DEVELOPED BY THE CITY OF NEW YORK 2008

SOUTH BRONX INITIATIVE

THE PEOPLE | THE NEIGHBORHOODS | THE VISION

SOUTH BRONX ASSETS & CONTEXT

SOUTH BRONX INITIATIVE STRATEGIC PLAN

The South Bronx is rebounding as an area with safe, vibrant neighborhoods and a growing economy. Guiding this change are grassroots efforts and partnerships between community stakeholders, elected officials, and government agencies committed to improving quality of life and creating new opportunities for current and future residents.

As a result, over $3 billion of public/private investment and new development, including the Boricua Village mixed-use campus, anchor retail at Gateway Center, and Harlem River waterfront parks, will create almost 16,000 construction and permanent jobs and lay the groundwork for additional, sustainable growth.

To guide future land use changes and capital investments that address community concerns, Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg announced the “South Bronx Initiative” (SBI) in 2006 and charged an interagency team, led by the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development and Rebuilding, to identify community priorities and create a coordinated economic development strategy for the area. The team includes the Departments of City Planning (DCP), Housing Preservation and Development (HPD), Parks & Recreation (DPR), Small Business Services (SBS), and Transportation (DOT), and the New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC).

This plan is the product of an extensive planning and outreach process that included over 35 meetings with community stakeholders and elected officials. It articulates a vision and recommendations for strengthening connections between existing assets and recent investments, supporting additional growth, and addressing community concerns. Continued collaboration and dialogue with community stakeholders and elected officials will be essential for implementing the plan and ensuring that a shared vision of a prosperous South Bronx is fully realized in the years to come.

THE PEOPLE

With over 300,000 residents, the SBI study area is home to a diverse immigrant population and the largest youth population in the city.

The area, located in Congressional District 16, had an 8% unemployment rate in 2006, compared to 5% citywide. By improving coordination and targeting investments in after-school and workforce development programs, the City seeks to support young and working adults in their academic development and search for permanent employment.

Since December 2006, the City's Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO) has been implementing initiatives aimed at reducing poverty citywide and addressing specific challenges in high-need, low-income neighborhoods like Mott Haven and Melrose. Through the Young Adult Internship program and Service Learning program, disconnected youth are receiving support from City agencies and community organizations to connect to education, jobs, and leadership development.

Coordinated partnerships to provide training and job placement programs are also helping working adults build their skills and advance their careers. Since 2004, the Workforce1 Center at the Hub has placed more than 5,600 residents in jobs. With three new CEO-funded staff and direct collaboration with community-based organizations, the Center is poised to target South Bronx residents and increase job placements by 100 per quarter.

- Total population in the SBI area is over 300,000 and will grow an additional 10% by 2030.
- 35% of the area's residents are under 18 years of age, compared to 24% citywide.
- Over the past 5 years, almost 300 businesses and 2,454 jobs have been created in the SBI area.
- Over the past 12 months, the Workforce1 Center has issued 470 Individual Training Grant vouchers to residents seeking employment and advancement.

THE NEIGHBORHOODS

While the "South Bronx" originated as a small section of Mott Haven, the name grew to encompass many neighborhoods, each with its unique history and character.

These neighborhoods vary from the growing residential community in Melrose, the bustling retail district at the Hub, and the emerging antiques district in Port Morris, to the historic Art Deco buildings of the Grand Concourse, and the Bronx Civic Center along East 161st Street.

The neighborhoods in the South Bronx are becoming more environmentally sustainable, transit-oriented, and economically diverse, thanks to public/private partnerships that are developing innovative affordable housing projects like Sunflower Way and Via Verde/The Greenway.

The development of the first new mid-rise co-ops and condos in decades, including the Orion in Melrose, will enable moderate and middle-income families to stay in the South Bronx and lay the foundation for balanced retail communities.

Rezonings, too, in Port Morris and Morrisania, have set the stage for creating economically diverse communities, by retaining industrial businesses and jobs for local residents, while encouraging the development of housing and neighborhood retail.

- Over the last 7 years, more than 2,300 units have been built or are under construction on public sites in Melrose Commons, and up to 1,400 more units will come online by 2010.
- Over 2,500 units of moderate and middle-income housing are projected for public and private sites in the SBI area by 2010.
- A new Metro North station at Yankee Stadium, scheduled to open in 2009, will increase public transportation options for residents and visitors year-round.

