hub, the South Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation (SoBRO) manages workforce programs in customer service and the construction trades, as well as broader adult education, GED, and English as a Second Language instruction. BronxWorks manages job placement services and employment assistance for specific populations, including residents of local New York City Housing Authority properties, young adults, and low-income fathers.



The Bronx has a vibrant cultural and arts scene, from formal performances by groups such as Pregones Theater to summer block parties and other community events for all ages.



Visitation & Cultural Activity

The Civic Center serves as a key gateway into the Bronx for millions of annual visitors, including those seeking recreation and culture. While neighborhood-scale visitation statistics are not collected, Yankee Stadium has attracted a minimum of 3 million visitors annually over the last two decades, and as many as 4.2 million during World Series runs, according to attendance records.¹²

In addition, the Bronx Civic Center is home to a significant cluster of cultural and arts organizations that serve both as destinations for residents and visitors, and as convening entities for community development. Most visitors for cultural events hail from the Bronx and Upper Manhattan, according to venue directors, but a growing share travel from other parts of Manhattan, Brooklyn, and surrounding counties. In the coming years, three additional cultural centers are expected to open within or near the Study Area – the Bronx Children’s Museum, Bronx Music Hall, and the Universal Hip-Hop Museum – that will draw additional traffic. Existing organizations operating within and nearby the Study Area include:

- **Andrew Freedman Home Cultural Center:** Run by the Mid-Bronx Senior Citizens Council and located at the historic Andrew Freedman Home on the Grand Concourse, the AFH

Cultural Center includes two ground-floor exhibition spaces, an Artist-in-Residence program including free studio spaces, and a small business incubator program.

- **Bronx Council on the Arts (BCA):** Established in 1962, the Bronx Council on the Arts is a non-profit membership organization that is the official cultural agency of Bronx County. BCA provides cultural and community services, including microgrant programs, to more than 5,000 artists, and over 250 arts and community-based organizations.
- **Bronx Documentary Center:** The Bronx Documentary Center, located near the Hub, is a non-profit gallery and educational space that shares visual media with underserved Bronx residents and the borough’s cultural community.
- **Bronx Museum of the Arts:** The Bronx Museum, since its founding in 1971, has remained committed to promoting cross-cultural dialogues to the Bronx and New York City through contemporary art exhibits and educational programs. A member of New York City’s Cultural Institutions Group, it draws more than 100,000 visitors annually and offers free admission for all. It is located on the Grand Concourse.
- **BxArts Factory:** The BxArts Factory supports local artists and arts projects. It is committed to supporting local artists and

Courtesy of Marisol Diaz, for Pregones Theater / PRTT ; Courtesy of Evan Hahn, Bronx Works

projects focused on making art accessible to communities in the Bronx and using art to address social and economic inequality.

- **Dancing in the Streets:** Since its origins in 1984, Dancing in the Streets creates movement-based projects that showcase and educate the public about Hip Hop culture in New York City, supports local resident artists, and provides space to develop the next generation of dancers and social practitioners.
- **En Foco:** Through exhibitions, workshops, events, and publications, En Foco supports U.S.-based photographers of African, Asian, Latino, Native American and Pacific Islander heritage. Founded in 1974 as a local non-profit, En Foco strives to remain visible and accessible for the communities it serves.
- **Hostos Center for the Arts and Culture:** The Hostos Center is a performing and visual arts venue located within CUNY

Courtesy of Marisol Diaz, for Pregones Theater / PRTT ; Courtesy of Evan Hahn, Bronx Works

Hostos Community College that attracts more than 40,000 annual visitors. It contains an art gallery, a 367-seat repertory theater, and an 884-seat main theater.

- **Pregones Theater / Puerto Rican Traveling Theater:** A prominent Latino arts organization with performance space in the Bronx and Manhattan. Pregones and PRTT champion the cultural legacy of broad impact through the creation and performance of original musical theater and plays based on Puerto Rican/Latino cultures, as well as the presentation of artists who share a commitment to the arts and civic enrichment.
- **Young Urban Christian and Artists (YUCA Arts):** YUCA is a community-based organization that provides extra-curricular programming to educate and empower youth in a way that leads to heightened school engagement and higher aspirations for the future. YUCA provides a six-month certificate-based program that teaches graphic arts, design, and computer software instruction, as well as workshops.



More than 11,000 Study Area residents live in developments run by the New York City Housing Authority, including the Patterson Houses, pictured here.

LAND USE

Predominant Residential Uses

There are 30,500 housing units within the Bronx Civic Center, reflecting the Study Area's predominant zoning, which favors medium- to high-density residential development. The majority of residential units, 85%, are rentals, nearly all of which (25,700 units in total) are in buildings containing 10 or more units. The average age of the housing stock is similar to the Bronx and city as a whole (65 years).

Housing is located throughout the Study Area but with concentrations at the north and center in a collection of large-scale developments. The center of the Study Area is defined by predominately high-rise tower-in-the-park-style developments and is home to 13,000 residents ranging from low to moderate incomes. This contains several major housing developments, including Concourse Village, a historic Mitchell-Lama middle-income development, and five New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) developments that include nearly 4,800 units and house more than 11,000 residents. To the west of the Study Area, along and adjacent to the Grand Concourse is a mix of low- and mid-rise residential buildings, including numerous historic properties on the Concourse dating to the 1920s and 1930s that are defined by wide-entrance courtyards, intricate brickwork, and spacious units.¹⁴

Significant Commercial Districts

In addition to residential uses, designated commercial zones clearly define main thoroughfares and allow for higher density development within the defined Study Area. These main commercial corridors include: E. 161st Street, Third Avenue, E. 149th Street, and River Avenue. Additionally, commercial overlays are implemented in key locations, which allow for commercial activity to extend through existing residential areas, as well as help stitch together gaps between already-designated commercial zones; most notably along Melrose Avenue and

Courtlandt Avenue, toward the eastern half of the Study Area.

In total, the Civic Center includes more than 6 million SF of commercial space: 4.5 million SF of ground-floor and multi-level retail, and more than 2 million SF of leasable commercial office space. The retail inventory includes a historic neighborhood shopping district at the Hub, a big-box retail destination at the Bronx Terminal Market mall; and a mix of neighborhood retail and casual dining businesses on 161st Street supported by Yankee Stadium traffic, local employment, and area residents. Most of the local office inventory is legacy space, with little new office development occurring over the last 10 years. According to interviews with real estate market experts including property owners and brokers, the format and condition of existing office space, including in some cases a lack of modern amenities, limits the area's current appeal as an office destination for private firms. Office space is concentrated in the Civic Core and Hub nodes, which collectively contain ~75% of the listed space in the Study Area.^{15 16}

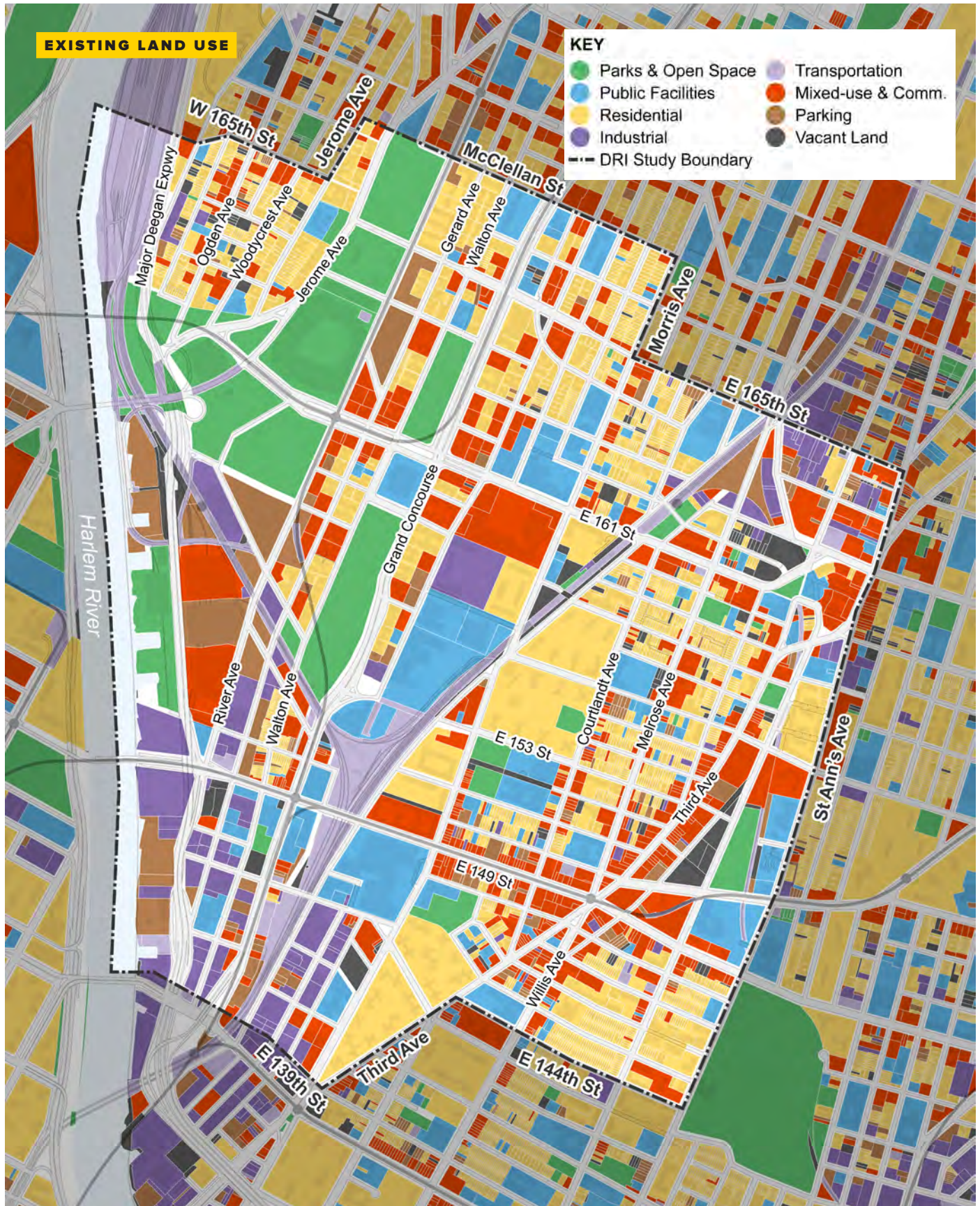
Legacy Manufacturing Space

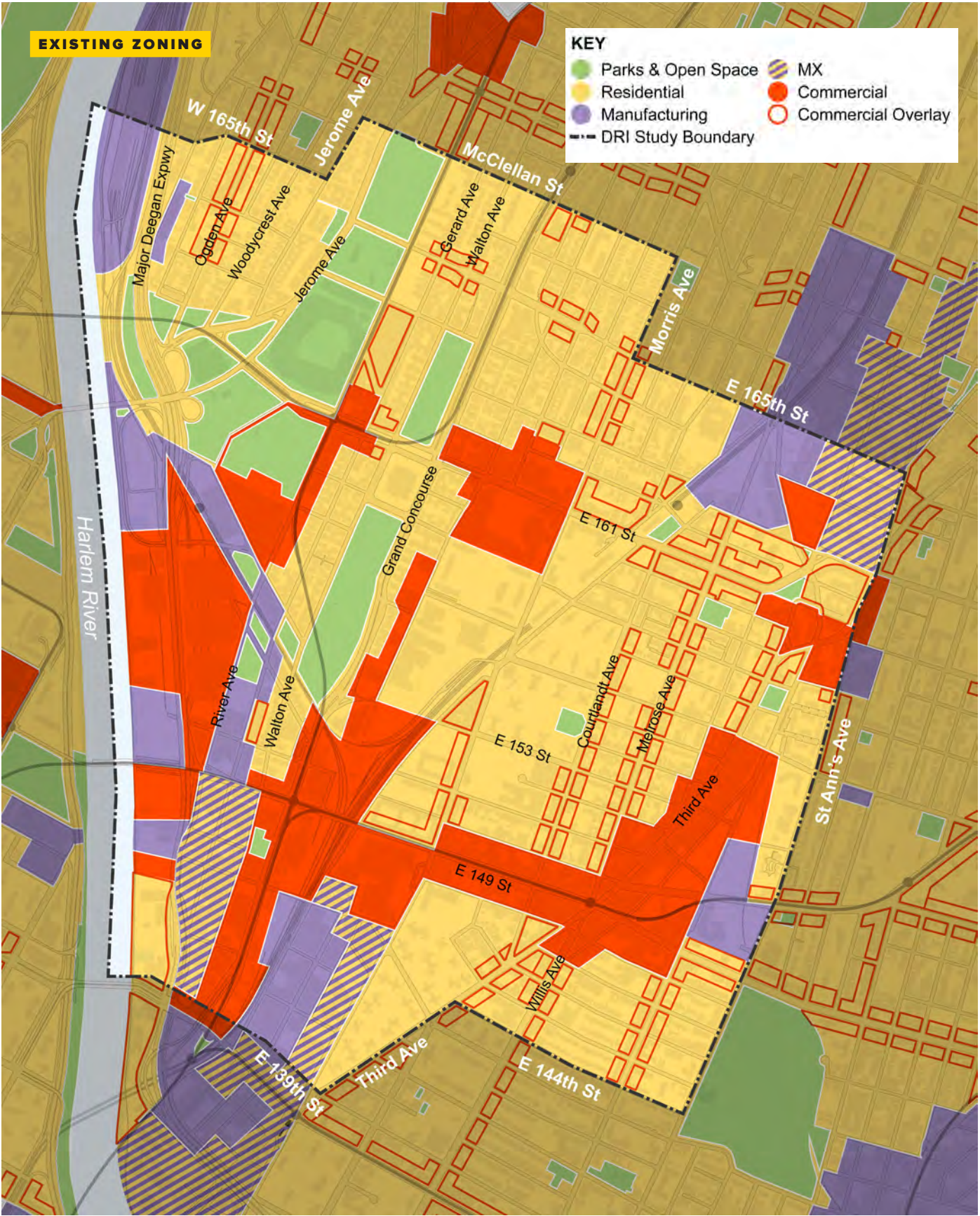
Outside of the predominantly residential and commercial zones, there are notable manufacturing zones located toward the northeast and southwest corners of the defined Study Area. Given the geographic proximity to the Harlem River, these areas are by and large vestiges of manufacturing zones that historically occupied the waterfront. Over the past decade, the waterfront has undergone a gradual rezoning (discussed below), with the intention of transforming it from primarily industrial uses to a more commercial and mixed-use neighborhood. In general, this rezoning has attracted residential redevelopment, and has begun to transform a portion of the rezoned area. The remaining manufacturing zones along the western portion of the Study Area limit residential use and therefore are expected to retain remaining manufacturing and warehousing businesses in place in the near term.

NYCHA Developments Within the Study Area¹⁷

Development	Year Built	Buildings	Units	Population
Patterson Houses	1950	15	1,791	4,283
Melrose Houses	1952	8	1,023	2,473
Jackson Houses	1963	7	868	2,273
Morrisania Air Rights Houses	1980	3	843	1,779
East 152nd Street (Senior Residence)	1973	2	221	383
Total		35	4,746	11,191

SOURCE: NYCHA





Strong Transit Connections

The area is well served by public transit, although service is unevenly distributed. Major connections within the Study Area include the B, D, 2, 4, and 5 subway lines, the Metro-North Hudson and Harlem lines, and dozens of bus lines, including the newly introduced Bx6 Select Bus Service (SBS) route, which runs east-west along 161st Street from Harlem to Hunts Point, and the Bx41 SBS route, which runs north-south along Melrose and Webster Avenues from the Hub to Gun Hill Road.

Commercial areas have some of the best transit access among outer-borough office or retail hubs, with travel times of less than 30 minutes to Midtown Manhattan and direct access to much of the borough, Upper Manhattan, and Lower Westchester. As such, the Study Area includes the Bronx's two most trafficked subway stations: the 2/5 station at 149th Street-The Hub and the 4/B/D station at 161st Street-Yankee Stadium, which together serve more than 16 million riders per year. The 2/4/5 station at 149th Street-Grand Concourse, which serves Hostos, Lincoln, and Lower Concourse node, is another major transit node.¹⁸

Residents living close to the Grand Concourse are well served by public transportation, including access to the 161st Street-Yankee Stadium station, separate 4 and B/D stations at 167th Street, numerous bus lines, and the Yankees-153rd Street Metro-North station. Residents living in the center, north, and northeast of the Study Area are served by the 161st Street-Yankee Stadium station (up to a 10-minute walk from Melrose Commons) and bus lines (including the SBS lines, which crisscross through Melrose Commons). The Melrose Metro-North station, which is more proximate than the subway for most residents, has seen substantial ridership growth since 2005, increasing from fewer than 50 daily riders to more than 500 today, including a 2X increase after the MTA increased the frequency of stops at the station in 2016. Despite this growth, barriers to use include high ticket prices and a lack of visibility,

since the station is located one block removed from the main commercial corridor, and blocked from view by the current conditions at the City-owned Railroad Park.

Uneven Quality of Open Space

There has been substantial recent investment in Bronx parks in recent years, particularly toward the western portion of the Study Area, but there remains underused open space distributed throughout the district. As part of the redevelopment of Yankee Stadium, Heritage Field was constructed on the site of the old Yankee Stadium, replacing the parkland on which the new stadium was built. This park is well used but not accessible to several major population centers within the area. Joyce Kilmer Park, located north of 161st Street on the Grand Concourse, is also well used for passive recreation and features public art displays. Garrison Playground, on the southern end of the Study Area, is in the process of being reconstructed as part of the P.S. 31 redevelopment.

Yet there are several parks within the Study Area that community representatives described as in need of investment:

- **Franz Sigel Park**, south of the Bronx County Building on the Grand Concourse, is a park with well used ball fields, playgrounds, and a gazebo. However, because the park is elevated above street level, community residents cited a imposing barrier to entry for potential users.
- **Mullaly Park**, just north of Yankee Stadium, is home to one of the first skate parks in New York City, which has fallen into disrepair and requires investment to reopen.
- **Railroad Park**, located on 161st Street, is a small park located in one of the densest residential areas of the Study Area. The park, which has benefited from recent public art installations, has an unused comfort station that blocks views of the park,

Annual and Average Weekday Ridership among Area Subway Stations, 2016¹⁸

Station	Annual Riders (2016)	NYC Rank (out of 424)	Avg. Weekday Riders (2016)	NYC Rank (out of 424)
161 St-Yankee Stadium (B/D/4)	8,784,407	40	26,947	45
3 Av-149 St (2/5)	7,609,968	55	24,808	52
149 St-Grand Concourse (2/4/5)	4,381,900	110	14,460	107
167 St (B/D)	3,365,748	151	10,439	156
167 St (4)	3,179,087	162	9,972	164

SOURCE: MTA

contributing to its underutilization. This part is strategically located adjacent to a Metro-North rail station, yet because of the comfort station and overall inaccessibility of the park, the station is not visible from the main 161st Street thoroughfare.

Additionally, distributed throughout Melrose Commons are a collection of community gardens benefiting from varying levels of investment and volunteer involvement.

Variable Streetscape Conditions

Streetscapes within the Civic Center are of highly varying quality, but overall do not foster a welcoming sense of place within and between nodes. The physical condition of the four major connective corridors – 161st Street to the north, Third Avenue to the east, 149th Street to the south, and the Grand Concourse to the west – heavily influence perceptions of the Civic Center.

East 149th Street connects the emerging Lower Concourse node to the well-established Hub node. It serves as a primary gateway for many entering the Bronx either coming out of the

subway or crossing the 149th Street bridge from Manhattan. As a result, the street is heavily trafficked by cars, buses, and pedestrians. However, the street does not present a welcoming gateway. On the western end of the street, between the Grand Concourse and Morris Avenue, there is a quarter-mile stretch that is particularly unwelcoming for pedestrians. Impediments include a blank wall facing pedestrians at 500 Grand Concourse, a bare pedestrian bridge over the Metro-North tracks, and a gated-off plaza in front of Lincoln Hospital, all of which dampen street activity. Toward the Hub, many facades are dated and there are few streetscape improvements such as planters or sidewalk extensions.

Third Avenue connects the Hub and Melrose Commons, and is heavily trafficked from 149th Street to 156th Street where the main commercial corridor ends. The pedestrian experience here is overall more hospitable, with street trees and more attractive storefronts. However, the area lacks a sense of place, and there is room to complete the street tree network and install additional planters that would enhance the street's character.



Railroad Park, nestled within Melrose Commons and adjacent to the Melrose Metro-North station, represents an opportunity to improve connections in the densely populated area.



The Hub, a major transportation node, is defined by bustling sidewalks and a colorful mix of facades, awnings, and promotional signs.

161st Street connects Melrose Commons and the Civic Core. The eastern end of the corridor between Elton Avenue and Morris Avenue is relatively inactive with few active ground-floor uses to draw people to the street. Toward the western end of the street at the intersection of 161st Street and Gerard Avenue, the streets require significant repair work. The area around the gateway intersection of River Avenue has a planted median featuring street trees, though there remains room for additional landscaping to improve the pedestrian experience. Additionally, the sidewalks in this area are narrow and in general need of repair.

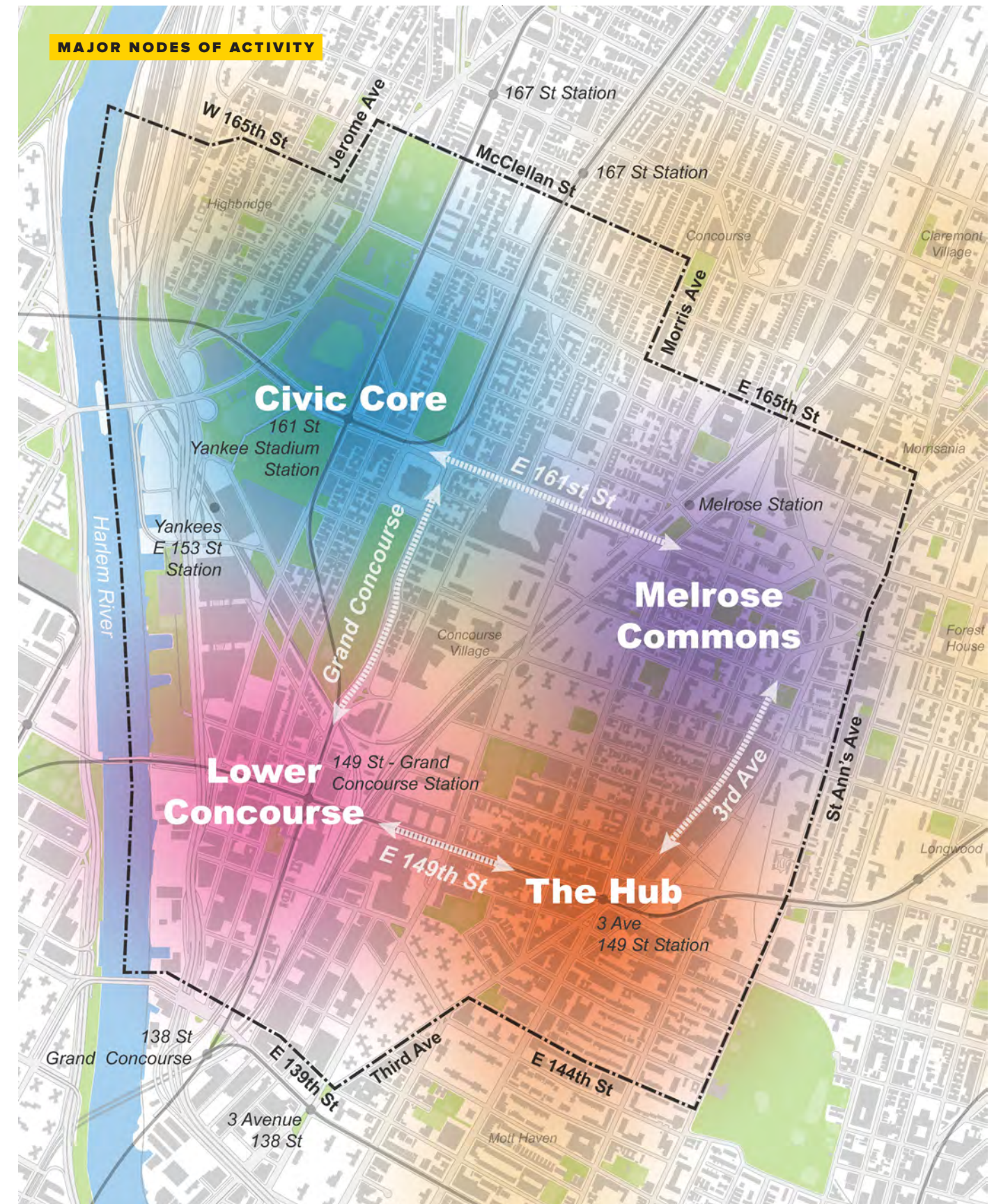
The Grand Concourse connects the Civic Core with Lower Concourse node. There have been significant investments on the Grand Concourse north of the Study Area, but the stretch of Grand Concourse between 161st Street and 149th Street lacks the visual flair of the northern portions. Additionally, though the Grand Concourse is home to the Bronx Walk of Fame, the Walk of Fame is dated and requires a refresh to create the destination and sense of place that the Grand Concourse in its ideal form would have.

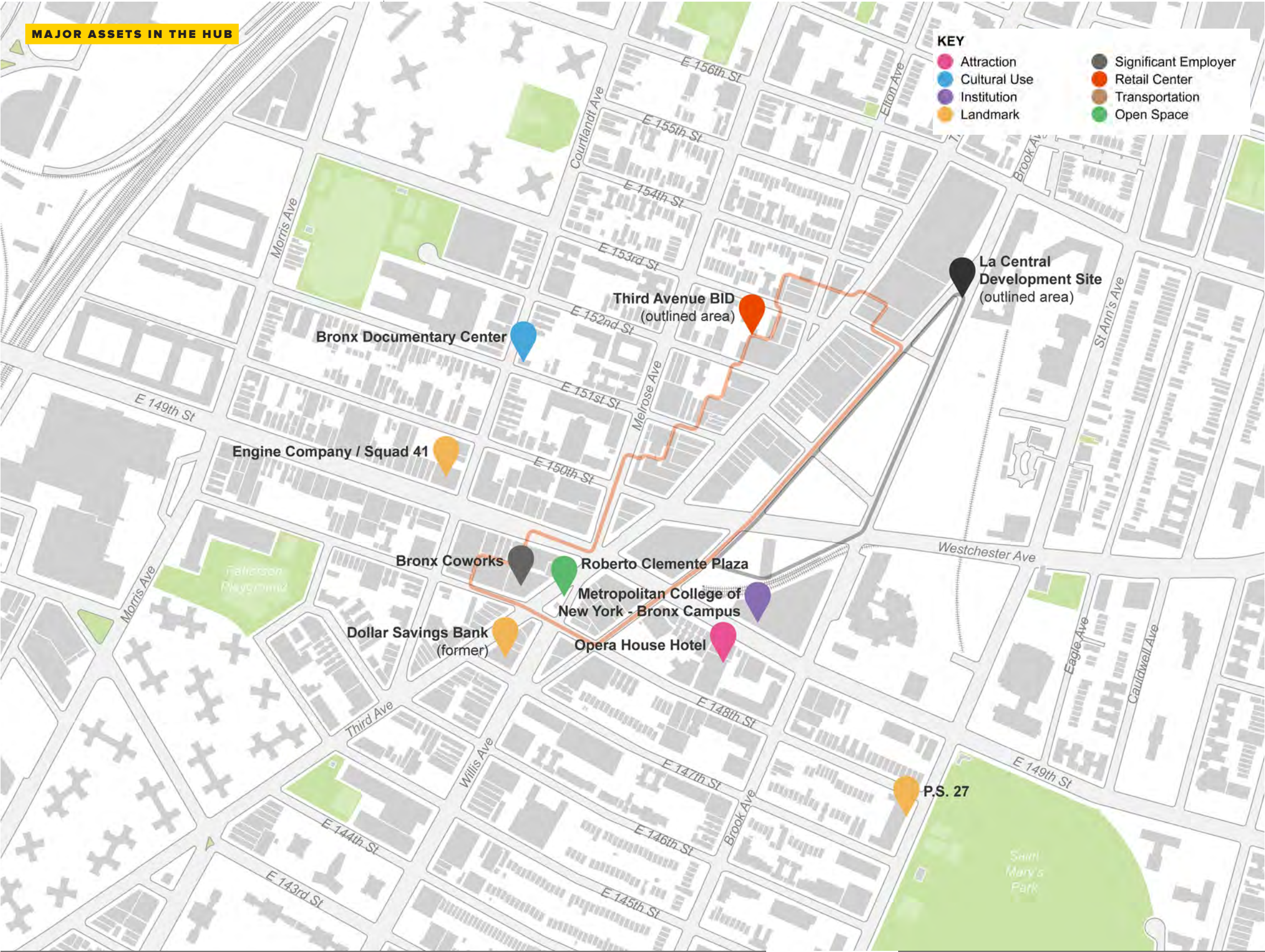
The Study Area's main corridors are heavily trafficked and regionally significant, but streetscapes require upgrades.

Major Nodes of Activity

The highest concentration of commercial activity is along the mixed-use corridors of East 161st Street and Third Avenue/East 149th Street. Industrial uses are concentrated near Lower Concourse in the southwest of the Study Area. Institutional uses, including high schools and colleges, and municipal buildings, are clustered at 149th Street/Grand Concourse, and along 161st Street at the Civic Core.

Generally, activity in the Bronx Civic Center is defined by four distinct nodes, each characterized by a unique mix of uses and users:





1. The Hub

A historic retail and office destination

The Hub, an iconic retail and commercial destination in the Bronx, is situated in the southeastern portion of the Study Area and represents the most concentrated downtown area of the borough. The Hub is home to more than 275 businesses, representing mostly discount destination retailers, and takeout and limited service restaurants.²⁰ The Hub attracts shoppers from across the Bronx and Northern Manhattan, and from adjacent residential neighborhoods. The Hub also has a base of nonprofit and institutional office tenants, primarily located in buildings around the intersection of East 149th Street and Third Avenue. These tenants include social service providers such as Legal Aid Society, educational institutions such as Metropolitan College of New York, and non-profit organizations such as SoBRO. Despite this cluster of office using tenants, there is significant unused commercial space concentrated in the Hub.

The Hub's success is supported by its strong transportation access. The 2 and 5 trains serve the 3rd Ave-149th Street subway station, connecting the Hub to the north Bronx, and both the East and West Sides of Manhattan. Multiple bus lines run through the area, including the Bx41 Select Bus Service line that connects the Hub to the north Bronx.

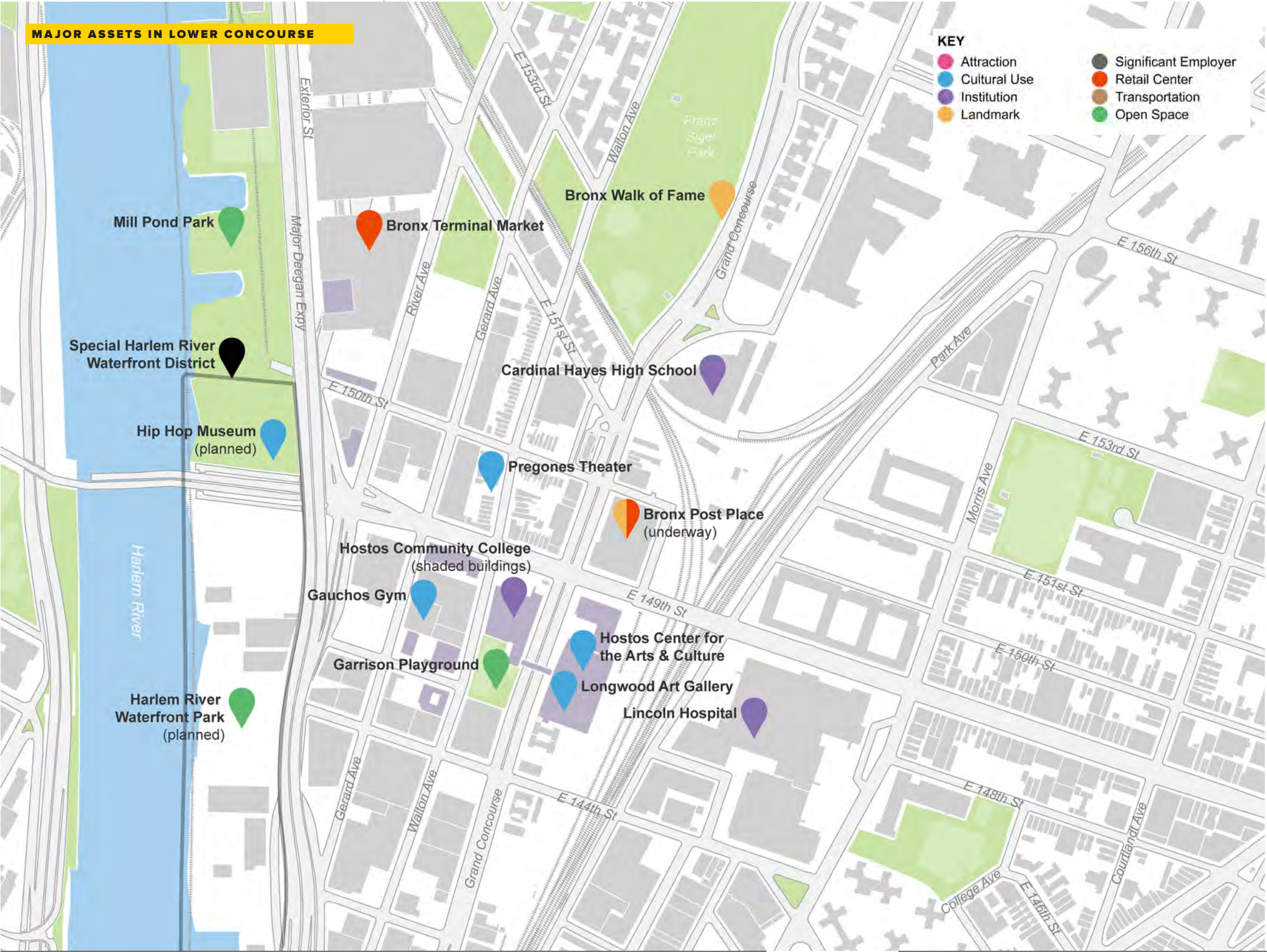


2. The Civic Core

A gateway to the Bronx and a major employment center

The Civic Core, situated in the northwest portion of the Study Area, acts as a primary gateway to the Bronx. Containing two unrelated anchors, Yankee Stadium and the Bronx County courts, as well as a relatively dense housing stock on the Grand Concourse, Gerard Avenue, and Walton Avenue, the Civic Core serves a variety of visitors, workers, and residents. Yankee Stadium, located on the western edge of the Civic Core, has an annual attendance of more than 3 million ticketholders, and is the most visited location in the Bronx, supporting a mix of sports-based retail and dining businesses at River Avenue and 161st Street. The courts anchor the eastern portion of the Civic Core, and support an estimated 7,000 government and professional services jobs. The Civic Core is therefore a major employment center for the Bronx.²¹

The Civic Core is connected to the rest of the Bronx and the broader region through a rich transit network. The 4 and D trains stop at the 161st Street subway station, connecting the area to the northern Bronx, the East and West Sides of Manhattan, and Downtown Brooklyn. The 153rd Street Metro-North stop on the Hudson Line, located adjacent to the Civic Core, provides visitors and workers from the northern suburbs a direct connection, and provides rapid service to Midtown Manhattan on gamedays. Additionally, the Bx6 bus, which runs along 161st Street, connects the Civic Core to both northern Manhattan and Bronx neighborhoods to the east, including Hunts Point and Longwood.

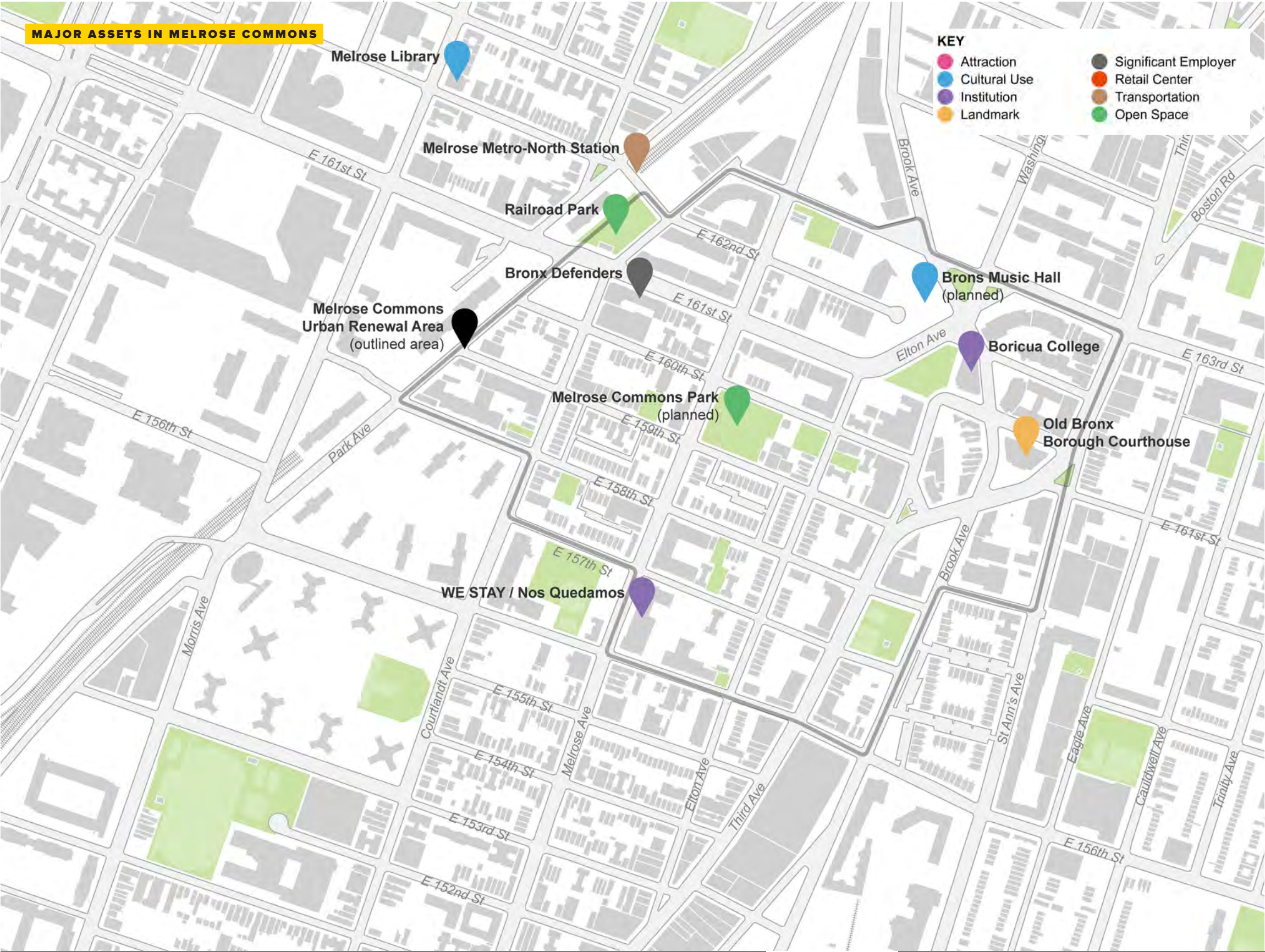


3. Lower Concourse
An institution-anchored, emerging mixed-use district

Lower Concourse is an emerging-mixed use district in the southwestern portion of the Study Area that has been historically anchored by two significant Bronx institutions, Hostos Community College and Lincoln Medical Center. Hostos, which is part of the City University of New York (CUNY) system, serves more than 7,200 students, employs just under 700 full time-faculty and staff (and an additional 675 part-time faculty and staff), and offers year-round cultural programming through the Longwood Arts Gallery and three performance spaces, which are complemented by the nearby Pregones Theater.²² Lincoln Medical Center, part of the New York City Health and Hospital Corporation, is a 362-bed public hospital and among the largest employers in the Study Area.²³

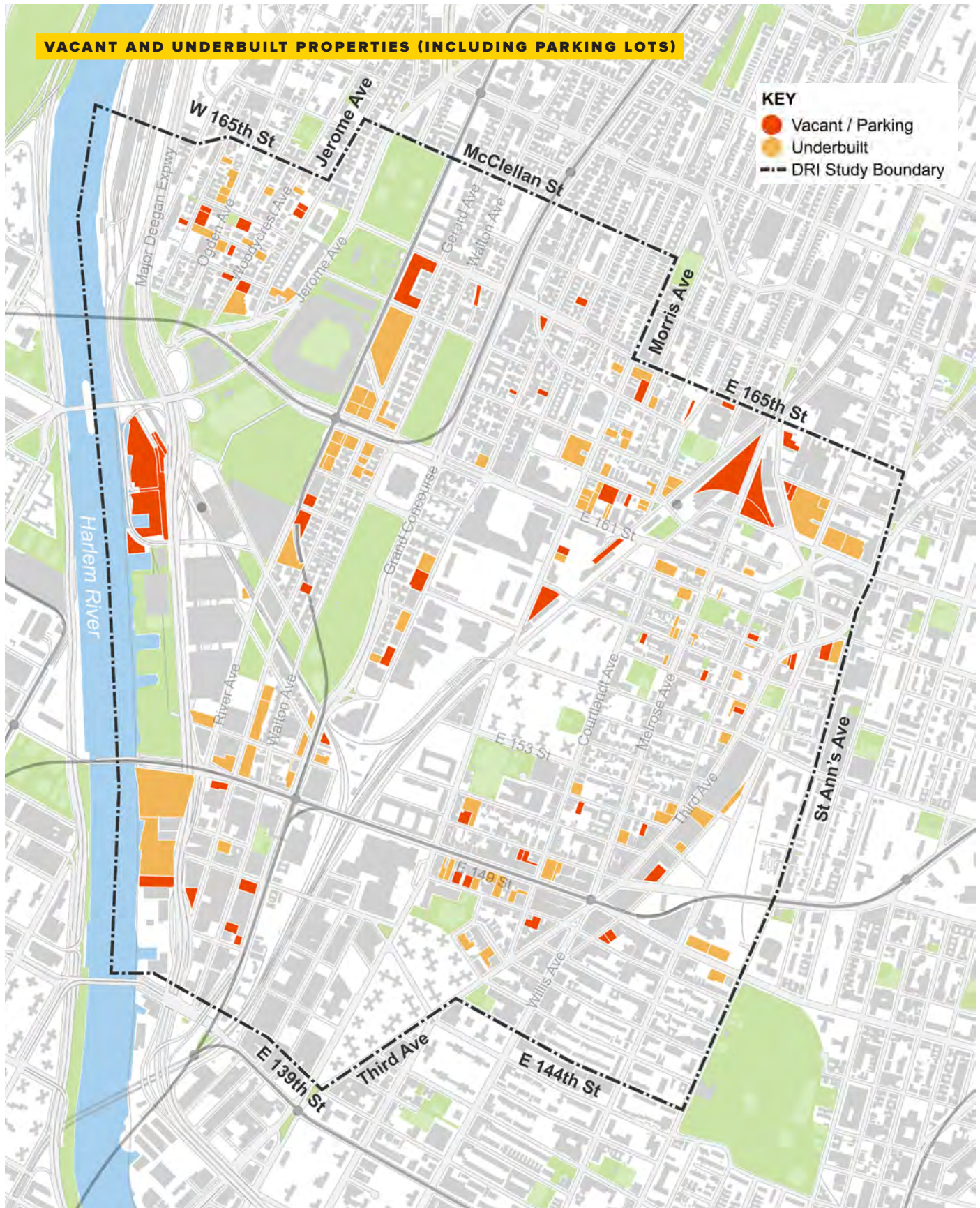
The blocks to the west and south of these two institutions historically housed industrial uses, including the Bronx Terminal Market, but have seen significant investment recently spurred by a rezoning (discussed below). The Bronx Terminal Market shopping mall opened in 2009 in place of the Bronx Terminal Market, bringing big-box retail to the South Bronx. The former Bronx General Post Office is being renovated into a “Chelsea Market”-style retail, dining, and office space. More than 1,300 units of mixed-income housing near the Harlem River are underway or built, and both the Universal Hip-Hop Museum and Bronx Children’s Museum are expected to open along Exterior Street within the next five years, building out this node’s cultural activities.²⁴ Even with recent development, there is still ample vacant and underused land available for redevelopment, especially north of East 149th Street along River Avenue.

The node is well-served by transit, with the 2, 4, and 5 trains merging at the 149th Street-Grand Concourse station, and numerous bus lines running along East 149th Street and the Grand Concourse.



4. Melrose Commons
A mixed-use residential community

Melrose Commons, at the northeastern corner of the Study Area and the result of the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Area plan, is a predominantly residential community with a mix of institutional, retail, and cultural uses interspersed. 4,500 residential housing units house nearly 12,000 residents, with nearly all developed as affordable housing serving low- and moderate-income households, including for-sale townhome units.²⁵ The district is also home to Boricua College, a private college serving a community beyond the Urban Renewal Area, and, with the development of Bronx Commons, will be the home of the Bronx Music Hall, a 300-seat performance space and educational facility. Supplementing these uses is ground-floor retail that links to the northern reaches of the Hub shopping corridor on Third Avenue. This node is disconnected from the subway system, but proximate to the Melrose Metro-North station and two Select Bus Service lines: the Bx6 (which connects to the Civic Core and Hunts Point) and the Bx41 (which connects to the Hub and north along Webster Avenue).



While none of these nodes independently contain the full mix of commercial, civic, retail, entertainment, and housing uses that typically define a downtown core, taken collectively, the Bronx Civic Center offers this vibrant mix of uses, and has historically played the role of a central gathering place for the Bronx. In addition, several nodes are beginning to attract a broader mix of uses that will increase their dynamism and attract a broader set of users. The Hub, historically a retail and office center, is welcoming more than 1,000 housing units as well as new commercial space, and Lower Concourse, traditionally an institutional center, is seeing substantial residential, commercial, retail, and cultural growth. Strengthening these nodes to maximize street activity and the mix of uses, and building connections among disparate centers of activity would support a more vibrant Bronx downtown overall.

Recent Rezoning Plans

In 2009, the City enacted two neighborhood rezoning plans to encourage higher density and more mixed-use development in the most transit-rich areas of the Civic Center. The result of significant community planning, they also sought to preserve viable light industry and encourage the activation of underused industrial land.

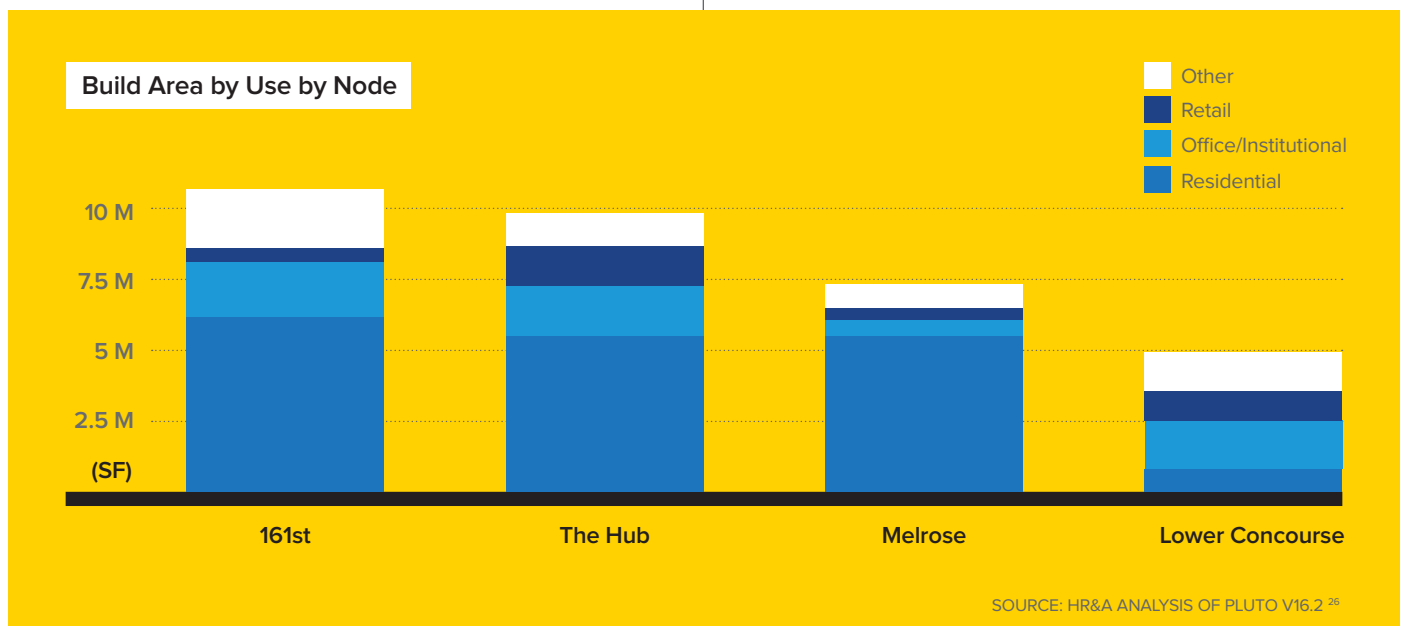
- **Lower Concourse rezoning** impacted a 30-block area at the lower end of the Grand Concourse that includes a portion of the Bronx Civic Center Study Area. This rezoning sought to address the shortage of available sites for new housing development caused by decades of investment in city-owned sites in the South Bronx. The plan re-categorized

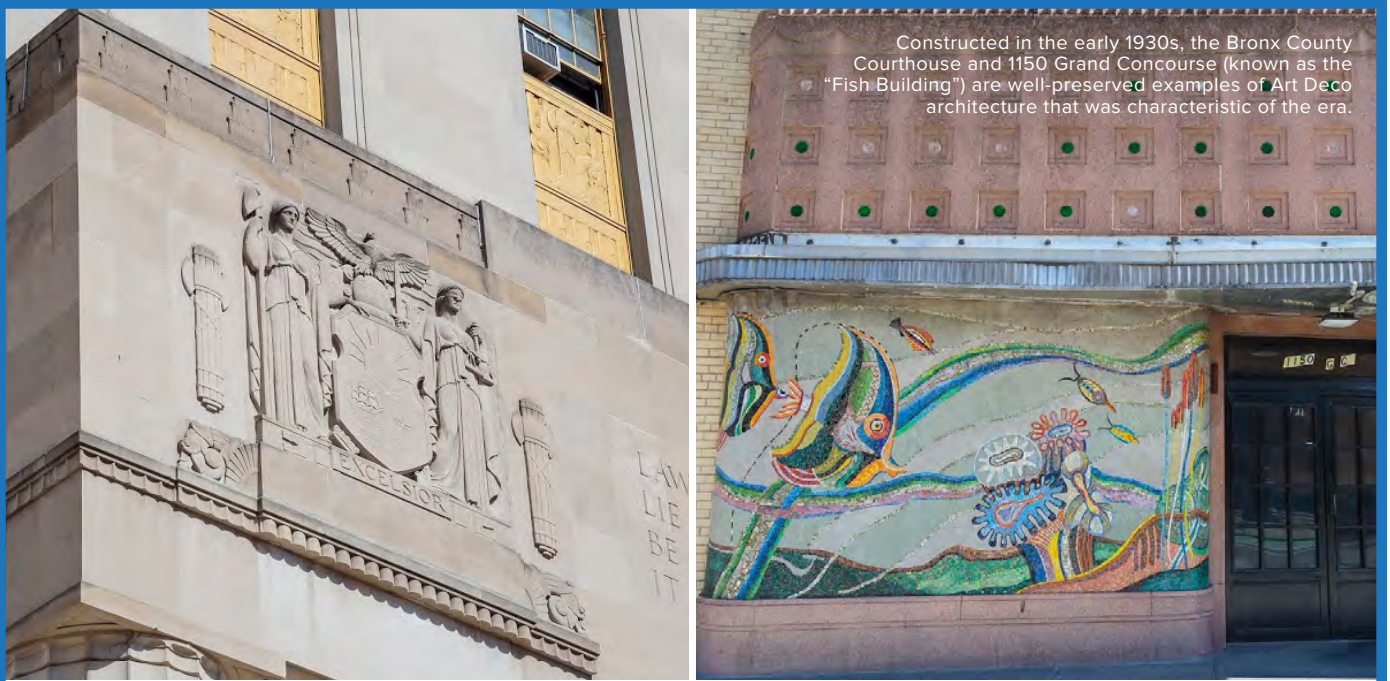
predominantly manufacturing zones, which did not permit residential development, to predominantly mixed commercial/residential and manufacturing/residential districts, with the aim of preserving viable industrial uses and accommodating employment growth over time. The rezoning also designated a Special Harlem River Waterfront District permitting tower-style residential development along the waterfront while mandating public waterfront access.

- The **161st St-River Avenue rezoning** impacted 8 blocks along the 161st Street and River Avenue mixed-use corridors. The study focused on three subareas: the Transit Node along River Avenue near Yankee Stadium, which was targeted for the densest residential and commercial development; the Civic Node on 161st Street near the Grand Concourse, which was targeted for the development of retail and office space; and the Residential Node further east on 161st Street, which targeted higher-density residential development and permitted a greater mix of commercial ground floor uses.

Vacant and Underbuilt Sites

Despite significant recent development that has filled in large vacant properties within the Study Area, particularly within the Hub and Melrose Commons, there is a considerable supply of vacant and underbuilt sites remaining, primarily in Lower Concourse and Civic Core nodes. Along River Avenue, multiple surface parking lots exist that present potential development opportunities. In Lower Concourse, several large parcels are vacant or underbuilt, including the “dirt pile” just south of the 145th Street Bridge along the Harlem River waterfront.





Architectural Character

The Study Area hosts a variety of 20th-century architectural styles. Historic styles include the Art Deco apartment buildings along the Grand Concourse. This boulevard and the adjacent courthouse and parks are in keeping with the City Beautiful Movement of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Less grand, but of similar scale and material, are the brick walk-up tenements and simple single-family townhomes that are prevalent in pockets throughout the Study Area. The more recently constructed townhomes and apartment buildings at Melrose Commons reference similar architectural styles, elements, and scales that help integrate these new buildings into the architectural fabric of the South Bronx.

Larger-scale developments from the mid-20th century also inform the architectural character of the area. Large multi-building residential developments such as Concourse Village, Melrose Houses, Patterson Houses, and the Morrisania Air Rights Housing are based on the tower-in-the-park model which was promoted by the 1961 New York City Zoning Resolution. Large institutional buildings such as Lincoln Hospital and the Hostos Community College campus also date from this era, as do the large infrastructural projects—particularly the Major Deegan Expressway—that rims the area.

Recent and planned development reflect a greater emphasis on modulated volumes, transparency, and variety of materials. Via Verde, La Central, Bronx Commons, and Bronx Point—all affordable housing and mixed-use developments completed recently or underway—are examples of this style. Institutional and civic buildings such as the Bronx County Hall of Justice, the Mott Haven Educational Campus, and the Bronx Museum of the Arts are also introducing new architectural styles to the district. The new Yankee Stadium attempts to bridge the architectural styles of the area through a modern reinterpretation of neo-classical elements, combining traditional materials such as limestone and granite, with glass and steel.

Elsewhere, low-scale large-footprint buildings reflect the manufacturing history of the South Bronx, particularly west of the Grand Concourse, where renovations are introducing or modernizing uses. Although most commercial establishments east of the Grand Concourse are smaller-scale buildings, some of them—such as the Triangle Plaza Hub and the Bronx Business Center building—also fill the entire block, but do not achieve the maximum heights permitted by zoning.

REAL ESTATE MARKET

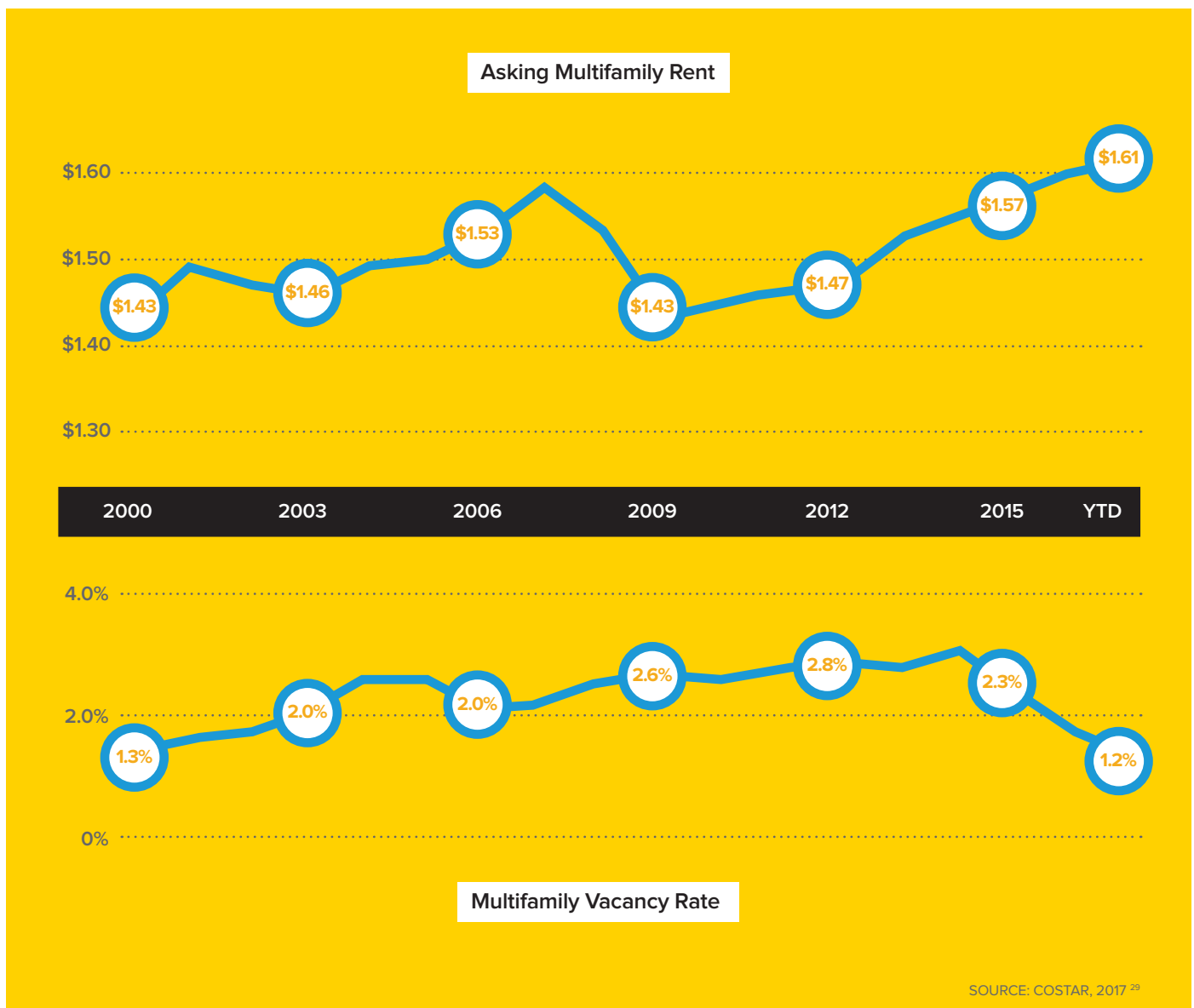
Residential

There has been significant recent residential development within the Study Area since 2009, with more than 1,800 units of multifamily housing delivered, an increase in inventory of approximately 7%. Despite this increase in inventory, overall housing vacancy is exceptionally low, at less than 4% (multi-family vacancies are even lower at just over 1%).²⁷

On average across the Study Area, residential rents are \$1.60 per SF monthly, or roughly \$1,150 per unit. By comparison, to sustain market-rate development, rents typically must be close to \$3.00 per SF, or roughly \$2,000 per unit. As a result,

nearly all new development has been City- or State-subsidized affordable housing, generally available to households earning between 30% and 80% of Area Median Income (AMI), equivalent to \$28,000 to \$76,000 for a family of four.

There are signs of rent growth in the market. While all new developments are fully affordable, some are testing higher AMI bands. La Central, the largest affordable development planned in the area, plans to reserve a portion of its units for households earning up to 100% of AMI, equivalent to \$95,000 for a family of four. The second phase of the 1,000-unit Bronx Point development along the Harlem River waterfront, scheduled for completion after 2022, is expected to include market-rate housing.²⁸



Located in the heart of Lower Concourse, Hostos Community College graduates 800 students per year from nearly 30 associate's degree programs and two certifications .



Office

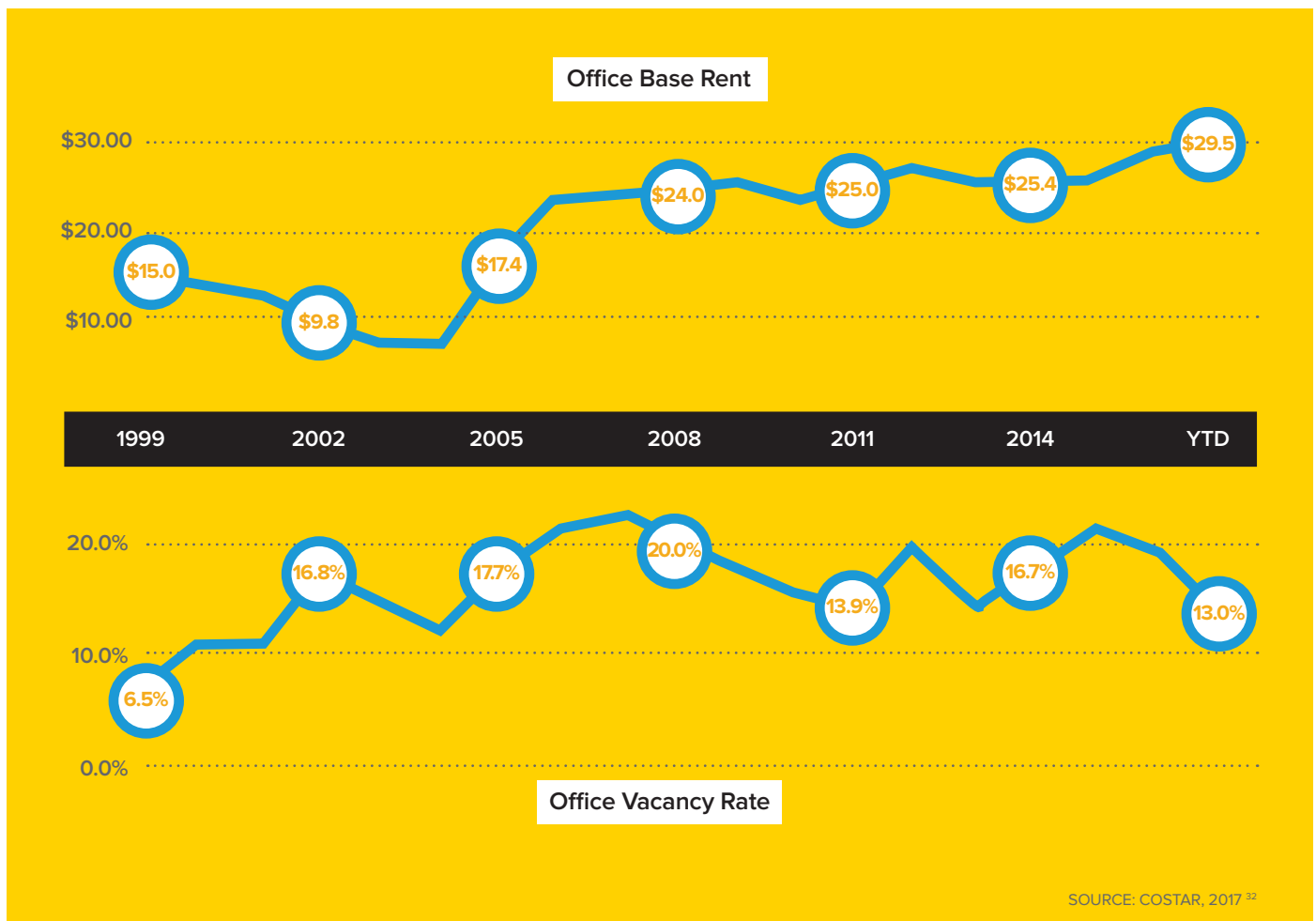
The Civic Center's ample available commercial stock is predominantly un-renovated Class B space. Approximately 90% of leasable space was built before 1980, and nearly 40% was built before 1940. Additionally, nearly two-thirds of all space has not been renovated since 1980. As a result, most of the office stock lacks modern amenities, including modern lobbies and elevator systems, and modern telecom and Internet services, limiting their marketability to commercial tenants demanding high quality, modern space.

Within the Civic Center's nodes, the Civic Core is dominated by government and court-related tenants, and the Hub is dominated by institutional (mainly higher education and health care) and nonprofit tenants. There is currently limited space occupied by private sector firms, and absent the addition of new Class A space, or the rehabilitation and modernization of existing space, it will be difficult for the Civic Center to attract such firms.

Office rents in the Study Area average \$25 to \$30 per SF,

higher than the Bronx overall but lower than other outer-borough downtowns markets such as Harlem, which commands average rents of \$40 per SF. Vacancies in the Study Area are 14%, equal to that of Harlem, a comparable non-core office district that has seen significant revitalization in the past decade. Within the Study Area, rents spiked in the lead-up to the Great Recession, but unlike in other sectors did not see a collapse during the recession. Vacancies did spike during the recession, increasing to as high as 22% but have returned to pre-recession levels.³⁰

Of significance, in addition to the 2 million SF of listed office space, the Study Area includes a substantial inventory of unlisted, warehoused office space, up to 4.7 million SF based on an analysis of office space recorded in City records versus office space listed on third-party real estate listing services. While some of this space may be in use as storage or another unlisted use, local market experts report that a considerable amount of upper-floor space is being warehoused, particularly at the Hub.³¹



The Hub is home to more than 275 retail businesses, drawing shoppers from across the Bronx and Northern Manhattan.

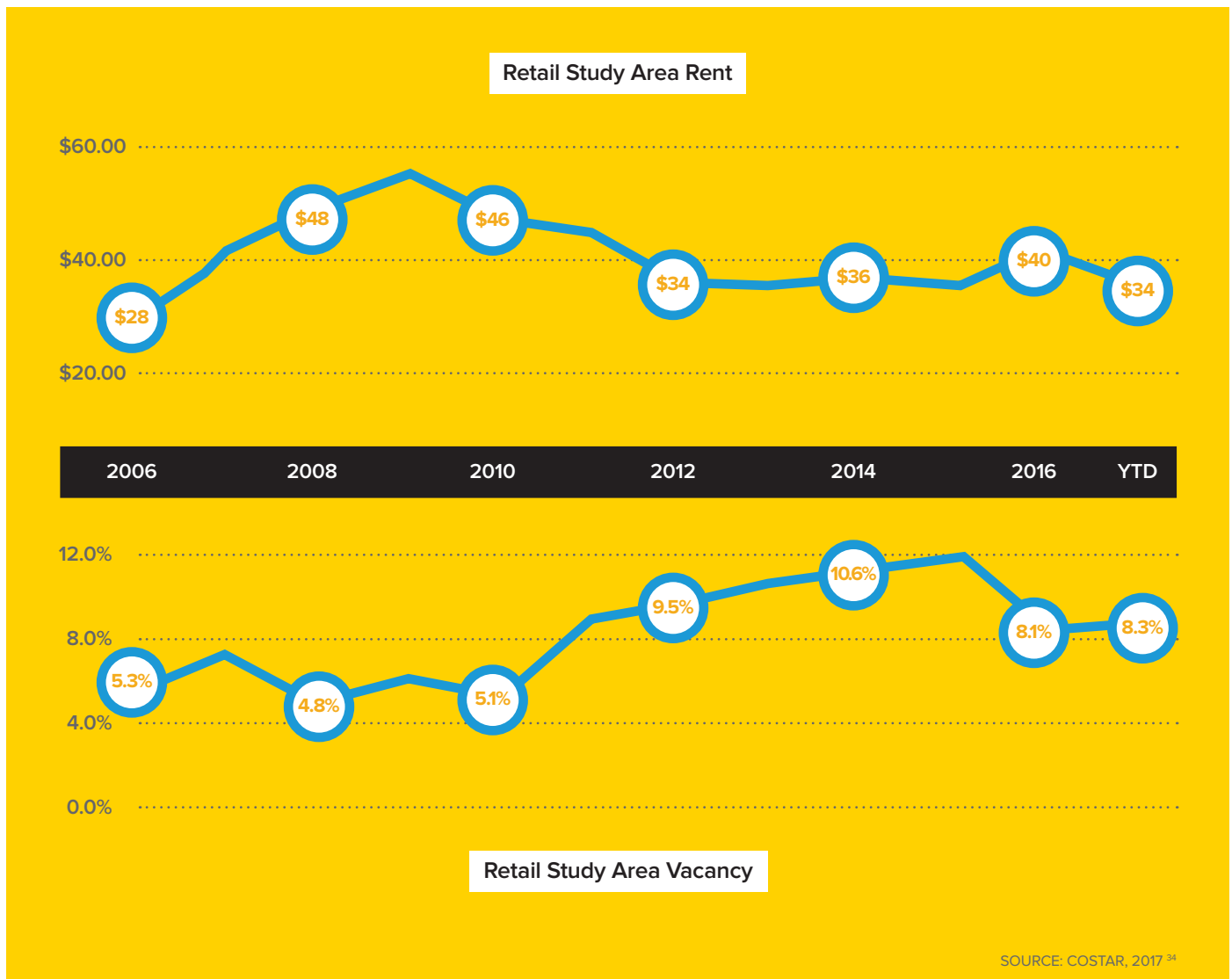


Retail

The Bronx Civic Center is a retail destination with just under 4.5 million SF of inventory, representing approximately 15% of the Bronx's total retail inventory. Rents in the area vary significantly by location. Rents overall average approximately \$35 per SF; prime locations at the Hub (the intersection of Third Avenue and 149th Street) command as high as \$60 to \$75 per SF, but diminish with distance from the subway. Although high for the Bronx, rents are lower than in comparable outer-borough retail destinations such as Jamaica and Harlem, where rents average \$70 and \$100, respectively. Vacancies are currently 8%, higher than for peer districts, which are 4% or less. Prior to the pre-recession boom, rents averaged just under \$30 per SF, then peaked at \$55 before stabilizing post-recession at \$35 to \$40. Prior to the recession, vacancies were just over 5% and climbed as high as 11% in 2015 before returning to 5%

today. In addition to the impacts of the recession, the Bronx Terminal Market delivered 1 million SF of new retail inventory in 2009, applying further downward pressure on rents and reportedly lengthening the period of recovery from the recession for other neighborhood retail corridors.³³

The Study Area includes 15% of the Bronx's total retail inventory and some of its highest rents.



The Bronx Post Place, scheduled to open in late 2018, is an adaptive reuse project that will introduce new retail and dining options to the growing Lower Concourse area.



Despite the density of retail in the Study Area, there is unmet demand for restaurants and other specialty uses, supporting observations by local stakeholders and residents.

Retail demand is estimated by multiplying the daily population of residents, workers, and other visitors, by the average amount each resident, worker, and visitor typically spends per day on various goods and services (adjusted for income and location). Unmet demand occurs when the amount of spending taking place in an area is less than the amount that would be expected to occur based on demand estimates. Within the Study Area, when considering the daily flow of residents and workers (our analysis did not account for other visitors), there is an estimated unmet demand of more than \$63 million across all spending categories, not considering the significant expected growth in population and employment in the coming years. This existing demand could support between 15,000 and 48,000 SF of new retail space in total, based on New York City estimates of retail sales per SF by category.

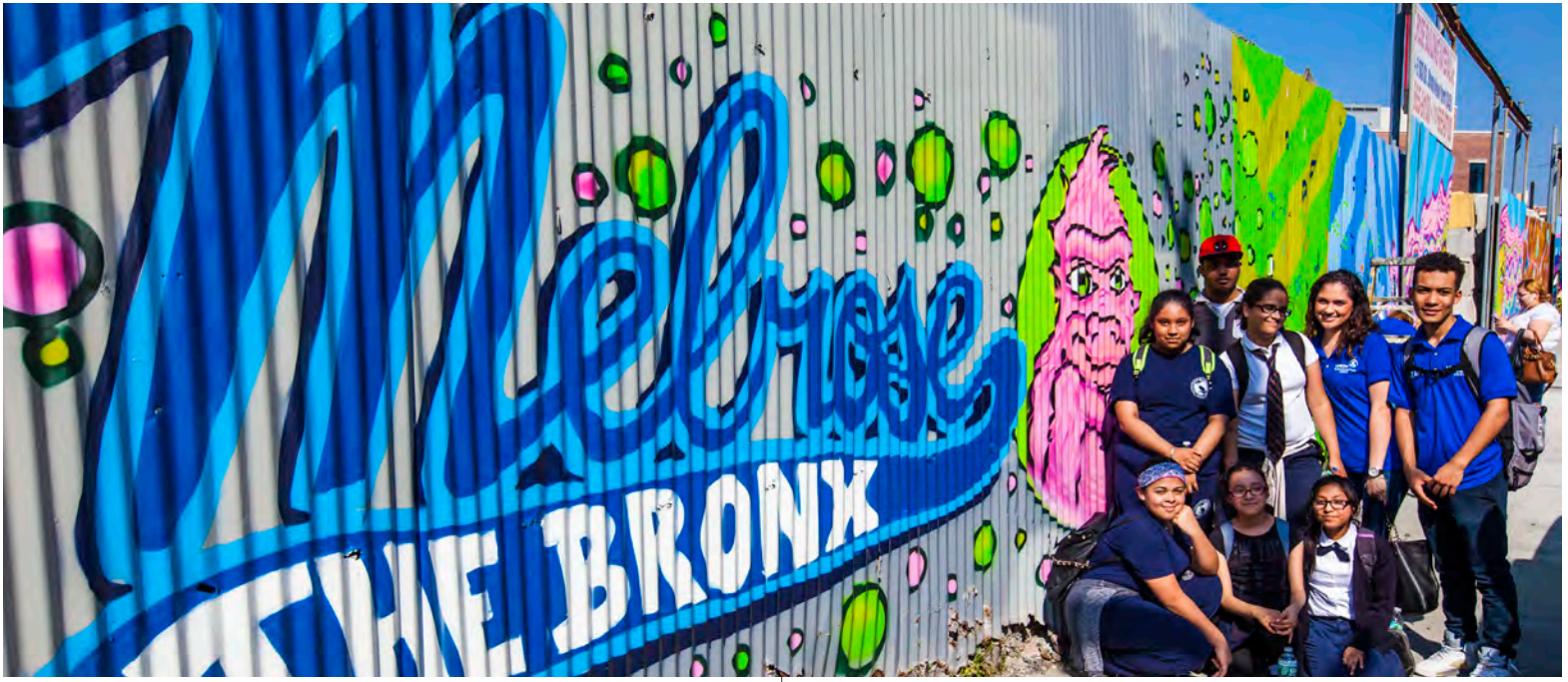
Of note, this total gap includes nearly \$19 million in unmet demand for annual food and restaurant spending, enough to support between 4,700 and 23,000 SF of new restaurant space (or roughly two to 10 new restaurants). Other unmet demand includes spending on health and personal care (more than \$9 million) and clothing (more than \$9 million).

Potential barriers to achieving full retail buildout that have been suggested by market experts include a disconnect between the type of retail that residents and workers seek, and the existing mix. For example, it is possible that the local population would be willing to spend more total dollars on local restaurants but is not dining out because the options currently available do not satisfy its full range of needs. Another possibility is that uses with an unmet demand have lower rent thresholds than other businesses, and therefore are not able to secure retail space despite pent-up consumer demand.

Estimated Unmet Retail Demand by Spending Category

Spending Category	Estimated Unmet Retail Demand	SF of New Retail (Low)	SF of New Retail (High)
Restaurants/Other Eating Places	\$18,760,000	4,700 SF	23,400 SF
Health & Personal Care Stores	\$9,690,000	2,000 SF	4,100 SF
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	\$9,140,000	2,300 SF	4,600 SF
Used Merchandise Stores	\$8,880,000	2,400 SF	4,700 SF
Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers	\$5,330,000	1,400 SF	2,800 SF
Office Supplies, Stationery & Gift Stores	\$4,890,000	1,300 SF	2,600 SF
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	\$4,360,000	1,200 SF	2,500 SF
Drinking Places - Alcoholic Beverages	\$2,030,000	600 SF	3,000 SF
Total	\$63,040,000	16,000 SF	47,800 SF

SOURCE: ESRI BUSINESS ANALYST, HR&A ANALYSIS



The Strategic Plan seeks to build on homegrown efforts to generate new opportunity for South Bronx residents, businesses, and visitors -and create a stronger, more cohesive downtown.

Section II:

DOWNTOWN VISION, GOALS & STRATEGIES

The Strategic Plan builds on the cultural legacy of the South Bronx while improving public assets and expanding economic opportunity.

VISION STATEMENT

The Bronx Civic Center DRI Local Planning Committee (LPC) developed the following vision to guide investment in the South Bronx and support local revitalization and economic development:

The Bronx Civic Center will draw on its proud history as a cultural, educational, retail, and employment hub to develop a unified downtown that:

- **Enhances quality of life for residents and visitors**
- **Preserves and promotes the borough’s unique heritage and identity**
- **Supports economic growth and opportunity**
- **Serves as a model for inclusive, community-led economic development**

GOALS & STRATEGIES



Guided by the opportunities and challenges identified in the Downtown Profile & Assessment, as well as potential interventions that could address challenges facing the Study Area, the LPC identified **four primary goals** for downtown revitalization, each supported by a set of **revitalization strategies** that are reflected in by the final Priority Project list:



Strengthen neighborhoods as livable, inclusive communities.
DRI investments should ensure that revitalization directly benefits those currently living in the area by supporting investment in public and civic spaces, enhanced quality of life, and new models for delivering services to economically diverse communities.

- Activate, improve, and expand parks, plazas, and other public spaces
- Make streetscapes more pedestrian-friendly through lighting, plantings, and sidewalk improvements
- Broaden public wi-fi access to address the digital divide
- Enhance safety, sanitation, and other quality of life enforcement
- Invest in expanded and improved educational programs and facilities
- Preserve and create a range of housing options to provide quality housing for today’s residents and future generations



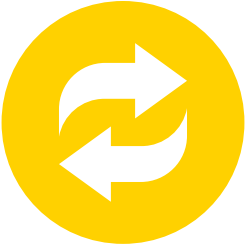
Develop attractive, vibrant commercial corridors to support businesses and attract jobs. DRI investments should provide economic support to local businesses to help them thrive and expand, while also laying the groundwork to attract new employers and build connections that link local residents to employment opportunities.

- Provide economic support to local businesses to help them thrive and expand
- Expand retail options to appeal to the needs of the community
- Enhance the appearance of retail storefronts and commercial properties
- Renovate aging and vacant office properties to create additional move-in ready space
- Stimulate innovation through business incubators tied to growth industries such as tech and life sciences
- Establish and preserve affordable work space for entrepreneurs and nonprofits
- Provide space and equipment to support workforce programs connecting residents to emerging businesses and industries



Promote local culture and visitation to the Civic Center. A recurring theme heard from the community was a desire to preserve and celebrate local culture, art, and heritage. DRI investments should therefore improve the visibility of cultural activities and emerging cultural centers, while also creating new opportunities for public art and the work of local artists.

- Improve the visibility of cultural activities, independent artists, and emerging cultural centers
- Identify opportunities for public art
- Showcase the community’s history and culture in public spaces
- Build on significant tourism and local employment to drive visitation to institutions and businesses
- Promote the development of full-service hotels to attract family visitors and tourists
- Enhance street life by encouraging outdoor dining, seasonal markets, and the use of public spaces



Enhance neighborhood gateways and connections.
As the Study Area experiences significant growth, DRI investments should improve the physical connections between centers of activity.

- Support consistent street activity along major connecting corridors
- Enhance navigability through wayfinding and other branding strategies
- Improve connectivity and transit service between neighborhoods to reduce travel times
- Incorporate technology to enhance the pedestrian experience and improve accessibility
- Unlock large, underused publicly owned sites for development

Community members and visitors enjoy a live arts performance at a block party hosted by Pregones Theater/PRTT.



Section III:

DOWNTOWN MANAGEMENT & IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

More than 10 community organizations, private entities, and City agencies will contribute to Priority Project implementation.

As a neighborhood within a large metropolitan area, the organizational capacity of the South Bronx differs from other DRI communities that have a centralized local government supporting project execution. Responsibility for implementing DRI Priority Projects rests primarily with a group of nonprofit organizations that have a vested interest in the long-term development of the South Bronx, as well as several private entities that have elected to invest in Bronx locations. One New York City agency – the Department of Parks and Recreation (NYC Parks) – will be responsible for implementing a DRI project. All organizations identified to receive funding have sufficient staff, operating funding, and expertise to manage the projects assigned to them.

To ensure effective coordination among DRI project leads, the Office of Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr – led by the Office of Planning and Development – will serve as an informal organizing entity responsible for monitoring project implementation, facilitating communication among project leads and partners, and serving as a central touch-point for New York State funding entities, including the Department of State, Empire State Development, and Homes and Community Renewal. The Borough President’s Office has been involved in several recent community planning processes in the South Bronx, including the expansion of Metro-North rail service, as well as advocating for the investment along the Harlem River, and played an active role in the Bronx DRI Local Planning Committee, for which Borough President Diaz served as Co-Chair and Director of Planning and Development James Rausse, AICP, was the primary point of contact for the LPC. The Borough President’s Office will convene a quarterly meeting of project sponsors and interested members of the Local Planning Committee to monitor implementation and sustain progress toward DRI investment priorities that were not awarded DRI funds.

The responsible entities for implementation of all DRI-funded projects, including project leads and co-leads, are as follows:

Non-Profit Organizations

- The **Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation (BOEDC)** is a nonprofit entity that works in collaboration with the Bronx Borough President’s Office to plan and coordinate economic development activities in the borough. It has a staff of 14 people, led by President Marlene Cintron (a Co-Chair of the Bronx Civic Center LPC), and manages several financing programs relevant to DRI goals, including the SBA 504 loan program and the Empowerment Zone program. BOEDC will be the project lead for the following Priority Projects: Create a Business Improvement Fund to Modernize Commercial Districts; Beautify Streetscapes at the 161st Street Gateway;

and Refresh the Bronx Walk of Fame with Updated Signs and Branding. BOEDC will partner with the 161st Street Business Improvement District and The Bronx Rox, a resident volunteer organization, on the 161st Street streetscape project, and with the Bronx Tourism Council, a subsidiary of BOEDC, on the Bronx Walk of Fame project.

- **BronxWorks** was founded in 1972 to serve individuals and families who face a variety of economic and social barriers, including food instability and homelessness. It has 875 employees and is led by Executive Director Eileen Torres (a member of the Bronx Civic Center LPC). BronxWorks is the project lead for Complete Enhancements to the BronxWorks Swimming Pool.
- **Mid-Bronx Senior Citizens Council (MBSCC)** is a community development organization that supports and empowers residents in the Bronx, with more than 40 years of experience in community-based development services. MBSCC currently manages 28 buildings, including 1,200 housing units, in the Bronx. It has a staff of 300 people, led by president and executive director Jeanette Puryear. It will be the project lead for the Expand the Andrew Freedman Home Cultural Art Center project.
- **Nos Quedamos/We Stay** is a community development corporation that has played a central role in developing over 2,600 mixed-income rental and ownership units in the Study Area over the last 20 years through community planning. It has a staff of 14 people, led by Executive Director Jessica Clemente (a member of the Bronx Civic Center LPC). It will be the project lead for the projects: Activate Community Gardens with Solar Lighting and Wi-Fi and Expand Low-Cost Broadband Access in Melrose Commons. Nos Quedamos will partner with the community gardens’ volunteer leadership on the former project, and with Neture, Inc., a Bronx-based startup internet service provider, for the latter project.
- **Pregones Theater / Puerto Rican Traveling Theater** is a prominent Latino arts organization with performance space in the Bronx and Manhattan. Pregones and PRTT is run by Artistic Director Rosalba Rolón (a member of the Bronx Civic Center LPC), and will be the project lead for Enable the Building of the New Pregones Theater Space.
- The **Third Avenue Business Improvement District**’s mission is to promote the growth, vitality, and visibility of the district. It is comprised of 47 properties and 107 businesses ranging from major chains to locally owned establishments, and has a full-time staff of 3, led by Executive Director Michael Brady,

a member of the Bronx Civic Center LPC, supplemented by part-time staff and contractors. The BID is in the process of expanding its boundaries significantly to include 149th Street up to the Grand Concourse and a portion of Melrose Avenue; approval is expected in late 2018. The BID will manage the following Priority Projects: Install Two Food Concessions at the New Roberto Clemente Plaza and Beautify Streetscapes at the Hub and 149th Street with Plantings, Banners, and Art. The BID will partner with the NYC Department of Transportation (NYCDOT) on both projects. The BID will also support BOEDC to Create a Business Improvement Fund to Modernize Commercial Districts.

Public

- **NYC Department of Parks and Recreation (NYC Parks)** is responsible for maintaining and expanding the City's network of over 5,000 parks, playgrounds and open spaces, and will be the project lead for Upgrade Railroad Park with Enhanced Lighting, Landscaping, and Wayfinding.

Private

- **Bronx Kreate, LLC** is a Bronx-based spin off from Brooklyn Brush, a successful for-profit arts and maker space based in Bushwick. Bronx Kreate's mission is to build a stable environment for artists and makers by leveraging low cost real estate, supporting tenant growth, and fostering community. It will be the lead for the project to Support the Opening of the Bronx Kreate Artist-Maker Hub project.
- **Great Performances, Inc.** is a WBE-certified full-service catering company founded in 1979 that employs more than 200 full-time and 930 part-time staff. It is currently located in the Hudson Square neighborhood in Manhattan but will relocate its corporate headquarters and production facilities to the Study Area as part of the project, Relocate a Prominent Catering Company to Lower Concourse. It will be the project lead, and will be supported by the building's developers, Signature Urban Properties and Monadnock Construction.

Project Implementation

Project Name	Responsible Entity	Project Partners
1. Upgrade Railroad Park with a Café Kiosk and Park Redesign	NYC Parks	
2. Relocate a Prominent Catering Company to Lower Concourse	Great Performances	Signature Urban Properties & Monadnock Construction
3. Expand the Andrew Freedman Home Cultural Art Center	Mid-Bronx Senior Citizens Council	
4. Beautify Streetscapes at the Hub and 149th Street with Plantings, Banners, and Art	Third Avenue BID	NYCDOT
5. Create a Business Improvement Fund to Modernize Commercial Districts	BOEDC	161st Street & Third Avenue BIDs
6. Create Active, Resilient Community Gardens with Solar Lighting and Wi-Fi	Nos Quedamos	Community garden associations
7. Support the Opening of the Bronx Kreate Space Artist-Maker Hub	Bronx Kreate LLC	
8. Activate the New Roberto Clemente Plaza with Two Food Kiosks	Third Avenue BID	NYCDOT
9. Expand Low-Cost Broadband Access in Melrose Commons	Nos Quedamos	Neture, Inc.
10. Complete an Upgrade of the BronxWorks Public Swimming Pool Facility	BronxWorks	
11. Enable Construction of a New Pregones Theater Space	Pregones Theater / Puerto Rican Traveling Theater	
12. Refresh the Bronx Walk of Fame with Updated Signs and Branding	BOEDC	Bronx Tourism Council
13. Create a More Welcoming Gateway at the 161st Street Station	BOEDC	The Bronx Rox & 161st Street BID

DRI outreach strategies included a web presence, street canvassing, and two public open houses.

THE BRONX CIVIC CENTER

Centro Cívico Del

Section IV: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Over 5 months, the Local Planning Committee engaged more than 500 South Bronx residents, businesses, and community leaders to identify challenges, opportunities, and Priority Projects.

Local Planning Committee (LPC) members represented 18 Bronx and citywide organizations with an interest in the future of the South Bronx.



Ensuring that the community was actively engaged through the DRI planning process was a key goal of the Local Planning Committee (LPC) and was essential to producing a Strategic Investment Plan that accurately reflects the community's needs and vision. The LPC, supported by the Planning Team, including Bronx-based firm Mainland Media, crafted a community engagement plan that established a transparent participatory process through a website and social media as well as two public open houses hosted within the Study Area; sought diverse public input by conducting targeted street canvassing to reach residents, workers, and visitors who may not attend public events; and solicited ongoing input from elected officials and leaders of community organizations.

The following provides an overview of the groups involved in this process, as well as the various efforts and events that were implemented to engage those groups.

Stakeholder Engagement

The **Local Planning Committee (LPC)** provided insight and expertise on local conditions and issues; collaborated with the Planning Team to identify and develop Priority Projects; and ultimately recommended Priority Projects for DRI investment. In addition, the LPC assisted the Planning Team's public and stakeholder outreach efforts by (1) identifying information resources and potential lines of communication; and (2) helping to raise awareness about community outreach efforts. The LPC, co-chaired by Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr., and Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation President Marlene Cintron, was primarily composed of representatives from community organizations and cultural institutions. In addition to providing feedback on goals and projects, LPC members were responsible for making final recommendations. A list of LPC members is provided at the front of this document.

Small group meetings and interviews with more than 30 stakeholders were held throughout the DRI process. These small group meetings varied in format, group size, and frequency. At the beginning of the process, meetings focus groups were facilitated with organizations that had similar missions, such as those whose primary goal is to promote arts and culture, economic development, education and workforce development, and community development in the South Bronx. As the project progressed, meetings and interviews were organized to advance and refine potential Priority Projects, including one-on-one meetings with potential project sponsors and government agencies whose approval was required for projects to proceed. Organizations consulted during the planning process are summarized in the table at right.

Stakeholder Meetings

Category	Organizations
Community Organizations	Bronx Community Board 1 Bronx Community Board 4 BronxWorks Concourse Village Co-op Board Friends of Joyce Kilmer Park Lincoln Hospital Mid-Bronx Senior Citizens Council Nos Quedamos SoBRO The Bronx Rox WHEDco
Educational & Workforce Organizations	Hostos Community College Metropolitan College of New York Bronx Innovation Factory
Arts and Culture	Bronx Children's Museum Bronx Culture Collective Bronx Kreate Bronx Museum of the Arts Bronx Music Heritage Center Bronx Council on the Arts Casita Maria Center for the Arts & Edu. Hostos Center for Arts & Culture Pregones Theater
Business and Economic Development Organizations	161st Street BID Regional Planning Association Third Avenue BID Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation
Real Estate	JRT Realty L+M Development Milestone Equities NAI Friedman Signature Urban Properties Triangle Realty Youngwoo & Associates

The Planning Team also conducted significant outreach with **State and City public agencies** to assess local needs, past and pending investments, and potential Priority Projects. This outreach was particularly important for the Bronx DRI effort, in comparison to other DRI planning efforts, because capital planning in New York City is led at the agency level, rather than by a centralized mayoral division, and is overseen by borough offices and local representatives with the most complete understanding of local investments. Agencies consulted during the planning effort include:

- Metropolitan Transportation Authority, which manages New York City's subway, bus, and commuter rail systems.
- NYC Department of City Planning, which oversees land use and zoning.
- NYC Department of Cultural Affairs, which oversees public art projects and supports community arts organizations.
- NYC Department of Parks & Recreation, which manages the city's network of parks, playground, and open spaces.
- NYC Department of Transportation, which manages the city's streets and sidewalks.

- NYC Economic Development Corporation, which supports economic development through planning, real estate, and targeted public investments and public-private partnerships.

Separately, the Planning Team and Bronx Borough President's Office briefed and provided updates to the City, County, State, and federal **elected officials** representing the Study Area. They are:

- Bronx District Attorney Darcel Clark
- NYC Council Member Vanessa Gibson
- NYC Council Member Rafael Salamanca
- NYS Assembly Member Carmen Arroyo
- NYS Assembly Member Michael Blake
- NYS Assembly Member Latoya Joyner
- NYS Senator Jose M. Serrano
- U.S. Representative Jose Serrano



Finally, **local community members and the public** provided a critical source of input for this effort through a variety of outreach efforts, including LPC meetings (which were open to the public), two Public Open Houses, a three-week street canvassing campaign, as well as a website, BronxCivicCenter.com. Among the public, an effort was made to include Limited English Proficiency (LEP) populations, by disseminating DRI informational handouts and public meeting flyers in Spanish and French, in addition to English, and providing Spanish language assistance at all open houses and during canvassing. A summary of public events is below.

Digital Engagement

The DRI website – BronxCivicCenter.com – served as the primary source of information for project news and announcements. Information posted included a summary of DRI and the Study Area, a calendar of events, a list of LPC members, a project fact sheet, FAQs, and meeting materials, such as flyers, agendas, presentations, and summaries. All technical information and concepts were presented in terms that were clear and understandable with numerous visualizations to illustrate complex topics. Members of the public also submitted comments via the website and signed up for the project mailing list to stay up to date on the study's progress.

In addition to the website, the Planning Team established social media pages on Facebook and Twitter to disseminate project information, and leveraged the social media channels of LPC members, including the Office of the Bronx Borough President. The use of social media platforms allowed the team to connect with community members who represent an invaluable part of the planning process but are harder to reach through traditional meetings or canvassing efforts.

Committee members also assisted in the distribution of meeting notices and project information through e-mail blasts, newsletters, and social media managed by their organizations or organizations with which they have close relationships.

Outreach Events

Outreach events for the Bronx Civic Center DRI were organized into three main categories: LPC Meetings, Public Open Houses, and Street Team Outreach. The dates and meeting topics are described in the following table. All public meetings were hosted at locations that were accessible by transit.

LPC Meetings

Five LPC Meetings were held, as outlined below. Meetings were held at a variety of locations reflecting the geographical diversity of the Study Area, including the Bronx County

Building, Hostos Community College, and Nos Quedamos. These meetings were held toward the end of work hours to accommodate members of the committee working outside of the Study Area, and typically lasted two to three hours. These meetings typically included a presentation from the Planning Team, followed by facilitated discussion. Members of the committee were encouraged to attend all meetings and participate in discussion topics. Members of the public were also invited to these meetings and had an opportunity to comment.

Outreach Events

Meeting Dates & Dates	Primary Meeting Topics
LPC Meeting #1 November 13, 2017 Bronx County Courthouse	Provide an overview of the DRI process; including context and goals, work plan, and community engagement process; identify issues and opportunities.
LPC Meeting #2 December 5, 2017 Hostos Community College	Discuss priorities among potential DRI projects, identify draft vision statement, goals, and objectives; project selection process.
Public Open House #1 December 12, 2017 Metropolitan College of New York	Educate the public about the Bronx DRI; solicit input on preliminary Priority Projects; engage the community in the development of the DRI plan.
LPC Meeting #3 January 10, 2018 Bronx Museum of the Arts	Gather feedback on preliminary projects to identify LPC Priority Projects, deprioritize projects not aligned with DRI goals, and fill in details for projects still in development.
Public Open House #2 February 22, 2018 Andrew Freedman Home	Educate the public about the Bronx DRI; gather community input on final projects.
LPC Meeting #4 February 28, 2018 Nos Quedamos	Seek consensus on a final list of Priority Projects; discuss project oversight and continued roles of Committee members and local organizations.
Street Team Engagement February 1-March 4, 2018	Gather input from a broad cross-section of Study Area stakeholders that are unlikely or unable to attend traditional methods of engagement
LPC Meeting #5 March 27, 2018	Present on final Strategic Investment Plan and Priority Projects.

The community engagement process included extensive outreach to South Bronx residents through street team interviews and two public open houses, where visitors voted on their favorite projects.



Public Open Houses

The DRI team hosted two open houses.

Open House #1 was held on Tuesday, December 12, from 6:00 PM – 8:30 PM at Metropolitan College of New York’s Bronx campus at the Hub. The purpose was to educate the public about DRI and engage the community in the development of vision and goals for the DRI plan. More than 40 people participated in the event, which provided an opportunity for the public to engage in one-on-one discussion with members of the LPC and Planning Team, to review draft vision and goal language, and provide their input on priorities for the Study Area and potential Priority Projects.

Key themes from the first open house included:

- Preserving culture and identity, while also capitalizing on the area’s strong history, including resilience in the face of disinvestment and cultural contributions.
- The importance of workforce and economic development that will provide new opportunities for current residents and educational training to prepare today’s students for a 21st century economy.
- Improving quality of life and accessibility that addresses perceptions that the Bronx houses an unfair share of social service locations, as well as safety, cleanliness, and other quality of life issues.
- Increasing retail options to broaden options.
- Creating safe, inclusive spaces for children and young adults to learn and play.

Open House #2 was held on Wednesday, February 22, from 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM at the Andrew Freedman Home on the Grand Concourse. This open house featured an interactive process where visitors could vote on their favorite preliminary projects. More than 70 people attended in the event. Public support for various projects is indicated in individual project profiles. Attendees’ comments were primarily focused on support for improved open space, job opportunities, and improved retail options.

Street Team Outreach

From February 11 through March 1, 2018, members of the Planning Team conducted “street team” outreach at 12 high-traffic locations within the Study Area, including transit stops, housing developments, and commercial corridors, to interview

Street Team Outreach Locations

Hostos Community College

Lincoln Hospital

NYCHA Patterson Houses

NYCHA Highbridge Gardens

149th Street and Grand Concourse

161st Street 4/B/D Subway Station

167th Street and Grand Concourse

Franz Sigel Park

The Hub, 149th Street and Third Avenue

Joyce Kilmer Park

Macombs Dam Park

St. Mary’s Park

residents, workers, and visitors on their priorities for downtown revitalization. Canvassers provided informational materials describing the DRI planning process in three languages – English, Spanish, and French – and, using an iPad-based survey, asked respondents to select four project themes that were of highest priority to them (out of eight).

The canvassing team conducted more than 300 surveys over the two-week period. Of these, 234 respondents live in the Study Area, 30 work in the Study Area (including 9 who also live in the Study Area), 32 are students (all but 5 of whom also live in the Study Area), and 32 were visiting. Respondents skewed younger; 62% (or 181 in total) are under 34 years old, of whom 17 (or 6%) are under age 18. Eighty-five respondents (29%) are aged 35 to 54; 27 (9%) are aged 55 to 74; and two are 75 or over.

Results of the project theme survey are summarized below. Overall, respondents expressed the strongest support for park and plaza improvements, and district beautification, followed by improved access to affordable internet services. Preferences were generally consistent across age groups and respondents’ relationships to the Study Area (e.g. resident, students, etc.), except that attracting new businesses and job opportunities was a higher priority for very young (under 18) and middle-age (45 and up) respondents, and for workers and visitors; promoting local art was a higher priority for very young (under 18) and older (55 and up) respondents; and the high priority for park improvements was driven largely by 25- to 34-year-old respondents, the most likely group to have young children.

% of Survey Respondents who Viewed the Following Themes as 'High Priority'

70%

Improve and expand local parks and gardens



54%

Improve the appearance of streets with better lighting, plantings and design



52%

Create and improve plaza and other public gathering spaces



46%

Expand affordable internet access



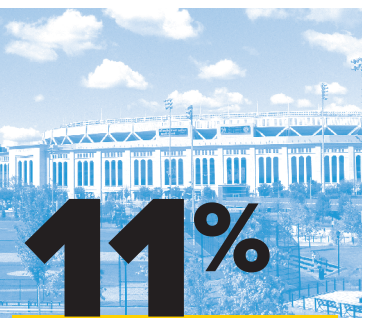
33%

Attract new business and job opportunities



33%

Promote local art and culture, and create new spaces for artists



11%

Introduce tourism and visitor spending

RAILROAD CAFE



ONE WAY

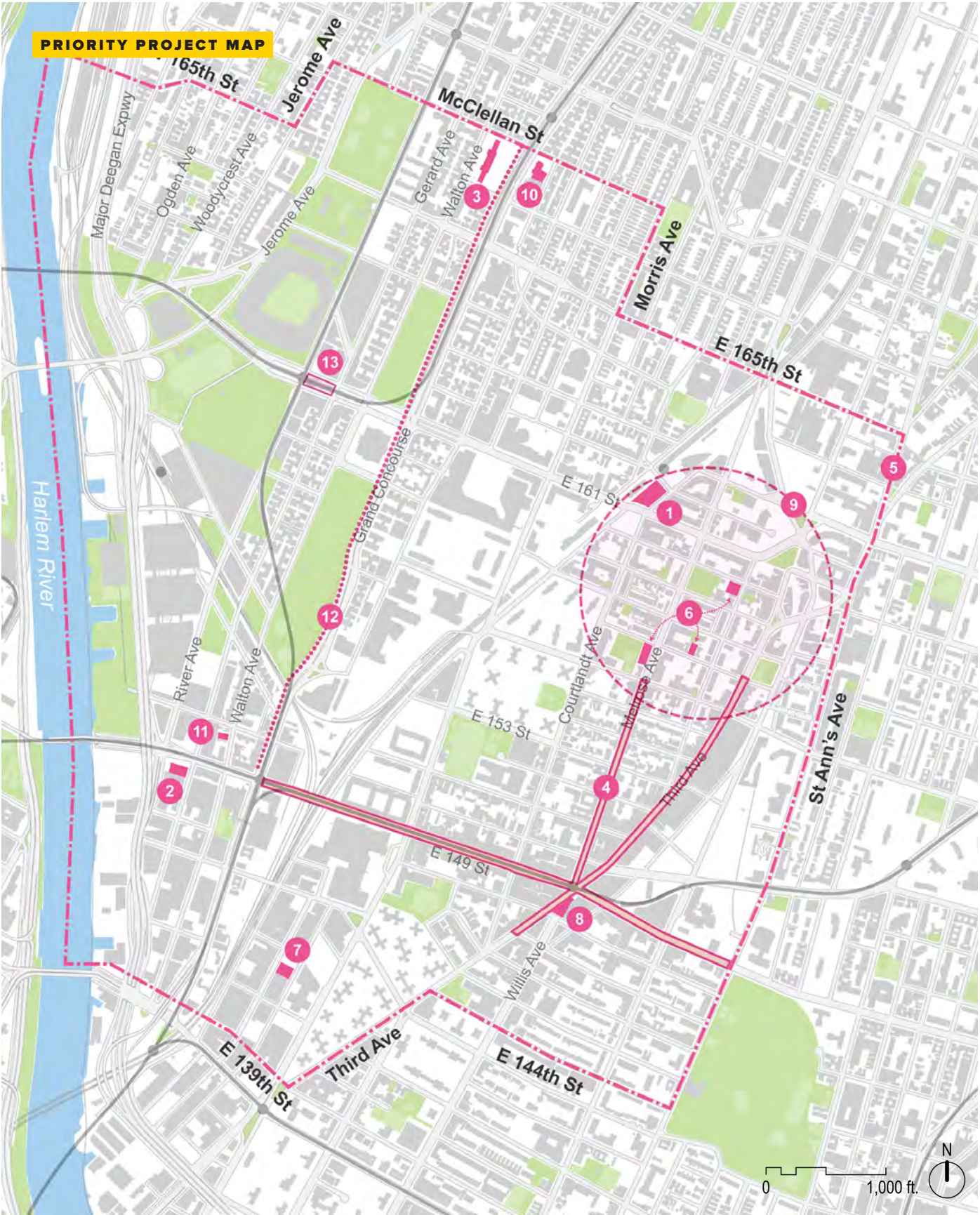
Courtlandt Av



Section V:

PROJECTS PROPOSED FOR DRI FUNDING

13 recommended projects would generate \$30M of investment in the Bronx, leverage two dollars for every DRI dollar spent, and attract nearly 1,000 jobs to the Study Area.



Projects Proposed for DRI Funding

Project Name	Page Number
1. Upgrade Railroad Park with a Café Kiosk and Park Redesign	90
2. Relocate a Prominent Catering Company to Lower Concourse	96
3. Expand the Andrew Freedman Home Cultural Art Center	101
4. Beautify Streetscapes at the Hub and 149th Street with Plantings, Banners, and Art	106
5. Create a Business Improvement Fund to Modernize Commercial Districts	111
6. Create Active, Resilient Community Gardens with Solar Lighting and Wi-Fi	114
7. Support the Opening of the Bronx Kreate Space Artist-Maker Hub	120
8. Activate the New Roberto Clemente Plaza with Two Food Kiosks	125
9. Expand Low-Cost Broadband Access in Melrose Commons	130
10. Complete an Upgrade of the BronxWorks Public Swimming Pool	136
11. Enable Construction of a New Pregones Theater Space	141
12. Refresh the Bronx Walk of Fame with Updated Signs and Branding	146
13. Create a More Welcoming Gateway at the 161st Street Station	150

PROJECTS PROPOSED FOR DRI FUNDING

Project Name	Description
1. Upgrade Railroad Park with a Café Kiosk and Park Redesign	Rehabilitate an unused comfort station at Railroad Park into an active café concession by making core-and-shell and utility improvements to accommodate food-related use. This project coincides with a NYC Parks Department RFP process expected to conclude in May 2018. Should no concessionaire be selected, a portion of funds will be reallocated to enhance lighting, signage, and visibility of Railroad Park.
2. Relocate a Prominent Catering Company to Lower Concourse	Provide gap financing to Great Performances, a prominent New York City food services company, to relocate their headquarters, including production facilities and a groundfloor café and bar, to a new commercial development at E. 149th Street and Gerard Avenue.
3. Expand the Andrew Freedman Home Cultural Art Center	Renovate the Andrew Freedman Home Cultural Art Center to accommodate theater, visual arts, music, dance, and other art productions, and expand workforce development and after-school programming. Additionally, enhance the outdoor areas to enhance public awareness of programming inside the historic center.
4. Beautify Streetscapes at the Hub and 149th Street with Plantings, Banners, and Art	Invest in a series of streetscape improvements on Third Avenue, Melrose Avenue, and 149th Street including sidewalk planters, street pole banners, public art, enhanced lighting, street trees, rain gardens, bike racks, and pedestrian improvements to foster a stronger local identity, improve safety, and encourage private investment.
5. Create a Business Improvement Fund to Modernize Commercial Districts	Create a Business Improvement Fund available to business owners and property owners along the Study Area's major commercial corridors to fund façade and storefront improvements, upper-floor renovations, and development of full-service restaurants and cafés.
6. Create Active, Resilient Community Gardens with Solar Lighting and Wi-Fi	Outfit three community gardens in Melrose Commons with solar power, enhanced lighting, wi-fi access, and rainwater harvesting to strengthen the area's open space network, community resilience, and sustainability.
7. Support the Opening of the Bronx Kreate Space Artist-Maker Hub	Provide gap funding to build out low-cost workspace, public gallery, and a café at the new Bronx Kreate Space, a planned artist-maker coworking space in Mott Haven.
8. Activate the New Roberto Clemente Plaza with Two Food Kiosks	Install two food concessions at Roberto Clemente Plaza to activate the soon-to-be-completed public space and provide new dining options for local workers and shoppers.
9. Expand Low-Cost Broadband Access in Melrose Commons	Create a point-to-multi-point, rooftop-based wireless broadband network serving residents, businesses, and visitors in Melrose Commons. The network would offer: 1) free wi-fi in and around select public spaces; 2) free access to an internet-enabled local resource portal for residents within networked buildings; and 3) low-cost broadband service for residents within networked buildings.
10. Complete an Upgrade of the BronxWorks Public Swimming Pool Facility	Build on recent investment in a community swimming pool located at BronxWorks' Carolyn McLaughlin Community Center with physical improvements that would enable expanded use for all-ages programming and public use.
11. Enable Construction of a New Pregones Theater Space	Demolish the existing, out-of-code, wood-frame house at 571 Walton Avenue to enable the development of a new building for community programs and administration.
12. Refresh the Bronx Walk of Fame with Updated Signs and Branding	Update the Bronx Walk of Fame by redesigning, replacing, and regrouping signs along the Grand Concourse between 149th Street and 167th Street, and creating a digital directory to draw visitors.
13. Create a More Welcoming Gateway at the 161st Street Station	Enhance the existing concrete medians outside the E. 161st Street-Yankee Stadium subway station with improved landscaping to create a modern, attractive gateway to the Bronx.

PROJECTS PROPOSED FOR DRI FUNDING

Responsible Entity	Est. Total Project Cost	Funding Request	Other Funding Sources	Start Year (Est.)	End Year (Est.)	Jobs Created
Concessionaire and/or NYC Parks	\$11,642,000	\$4,000,000	City capital funds and private contributions by the selected concessionaire are expected to be confirmed prior to DRI award.	2020	2021	2
Great Performances	\$4,940,000	\$2,000,000	Great Performances will obtain a bank loan and invest its own equity into the project.	2018	2020	700 FTEs will be relocated to the Study Area; 50+ new FTEs will be created by the move
Mid-Bronx Senior Citizens Council	\$2,382,000	\$1,720,000	MBSCC will fund non-DRI expenses, and will seek alternative sources of funding for non-critical components of the project.	2018	2020	1+ jobs to manage the expanded facility; potential to enable jobs through job training
Third Avenue BID	\$1,474,000	\$1,040,000	NYCDOT will fund improvements that are standard for NYC streets and sidewalks.	2018	2020	N/A
BOEDC (w/ BIDs)	\$1,500,000+	\$1,000,000+	The fund will leverage at least \$500,000 of private funds.	2018	2020+	Est. 100+ jobs will be created by rehabbed space and food businesses
Nos Quedamos	\$630,000	\$630,000	Nos Quedamos will provide in-kind services to maintain the gardens.	2018	2019	N/A
Bronx Kreate Space LLC	\$1,379,000	\$595,000	Bronx Kreate Space will contribute \$150,000 in equity, and will obtain an SBA loan to fund the project balance.	2018	2019	5+ FTEs; 100+ artist/maker work units created
Third Avenue BID	\$520,000	\$520,000	Rental income from the concessions will partly fund ongoing maintenance; the Third Avenue BID will fund the balance.	2018	2019	4+ jobs at new food businesses
Nos Quedamos	\$1,330,000	\$437,000	Additional funds to maintain and build out the network will be obtained through ongoing service fees.	2018	2019	1 direct; potential to catalyze business creation, job training
BronxWorks	\$429,000	\$429,000	BronxWorks is building on a recent \$400,000 upgrade, and will provide ongoing maintenance.	2019	2020	N/A
Pregones Theater / Puerto Rican Traveling Theater	\$6,284,000	\$260,000	City capital grants will fully fund the \$6,024,000 construction budget.	2018	2020	3+ jobs to support Pre-gones' expanded operations
BOEDC (via Bronx Tourism Council)	\$250,000	\$250,000	Bronx Tourism Council will provide ongoing maintenance.	2018	2019	N/A
BOEDC w/ 161st St BID and The Bronx Rox)	\$227,000	\$227,000	161st Street BID and The Bronx Rox will provide ongoing maintenance.	2018	2019	N/A
\$32,987,000		\$13,108,000				



Upgrade Railroad Park with a Café Kiosk and Park Redesign



SUMMARY

Rehabilitate an unused comfort station at Railroad Park into an active café concession by making core-and-shell and utility improvements to accommodate food-related use. This project coincides with a NYC Parks Department RFP for which responses are due May 2018. Should no concessionaire be selected, a portion of funds will be reallocated to enhance lighting, signage, and visibility of Railroad Park.

DRI FUNDING REQUEST

\$4,000,000 (if a concessionaire is selected), \$2,000,000 (for park improvements if no concessionaire is selected)

LOCATION

E. 161st Street & Courtlandt Avenue

STRATEGIES

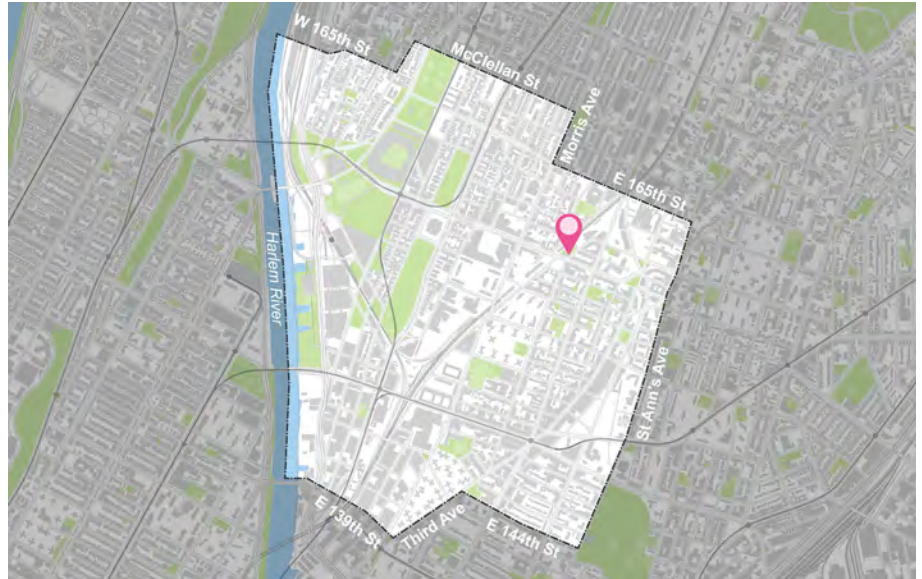
This project aligns with the following DRI strategies:

- Expand retail options to appeal to the needs of the community
- Support consistent street activity along major connecting corridors
- Enhance navigability through wayfinding and other branding strategies
- Activate, improve, and expand parks, plazas, and other public spaces
- Make streetscapes more pedestrian-friendly through lighting and plantings

In addition, this project aligns with the following REDC goals:

- Improve quality of life

MAP



PUBLIC SUPPORT

The “improve and expand local parks and gardens” strategy was the highest-priority public theme in a DRI public survey conducted in February/March 2018. The “introduce new shopping and dining options” strategy also received moderate support in the survey. This project received moderate support in a public voting exercise at Public Open House #2. The “activate, improve, and expand parks, plazas, and other public spaces” strategy advanced by this project received high support in a public voting exercise at Public Open House #1.

DESCRIPTION

Railroad Park is one of few open spaces in the densely populated Residential Core of the Study Area, located at the northwestern corner of Melrose Commons and immediately adjacent to the Morrisania Air Rights public housing development. The 1-acre park consists of a small playground, a planted seating area, and a shuttered comfort station that fronts E. 161st Street, a major commercial corridor. Directly behind the park is the Melrose Metro-North Station, which has seen recent ridership increases as hourly service has been introduced but is less used than other stations in the Bronx.

The NYC Department of Parks and Recreation (NYC Parks), during the DRI planning process, has developed a comprehensive vision for the rehabilitation of the Railroad Park, which includes a total redesign of park and playground space, and a total renovation of the shuttered comfort station. This DRI project would advance components of that vision, with the expectation that NYC Parks would rely on other sources of funding to complete the balance of the project.

The first priority of the LPC is to fund the rehabilitation of the comfort station into a café concession. NYC Parks issued an RFP in mid-March to attract a concessionaire to rehabilitate the unused comfort station into a café concession. The comfort station needs substantial investment to accommodate a potential concessionaire, including but not limited to: masonry & brick reconstruction, roof repairs, installation of doors and windows, utility connections, electrical upgrades, and site work. DRI funds would be used to make structural improvements to enable a concessionaire to fit out the former comfort station into a food-related use without bearing the extraordinary costs of structural rehabilitation, i.e. delivering the structure in “white box” condition. Depending on the outcome of the RFP, the core-and-shell improvements would be undertaken by

concessionaire directly or by NYC Parks; in either case, the concessionaire would be responsible for all costs required to fit out the café space, including equipment and furnishings. It is anticipated that the ultimate concessionaire would operate both indoor and (at least on a seasonal basis) outdoor, plaza-style operations to contribute to street activity on E. 161st Street.

Given the timeline of the RFP process (responses are due in May with expected selection shortly thereafter), it is not confirmed that a concessionaire will be selected for the café space, and it is not known how much less the rehabilitation cost may be if the concessionaire leads the project rather than NYC Parks. Should NYC Parks not select a concessionaire by the time of DRI project awards, should the winning concessionaire have agreed to complete all the rehabilitation costs at their own expense, or should rehabilitation costs be less than estimated, then as a second priority, a maximum of \$2 million of funds recommended for this project should be allocated to other Railroad Park improvements that support economic development goals articulated in the DRI plan, with the balance reallocated to the remaining DRI project list. Specifically, Railroad Park funds should be applied to the following park elements, in order of priority:

- Install distinctive lighting throughout the park (such as catenary lighting or ground-level lighting) that provides a greater sense of park security and serves to guide people through the park to and from the Melrose Metro-North station.
- Install visible signage to direct visitors to the Metro-North station and nearby attractions such as the Bronx Music Hall and Boricua College.
- Replace the fencing that currently surrounds the park with landscaping to improve physical access and promote a more inclusive image of the park (while preserving the fencing around the children's playground area for safety.)
- Enhance the visual appeal of the comfort station with repainting and attractive lighting.
- Landscape the interior and perimeter of the park, repave the pathways, reconstruct passive recreation areas, and install new benches around the park.
- Repave the public sidewalks around the park.



OWNERSHIP

Should NYC Parks identify a concessionaire prior to the award of DRI funds and it is determined that the **concessionaire** will administer the funds, then the concessionaire would be the project owner. If a concessionaire is not identified, **NYC Parks**, which controls and manages Railroad Park on behalf of the City of New York, would be responsible for overseeing implementation.

PARTNERS

Concessionaire: If a concessionaire is selected to renovate the comfort station, NYC Parks would license with the selected concessionaire to make capital improvements and take responsibility for the ongoing maintenance and operations of the comfort station and potentially portions of the park, including enhanced design features such as lighting and signage.

NYC Parks: If a concessionaire is selected, NYC Parks would remain the owner of the park and comfort station, including all permanent improvements, and would manage the operating license and concession with the concessionaire. It would also continue to take responsibility for maintenance of the remainder of Railroad Park.

MTA Metro-North will be a partner to NYC Parks and/or the concessionaire to facilitate the installation of improved signage that directs residents and visitors to Melrose Station.

BUDGET

Complete Railroad Park Rehabilitation:

Comfort station renovation – Core and shell / utility improvements: \$1,842,000

Partial site work & miscellaneous costs: \$388,000

Overhead & inspection: \$609,000

Mobilization: \$134,000

Contingency & escalations: \$1,027,000

Comfort station renovation total: \$4,000,000

Other site work & miscellaneous costs (including contingencies): \$175,000

Comfort station renovation – café fit-out and equipment (including contingencies): \$887,000

Comfort station renovation – public restrooms (including contingencies): \$3,000,000

Partial park reconstruction: \$1,680,000

– Includes new pavement, benches, landscaping, lighting, and signage

Perimeter sidewalk reconstruction: \$400,000

Playground reconstruction: \$1,500,000

Total: \$11,642,000

FUNDING SOURCES

DRI: Depending on the outcome of the pending RFP process, DRI funds will either fund core-and-shell improvements and/or fund partial park renovations, as itemized above.

Other Public Sources: NYC Parks is seeking funding from local elected officials, to contribute to park renovation costs, including playground reconstruction and the public restrooms component of the comfort station renovation. Funding commitments are to be finalized prior to DRI award.

Private Sources: The concession fit-out cost (estimated at \$887,000) will be funded by the concessionaire, should NYC Parks select one.

COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS

Railroad Park is currently an underutilized asset sitting in the middle of a dense residential neighborhood, adjacent to the Melrose Commons master planned community, which has added nearly 3,000 housing units since 1994 with hundreds more on the way. Despite the community's growth, street-level activity along E. 161st Street between Park and Melrose avenues is limited due to ground-floor occupancy by office rather than retail uses, and the tower-on-platform form of adjacent public housing. Converting the closed comfort station at the southern entrance of the park into a food and beverage concession has the potential to transform the park and activate both the park and street. In this sense, the pavilion becomes a community asset similar to the 'casitas' model at nearby community gardens.

Renovation is further supported by proximity to the Metro-North station, as there is synergy between commuters and retail use. Improvements would improve the visibility of the Melrose Metro-North Station, located adjacent to the park on E. 162nd Street, potentially increasing ridership. The MTA increased service to this station in the fall of 2016, resulting in an increase of weekday ridership of 67% and in weekend ridership of 101%. Still, the station has low relative ridership for the Harlem line, and the station's lack of visibility and signage are reasons cited by community advocates for its low use. Improving visibility would build on recent MTA investments to increase ridership.

Should NYC Parks not select a concessionaire to occupy the café space, investing in Railroad Park improvements would still contribute to the transit access benefits above, and, given the few options for public open space in this area, provide a much-needed asset for local families, providing an attractive space for picnics, concerts, other public gatherings, as well as passive recreation.

REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

Concession Portion

- NYC Parks solicitation and selection of food concessionaire, subject to review by the Franchise and Concession Review Commission
- NYC Department of Buildings permits for construction or alterations of kiosk
- NYC Department of Health permits and approvals for food and beverage concession facilities and equipment
- NYC Department of Consumer Affairs licensing of vendors
- NYC Fire Department review of plans and facilities for fire code compliance

Park Enhancements:

- NYC Public Design Commission approval for park redesign
- NYC Parks public solicitation and selection of Architect/Engineer
- NYC Parks public solicitation and selection of General Contractor
- NYC Parks construction permits
- If improvements affect trees, NYC Parks forestry permits
- For portions of the project in rights-of-way, NYC Department of Transportation permits, and standards compliance

TIMEFRAME FOR
IMPLEMENTATION AND
PROJECT READINESS

Pre-Award: Concessionaire RFP and selection (March – May 2018)
Months 1-18: Concession and license review, and design planning, for concession; design team selection and design for park (est. Mid-2018-Late 2019)
Months 19-30: Comfort station and/or park reconstruction (est. 2020)
Months 31-36: Park commissioning and reopening (est. 2021)

The NYC Parks Department is slated to release a concession RFP for the comfort station in March 2018, with responses due May 7, and to evaluate and select a concessionaire in late May, at which point the department will have a clearer understanding of the total cost and private contributions toward the comfort station rehabilitation and ongoing maintenance.

REPORTING

Key metrics for the concessionaire or NYC Parks to track and report include:

- Annual sales by the parks concession
- Daily visitation to the parks concession
- Annual revenue to NYC Parks from concession operations
- Number of permitted events held at Railroad Park
- Daily ridership of the Melrose Metro-North station





Relocate a Prominent Catering Company to Lower Concourse



SUMMARY

Provide gap financing to Great Performances, a prominent New York City food services company, to relocate their headquarters, including production facilities and a ground-floor café and bar, to a new commercial development at E. 149th Street and Gerard Avenue.

DRI FUNDING REQUEST

\$2,000,000

LOCATION

110 E. 149th Street, at Gerard Avenue

STRATEGIES

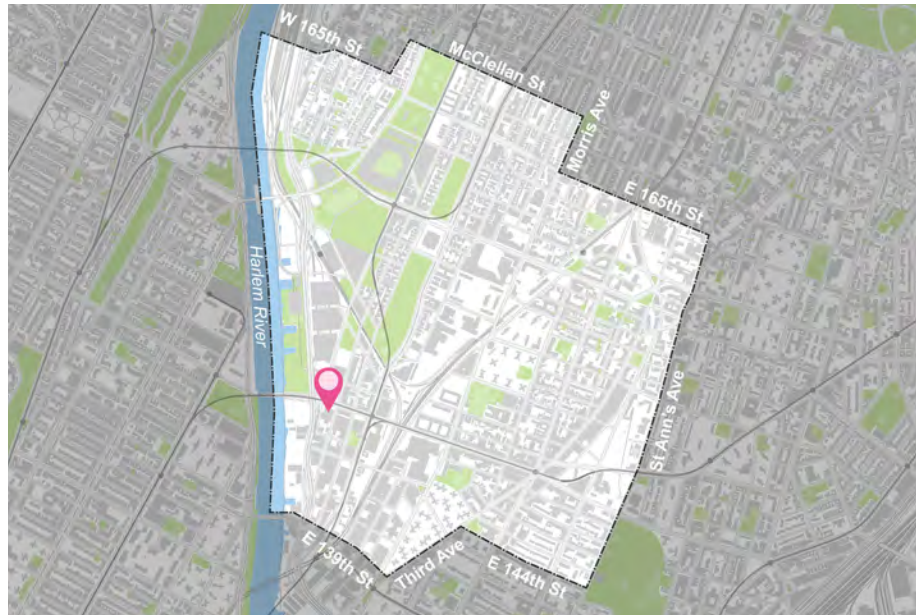
This project aligns with the following DRI strategies:

- Provide space and equipment to support workforce programs connecting residents to emerging businesses and industries
- Provide economic support to local businesses to help them thrive and expand
- Expand retail options to appeal to the needs of the community

In addition, this project aligns with the following REDC goals:

- Create a pro-growth, pro-jobs environment

MAP



PUBLIC SUPPORT

Attracting new commercial and manufacturing uses, and employment overall, to Lower Concourse area was a key priority that emerged from the NYC Economic Development Corporation's Lower Concourse Planning Initiative. The "attract new businesses and job opportunities" strategy received moderate support in a DRI public survey conducted in February/March 2018. This project received moderate support at Public Open House #2.

DESCRIPTION

Great Performances, a prominent New York City food services company that caters events and operates on-site cafés at numerous cultural and commercial locations across New York City, has been located in the Hudson Square neighborhood of Manhattan since its founding, but must relocate within the next three years due to changing real estate conditions. Great Performances is in negotiations with the developers of a new commercial property at the corner of E. 149th Street and Gerard Avenue – Signature Urban Properties and Monadnock Development, who can accommodate the relocation by enlarging their plans for the new building. Great Performances requires 30,000 square feet of space, including kitchen, storage, and office space, and would include a café and bar at the ground level that would be open for at least breakfast and lunch service, and potentially dinner. The move would relocate an estimated 240 full-time employees, who would be based at the Bronx location, and 800 part-time employees, who typically work in the field but would report to the Bronx location at least once per week.

Great Performances is a certified Women-Owned Business Enterprise. At its current location, it frequently collaborates with local educational and community partners to provide workforce development opportunities for individuals interested in the food preparation and services industry. In addition, Great Performances is co-located with the Sylvia Center, a non-profit founded by Great Performances founder Liz Neumark to offer food- and nutrition-related programs to underserved children and families. Programs include educational trips to Katchkie Farm, the company's 60-acre organic farm in the Hudson Valley; cooking classes and apprenticeships; cooking and nutrition training for educators; and cooking demonstrations at New York City Housing

Authority developments. Looking for a potential Bronx location, Great Performances has expressed interest in partnering with Hostos Community College, which offers an associate's degree in food studies, and local workforce development nonprofits.

Relocation to E. 149th Street would offer significant advantages for Great Performances, due to favorable highway and transit access and relative affordability in comparison to other New York City commercial submarkets. Yet the capital costs of relocation, including the significant expense of developing a new kitchen and installing an exhaust system, results in a financial gap. This project would fill that gap by providing funds to support build-out of the kitchen and workspace into a new headquarters for Great Performances. Specifically, DRI funds would support the fit-out of the interior space from the core-and-shell conditions delivered by the developer.

Great Performances would fund the balance of construction costs not covered by DRI; the purchase of furnishings, fixtures, and equipment; architecture & engineering fees; and IT infrastructure through a combination of equity contribution and a private loan with Great Performances' longtime banking partner.

JOBS CREATED

More than 200 full-time positions would relocate to the Bronx from Manhattan, and an estimated 40 new full-time positions would be created at the new site. Additionally, more than 700 part-time jobs – an estimated 400 full-time equivalent positions – would also relocate, with more than 100 estimated new positions (60 FTEs) added over the course of the move.

OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTY

Signature Urban Properties and Monadnock Development have a long-term lease for the site on which they plan to develop a 6-story commercial development.

ANTICIPATED REVITALIZATION BENEFITS

Short Term: Provide construction jobs during the construction phase of the project.

Medium Term: Relocate 700 full-time-equivalent employees to the Civic Center, increasing local spending to support diversified retail, and activating local streets. Opening of a new breakfast and lunch option for local residents, workers, and visitors. Increased scale of commercial development on E. 149th Street, contributing to street activity and the visibility of Lower Concourse as a business destination.

Long Term: As positions turn over, provide local access to jobs in the food prep and services industry. Build partnerships between Great Performances and local educational institutions, increasing skills of graduates and developing a job pipeline between these institutions.

OWNERSHIP

Great Performances will be the recipient of DRI funds. It will manage the fit-out and equipment installation at the tenant space and maintain the space on an ongoing basis. Great Performances has over 200 full-time employees, and 39 years of experience in the food service industry.

PARTNERS

Signature Urban Properties and **Monadnock Development**, as project developers, will be responsible for delivering the building's core and shell with design guidance from the tenant. The development team recently completed construction on nearly 300 residential units immediately adjacent to the subject development site.



FUTURE USE OF STRUCTURE

Three full stories and a ground-floor space will be occupied by Great Performances for the duration of their lease, expected to run 20 years with two five-year options. Given the substantial investments that will be made to the space, it is anticipated that it will continue to serve as office and kitchen space throughout the life of the building. The development will also house ground-floor retail uses and, tentatively, a two-story health care facility.

BUDGET

Construction: \$2,200,000
 A&E Fees: \$443,000
 IT: \$173,750
 Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment: \$1,806,595
 Miscellaneous Expenses: \$317,000
Total: \$4,940,345

REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

For Site Development:

- NYC Department of Buildings must issue all necessary permits.
- The MTA must review and approve building plans, due to the foundation's proximity to subway infrastructure.

For Food Preparation and Service:

- Food and beverage facilities and equipment permits and approvals by NYC Department of Health are required.
- Licensing of the ground floor café by NYC Department of Consumer Affairs and NYS Liquor Authority.
- Review of plans and facilities for fire code compliance by NYC Fire Department is required.

FUNDING SOURCES

DRI: \$2,000,000 in DRI funding for construction costs

Other Sources:

Great Performances equity: \$690,345, plus any cost overruns
 Private loan from Great Performances' long-time banking partner: \$2,250,000

COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS

Lower Concourse is a historical hub for production employment in the Bronx and envisioned by recent planning efforts as a district capable of attracting increased commercial use and employment. Moving of Great Performances to the Study Area would relocate 700 full-time-equivalent (FTE) positions, or roughly one employee for every \$2,850 of DRI investment, to the area. Of these, more than 250 FTEs would work at the 149th Street headquarters on a daily basis, energizing street life and increasing economic impact on the surrounding area. The remaining 450 FTEs (part-time positions that report weekly to the headquarters) will provide supplemental benefits. Historically, Great Performances has grown by 8% per year, creating 50+ new positions annually not including positions that become available through attrition; Great Performances has committed to prioritizing local hiring, including partnerships with local colleges and workforce-related organizations such as Hostos Community College. In addition to the significant employment benefits, the opening of a ground-floor café would further activate 149th Street, providing local students, workers, residents, and visitors additional food and dining options in an area that currently lacks them.

**TIMEFRAME FOR
IMPLEMENTATION AND
PROJECT READINESS**

Months 3-6: Groundbreaking on new commercial development (est. Fall/Winter 2018)
Month 24: Project completion and occupancy (est. mid-2020)

Prior to implementation, Great Performances must execute a lease with the developers, and the developers must secure approvals to begin construction and occupy the finished building. Lease negotiations are expected to conclude prior to the announcement of DRI awards, and lease terms will be contingent on DRI support.

REPORTING

Key metrics for Great Performances to track include:

- Number of jobs created at the Bronx location
- Number of existing and new jobs filled by Bronx residents
- Number of employees sourced from partnerships with local organizations
- Number of students served by community partnerships



Expand the Andrew Freedman Home Cultural Art Center



SUMMARY

Renovate the Andrew Freedman Home (AFH) Cultural Art Center to accommodate theater, visual arts, music, dance, and other art productions, and expand workforce development and after-school programming. Additionally, enhance the outdoor areas to enhance public awareness of programming inside the historic center.

DRI FUNDING REQUEST

\$1,720,000

LOCATION

Andrew Freedman Home, 1125 Grand Concourse

STRATEGIES

This project aligns with the following DRI strategies:

- Improve the visibility of cultural activities, independent artists, and emerging cultural centers
- Establish and preserve affordable work space for entrepreneurs and nonprofits
- Identify opportunities for public art
- Showcase the community's history and culture in public spaces
- Build on significant tourism and local employment to drive visitation to institutions and businesses

In addition, this project aligns with the following REDC goals:

- Improve quality of life

MAP



PUBLIC SUPPORT

The “promote local art and culture and create new space for artists” and “increase tourism and visitor spending” strategies received moderate support in a DRI public survey conducted in February/March 2018. This project received high support in a public voting exercise at Public Open House #2. The strategies “showcase the community’s history and culture in public spaces,” “improve the visibility of cultural activities, independent artists and emerging cultural centers,” and “establish and preserve affordable workplaces for entrepreneurs and nonprofits strategies” received high support in a public voting exercise at Public Open House #1.

DESCRIPTION

The nonprofit Mid-Bronx Senior Citizens Council (MBSCC), which provides housing, workforce development, childcare, and other community services within the Study Area, acquired the historic Andrew Freedman Home in 1985, and in 2012 began its adaptive reuse into the AFH Cultural Art Center. Today, the AFH Cultural Art Center hosts exhibitions, performances, workshops, and trainings that attract 16,000 annual attendees from the surrounding communities and citywide. In addition to three ground-floor exhibition spaces, the AFH Cultural Art Center encompasses the AFH Residency Program, an arts, media, and digital project-based residency that provides free workspace for 18 artists-in-residence in exchange for teaching classes and workshops and putting on exhibits and performances; an entrepreneur incubator space; a Saturday studio project; summer and after-school youth programs; and public arts programming.

MBSCC seeks to expand and enhance the AFH Cultural Arts Center through a series of investments:

Rehab and Equip Exhibition & Performance Space

- Rehabilitate the Grand Ballroom on the first floor of the building. The rehabilitation will include electrical work, painting, re-plastering, refurbishing, as well as new flooring. Additionally, install a lighting grid, permanent theatrical lights, and a permanent sound system.
- Repair the Executive, Library, and Princess rooms on the first floor and install quality track lighting.

- These investments will enable the AFH Cultural Arts Center to produce theatrical, visual arts, music, dance, and martial arts productions. It will also provide a venue for potential partner organizations to display their works and sponsor programming.

Rehab and Equip Production & Workforce Development Space

- Rehabilitate 22,000 square feet of space on the second floor to create space for an open co-working space, construction and hospitality classroom training space, art handling training space, artists-in-residency studios, international-partner artist studios, a recording studio, and a new-media lab.
- investments will enable the AFH Cultural Arts Center to:
 - ✦ Offer expanded community programming, including after-school, weekend, and summer classes on visual, performing, and digital arts (taught by artists-in-residence);
 - ✦ Build a networking platform for small businesses and entrepreneurs;
 - ✦ Offer arts and culture career training, including art handling and art storage;
 - ✦ Accommodate media professionals in new-media art, augmented reality/virtual reality, podcast production; music beat production, projection mapping, digital music production, photography, comic-graphic art, coding, fashion design, and multimedia arts.

Make Exterior Improvements

- Make partial roof and façade repairs.
- Install distinctive signage to promote the Andrew Freedman Home Cultural Art Center.
- Refurbish front entry doors.
- Upgrade exterior lighting.
- These investments will increase the awareness and visibility of the cultural center, increasing the number of visitors to its programming.

JOBS CREATED

At least one full-time-equivalent position will be created to support operations of the expanded AFH Cultural Center. The job training components of the proposal have the potential to enable employment by dozens of annual participants.



OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTY

The **Mid-Bronx Senior Citizens Council** owns the building.

ANTICIPATED REVITALIZATION
BENEFITS

Short Term: Provide construction jobs during the construction phase of the project.

Medium Term: Increase the availability of workforce training for local residents, improving their skills and employability. Make available additional artistic and cultural space in the area, drawing in visitors and providing residents with additional entertainment options.

Long Term: Enhance the quality of artistic works coming from the residency program and increase visibility of the Civic Center as an artistic destination.

OWNERSHIP

The **Mid-Bronx Senior Citizens Council** would be responsible for the execution of this project. MBSCC is a community development organization that has 40 years of experience in community development. MBSCC currently manages 28 buildings and 1,200 housing units throughout the Bronx. MBSCC and its affiliates has a staff of 300. MBSCC has an annual budget of more than \$6,000,000. Further, MBSCC received a letter of intent from their financial institution stating that they have historically had positive business dealings, and would welcome the opportunity to do so in the future.

PARTNERS

The AFH Cultural Art Center has partnered with numerous local cultural organizations, including the Bronx Museum, EnFoco, Bronx Council on the Arts, BronxArtSpace, and Longwood Art Gallery, and is exploring similar partnerships to activate its new spaces. The AFH Cultural Art Center intends to continue its partnership with the Bronx Museum, focusing on performance collaborations, including a Bronx alternative music and film festival in the proposed performance and exhibition space, and providing an artist work-studio to support the Museum's international artist invitations.

FUTURE USE OF STRUCTURE

The second floor and portions of the first floor of the Andrew Freedman home will continue to be used as a gallery, artist workspace, and training facility. The first floor contains several guest rooms for visiting artists and dignitaries. The remainder of the second floor is used for administrative offices.

BUDGET

For DRI Funding

First Floor Renovation of Grand Ballroom, Executive, Library, and Princess Rooms: \$310,000

Second Floor Renovation of Workforce Development, Construction and Art-Handling, Media Center, AIR, Children Saturday Art Center, Business Incubator: \$428,000

Exterior Improvements: \$285,000

Electrical Upgrades: \$300,000

DRI Contingency: \$397,000 (30%)

Subtotal: \$1,720,000

For Non DRI Funding

Kitchen Equipment: \$124,000

Driveway Improvements: \$75,000

Other Soft Costs: \$100,000

Equipment & Furnishing: \$210,000

Other Contingency (30%): 153,000

Rent, Utilities & Maintenance: \$450,000 annually
 Staffing: \$200,000 annually
 Subtotal: \$662,000 one-time costs and \$650,000 annually

Total: \$2,382,000 in one-time costs and \$650,000 annually

FUNDING SOURCES

DRI: The capital budget of \$1,720,000 will be fully funded by DRI.

Other Funding: MBSCC will obtain alternative funding for the equipment, furnishing, and soft cost portion of the project budget. Additionally, MBSCC will generate \$650,000 from in-kind donations and other sources including fundraising and exhibitions and performances ticket sales to fund ongoing annual expenses, including rent, utilities, and staffing costs. To date, MBSCC has invested \$500,000 in the AFH Cultural Art Center. DRI funds would build on this past investment.

COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS

The Andrew Freedman Home is a significant but underappreciated and underutilized asset in the community. Improving its available space through retrofitting and equipment purchases would raise its profile in the community, driving increased utilization and visitation among residents, tourists, and local employees. Additionally, the expansion of usable space will provide a place for local artists to create and display their works, driving growth in the local artist community and reinforcing the area as an emerging artistic hub. The workforce development programs envisioned will offer skills training and career pathways in construction, art handling, and art storage, improving economic outcomes for program participants.

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND PROJECT READINESS

Months 1-9: Purchase equipment, commission construction drawings

Months 10-24: Complete renovation of the space and equipment installation

REPORTING

Key metrics for the MBSCC to track include:

- Number of visitors to the Andrew Freedman Home Cultural Center
- Number of artistic performances and programs held at the Andrew Freedman Home Cultural Center
- Number of classes hosted and number of participants in those classes
- Number of workforce training participants obtaining employment in a relevant field within 12 months of training completion



Beautify Streetscapes at the Hub and 149th St. with Plantings, Banners, and Art



SUMMARY

Invest in a series of streetscape improvements on Third Avenue, Melrose Avenue, and 149th Street including sidewalk planters, street pole banners, public art, enhanced lighting, street trees, rain gardens, bike racks, and pedestrian improvements to foster a stronger local identity, improve safety, and encourage private investment.

DRI FUNDING REQUEST

\$1,040,000

LOCATION

Third Avenue between 147th and 157th Street, Melrose Avenue between 149th Street and 156th Street, and E. 149th Street between Grand Concourse and St. Ann's Avenue. (See Project Map.)

STRATEGIES

This project aligns with the following DRI strategies:

- Make streetscapes more pedestrian-friendly through lighting, plantings, and sidewalk improvements
- Support consistent street activity along major connecting corridors
- Enhance navigability through wayfinding and other branding strategies
- Identify opportunities for public art

In addition, this project aligns with the following REDC goals:

- Improve quality of life

MAP



PUBLIC SUPPORT

This project supports the South Bronx Initiative’s vision of building and maintaining attractive streetscapes, public spaces, and parks within the South Bronx. The “improve the appearance of streets with better lighting, plantings and design” and “promote local art and culture and create new spaces for artists” strategies received high and moderate support, respectively, in a DRI public survey conducted in February/March 2018. This project received high support in a public voting exercise at Public Open House #2. The strategy “make streetscapes more pedestrian-friendly through lighting, plantings and sidewalk improvements” received high support in a public voting exercise at Public Open House #1.

DESCRIPTION

The Third Avenue, Melrose Avenue, and E. 149th Street commercial corridors – collectively known as The Hub – are among the most significant in the Civic Center and the Bronx. They include major institutions such as Lincoln Hospital and Metropolitan College of New York, and significant office and retail space, and are heavily trafficked by residents, workers, students, and visitors. With the exception of the Roberto Clemente Plaza reconstruction, the area has seen little investment in the public realm, including streetscapes, contributing to a dated appearance. The Third Avenue BID – whose boundaries are expected to expand to include the entire impact area for this project – has proposed the following interventions:

- Street pole banners throughout the corridors to promote art, culture, and the history of the community.
- Street pole hanging baskets throughout the corridors.
- Sidewalk planters throughout the corridors.
- Curb extensions throughout the corridors as needed.
- Street trees to fill in gaps along Third Avenue.
- Rain gardens on Westchester Avenue and Third Avenue, and 149th Street between Melrose and Third Avenue.
- A mural on the wall of 521 Bergen Street, overlooking Roberto Clemente Plaza, and potentially other locations.
- Public art on the public easement of 149th Street and Third Avenue, and potentially other locations.
- Benches throughout the corridors.

- WalkNYC wayfinding signs throughout the corridors.
- Sidewalk repairs throughout the corridors as needed.

In addition to improvements along the corridors traditionally considered part of The Hub, this project would also extend improvements across the 149th Street pedestrian bridge that links Lincoln Hospital and Hostos Community College, and address sidewalk conditions along the E. 149th Street side of 500 Grand Concourse, a Hostos building, which currently provides an unwelcoming gateway into the Bronx. The sidewalk improvements would include (in addition to the proposed improvements above):

- Installation of bike racks and public art displays.
- A mural on the wall of 500 Grand Concourse, owned by Hostos Community College.

NYCDOT expressed that they would consider funding and implementing all improvements that are considered standard for NYC streets and sidewalk enhancements. These elements include sidewalk repair, bike racks, and benches.

OWNERSHIP

The **Third Avenue BID** would be responsible for the execution of this project. The Third Avenue BID draws funding from a special assessment on the 47 properties and 107 businesses currently within its boundaries. The BID is currently working to expand its boundaries, with expected approval by the end of 2018. With a staff of three full-time employees and several part-time employees and contractors, the BID has sufficient capacity and expertise to maintain selected streetscape enhancements.

PARTNERS

The **NYC Department of Transportation (NYCDOT)** will need to approve all proposed enhancements and has expressed receptiveness to corridor improvements.

Hostos Community College would be a key planning partner, with their approval required for the mural painted on their building. The owner of 521 Bergen Street, 521 Bergen LLC, has already granted approval for the mural to be painted on its building.

BUDGET

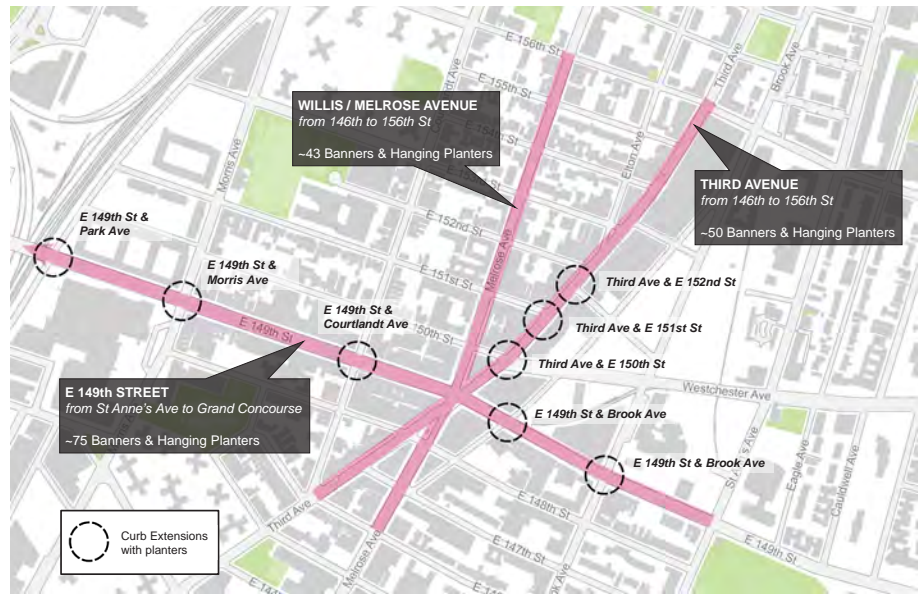
DRI Funding

Banner and hanging planters: \$150,000
 Tree planting: \$15,000
 Planter installation: \$75,000
 Rain garden installation: \$280,000
 Public art: \$325,000
 Wall murals: \$110,000
 Street lighting: \$45,000
 DRI cost escalation (4%): \$40,000
 Subtotal: \$1,040,000

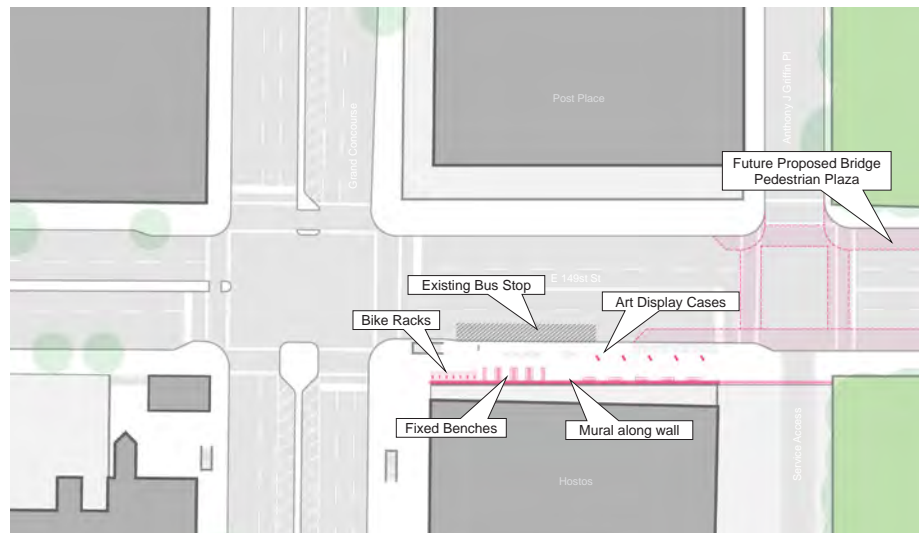
NYCDOT Allocation

Bike rack installation: \$4,000
 Bench installation: \$30,000
 Sidewalk repairs: \$400,000
 Subtotal: \$434,000

Total: \$1,474,000



* Assumes removal of two (2) parking spaces
** Assumes removal of one (1) parking space



FUNDING SOURCES

DRI: \$1,040,000 for improvements that are not standard for NYC streetscapes, including banners, planters, and public art.

Other Public Funding: NYCDOT will fund up to \$434,000 in improvements that are standard for NYC streets and sidewalks, including benches, bike racks, and sidewalk repairs

COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS

Third Avenue and E. 149th Street are centers of commercial activity and energy in the neighborhood. Improving the visual character of these corridors can help build a stronger local identity, increase visitation and average lengths of stay, enhance perceptions of corridor safety, and encourage private investment. In interviews, real estate brokers indicated that the corridors' visual appearance served as a hindrance to retail tenant attraction and to incentivizing property owners to invest in their buildings' facades or space improvements.

REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

- For portions of projects in roadways or public rights-of-way, NYCDOT Department of Transportation permits, and standards compliance are required.
- The Public Design Commission will approve any permanent installations on public property that are not part of the City's standard urban design guidelines.
- If improvements affect trees, NYC Parks Department Forestry Permits are required.
- Standards compliance and infrastructure alteration subject to Con Edison requirements.
- The NYC Department of Environmental Protection will need to review all rainwater plans for impacts on the sewer system.

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND PROJECT READINESS

Months 1-9: Design team selection and street amenities design (est. Mid-2018-Early 2020)

Months 8-12: NYCDOT and NYC Parks Permitting (est. Mid-2020)

Months 13-24: Construction (est. 2020)

Month 24: Completion (est. Early 2021)

REPORTING

Key metrics for the Third Avenue BID to track include:

- Scope of installations (every 6 months until completion)
- Worker and shopper perceptions of safety (by annual survey)
- Rents for retail and office space along corridors targeted for streetscape improvement



Create a Business Improvement Fund to Modernize Commercial Districts



SUMMARY

Create a Business Improvement Fund available to business owners and property owners along the Study Area's major commercial corridors to fund façade and storefront improvements, upper-floor renovations, and development of full-service restaurants and cafés.

DRI FUNDING REQUEST

\$1,000,000 or up to \$1,600,000

STRATEGIES

This project aligns with the following DRI strategies:

- Provide economic support to local businesses to help them thrive and expand
- Expand retail options to appeal to the needs of the community
- Enhance the appearance of retail storefronts and commercial properties by providing economic support
- Renovate aging and vacant office properties to create additional move-in ready space

In addition, this project aligns with the following REDC goals:

- Improve quality of life
- Create a pro-growth, pro-jobs environment

MAP



PUBLIC SUPPORT

This project supports the development of active retail corridors, a priority in the 2008 South Bronx Initiative. The “introduce new shopping and dining options” and “attract new businesses and job opportunities” strategies advanced by this project received moderate support in a DRI public survey conducted in February/March 2018. This project received high support in a public voting exercise at Public Open House #2. The strategy “provide economic support to local businesses to help them thrive and expand” received high support in a public voting exercise at Open House #1.

DESCRIPTION

The Civic Center is home to some of the Bronx’s most active commercial corridors. However, due to limited investment in recent decades, they face several challenges: retail facades that are dated or in disrepair, boarded-up upper-floor space unsuitable for lease-up, and a dearth of full-service sit-down restaurants, cafés, and other informal gathering places. Local market economics constrain improvements: business owners lack sufficient capital to fully fund improvements, rents are insufficient to justify the substantial investment required by property owners to repurpose vacant space, and desired food tenants are unable to pay market rents and assume substantial capital costs. In addition, existing public funding tools available to property and business owners – including the New York Main Street program – have had limited uptake in part due to filing requirements and restrictions placed on funded properties.

A Business Improvement Fund would be available to business owners and property owners across the Civic Center – including the Hub/Third Avenue and 161st Street commercial corridors. The fund would support corridor revitalization in three categories:

- 1) An estimated \$400,000 or up to \$1,000,000, targeted for grants for **façade and storefront improvements**, including signage, awning, and façade repairs (up to \$50,000 per grant). Improvements would need to conform to the NYC Small Business Services Storefront Improvements guidelines. Recipients would have access to a preferred vendor list and potentially bulk discounts. Funds would need to be matched on a 1:1 basis (if the recipient is a property owner) or a 1:0.5 basis (if the recipient is a small business owner). This component is estimated to result in at least 10 – 12 improvements.

- 2) An estimated \$400,000 targeted for grants for **upper-floor renovations**, including building equipment and fit-out of tenant space of up to \$20 per square feet. The fund would prioritize technology, professional services, and cultural tenants, and allocations would need to be matched on a 1:1 basis by the property owner or tenant. This component is estimated to result in 20,000 new square feet of available space at one or two prime locations.
- 3) An estimated \$200,000 targeted for grants of up to \$100,000 for new **full-service restaurants or cafés** in the area, including fit-out, equipment, and furnishings, with a match of at least 1:1 by the business owner. Eligibility would be limited to applicants with an established operational record, such as an existing restaurateur opening a second location or a caterer opening a first brick and mortar location. This component is estimated to result in 2 – 3 new restaurants opening in the Civic Center.

ANTICIPATED REVITALIZATION BENEFITS

Short Term: Engage storeowners and landlords to invest in the area and generate interest among restaurateurs to open in the Study Area. Provide marketing exposure for the area.

Medium Term: Add to local employment, downtown vibrancy, and the perception of safety. Improve character of the built environment. Provide space for entrepreneurs, driving economic development. Provide activities for commuters and tourists, extending their stay.

Long Term: Support a pipeline of restaurants to open larger locations in the Study Area. Increase rents, enabling landlords to make renovations without public support.

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND PROJECT READINESS

Months 1-6: Establish legal structure for fund; establish application and selection guidelines.

Months 7-36: Market fund via online and traditional channels; select, evaluate, and underwrite initial group of grantees.

BUDGET

\$1,000,000

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE /RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

The Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation (BOEDC) will be responsible for the long-term administration of the fund. BOEDC will be the responsible entity for developing an administrative plan. BOEDC manages the SBA 504 loan program and the Empowerment Zone program. BOEDC will select an evaluation committee to screen applicants, most likely to include representatives of the Third Avenue BID and 161st Street BID.

REPORTING

Key metrics for BOEDC to track include:

- Number of applicants to each component of the grant fund
- Number of jobs created at spaces receiving funding for upper-floor renovations & full-service cafés and restaurants
- Total private capital leveraged by the fund



Create Active, Resilient Community Gardens with Solar Lighting and Wi-Fi



SUMMARY

Outfit three community gardens in Melrose Commons with solar power, enhanced lighting, wi-fi access, and rainwater harvesting to strengthen the area's open space network, community resilience, and sustainability.

DRI FUNDING REQUEST

\$630,000

LOCATION

The three gardens identified for the demonstration project are:

- Jardin de la Roca/the Rock Garden – southeast corner of E. 160th St. & Elton Avenue
- Latinos Unidos – mid-block on the north side of E. 157th St. between Elton & Melrose Avenue
- The Rainbow Garden – southeast corner of Melrose Avenue and E. 157th St.

STRATEGIES

This project aligns with the following DRI strategies:

- Activate, improve, and expand parks, plazas, and other public spaces
- Make streetscapes more pedestrian-friendly through lighting, plantings, and sidewalk improvements
- Improve the visibility of cultural activities, independent artists, and emerging cultural centers
- Showcase the community's history and culture in public spaces

In addition, this project aligns with the following REDC goals:

- Improve quality of life

MAP



PUBLIC SUPPORT

This project is an outgrowth of substantial community planning led by Nos Quedamos to organize and form collaborations among the network of independent community gardens in and around Melrose Commons. Preservation of community gardens during neighborhood redevelopment in the 1990s and 2000s was a community-led effort. The “improve and expand local parks and gardens” and “create and improve plaza and other public gathering spaces” strategies were among the highest-priority project themes in a DRI public survey conducted in February/March 2018. This project received high support in a public voting exercise at Public Open House #2. The strategies “activate, improve, and expand parks plazas, and other public spaces,” “improve the visibility of cultural activities, independent artists, and emerging cultural centers,” and “showcase the community’s history and culture in public spaces strategies” received high support in a public voting exercise at Public Open House #1.

DESCRIPTION

Community gardens are a critical community resource in New York City. Taking root during the City’s decline in the 1970s, the gardens arose from vacant lots when residents cleaned and greened the vacant lots, transforming them into gardens that beautified and enhanced the neighborhood, and created opportunities for arts, culture, and recreation. In the early 1990s, due to community-led advocacy, the City of New York agreed to preserve a network of gardens under the auspices of the NYC Parks Department and various nonprofit organizations, in effect creating pocket parks throughout mostly low-income communities.

The Melrose Commons area includes more than 20 of these community gardens ranging in size from 1,500 square feet to 17,500 square feet. These gardens, operated by neighborhood volunteers, form a critical network of open space for the community. They are important centers of community health, culture, food, and programming, and have the potential to contribute to resilience planning and response. They serve important sustainability goals by absorbing stormwater, reducing burdens on the existing sewer network, and contributing to better air quality as well as local sources of food. Moreover, the gardens host concerts, film screenings, and other events, and provide space for artistic installations from local artists.

Nos Quedamos/We Stay, a nonprofit community development corporation serving Melrose Commons, has provided organizational support to formalize the gardens into a local network –operating under the name Huerta Y Cultura – and link the garden network to job training and marketing resources for food products grown in the gardens, building on the success of The Bronx Hot Sauce, which sources Serrano peppers from more than 30 community gardens in the Bronx.

To advance the creation of a local network and improve the functionality of gardens, Nos Quedamos proposes to install a series of improvements at three community gardens within Melrose Commons – Jardin de la Roca/the Rock Garden, Latinos Unidos, and The Rainbow Garden – that would together serve as a demonstration project for a broader deployment to enhance the gardens' impact on the community overall. The project would include:

- **Solar Panels:** Installation of mounted solar panels to improve lighting in and around the gardens, making them more accessible at night, providing night-lighting of surrounding streets for safety, and providing a power source for small-scale community events and cell-phone charging stations within the gardens.
- **Rainwater Harvesting:** Installation of rainwater harvesting materials, including catch basins and the corresponding plumbing equipment to reduce runoff to the municipal system and provide an alternative source of water for the gardens.
- **Wi-fi Access:** Installation of wi-fi routers to enable internet connectivity at the gardens.

All three gardens identified for DRI are in City-owned vacant land and are registered in the City's Green Thumb program. Additionally, the gardens are protected from development via the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Plan. In addition to the three gardens identified for DRI funding, Nos Quedamos has expressed interest in making enhancements to additional gardens should this project prove successful.



OWNERSHIP

Nos Quedamos will manage project administration and maintenance, and will own all equipment installed in the gardens.

PARTNERS

The **volunteer garden organizations** responsible for the three participating gardens will oversee day-to-day maintenance of the gardens. Each garden has members who contribute to garden maintenance and leadership.

Huerta Y Cultura is a local community gardens coalition that has been set up by Nos Quedamos to facilitate knowledge and resource sharing across the garden volunteers. It will serve as a support resource for the gardeners for garden maintenance.

Nos Quedamos will engage **Crauderueff & Associates**, a green systems design and policy firm with experience advancing solar panel installation projects across New York City, to support the installation and maintenance of the garden infrastructure.

Magnusson Architecture and Planning, a planning and architecture firm that co-created the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Plan, will continue to advise Nos Quedamos and the garden network.

CAPACITY

Nos Quedamos, a nonprofit community development corporation founded in 1992 that co-created the Melrose Commons master plan and has played a central role in developing more than 2,600 mixed-income rental and ownership units within the district, has for the past three years conducted extensive outreach to the network of community gardens in Melrose Commons. Nos Quedamos has a staff of 10, an annual budget of \$800,000, and assets of more than \$3,800,000. With decades of experience in community organizing, planning, and development, they are well qualified to install the equipment and support the volunteers who run the gardens in the maintenance of all improvements.

BUDGET

Hard Costs: \$150,000 per garden

- Solar array equipment (\$125,000)
 - + Steel frame structure for modular array
 - + 18 modular panel array
 - + Footings for PV array frame
 - + Lightning protection
 - + Instrument paint for weather & fireproofing
 - + Wiring for panels and battery
 - + Digital display for PV power generation and battery status
 - + Housing and protective structure for PV system components
- Rainwater harvesting equipment (capacity 1,200 gallons annually) (\$10,000)
 - + Modular, above ground storage basins
 - + Rainwater collection gutters on PV frame
 - + Plumbing for rainwater harvesting
 - + Water quality testing with displays
- Electrical equipment (\$15,000)
 - + Wiring for casita & lighting
 - + Wiring and finishes for point-of-use outlets
 - + Wiring for wireless access points
 - + Wi-fi outdoor access point

Site Preparation Costs: \$15,000 per garden

- Site and soils investigation
- Permits

Design, Engineering & Professional Costs: \$105,000 for all three gardens

- Project management
- Landscape architecture
- Structural engineering
- Electrical engineering
- Legal
- Plumbing engineering for rainwater collection
- Network design for wireless access points

Operational Costs: \$30,000 for all three gardens

- Warranties, testing, & commissioning

Total: \$630,000 for all three gardens

FUNDING SOURCES

DRI: The project design and installation costs will be fully funded by DRI.

Other Sources: Nos Quedamos and garden volunteers will make significant in-kind contributions through staff and volunteer time managing garden maintenance. Garden volunteers and Nos Quedamos staff will also provide resources to program events enabled by this investment and to coordinate activities among gardens via the Huerta Y Cultura network.

COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS

Enhanced community gardens provide numerous benefits to the community, including:

- **Economic:** Access to free wi-fi will better connect community residents to vital resources, including job postings and trainings, enhancing their overall economic opportunity.
- **Cultural:** Community gardens are important cultural gathering points, and house cultural landmarks within them. Enhancing the gardens would celebrate this rich cultural history.
- **Social:** Community gardens are an important focal point for communities, creating opportunities for community organization, engagement, and social integration. They provide space for community workshops, trainings and events, all of which enhance social cohesion across cultures and generations.
- **Sustainability & Resiliency:** Community gardens are able to absorb stormwater, reducing strain on sewer infrastructure and contributing to better air quality through provision of trees and plants. The gardens will also provide a resilient gathering place during disaster events, with independent sources of power and public charging stations.
- **Health:** Community gardens produce high-quality, nutritional food that is accessible to residents. Additionally, the gardens are an open space that can be utilized for outdoor activities. These benefits are especially important as the Bronx ranks last among the State's 62 counties across health indicators.

REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

- For portions of projects including streetscape improvements in road or public space rights-of-way, NYC Department of Transportation permits, and standards compliance are required
- Community garden redesign may be subject to approval by the NYC Public Design Commission
- Architect/Engineer and General Contractor to obtain NYC Parks construction permits
- If improvements affect trees, NYC Parks forestry permits & Recreation Forestry Permits are required
- Review of plans and facilities for fire code compliance by NYC Fire Department may be required.
- Standards compliance and infrastructure alteration subject to ConEdison requirements
- Should the gardens host events, an NYC Parks special event permit from DPR is required

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND PROJECT READINESS

Months 1-6: Simple park/facility design and walk through permits (est. Late 2018-mid-2019)

Months 7-12: Garden construction (est. June 2019)

Month 13: Completion (est. Late 2019)

REPORTING

Key metrics for Nos Quedamos to track and report include:

- Number of members at each garden
- Number of events held at each garden
- Kilowatt-hours of electricity generated and used on site
- Gallons of rainwater harvested
- Number of wi-fi logins through garden hotspots



Support the Opening of the Bronx Kreate Space Artist-Maker Hub



SUMMARY

Provide gap funding to build out a publicly accessible gallery and café, and low-cost workspace, within Bronx Kreate Space, a planned artist-maker co-working space in Mott Haven.

DRI FUNDING REQUEST

\$595,000

LOCATION

349 Rider Avenue

STRATEGIES

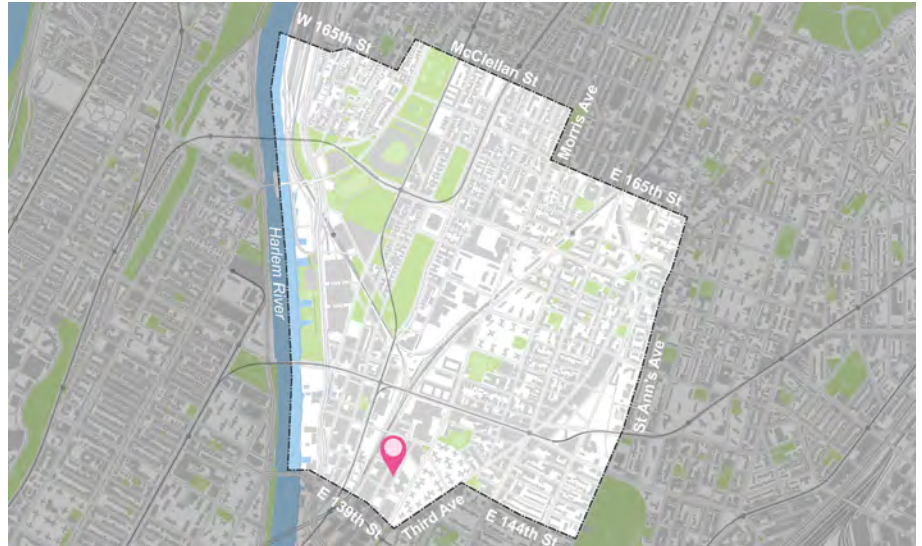
This project aligns with the following DRI strategies:

- Provide economic support to local businesses to help them thrive and expand
- Establish and preserve affordable work space for entrepreneurs and nonprofits
- Improve the visibility of cultural activities, independent artists, and emerging cultural centers

In addition, this project aligns with the following REDC goals:

- Improve the quality of life
- Foster innovation and inter-regional cooperation

MAP



PUBLIC SUPPORT

The “promote local art and culture and create new space for artists” strategy received moderate support in a DRI public survey conducted in February/March 2018. This project received moderate support at Public Open House #2. The strategies “improve the visibility of cultural activities, independent artists, and emerging cultural centers” and “establish and preserve affordable work space for entrepreneurs and nonprofits” received high support in a public voting exercise at Public Open House #1.

DESCRIPTION

This project would provide gap funding to support the opening of Bronx Kreate Space, a planned for-profit workspace for artists and makers on Rider Avenue between E. 144th and 141st Street in Mott Haven. The vision for the space is to create a stable environment for artists and makers by leveraging low-cost real estate, supporting tenant growth, and fostering community.

The initial proposed space is 23,000 gross SF, including three levels of workspace sized 6,000 SF each, one half level of open workspace sized 3,000 SF, and a 2,000 SF ground-floor space that will serve as a gallery and café open to the public and used to foster a collaborative environment among community artists. An additional level of the building that is approximately 6,000 SF may also be available for occupancy by the time of award, pending discussions between Bronx Kreate Space and the property owners and its lenders. Half of the workspace will be occupied by “traditional” artists working in animation, ceramics, drawing, graphics, graffiti-style works, painting, and sculpting, while the other half will be occupied by “makers,” including writers and those working in film, photo, sound, crafts, fashion, and jewelry. All tenants will have the opportunity to display their work at the gallery and have access to communal facilities such as meeting rooms, a lounge, concierge services, and events.

Bronx Kreate Space is a successor of the Brush Experience, also known as b[x], a successful workspace for artists and makers in Bushwick. b[x] has sought to preserve workspace for artists as Bushwick has transformed from a mostly industrial neighborhood into a vibrant district of bars, restaurants, shops and galleries.

A core mission of Bronx Kreate Space is to keep artist spaces affordable. Studio prices are expected to start at \$350 per month for a shared studio, which makes up 30% of

all studio space. On the 3rd floor, which will be 3,000SF, Bronx Kreate Space will utilize an open-format workspace at lower price points, starting at \$175 per artist per month. Should the open-format model prove successful, it intends to extend the format and expand to additional floors. Residents can also join the community without renting a permanent space for \$20 per month. Benefits of membership include access to lectures, classes, gallery space, and maker markets.

To ensure community access to the space, Bronx Kreate will reserve at least 30% of its space, for the first two years of operation, for Bronx residents on a first-come, first-served basis. Additionally, it will:

- Offer Bronx residents occupying up to half of the shared studio space a 10% discount off advertised rates for that space; the discount would extend for at least five years.
- Offer Bronx residents occupying the open-format workspace a discounted rate of \$150 for the first two years of operations.
- Dedicate proceeds from the operations of Bronx Kreate Space to support the build-out of one or more additional floors of workspace, which will consist primarily of lower-cost, open-format space.
- Establish a mentoring program that matches local students to artists in their areas of interest (based on a model from b[x]).
- Offer free access to the gallery space to showcase artists' work and host local events.
- Donate all late fees to a community arts organization to be determined through local outreach.

These community benefits will likely be formalized through an MOU with BOEDC as a condition of receiving a U.S. Small Business Administration 504 loan through them.

Bronx Kreate Space's curator will market, target and recruit from the Bronx. Bronx Kreate Space will utilize a referral program to motivate tenants to recruit locally, mimicking the peer-to-peer network that grew the Brooklyn locations, which has 60 – 70% of tenants living within a five-mile radius of the space. Additionally, Bronx Kreate Space will market to the 20% of tenants at the Brooklyn space who live in the Bronx and have expressed interest in a workspace closer to home.





JOBS CREATED

5 jobs will be directly created by the opening of Bronx Kreate Space. Additionally, there will be numerous makers, entrepreneurs, and artists who choose to locate at Bronx Kreate Space who otherwise would not have worked in the Bronx, potentially creating dozens of local jobs as a result.

OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTY

Bronx Kreate Space, LLC, is in advanced negotiations to lease the subject space with the landlord, Newlo Realty Co., pending confirmation of financing sources.

**ANTICIPATED
REVITALIZATION BENEFITS**

Short Term: During build out phase, expenditures will create construction jobs and associated revenues for local businesses.

Medium Term: Increase the availability of artist and maker space in the Civic Center, broadening the capacity of local artists and makers to produce work. Create local employment opportunities. Strengthen connections between the Civic Center arts community and the broader New York City arts community. Drive visitation to the Study Area.

Long Term: Develop the Civic Center as a destination for aspiring artists and makers, and cultural tourists.

OWNERSHIP

Bronx Kreate Space LLC is a successor of The Brush Experience, also known as b[x], a successful workspace for artists and makers in Bushwick. Bronx Kreate CEO Dan Herdoon served as the Founder and COO of The Brush Experience.

FUTURE USE OF STRUCTURE

The upper-floor space would be occupied by the tenants of Bronx Kreate, while the ground-floor would be used as a public café and gallery for the artists.

BUDGET

Hard Costs: \$850,000
Soft Costs: \$211,000
Contingency (30%): \$318,000
Total Costs: \$1,379,000

REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

- NYC Department of Buildings permits for construction or alterations to facilities
- Food and beverage concession facilities and equipment permits and approvals by NYC Department of Health. The type of permit varies with venue type.
- Review of plans and facilities for fire code compliance by NYC Fire Department may be required.

FUNDING SOURCES

DRI: \$595,000 for the fit-out and furnishing of the public gallery and café space, and a portion of the artist/maker workspaces.

Private Sources: Bronx Kreate Space investors will provide \$150,000 in startup costs.

Other Public Funding: Bronx Kreate Space has applied for a U.S. Small Business Administration 504 loan to fund the fit-out and furnishing of artist/maker workspaces. A final determination on the loan application is expected to be made in April 2018.

COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS

The Civic Center, with its range of cultural assets, has a longstanding arts community. Based on outreach to local artist groups, there is substantial demand for affordable workspace within the Civic Center, as well as gallery space for local artists, especially in light of increasing rents for commercial and residential space throughout the Study Area. Bronx Kreate would serve to fill both of these needs, helping to preserve space for local artists with the Bronx-based set-asides and discounted rates, while attracting new artists and interest to broaden the visibility of the Bronx art scene. In addition, the café and gallery spaces are envisioned as a destination for both residents and visitors, generating additional traffic and commerce.

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND PROJECT READINESS

Months 1-9: (Est. completion Early 2019): Construction

Months 9+: Occupancy and use (est. Early to Mid-2019)

REPORTING

Key metrics for the Third Avenue BID to track include:

- Number of Bronx tenants at the Bronx Kreate Space
- Number of events held in the gallery
- Number of visitors to the ground floor gallery space
- Sales volume for the ground floor café



Activate the New Roberto Clemente Plaza with Two Food Kiosks



SUMMARY

Install two food concessions at Roberto Clemente Plaza to activate the soon-to-be-completed public space and provide new dining options for local workers and shoppers.

DRI FUNDING REQUEST

\$520,000

LOCATION

Third Avenue & E. 148th Street

STRATEGIES

This project aligns with the following DRI strategies:

- Activate, improve, and expand parks, plazas, and other public spaces
- Expand retail options to appeal to the needs of the community
- Provide economic support to local businesses to help them thrive and expand
- Establish and preserve affordable work space for entrepreneurs and nonprofits
- Make streetscapes more pedestrian-friendly
- Broaden public wi-fi access to address the digital divide

In addition, this project aligns with the following REDC goals:

- Improve quality of life

MAP



PUBLIC SUPPORT

The “introduce new shopping and dining options” and “create and improve plaza and other gathering spaces” strategies advanced by this project received moderate and high support respectively in a DRI public survey conducted in February/March 2018. This project received high support in a public voting exercise at Public Open House #2. The strategies “provide economic support to local businesses to help them thrive and expand” and “establish and preserve affordable work space for entrepreneurs and nonprofits” received high support in a public voting exercise at Public Open House #1.

DESCRIPTION

Roberto Clemente Plaza, located at the heart of the Hub, has been the subject of a long-running rehabilitation that is due to be completed in 2018. The original plans for the plaza included space for a food concession and info kiosk. As the project has been delayed, funding for the concession has been lost, but the site will have power and water infrastructure in place to accommodate concessions.

This project would re-enable food concessions at the plaza (two in total), activating a heavily used public space, and providing new dining options for local workers and shoppers. The Third Avenue BID, which will manage the plaza on behalf of the NYC Department of Transportation (NYCDOT), will install the concessions. The BID intends to use NYCDOT’s prototypical kiosk design, which has an aesthetic similar to other street furniture and does not require independent design approval, shortening the approval period.

The concession would be leased by the Third Avenue BID to retailers. The BID’s operating plan for the concession calls for leasing one kiosk to a vendor at market rate, which the BID estimates at \$21,600 annually, and one at a subsidized rent of \$10,800 annually. This subsidized space would serve as an incubator for local food entrepreneurs. The vendors for both the market rate kiosk and the subsidized kiosk would be selected through an RFP process run by the BID. Proceeds from rent would be used to partially fund plaza maintenance (which will cost more than \$80,000 annually).

JOBS CREATED

The installation of two kiosks would create construction jobs and space for at least 4 full-time equivalent jobs.

OWNERSHIP

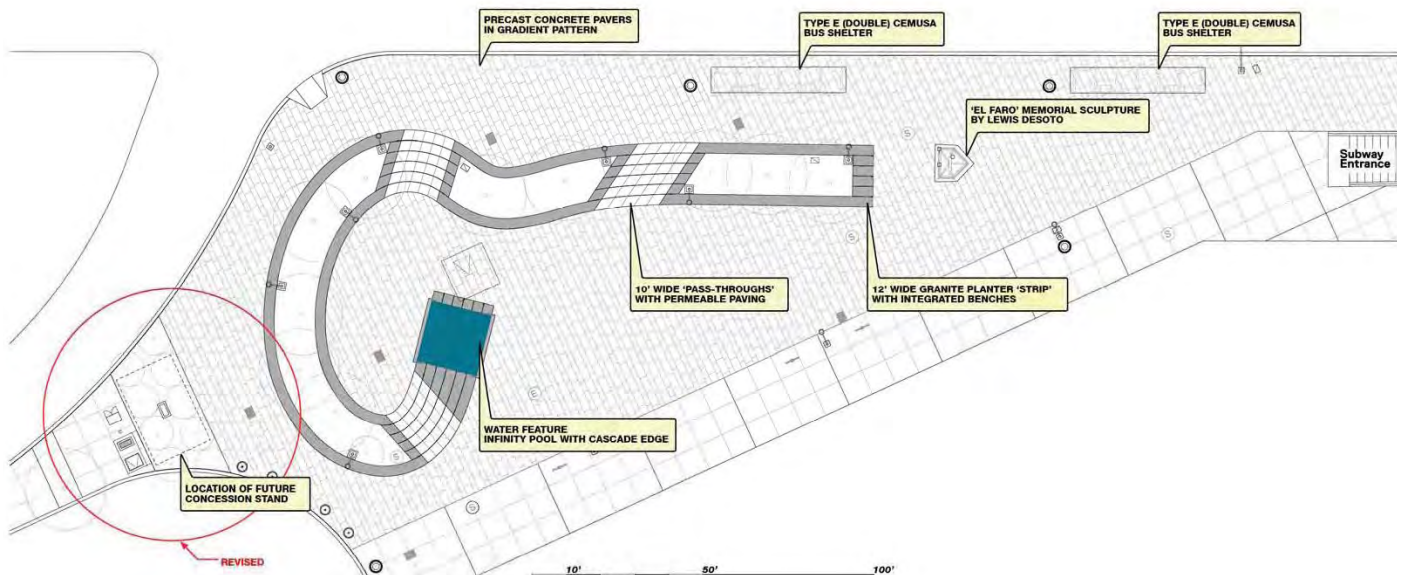
NYCDOT owns the property and has agreed to enter into a management agreement with the Third Avenue BID, which would sublicense with the concessionaires.

**ANTICIPATED
REVITALIZATION BENEFITS**

Short Term: Provide construction jobs and raise interest in the plaza among the Bronx and citywide food and beverage network.

Medium Term: Once the concession opens, provide amenities and activities for local residents, workers, and visitors, increasing the amount of time spent at the Hub. Activation improves perceptions of safety and vibrancy and will activate the Hub at night.

Long Term: Provide an ongoing source of revenue to maintain the Plaza and create an ongoing pipeline of food entrepreneurs that may move into larger spaces within the area.



OWNERSHIP

The Third Avenue BID, the local business improvement district funded through a special assessment on the 47 properties within its boundaries, will manage Roberto Clemente Plaza, and be responsible for the installation and maintenance of the kiosks, under an agreement with the license with the NYCDOT. The BID is expected to expand significantly by 2019, increasing its special assessment revenues. With a staff of three full-time employees and several part-time employees and contractors, the BID has sufficient capacity and expertise to execute a concession agreement, and successfully manage space for two food and beverage concessions.

PARTNERS

NYCDOT as the owner of Roberto Clemente Plaza will execute and oversee the management agreement with the Third Avenue BID, and approve any concession agreements.

FUTURE USE OF STRUCTURE

The concession spaces will be occupied by food and beverage concessionaires to be selected by the Third Avenue BID. At least one of the concessionaires will be a local business receiving discounted rent.

BUDGET

Purchase and installation of kiosks: The Third Avenue BID has received estimates from NYCDOT that each kiosk will cost \$200,000 to purchase and install. The total budget of \$520,000 includes a 30% contingency to account for any unknown site costs or design adjustments.

REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

- NYCDOT permits, and standards compliance are required
- NYC Department of Buildings permits for construction or alterations to facilities
- Food and beverage concession facilities and equipment permits and approvals by NYC Department of Health.
- Licensing of concessionaires by NYC Department of Consumer Affairs
- Review of plans and facilities for fire code compliance by NYC Fire Department may be required.

FUNDING SOURCES

DRI: The installation of the kiosks will be fully funded by DRI.

Private sources: Revenue from the kiosks will partially fund maintenance of Roberto Clemente Plaza, contributing more than \$30,000 annually; the Third Avenue BID, through its private assessments, will fund nearly \$50,000 of maintenance costs annually.

COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS

Roberto Clemente Plaza is a prime location within the Bronx Civic Center and has been the subject of a long-delayed renovation project that initially included funding for the concession space. Activating the plaza with a concession would enhance the overall quality of the plaza. Additionally, a retail gap analysis revealed that there is nearly \$19 million of unmet retail demand for food and restaurant spending from study area residents and workers, which could support up to 23,400 SF of new space. Funding the creation of food and beverage kiosks would enable the Civic Center to capture a portion of the unmet retail demand, driving new economic activity within the study area.

TIMEFRAME FOR
IMPLEMENTATION AND
PROJECT READINESS

Pre-Award: RFP for fabrication of the kiosks is released and fabricator is selected (est. by summer 2018)

Months 1-9: Fabrication and installation of the kiosks (est. by spring 2019)

Months 8-9: RFP and selection of concession tenants (est. by spring 2019)

Month 12: Opening (est. summer 2019)

The Third Avenue BID is in active negotiations with NYCDOT to enter into a management and concession agreement to manage the plaza. Additionally, the plaza is in final stages of construction. Once the agreements are finalized and the plaza is completed, the project would be fully ready for implementation on the preceding timeline.

REPORTING

Key metrics for the Third Avenue BID to track include:

- Annual sales at concessions
- Number of people utilizing the Plaza open space
- Number of responses to RFP for concessionaires



Expand Low-Cost Broadband Access in Melrose Commons



SUMMARY

Create a point-to-multipoint, rooftop-based wireless broadband network serving residents, businesses, and visitors in Melrose Commons. The network would offer: 1) free wi-fi in and around select public spaces; 2) free access to an internet-enabled local resource portal for residents within networked buildings; and 3) low-cost broadband service for residents within networked buildings.

DRI FUNDING REQUEST

\$437,000

LOCATION

Melrose Commons neighborhood (see project map).

STRATEGIES

This project aligns with the following DRI strategies:

- Broaden public wi-fi access to address the digital divide
- Support high-speed broadband connectivity within commercial districts

In addition, this project aligns with the following REDC goals:

- Foster innovation and inter-regional cooperation
- Invest in the future

MAP



PUBLIC SUPPORT

Expanding the availability of broadband was a priority that emerged from the NYC Economic Development Corporation's Lower Concourse Planning Initiative, and efforts to deploy low-cost broadband at the southern boundary of the DRI Study Area are in planning stages. The "expand affordable internet access" strategy advanced by this project received high support in a DRI public survey conducted in February/March 2018. This project received moderate support in a public-voting exercise at Public Open House #2.

DESCRIPTION

High-speed home internet access is an increasing necessity for individuals to participate in the 21st century economy, including basic tasks such as job preparation and applications. Yet while most New Yorkers have access to mobile-based internet, many residents within the Civic Center lack high-speed internet access at home due to cost constraints. Thirty percent of New Yorkers do not have in-home high-speed connectivity. That figure is higher within the Civic Center; according to a recent survey of 200 Community School District 7 residents, 63% did not have home broadband access.

Nos Quedamos/We Stay, a nonprofit organization that owns and operates housing and provides community development services in Melrose Commons, has partnered with a Bronx-based internet services provider, Nuture, Inc., to plan a wireless network to expand broadband internet access to residents, workers, and visitors in Melrose Commons. Nuture has indicated it will reach out to local businesses and other building owners to install public access points.

The network would make use of existing fiber access at 754 Melrose Avenue and 390 E. 158th Street, two buildings owned by Nos Quedamos, to install network equipment and base towers on building rooftops. The network would create a point-to-point wireless network that can be accessed by receivers throughout buildings managed by Nos Quedamos and other partners, and in public spaces throughout Melrose Commons. After the initial installation of the base towers on these two buildings, three additional buildings will have base towers installed: tentatively among 871 Elton Avenue, 890 Washington Avenue, 3103 Third Avenue, and 3097 Third Avenue.

The network would have three components:

1. Wi-fi access points will be installed in and around public spaces, including plazas, parks, and community gardens, offering free internet access for use by an estimated 25,000 people annually.
2. The 7,000 residents within the buildings with base towers will have free access to an internet-enabled local resources portal developed by Nuture and Nos Quedamos.
3. The same 7,000 residents will have an option to purchase internet access for \$20 per month (plus an \$175 upfront or \$10 monthly equipment charge for 24 months), a rate that is discounted from present cable and fiber-based internet services, which typically cost at least \$60 per month inclusive of equipment costs.

Nos Quedamos, as the recipient of the funds, would contract with Nuture to oversee the installation of the necessary equipment within the targeted buildings that would serve as the backbone of the overall network, as well as the access points within the buildings themselves. Nuture has identified installation partners to assist with the technical components and provision of fiber, including Kwikbit, Cogent, Transit Wireless, and Natural Wireless. Nuture is in the process of identifying locations for the public access points and will work with Nos Quedamos to secure necessary installation permissions once they complete the identification process.

This project follows a beta installation in 2016-17 by Nuture in partnership with Nos Quedamos that provided free and low-cost internet access options to five floors within 390 East 158th Street, a building with a diverse population of seniors, single adults, and families with children. Nuture installed access points within the hallways of selected floors. The beta test provided service for two years, averaging over 500 connections per month. This beta test informed the basis of this project's network design, price structures, and proposed community access platform.

To maintain the system, Nuture will use a three-tiered support system in collaboration with MAP Communications, a 24/7 call center. The first two levels of support will be handled remotely through network software that can manage all aspects of the network including ethernet switches, transmitters, access points, and receivers. The first level of support for simple problems will be handled at the call center and is estimated to account for 70% of potential issues. The second level will be escalated to more technical experts, including Nuture's team of network engineers, estimated to account for 20% of issues. The third level of support will involve site visits by Nuture personnel and is expected to account for 10% of issues.

Additionally, all equipment purchased for the project will have a three-year replacement warranty in case of equipment failure.

JOBS CREATED

In addition to construction and technical jobs that will be created through the installation of the network and the building of the resource portal, this project will support the long-term development of critical workforce skills for residents in the area by providing access to reliable low-cost broadband.



OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTY

Nos Quedamos owns both buildings targeted for the installation of the initial network, as well as the one building targeted for expansion. Neture has received assurances from the owners of the remaining two buildings that they will obtain necessary permissions from the owners of the remaining properties upon the project being funded. Should these permissions fall through, Nos Quedamos will make two additional buildings available for network installation.

Installation of wi-fi receivers in publicly accessible spaces may require permission from other property owners, business owners, and/or public agencies.

ANTICIPATED
REVITALIZATION BENEFITS

Short Term: Provide free internet access to community residents through provision of free wi-fi to public spaces, and low-cost internet access to households living in buildings wired by the project. Enhance the ability of local residents to access community resources.

Medium and Long Term: Improve internet access in a community that relies disproportionately on mobile data plans, thereby enabling broader use of digital services, including for schoolwork, digital skills development, and job and benefits applications.

OWNERSHIP

Nos Quedamos would be the recipient of DRI funds and the administrator of the project. Their buildings would be used as base stations for the wireless network. Nos Quedamos, founded in 1992, has a staff of 10, an annual budget of \$800,000, and assets worth more than \$3,800,000.

PARTNERS

Neture, Inc. would be responsible for the planning, installation, and servicing of the network, and would partner with Nos Quedamos to develop and maintain the community resource portal. Neture's CEO, Marlin Jenkins, has 10 years of experience in telecommunications sales and operations. Their four-member advisory team has a combined 50 years of experience in telecommunications, network engineering, operations, and marketing.

BUDGET

Base Tower and Public Access Installation

Equipment & Installation: \$323,000
 Contingency and Cost Escalation (34%): \$114,000
 Design: \$18,000
 Marketing & Outreach: \$20,000
 Ongoing Support: \$83,000
Subtotal: \$558,000

In-Unit Installation

Equipment & Installation: \$772,000 (estimated based on the number of customers purchasing private plans)

Total: \$1,330,000

**REGULATORY
REQUIREMENTS**

- All installations must comply with the National Electrical Code and various telecommunications standards such as EIA/TIA and BICSI.
- All installations on property owned by entities other than Nos Quedamos require approval by the owner.
- NYC Department of Buildings permits for construction or alterations to facilities including towers, electrical equipment facilities, HVAC improvements for data/telecom facilities.
- For facilities owned or regulated by NYC Housing Preservation and Development permits and compliance with established standards are required.
- Standards compliance and infrastructure alteration subject to Con Edison requirements and easements.

FUNDING SOURCES

DRI: \$437,000 for the purchase and installation of base tower and public access equipment.

Private Sources: Nuture, Inc. will be responsible for the design, maintenance, and marketing of the network, estimated to cost \$122,000, and an estimated \$772,000 for the expansion of the system to offer residential service plans – a total of \$894,000.

COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS

This project will provide numerous benefits, including free access to the internet in public spaces for approximately 25,000 residents, and the potential for 7,000 residents within networked buildings to obtain below-market high-speed internet access.

In the impacted neighborhood, there are currently three methods for households to access high-speed broadband: 1) through the local cable provider, Optimum, 2) through a residential fiber provider such as Verizon Fios, and 3) through LinkNYC kiosks, a network of public wi-fi enabled devices installed on public streets. Optimum charges a minimum of \$55 per month (\$40 as a promotional rate) for residential access, not including equipment charges, nearly three times the rate proposed by Nuture. Verizon Fios is unavailable at any of the targeted buildings. LinkNYC kiosks are installed on Third Avenue up to 158th Street, with more due to be installed up to 163rd Street. Because of restrictions on where Links can be installed, they do not reach the residential sections of Melrose Commons. This project fills a portion of the gap in free coverage, and enables more households to purchase broadband at a rate they can afford.

TIMEFRAME FOR
IMPLEMENTATION AND
PROJECT READINESS

This project would leverage private resources in excess of \$120,000 for the base installation, and additional investment in equipment and installation costs to serve private households that sign up for the paid access, estimated at \$772,000, pending the level of uptake. Neture estimates that 4,000 households would sign up for the paid service.

Months 1-6: Rooftop installation on first building and fiber installation at additional network buildings.

Months 6-12: Installation of receivers at participating buildings and in public spaces, averaging one new building per month.

Neture has actively engaged design partners, and has lined up two potential installation contractors for the project. Nos Quedamos has indicated that Neture will have access to their buildings for network installation, which can happen immediately upon funds being granted.

REPORTING

Key metrics for Nos Quedamos to track include:

- Number of public wi-fi locations
- Number of logins from public locations
- Number of logins to the resource portal
- Average length of stay on the resource portal
- Number of households signing up for paid internet service
- Scope of installations (every 6 months until completion)
- Worker and shopper perceptions of safety (by annual survey)
- Rents for retail and office space along corridors targeted for streetscape improvement



Complete an Upgrade of the BronxWorks Public Swimming Pool



SUMMARY

Build on recent investment in a community swimming pool located at BronxWorks' Carolyn McLaughlin Community Center with physical improvements that would enable expanded use for all-ages programming and public use.

DRI FUNDING REQUEST

\$429,000

LOCATION

Carolyn McLaughlin Community Center, 1130 Grand Concourse

STRATEGIES

This project aligns with the following DRI strategies:

- Invest in expanded and improved educational programs and facilities

In addition, this project aligns with the following REDC goals:

- Improve quality of life

MAP



PUBLIC SUPPORT

This project builds on the Bronx' #not62 campaign, which works to address social and health inequities and improve health outcomes in the Bronx, which as of 2016 was ranked as the county in New York State with the worst health outcomes. Additionally, improving health and wellness outcomes, and creating safe, inclusive spaces for children and young adults to play and learn emerged as community priorities during discussions with members of the public during Public Open House #1.

DESCRIPTION

BronxWorks, a locally based nonprofit organization that provides a range of services for thousands of youth, seniors, and families, operates a swimming pool on the first floor of the Carolyn McLaughlin Community Center, its flagship location on the Grand Concourse. The pool is currently used by BronxWorks primarily for afterschool programs that serve adolescents and teenagers, and for BronxWorks summer camps, which serve hundreds of children daily during the summer months. The pool is one of few such facilities in the South Bronx that could provide public access to swimming education and recreation.

The pool underwent a long-planned \$400,000 upgrade in 2017 – funded primarily by City of New York capital allocations, as well as private donations – that included installing a new liner and replacing the pool tiling. The pool itself is now in prime condition. However, sufficient funds were not available to improve the interior conditions in the pool area, and the recent investment is now threatened by those aging building components. Poor visual and operational conditions also limit BronxWorks' ability to expand use of the pool.

This project would address three conditions:

- **Air Handling System:** The pool area lacks an air handling system, which prevents proper temperature control and allows chlorine from the pool to collect in the air, corroding metal services and impacting the comfort and safety of pool users. This project would install an air handling system for the pool and locker room areas.
- **Ceiling Tiles:** The ceiling tiles above the pool, which are over 60 years old, are oxidized, their material is flaking, and numerous tiles are missing. In addition to creating an unsightly condition, the flaking deposits a substance into the pool,

damaging the new pool liner and causing safety risks. This project would replace the ceiling tiles.

- **Locker Room:** Several components of the locker room, including the lockers themselves, door frames, bathroom stalls, and metal partitions, are corroded (due to the inadequate air handling system) and need to be replaced. This project would replace the damaged components, and address minor drainage issues.

With these investments, BronxWorks would be able to expand the use of the pool, both by expanding its own programming to new populations, and by opening the facility to outside entities. Internally, BronxWorks would expand the use of the pool to serve its early childhood programs, including learn-to-swim programs and “mommy and me” classes for new parents and younger children; and launch programming for members of the four senior centers it runs. Externally, BronxWorks has received interest from – and would pursue partnerships with – groups that have difficulty accessing pools but for which pools are a core part of programming, including community groups currently using the St. Mary’s Park Recreation Center (soon to be closed for renovation) and the Trilatino Triathlon Club, which teaches Latino/a high school students swimming skills to promote participation in triathlons and other competitive sporting events.



BronxWorks is exploring a range of additional programs that would also provide general public access to the pool during off-hours. In addition to direct public benefits, making the pool space available to outside groups could also generate a modest revenue source that would support BronxWorks' maintenance of the facility.

This project also builds on recent State investment in the McLaughlin Community Center, as New York State Assembly Member Latoya Joyner recently allocated \$700,000 in capital funds to upgrade the gymnasium located upstairs from the swimming pool, including restrooms attached to the gym.

OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTY

BronxWorks owns the building.

ANTICIPATED REVITALIZATION BENEFITS

Short Term: During the build-out phase, expenditures will create construction jobs and associated revenues for local businesses.

Medium Term: Prolong the useful life of the pool, enhancing recent City investments. Enhance safety of the pool area for all users. Expand pool access for use by community organizations and additional BronxWorks programs. Create a new revenue source for BronxWorks through pool rentals.

Long Term: Enhance access to fitness facilities for BronxWorks clients and the broader community, improving fitness outcomes.

OWNERSHIP

BronxWorks, founded in 1972 as the Citizens Advice Bureau, is a community nonprofit that serves individuals and families who face a variety of economic and social barriers. They have deep experience with youth education and programming. With a staff of nearly 875 employees and a \$65 million annual budget, they have the capacity and expertise necessary to oversee this project.

FUTURE USE OF STRUCTURE

The building would continue to be used as a community center, with the renovations targeted toward maintaining the pool area for future use.

BUDGET

Ceiling tile replacement (incl. expected asbestos remediation): \$120,000

Air handling system installation: \$100,000

Locker room upgrades: \$100,000

Contingency and cost escalation (34%): \$109,000

Total: \$429,000

REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

- NYC Department of Buildings must issue all necessary construction permits.
- NYC Department of Health must issue a Bathing Establishment with Pool permit.

FUNDING SOURCES

DRI: The \$429,000 project cost will be fully funded by DRI.

Other Funding: This project builds on \$400,000 of New York City capital funds and private donations that funded a recent pool upgrade, and \$700,000 in State funds allocated to improve the gymnasium at the McLaughlin Community Center. BronxWorks will fund ongoing maintenance of the pool and locker rooms, supported by modest rental revenue from the upgraded pool facility.

COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS

The enhancement of the Carolyn McLaughlin Community Center pool would provide additional access to swimming for community residents and locally based organizations that currently lack access to these resources. This access is particularly important in the Bronx, which has consistently ranked last among the State's 62 counties in terms of health outcomes in an annual ranking by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. In response, the Bronx Borough President's Office, in partnership with community organizations, launched the #NOT62 campaign to improve health outcomes, including by promoting physical activity and fitness. Additionally, the enhancement of the pool would allow BronxWorks to host additional early education, family, and senior programming at the pool.

**TIMEFRAME FOR
IMPLEMENTATION AND
PROJECT READINESS**

Months 1 – 3: Purchase and install tiles and equipment
Months 3+: Occupancy and use

REPORTING

Key metrics for BronxWorks to track include:

- Number of annual users of the pool
- Number of outside organizations hosting programming at the pool
- Annual revenue from pool rentals



Enable the Construction of a New Pregones Theater Space



SUMMARY

Demolish the existing out-of-code wood frame house at 571 Walton Avenue to enable to development of a new building for community programs and administration.

DRI FUNDING REQUEST

\$260,000

LOCATION

571 Walton Avenue

STRATEGIES

This project aligns with the following DRI strategies:

- Invest in expanded and improved educational programs and facilities
- Improve the visibility of cultural activities, independent artists, and emerging cultural centers
- Identify opportunities for public art
- Build on significant tourism and local employment to drive visitation to institutions and businesses

In addition, this project aligns with the following REDC goals:

- Invest in the future

MAP



PUBLIC SUPPORT

The “promote local art and culture and create new space for artists” strategy received moderate support in a DRI public survey conducted in February/March 2018. The strategies “improve the visibility of cultural activities, independent artists, and emerging cultural centers” and “establish and preserve affordable work space for entrepreneurs and nonprofits” received high support in a public voting exercise at Public Open House #1.

DESCRIPTION

Pregones/Puerto Rican Traveling Theater (PRTT) is a prominent Latino arts organization with performance space in the Bronx and Manhattan, including its headquarters on Walton Avenue within the DRI Study Area. Pregones/PRTT champions the creation and performance of original musical theater and plays based on Puerto Rican/Latino cultures, as well as the presentation of artists who share a commitment to the arts and civic enrichment.

In line with its long-term strategic plan, Pregones has raised over \$6.6 million in City of New York capital funds to replace the out-of-code wood frame house at 571 Walton Avenue, which currently houses the organization’s offices and meeting space, with a modern facility that will serve as an organizational headquarters and house artist rehearsal, studio, and performance space. This is Pregones’ first major upgrade since the 2005 inauguration of the adjacent 130-seat theater at 575 Walton Avenue.

While the funds Pregones has secured are sufficient to construct a new facility, the funds may not be used for the first step of the project – demolition of the existing home – and therefore the \$6.6 million allocation is currently on hold. This project would directly fund demolition, thereby unlocking City capital grants, enabling the project to proceed, and minimizing the impact of cost escalation should the project be delayed any further.

The project, once initiated, represents a significant investment in the South Bronx arts community. The new structure will total at least 5,000 SF over two stories. (The building’s foundation is being designed to allow future vertical expansion.) The building will include:

- Headquarters for Pregones/PRTT
- Two multi-purpose rooms for live performance and rehearsal, training and education programs, and incubation of new performances by members of the Pregones/PRTT ensemble;

- Two dedicated studios for music and video production and editing, including telepresence (live streaming); and
- Temporary housing for artists, including visiting artists and emergency artist housing.

In addition to expanding performance and rehearsal space, the new multi-purpose space will allow Pregones/PRTT to host all programming onsite, strengthening the Walton Avenue hub as an arts destination and creating greater synergies across Pregones' programs. (Currently, Pregones must hold certain education programs offsite due to a lack of space.)

JOBS CREATED

Pregones intends to hire 3 additional full-time staff members within the next three years which will be largely attributable to the programmatic expansion enabled by the new building. In addition, expanded performance space will result in additional part-time, front-of-house positions, including ushers and ticketing personnel.

OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTY

Pregones/PRTT owns the subject property and building. It holds a mortgage with the prior property owner of 571 Walton Avenue, but has the approval of the property owner to proceed with this project.

ANTICIPATED REVITALIZATION BENEFITS

Short Term: During the build-out phase, expenditures will create construction jobs and associated revenues for local businesses.

Medium/Long Term: Enable additional cultural programming within the Civic Center, driving visitation and economic growth. Improve the quality and quantity of artistic output emerging from the Civic Center.

OWNERSHIP

Pregones Theater/Puerto Rican Traveling Theater is a prominent Latino arts organization with performance space in the Bronx and Manhattan. It has a professional staff of eight, and an annual budget in excess of \$1.25 million as of 2016.

PARTNERS

The **NYC Department of Design and Construction** will manage demolition and construction of the new building, including procurement. The NYC Department of Cultural Affairs will administer all capital grants and serve as the City's overall project manager.

FUTURE USE OF STRUCTURE

The building would be used as a performance and rehearsal space, artist studios, editing facility, and offices. With the enhanced foundations, the building could be expanded to allow for additional space for these uses.

BUDGET

Demolition Costs: \$200,000
 Demolition Contingency (30%): \$60,000
 Building Construction (incl. Contingency): \$6,025,000
 Design Fees & Allowances: \$615,000
Total: \$6,900,000

REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

The NYC Department of Buildings must issue all necessary permits for construction and demolition.



FUNDING SOURCES

DRI: The \$260,000 demolition costs will be fully funded by DRI.

Other Funding: The City of New York has committed \$6,640,000 in capital grants for the completion of the building.

COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS

Pregones Theater/PRTT is a significant local cultural institution, drawing thousands of annual guests and serving as a home base for a rich collection of artists and performers. This project would expand their ability to host programming, drawing in cultural visitors and tourists that may not otherwise visit the Bronx, driving economic development. Additionally, the new space would allow Pregones to host more artists for project incubation, increasing the artistic output of those affiliated with Pregones, further raising its profile and driving cultural growth.

**TIMEFRAME FOR
IMPLEMENTATION AND
PROJECT READINESS**

Months 1 – 9: Design and Permitting

Months 9 – 12: Demolition

Months 12 – 36: Construction

REPORTING

Key metrics for Pregones to track include:

- Number of productions and events held at the new space
- Number of attendees of performances
- Number of artists and other program attendees engaged



Refresh the Bronx Walk of Fame with Updated Signs and Branding



SUMMARY

Update the Bronx Walk of Fame by redesigning, replacing, and regrouping signs along the Grand Concourse between 149th Street and 167th Street, and creating a digital directory to draw visitors.

DRI FUNDING REQUEST

\$250,000

LOCATION

Grand Concourse, between 149th Street and 167th Street

STRATEGIES

This project aligns with the following DRI strategies:

- Showcase the community's history and culture in public spaces
- Build on significant tourism and local employment to drive visitation to institutions and businesses
- Improve the visibility of cultural activities, independent artists, and emerging cultural centers
- Identify opportunities for public art

In addition, this project aligns with the following REDC goals:

- Improve quality of life

MAP



PUBLIC SUPPORT

The “increase tourism and visitor spending” strategy received moderate support in a DRI public survey conducted in February/March 2018. This project received moderate support in a public voting exercise at Public Open House #2. The strategies “showcase the community’s history and culture in public spaces” and “improve the visibility of cultural activities, independent artists, and emerging cultural centers” received high support in a public voting exercise at Public Open House #1.

DESCRIPTION

The Bronx Walk of Fame, established in 1997, has honored nearly 120 notable Bronxites with decorative signs along the Grand Concourse between 138th Street and 161st Street. Every year during “Bronx Week” – presently held in May – the Bronx Borough President and community leaders induct four to five notable individuals who were either born in the Bronx or have a strong connection to the borough. The inductions are meant to celebrate Bronx heritage and provide a daily reminder for residents, students, and visitors of the accomplishments of their former and current neighbors. Notable inductees include Colin Powell, Neil deGrasse Tyson, Stanley Kubrick, and Grandmaster Flash & the Furious Five.

The existing Bronx Walk of Fame signs, some now more than 20 years old, are outdated, several signs are missing, and the sign design makes honoree names difficult to read from the sidewalk level. Further, signs are arranged based on year of placement rather than by theme, and there is no easy-to-access directory of the honorees and the location of their signs.

The Bronx Tourism Council, the division of the Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation that manages Bronx Week and the Walk of Fame, seeks to modernize the Walk in four ways:

1. Redesign and replace the signs along the Grand Concourse;
2. Shift the boundaries of the Walk of Fame to start from 149th Street and extend to 167th Street, one block north of the Bronx Museum; and
3. Group honorees together by category (e.g. hip-hop artists, film and television stars, authors) to enhance the appeal of individual sections to residents and visitors. These themed sign clusters would be strategically located to maximize traffic – for example,

the hip-hop artists would be displayed at 149th Street and Grand Concourse, parallel to the planned Universal Hip-Hop Museum at Exterior Street.

4. Develop bios for all inductees, a walking map, and an interactive digital map for visitors to help them locate individual signs and educate visitors on the significance of each honoree.

OWNERSHIP

The Bronx Tourism Council (BTC), a division of the **Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation (BOEDC)**, will be responsible for designing, installing, and maintaining the signs. Bronx Tourism Council was established in 1991 and supports a coalition of more than 100 Bronx institutions including the Wildlife Conservation Society, the New York Yankees, and the New York Botanical Garden.

PARTNERS

BTC has an existing maintenance agreement with the **NYC Department of Transportation (NYCDOT)**, which would be amended to accommodate the new boundaries and signs.

CAPACITY

BTC has overseen the Bronx Walk of Fame for more than a decade, and manages the installation of new signs each spring/summer. BTC runs numerous events each year in the Bronx, including Bronx Week, during which new Bronx Walk of Fame inductees are introduced.

BUDGET

Redesign of Walk of Fame Signs: \$60,000
 Digital marketing and website content creation: \$40,000
 Fabrication and installation of 125 new signs: \$100,000
 Contingency & Cost Escalation (25%): \$50,000
Total: \$250,000

FUNDING SOURCES

DRI: This project would be fully funded by DRI.

Other Public Funding: BTC will manage ongoing maintenance and sign replacement, and organize and fund ongoing events to promote the Walk of Fame and induct new members.



COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS

The Bronx Walk of Fame is intended as a tourism draw; enhancing and reorganizing the Walk will bring additional visitors into the area. This is particularly significant for the southern section of the Walk of Fame, envisioned to be the hip-hop section, as the Universal Hip-Hop Museum will be situated on 149th Street. The Walk of Fame could extend the visits of museum tourists to the area, driving economic activity along the Grand Concourse.

REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

- The Public Design Commission will need to approve the design of the signs.
- NYCDOT will need to amend its maintenance agreement with the Bronx Tourism Council.
- For portions of projects in rights-of-way, NYCDOT Department of Transportation permits, and standards compliance are required

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND PROJECT READINESS

Months 1 – 6: Complete signage redesign and digital content creation
Months 7 – 10: Fabrication of signs
Months 11 – 12: Install redesigned signs along the Grand Concourse in select locations
May 2019: Formal unveiling of first new batch of honorees under the new design system

REPORTING

Key metrics for the Bronx Tourism Council to track include:

- Number of visitors to the Bronx Walk of Fame
- Number of logins to iLoveTheBronx.com



Create a More Welcoming Gateway at the 161st Street Station



SUMMARY

Enhance the existing concrete medians outside the E. 161st Street-Yankee Stadium subway station with improved landscaping to create a modern, attractive gateway to the Bronx.

DRI FUNDING REQUEST

\$227,000

LOCATION

E. 161st Street between River and Gerard Avenues

STRATEGIES

This project aligns with the following DRI strategies:

- Make streetscapes more pedestrian-friendly through lighting, plantings, and sidewalk improvements
- Support consistent street activity along major connecting corridors
- Enhance navigability through wayfinding and other branding strategies
- Identify opportunities for public art

In addition, this project aligns with the following REDC goals:

- Improve quality of life

MAP



PUBLIC SUPPORT

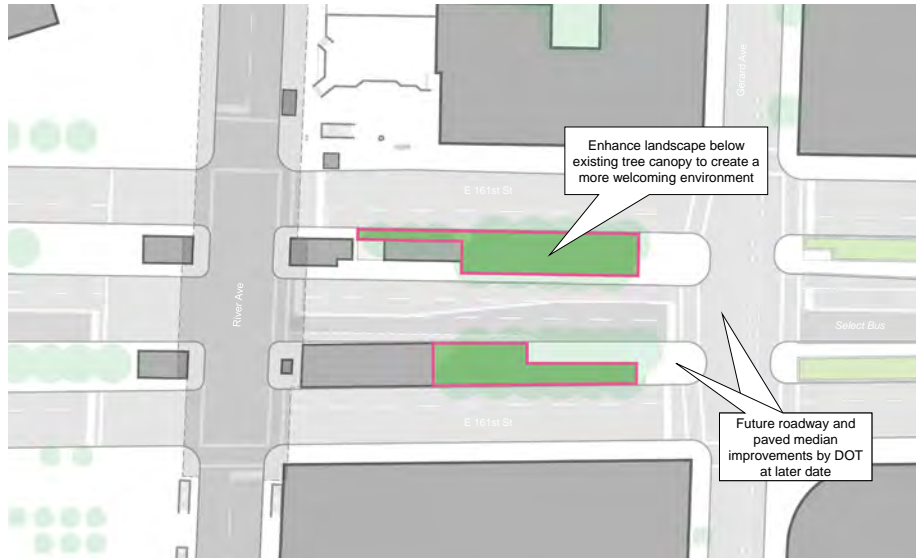
The “improve the appearance of streets with better lighting, plantings and design” strategy received high support in a DRI public survey conducted in February/March 2018. This project received high support in a public voting exercise at Public Open House #2. The strategy “make streetscapes more pedestrian-friendly through lighting, plantings and sidewalk improvements” received high support in a public voting exercise at Public Open House #1.

DESCRIPTION

The block of E. 161st Street between River and Gerard Avenues – immediately outside the 161st Street-Yankee Stadium subway station – is one of the most visible streetscapes in the borough, seeing millions of Yankee Stadium visitors annually and tens of thousands of daily residents and workers. Yet the streetscape does not present an attractive gateway to the borough. Instead, visitors are met by narrow sidewalks, roadways in disrepair, and outdated public structures.

Several important steps to improve the area’s visual appearance are underway: the MTA will begin stripping and repainting the elevated subway structure in the spring of 2019, and the NYC Department of Transportation (NYCDOT) has included a major roadway reconstruction of E. 161st Street as a high-priority capital request. The latter project will ultimately address buckling in the roadbed and uneven crosswalks. This project would complement these planned and proposed investments by enhancing the expansive concrete raised medians along E. 161st Street with plantings and improved landscaping. These medians, presently lined with trees but barren at the ground level, will brighten the streetscape and create a modern, attractive entranceway to the Bronx.

The Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation (BOEDC), would coordinate this project. BOEDC would work collaboratively with the 161st Street Business Improvement District and The Bronx Rox, a volunteer organization led by residents of nearby cooperative residences, to design and maintain the proposed investment. It is anticipated that The Bronx Rox’s volunteers would supplement the BID’s capacity to maintain and replenish the plantings in the near term. In the long term, the NYCDOT has expressed receptiveness to taking on maintenance, pending review of the effectiveness of a new vendor maintenance contract in place on the Grand Concourse.



OWNERSHIP

The **Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation (BOEDC)**, the Bronx Tourism Council, will be responsible for the execution of this project.

PARTNERS

NYCDOT owns the raised median planters and has approved enhanced planting. The **161st Street BID** would assist with the design and maintenance of the plaza. **The Bronx Rox**, a volunteer-based resident organization, will contribute to ongoing maintenance.

BUDGET

Median Plantings: \$218,000
Cost Escalation (4%): \$9,000
Total: \$227,000

FUNDING SOURCES

DRI: The \$227,000 installation cost will be fully funded by DRI.
Other Funding: The Bronx Rox and 161st Street BID will provide ongoing maintenance services.

COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS

E. 161st Street is a vital corridor within the Bronx Civic Center, connecting to the borough's legal and government center and the borough's largest visitor attraction, Yankee Stadium. The corridor sees more than 3 million passers-by annually; community leaders have sought to draw more of those visitors past Gerard Avenue to the Grand Concourse and beyond, to visit local attractions such as the Bronx Museum of the Arts and the Andrew Freedman Home Cultural Center. Improving the visual character of this corridor can help build a stronger local identity, increase visitation and average lengths of stay, enhance perceptions of safety, and encourage private investment.

REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

- For portions of projects in roadway or public rights-of-way, NYCDOT permits, and standards compliance are required.
- The Public Design Commission will approve any permanent installations on public property that are not part of the City's standard urban design guidelines.
- If improvements affect trees, NYC Parks Department Forestry Permits are required.
- Standards compliance and infrastructure alteration subject to Con Edison requirements
- The NYC Department of Environmental Protection will need to review all rainwater plans for impacts on the sewer system.

TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND PROJECT READINESS

Months 1-6: Planning, contracting, and design

Months 6-9: Planting

REPORTING

Key metrics for the Bronx Tourism Council to track include

- Rents for retail and office space along corridors targeted for streetscape improvement.



Section VI: OTHER PRIORITY PROJECTS

10 additional projects were identified as priorities and recommended for future public and private funding.

Other Priority Projects

Project Name	Description	Responsible Entity
A. Reconstruct the 153rd Street Bridge	Replace the 153rd Street Bridge over the Metro-North rail tracks to improve traffic and pedestrian flow, and better connect the Melrose community with the emerging activity node at Lower Concourse.	NYCDOT
B. Convert the 149th Street Bridge into a Public Plaza	Create an expanded, programmable sidewalk plaza on the 149th Street Bridge, connecting Lower Concourse to the Hub and providing space for vendors, art, and other activities.	Third Avenue BID
C. Rehabilitate Mullaly Park's Historic Skate Park	Renovate and rehabilitate Mullaly Park's skate park, the first ramp park established in New York City to serve skateboarders, BMX freestylers, and other "extreme sports" enthusiasts.	NYC Parks
D. Create a Gateway Plaza at the 161st Street McDonald's	Partner with McDonald's to build an enhanced plaza at the McDonald's site directly across the street from Yankee Stadium.	McDonald's/ Franchisee
E. Create a Permanent Home for the Bronx Innovation Factory	Identify a location for the Bronx Innovation Factory (BXIF), a center for advanced manufacturing led by, and focused on serving, women and people of color.	CommonWise Education
F. Transform the MTA Control House at 149th Street into a Colorful Icon	Refurbish and install decorative lighting and signage on the historically significant MTA control house located on the southwest corner of the Grand Concourse and 149th Street.	MTA
G. Upgrade the Conference Center at NYC Health + Hospitals Lincoln	Invest in upgrades to the existing meeting rooms and auditorium at NYC Health + Hospitals Lincoln to create a conference center that can host events sponsored by nonprofits, educational institutions, businesses, and others.	Health + Hospitals Lincoln
H. Develop a Network of Public Art Across the Civic Center	Install a network of public art and wayfinding signage to promote local culture, enhance the Civic Center's brand, and point visitors and residents to key cultural and historical sites.	TBD
I. Create a Gateway into the Bronx Walk of Fame	Create a distinctive gateway to the Bronx Walk of Fame that attracts visitors and creates a strong sense of place for the Walk.	BOEDC
J. Improve Accessibility to Franz Sigel Park	Open up access to Franz Sigel Park, an important local asset that is walled off and elevated from the street, to increase use and enhance safety along the Grand Concourse.	NYC Parks/ NYCDOT

Reconstruct the 153rd Street Bridge



SUMMARY

Replace the 153rd Street Bridge over the Metro-North rail tracks to improve traffic and pedestrian flow, and better connect the Melrose community with the emerging activity node at Lower Concourse.

LOCATION

E. 153rd Street between Park Avenue and Concourse Village West

DRI STRATEGIES

This project supports the following DRI strategies:

- Improve connectivity and transit service between neighborhoods to reduce travel times
- Make streetscapes more pedestrian-friendly through lighting, plantings, and sidewalk improvements

DESCRIPTION	<p>The proposed 153rd Street Bridge would replace a two-lane bridge that was built in 1902, closed in 1988, and demolished in 1992. According to the New York City Department of Transportation's (NYCDOT) 2009 TIGER application for the construction of the bridge, the demolition of that bridge has increased traffic on the 149th Street vehicular overpass to the south, and 161st Street to the north, due to the absence of any other through-streets in between. As the area has developed with more than 1,000 housing units built and underway, traffic and pedestrian/bicycle circulation issues are expected to worsen.</p> <p>The construction of a new four-lane bridge with pedestrian sidewalks and bicycle lanes would provide an essential east-west connection between the eastern and western portions of the Civic Center, and the Bronx as a whole. It would also serve to divert traffic from the through-streets to the north and south, extending the lifespan of the infrastructure on those streets. Per the 2009 TIGER application, the design and construction of the bridge is projected to take between four and five years.</p>
ANTICIPATED BENEFITS	<p>Short Term: During the construction period, construction spending will support local businesses with revenue and employment.</p> <p>Long/Medium Term: Create a safe east-west connection between Melrose and Lower Concourse. Extend the lifespan of existing bridges to the north and south of 153rd Street.</p>
ESTIMATED COST	\$100,000,000 (pending review by NYCDOT)
RESPONSIBLE PARTIES & POTENTIAL PARTNERS	NYCDOT would serve as the lead of this project.

Convert the 149th Street Bridge into a Public Plaza



SUMMARY

Create an expanded, programmable sidewalk plaza on the 149th Street Bridge, connecting Lower Concourse to the Hub and providing space for vendors, art, and other activities.

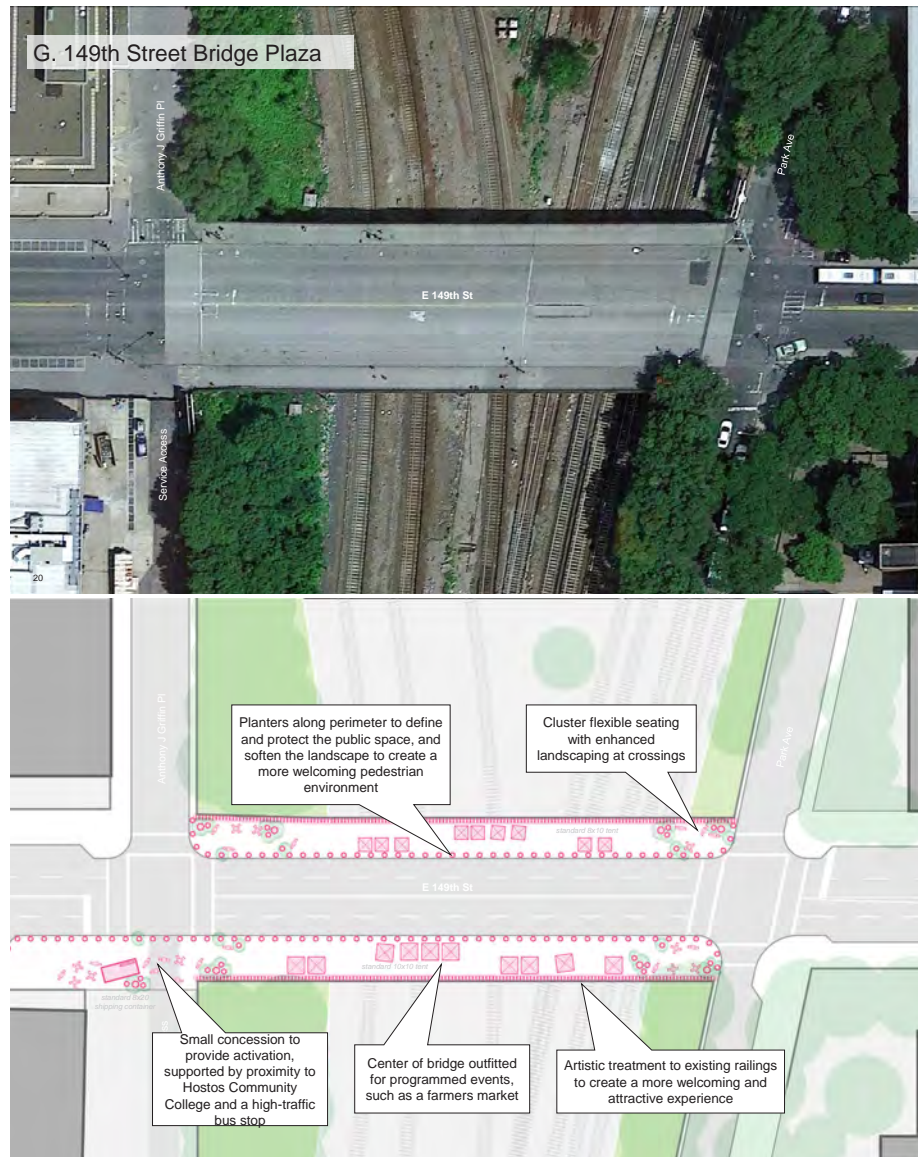
LOCATION

149th Street between A.J. Griffin Place and Morris Avenue

DRI STRATEGIES

This project supports the following DRI strategies:

- Make streetscapes more pedestrian friendly through lighting, plantings, and sidewalk improvements
- Support consistent street activity along major connecting corridors
- Enhance street life by encouraging outdoor dining, seasonal markets, and the use of public spaces
- Activate, improve, and expand parks, plazas, and other public spaces
- Enhance navigability through wayfinding and other branding strategies
- Identify opportunities for public art



DESCRIPTION

The quarter-mile stretch of E. 149th Street between the Grand Concourse and Morris Avenue – a key connector between Lower Concourse and the Hub – is an unappealing streetscape for pedestrians, with low lighting and limited plantings or street furniture breaking up the concrete expanse. In the middle of this gap is a vehicular overpass connecting Hostos Community College and Lincoln Hospital.

This project would convert the bridge into a pedestrian-friendly public plaza through a series of interventions that collectively would create a public space for relaxation and a signature gateway to the Civic Center, and enhance perceptions of activity and safety along the critical 149th Street corridor. These interventions, which may be phased, include:

- Repainting of two unused parking lanes to extend available pedestrian space.
- Installation of planters to protect the expanded pedestrian space from vehicular traffic.

- Provision of movable seating and tables.
- Space for a mobile food and beverage concessionaire.
- Installation of temporary rotating art displays along the bridge railings and fencing.
- Potentially installation of artistic lighting along the fencing.

To initiate the plaza designation, the Third Avenue BID – the boundaries of which are expected to extend to Grand Concourse by late 2018 – would submit an application to the NYC Department of Transportation’s (NYCDOT) NYC Plaza Program. Upon designation as a plaza, NYCDOT would provide funds for street improvements and furniture arrays. The BID could also submit an application with DOT Art for temporary art displays on the bridge. To ensure continued maintenance of the new public space, the Third Avenue BID would enter into a maintenance and concession agreement with NYCDOT. An agreement would also be required to operate a kiosk alongside the bridge.

ANTICIPATED BENEFITS

The quarter-mile stretch between Grand Concourse and Morris Avenue on 149th Street is desolate and unattractive. This stretch is regularly traversed by the 7,000 students attending Hostos Community College and the thousands of employees of Lincoln Hospital. Additionally, the area is growing significantly, with the addition of more than 175,000 SF of mixed-use space at the Bronx Post Place (adjacent to the bridge), and more than 1,100 units of residential housing planned or in development in the blocks immediately west of the bridge.

The transformation of the unattractive bridge into a pedestrian-friendly public plaza with unique seating and decorative lights would create a welcoming gateway for these users and visitors, increasing the likelihood they will lengthen their stay in the area, driving economic activity. Moreover, a transformed bridge will serve to connect Lower Concourse node and the Hub node, two areas of significant and increasing activity.

ESTIMATED COST

\$4,500,000

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES & POTENTIAL PARTNERS

The Third Avenue BID would manage the plaza and be the recipient of the funds. NYCDOT would need to establish maintenance and concession agreements with the BID.

Rehabilitate Mullaly Park's Historic Skate Park



SUMMARY

Renovate and rehabilitate Mullaly Park's skate park, the first ramp park established in New York City to serve skateboarders, BMX freestylers, and other "extreme sports" enthusiasts.

LOCATION

E. 164th Street & River Avenue

DRI STRATEGIES

This project supports the following DRI strategies:

- Activate, improve, and expand parks, plazas, and other public spaces
- Improve the visibility of cultural activities, independent artists, and emerging cultural centers
- Showcase the community's history and culture in public spaces
- Build on significant tourism and local employment to drive visitation to institutions and businesses

DESCRIPTION	<p>Mullaly Park’s skate park is NYC’s original ramp park, established in 1988, with a mission of providing a safe environment for youth to be active, creative, and off the streets. Since 1988, the skate park has been a popular feature at Mullaly, with skateboarders, roller-bladers, roller-skaters, and BMX-riders practicing and competing on half-pipe and jump ramps. The skate park has been known to attract audiences from across the New York City region, thereby serving as a tourism and cultural draw.</p> <p>General wear-and-tear, and advances in ramp equipment, have raised the need to replace the ramps and improve facilities overall. Renovations would entail repaving the skating area and surrounding sidewalk, replacing fencing around the skate park area, installing new skate ramps, and installing new security lighting. These investments would improve the function and safety of the park for current and future users, making the facility a visual asset for the community and for sidewalk spectators.</p>
ANTICIPATED BENEFITS	<p>Short Term: During the construction phase, would support local businesses and provide construction jobs.</p> <p>Long/Medium Term: Provide expanded options for fitness and play in the community. Enhance the visual and aesthetic quality of the park perimeter. Preserve history of BMX and skateboarding in the Bronx. Attract new visitors to the Bronx.</p>
ESTIMATED COST	<p>\$3,500,000</p>
RESPONSIBLE PARTIES & POTENTIAL PARTNERS	<p>The New York City Department of Parks & Recreation (NYC Parks) would be responsible for the all construction and maintenance.</p>

Create a Gateway Plaza at the 161st Street McDonald's



SUMMARY

Partner with McDonald's to build an enhanced plaza at the McDonald's site directly across the street from Yankee Stadium.

LOCATION

51-67 E 161st Street, at River Avenue

DRI STRATEGIES

This project supports the following DRI strategies:

- Activate, improve, and expand parks, plazas, and other public spaces
- Support consistent street activity along major connecting corridors
- Enhance navigability through wayfinding and other branding strategies
- Identify opportunities for public art
- Make streetscapes more pedestrian-friendly through lighting, plantings, and sidewalk improvements

DESCRIPTION

The plaza on the northeast corner of E. 161st Street and River Avenue is for many visitors to Yankee Stadium the first impression they have of the Bronx, prominently visible from most subway exits. The plaza, which is adjacent to a McDonald's restaurant, owned by McDonald's, and operated by a local franchisee, is currently an elevated space featuring concrete tables and chairs, and umbrellas, and has not been renovated in more than two decades.

McDonald's and its franchisee are planning to undertake a wholesale renovation of the restaurant façade and interior, and have contemplated improvements to the outdoor plaza. This project would partner with McDonald's to enhance the franchisee's base package of improvements to create a more welcoming gateway that could double as a performance space and/or visitor center. Improvements may include:

- A level plaza to create a larger, contiguous space for events and gatherings.
- New, modern, flexible furniture, including modular booths capable of accommodating a range of seating layouts, including for daily dining and special events.
- Catenary lighting to provide a unified appearance and improved security at night.
- One or more public art installations.
- Wayfinding signage to identify local attractions, including the Bronx Children's Museum, the Bronx Museum, and the Andrew Freedman Home.
- A small raised stage to accommodate performances.
- Removal of outdated signage and street furniture..

ANTICIPATED BENEFITS

E. 161st Street is a vital corridor within the Bronx Civic Center, connecting to the borough's legal and government center and the borough's largest visitor attraction, Yankee Stadium. The corridor sees more than 3 million passers-by annually; community leaders have sought to draw more of those visitors past Gerard Avenue to the Grand Concourse and beyond, to visit local attractions such as the Bronx Museum and Andrew Freedman Home. Improving the visual character of this corridor can help build a stronger local identity, increase visitation and average lengths of stay, enhance perceptions of safety, and encourage private investment.

ESTIMATED COST

\$1,750,000

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES & POTENTIAL PARTNERS

McDonald's and its franchisee would be responsible for the construction of the plaza.

Create a Permanent Home for the Bronx Innovation Factory

SUMMARY

The Bronx Innovation Factory (BXIF) is a center for advanced manufacturing led by, and focused on serving, women and people of color. The BXIF leverages the borough's existing entrepreneurial talent and manufacturing base to create new production and innovation capacity that will be owned by and geared toward Bronx residents.

LOCATION

To be determined. Current prototype facility is 2431 Morris Avenue, at E. Fordham Road.

DRI STRATEGIES

This project supports the following DRI strategies:

- Stimulate investment through business incubators tied to growth industries such as tech and life sciences
- Establish and preserve affordable work space for entrepreneurs and nonprofits
- Provide economic support to local businesses to help them thrive and expand
- Provide space and equipment to support workforce programs connecting residents to emerging businesses and industries

DESCRIPTION

The Bronx Innovation Factory (BXIF) – a project of CommonWise Education, in partnership with MIT CoLab and Mondragon Cooperative Corporation, an industrial business cooperative based in Spain – is a proposed center for advanced manufacturing led by, and focused on serving, women and people of color. The BXIF seeks to leverage the borough's entrepreneurial talent and manufacturing base to create new production and innovation capacity that will be owned by and geared toward Bronx residents.

The BXIF currently operates a prototype makerspace facility in the Fordham neighborhood, and is in the process of raising funds for a feasibility study for a permanent BXIF facility. This facility would:

- Allow the organization to provide shared fabrication facilities, targeted business incubation, and training in manufacturing and design skills, entrepreneurship, and economic democracy.
- Focus on new product and business ideas that draw on Bronx residents' lived experiences and solve real-world challenges not currently being addressed by conventional markets.
- Provide education on shared ownership business models, social and environmental impact, urban planning, and entrepreneurs' role in the larger economy.

MIT CoLab and the BXIF are partners of the New York City Economic Development Corporation's FutureWorks initiative to expand advanced manufacturing across the five boroughs, listed as one of 12 Futureworks Shops where product entrepreneurs can access resources and discounted services to build and grow their businesses.

ANTICIPATED BENEFITS

Short Term: Provide access to fabrication equipment and education for Bronx residents, especially youth; connect existing businesses to digital fabrication; identify and support promising new businesses and products, with a focus on shared-wealth businesses.

Medium Term: Launch new businesses that support shared wealth creation; place Bronx residents in high-paying jobs in industry; produce innovative products and businesses that meet the needs of Bronx residents.

Long Term: Reposition the Bronx as a center for quality production and innovation; enhance the economic, environmental, and social health of the Bronx. Improve employment opportunities and support the development of new and existing businesses.

ESTIMATED COST

\$1,000,000 for equipment at the prototype facility and a feasibility study for a freestanding facility.

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES &
POTENTIAL PARTNERS

The Bronx Innovation Factory is a project of CommonWise Education in partnership with MIT CoLab and Mondragon Cooperative Corporation, an industrial business cooperative based in Spain. CommonWise Education provides education and training to entrepreneurs who seek to build innovative social enterprises that build democracy, social equity, and environmental sustainability. Its principal effort, the Bronx Cooperative Development Initiative (BCDI), is a collaboration of community organizers, anchor institutions, organized labor, businesses, and academic institutions. Their focus is to end generational poverty in the Bronx through shared wealth and democratic ownership. BCDI aims to achieve this by leveraging the significant assets of the borough to build shared wealth and increase local decision-making over economic assets.

Transform the MTA Control House at 149th Street into a Colorful Icon



SUMMARY

Refurbish and install decorative lighting and signage on the historically significant MTA control house located on the southwest corner of the Grand Concourse and 149th Street.

LOCATION

The southwest corner of Grand Concourse and 149th Street

DRI STRATEGIES

This project supports the following DRI strategies:

- Make streetscapes more pedestrian-friendly through lighting, plantings, and sidewalk improvements
- Incorporate technology to enhance the pedestrian experience and improve accessibility
- Enhance navigability through wayfinding and other branding strategies
- Improve connectivity and transit service between neighborhoods to reduce travel times

DESCRIPTION

An MTA control house at the southwest corner of the Grand Concourse and 149th Street is registered in the National Registry of Historic Places as the Mott Avenue Control House, and served originally as an ornamental entrance to the subway system. Currently, the control house serves no functional purpose, is in disrepair, and is an eyesore at a key gateway to the Civic Center.

The MTA, which owns the control house, is planning to repurpose the control house to build an elevator to the 149th Street/Grand Concourse station. While the design process will not begin until late 2018, the MTA anticipates preserving the control house structure as the street-level entrance to the elevator. The elevator project is projected to begin in 2019, and is fully funded in the MTA's current capital plan.

Should the MTA be able to preserve the control house, it has expressed willingness to consider artistic enhancements that would create a more attractive gateway for the area. One option would transform the structure into a "color cube" lit by overhead LED arrays that could be programmed to modulate and/or display public art. This would involve installing flexible, decorative lighting on the structure. Paired with this, the MTA expects to refurbish the structure and restore its historically significant components, including the tiled signage.

ANTICIPATED BENEFITS

Short Term: During the construction period, construction spending will support local businesses with revenue and employment.

Long/Medium Term: Enhance perceptions of safety and place within Lower Concourse, driving visitation and investment in the area.

ESTIMATED COST

\$500,000 to \$1,000,000 for an enhanced lighting display

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES & POTENTIAL PARTNERS

The MTA as the owner of the control house would serve as the primary responsible party.

Upgrade the Conference Center at NYC Health + Hospitals Lincoln



SUMMARY

Invest in upgrades to the existing meeting rooms and auditorium at NYC Health + Hospitals Lincoln to create a conference center that can host events sponsored by nonprofits, educational institutions, businesses, and others.

LOCATION

234 East 149th Street

DRI STRATEGIES

This project supports the following DRI strategies:

- Provide economic support to local businesses to help them thrive and expand
- Provide space and equipment to support workforce programs connecting residents to emerging businesses and industries

DESCRIPTION

NYC Health + Hospitals Lincoln (formerly known as Lincoln Medical Center) has been a mainstay serving the South Bronx for more than five decades. On its ground floor in the eastern wing, it houses six small to medium-size meeting rooms totaling 5,800 square feet and an auditorium totaling 8,500 square feet. Lincoln has historically rented this space to nonprofit and industry trade organizations for conferences and community meetings. The space, while accessible, is dated and requires a refurbishment to serve a wider spectrum of events and audiences.

Specific upgrades envisioned by Lincoln include:

- Replacement of auditorium seats to expand its seating capacity from 237 to 300.
- Upgraded equipment in the auditorium control room.
- Installation of translational technology in new seating.
- Upgraded sound and projection equipment in two of the small conference rooms.
- Rehabilitation of all conference rooms.
- Enhanced signage on the 149th Street and Morris Avenue entrances.
- Upgrades to the main entrance on Morris Avenue.

ANTICIPATED BENEFITS

Short Term: During the construction period, construction spending will support local businesses with revenue and employment.

Long/Medium Term: Create an affordable meeting and conference space for non-profits and local businesses in the Civic Center. Attract local conferences, driving economic activity within Lower Concourse node.

ESTIMATED COST

\$500,000

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES & POTENTIAL PARTNERS

NYC Health + Hospitals Lincoln will serve as the lead for this project.

Develop a Network of Public Art Across the Civic Center

SUMMARY

Install a network of public art and wayfinding signage to promote local culture, enhance the Civic Center's brand, and point visitors and residents to key cultural and historical sites.

LOCATION

District-Wide

DRI STRATEGIES

This project supports the following DRI strategies:

- Improve the visibility of cultural activities, independent artists, and emerging cultural centers
- Identify opportunities for public art
- Showcase the community's history and culture in public spaces
- Build on significant tourism and local employment to drive visitation to institutions and businesses
- Activate, improve, and expand parks, plazas, and other public spaces

DESCRIPTION

The Study Area is home to several of the Bronx's most significant cultural centers, including the Bronx Museum of the Arts, the Hostos Center for Arts & Culture, Pregones Theater, the Andrew Freedman Home, and soon the Bronx Children's Museum, Bronx Music Hall, and Universal Hip-Hop Museum. Yet, as a result of their disparate locations, the area's deep cultural relevance is not readily evident, and understanding the geographic relationship of one asset to another can be challenging. A district-wide network of public art at key locations – eye-catching structures, installations, and surfaces – would draw attention to cultural centers, establish the Study Area as a cultural destination, promote local artists and organizations, and in certain cases serve as wayfinding, pointing visitors to local assets.

Strategies may include:

- Identifying locations for temporary and permanent art commissions, such as Lou Gehrig Plaza, Franz Sigel Park, Joyce Kilmer Park, Railroad Park, Lincoln Hospital, and throughout the Melrose Commons neighborhood.
- Partner with area property owners to make wall spaces available for mural art.
- Explore a customized wayfinding system to direct visitors and residents to local attraction, which may combine physical and digital elements.

ANTICIPATED BENEFITS

Short Term: Increase the number of venues to promote local arts and culture.

Long/Medium Term: Increase awareness of the local arts and cultural community, driving increased tourism to the area. Improve perceptions of neighborhood safety. Strengthen neighborhood identity.

ESTIMATED COST

\$200,000+

**RESPONSIBLE PARTIES &
POTENTIAL PARTNERS**

A cultural or visitation-related organization would need to take the lead in organizing this project. The NYC Department of Cultural Affairs would be a key project partner in commissioning permanent art installations. The NYC Department of Transportation and NYC Department of Parks and Recreation would be key project partners in installations that affect public spaces.

Create a Gateway into the Bronx Walk of Fame

SUMMARY

Create a distinctive gateway to the Bronx Walk of Fame that attracts visitors and creates a strong sense of place for the Walk.

LOCATION

Grand Concourse at 149th Street and/or 161th Street

DRI STRATEGIES

This project supports the following DRI strategies:

- Improve the visibility of cultural activities, independent artists, and emerging cultural centers
- Identify opportunities for public art
- Showcase the community's history and culture in public spaces
- Build on significant tourism and local employment to drive visitation to institutions and businesses
- Activate, improve, and expand parks, plazas, and other public spaces
- Make streetscapes more pedestrian-friendly through lighting, plantings, and sidewalk improvements
- Support consistent street activity along major connecting corridors

DESCRIPTION

The Bronx Walk of Fame, established in 1997, has honored nearly 120 notable Bronxites with decorative signs along the Grand Concourse between 138th Street and 161st Street. The redesign and replacement of the honorary signs and associated digital marketing is proposed for DRI funding. This project would complement those investments by creating a distinctive gateway art installation along the Walk of Fame on the Grand Concourse between 149th Street and 167th Street. The Bronx Tourism Council, a subsidiary of the Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation and the current manager of the Walk of Fame, would be responsible for identifying a site; coordinating approvals with the NYC Department of Transportation (NYCDOT), Public Design Commission, and other agencies; and commissioning and overseeing the installation. The gateway is intended to serve as a tourism draw in its own right and would signify to visitors the significance of the Walk of Fame as a distinct and important place.

ANTICIPATED BENEFITS

Short Term: During the construction period, construction spending will support local businesses with revenue and employment.

Long/Medium Term: Draw additional visitors to the area and improve perceptions of the Grand Concourse and the South Bronx overall.

ESTIMATED COST

To be determined.

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES & POTENTIAL PARTNERS

The Bronx Tourism Council (BTC), a division of the Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation (BOEDC), would be responsible for designing, permitting, installing, and maintaining the gateway.

Improve Accessibility to Franz Sigel Park



SUMMARY

Open up access to Franz Sigel Park, an important local asset that is walled off and elevated from the street, to increase use and enhance safety along the Grand Concourse.

LOCATION

Grand Concourse between 151st and 158th Streets

DRI STRATEGIES

This project supports the following DRI strategies:

- Activate, improve, and expand parks, plazas, and other public spaces
- Support consistent street activity along major connecting corridors
- Enhance street life by encouraging outdoor dining, markets, and use of public spaces
- Identify opportunities for public art

DESCRIPTION

While Franz Sigel Park is one of the most recognizable open spaces in the Study Area, the steep landscape and stone wall along the Grand Concourse limits access to the park. Given the natural landscape, creating additional entry points to the park is challenging; therefore, improvements to the southern and northern points of entry represent the most practical strategies to improve access.

Expanding the entrance at E. 153rd Street into a plaza would create a signature entryway to the park and could support a variety of public amenities, including public art, wayfinding, and programmable event space. With a future realignment of the Grand Concourse planned, the plaza would better connect the park with the community by reducing crossing lengths and replacing the expansive roadway with a softer pedestrian landscape. Elements could include:

- Coordinate with the planned NYCDOT redesign to extend the curb to match the temporary extension currently marked with paint and reflector posts and unify the new plaza area with the park through a distinct paving material.
- Establish an area for signature public art to promote culture and community.
- Provide flexible and permanent furniture options for plaza.
- Improve lighting for the new plaza.
- Install wayfinding information on the side of the restroom facility facing the street, and a mural or other form of art on the remaining sides.
- Remove segments of the perimeter stone wall opposite the restroom facility to improve accessibility and circulation.

Making the northern entrance more accessible and connected to the intersection of the Grand Concourse and E. 158th Street would significantly improve its relationship to visitors arriving from the north. This would be achieved by reconfiguring the existing ramped entrance into a series of switchbacks that achieves a handicapped-accessible slope and leads directly to the intersection at E 158th Street.

ANTICIPATED BENEFITS

Short Term: Enhance pedestrian experience and safety.

Long/Medium Term: Provide additional space for public programming and gatherings, increasing community cohesion and strengthening neighborhood identity. Increase overall use of the park.

ESTIMATED COST

To be determined

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES & POTENTIAL PARTNERS

The NYC Department of Parks and Recreation would be responsible for portions of this project that impact dedicated parkland. The NYC Department of Transportation would be a key partner and responsible for portions of the project that involve streets and sidewalks.

Section VII:

APPENDIX

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