THE VISION

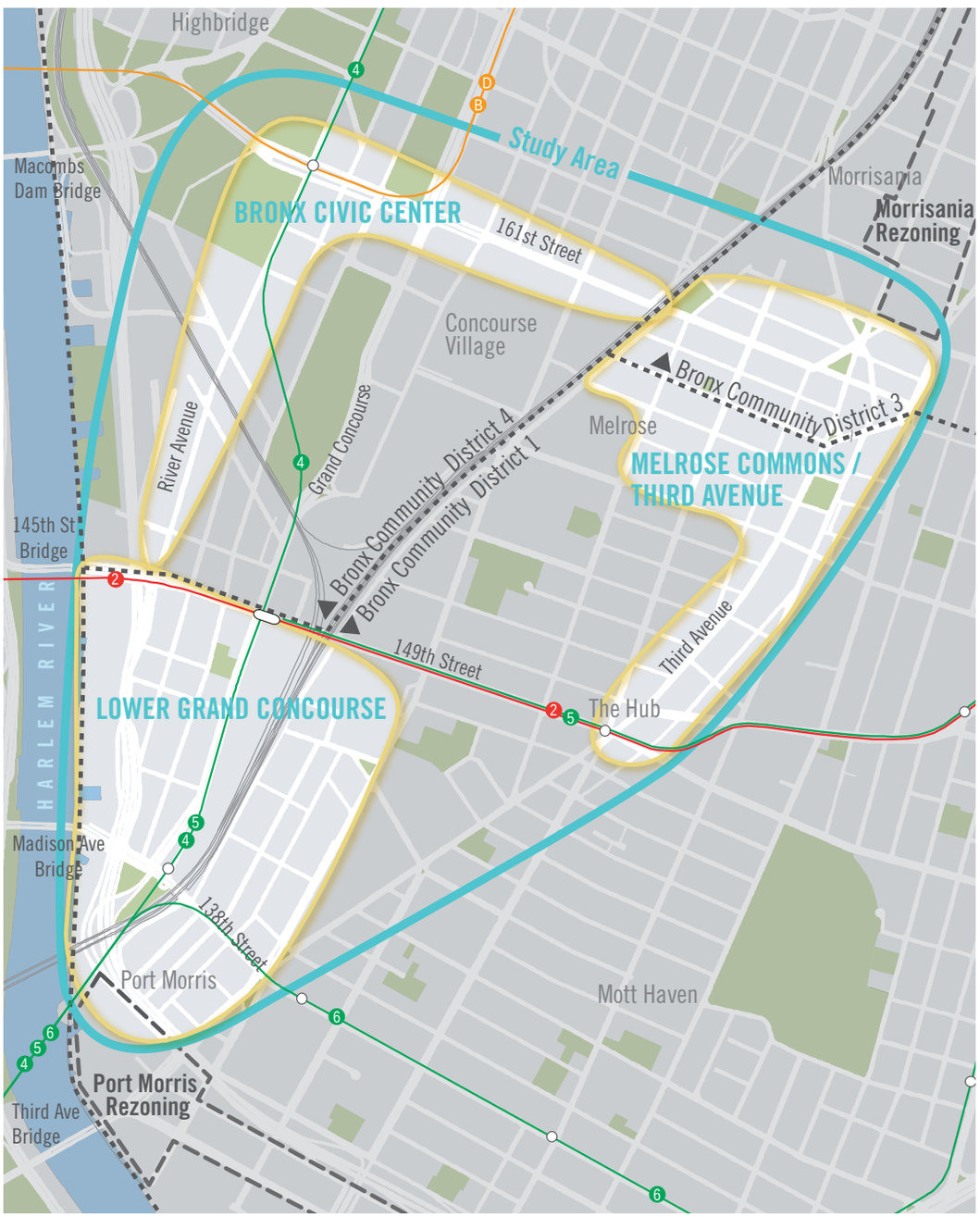
Partnerships between the City, community, and private sector will build upon the South Bronx's existing assets and potential to enhance and sustain revitalized neighborhoods that include:

- Affordable housing for people of diverse incomes;
- Vibrant commercial districts with year-round destinations;
- Attractive streetscapes, public spaces, and parks;
- A publicly-accessible waterfront;
- An efficient transportation network; and
- A diverse economy providing jobs for local residents.

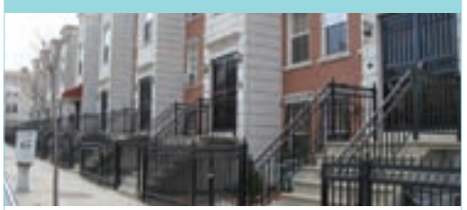
PLAN FOCUS AREAS

This plan seeks to link existing assets with recent investments, support additional growth, and address the community's quality of life concerns. The interagency team focused on three areas with significant opportunities to achieve these goals, given the availability of City-owned land, proximity to transit, and potential to redevelop privately-owned vacant and underutilized land through rezonings.

These three focus areas fall within Community Districts 1, 3, and 4, with major thoroughfares like 149th Street, 161st Street, Third Avenue, and the Grand Concourse providing critical transportation and retail connections.



MELROSE COMMONS / THIRD AVENUE

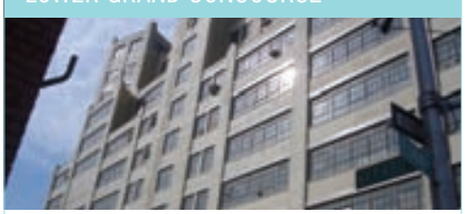


A thriving residential area, where City, community, and private partnerships are establishing a mixed-use, economically diverse neighborhood.

BRONX CIVIC CENTER

An urban center with a strong civic and office core, bolstered by new and enhanced regional destinations like Yankee Stadium, Gateway Center, Harlem River waterfront parks, and the Bronx Museum of the Arts.

LOWER GRAND CONCOURSE



An area surrounding the Grand Concourse, south of East 149th Street, characterized by multi-story industrial loft buildings, excellent highway and subway access, and its proximity to the Harlem River waterfront.

MELROSE COMMONS / THIRD AVENUE

Melrose Commons is the realization of a collaborative process involving an engaged community, the City, and the Bronx Borough President. Since implementation of the Melrose Commons Urban Renewal Plan in 2000, over 2,300 units have been built or are under construction. By 2010, as many as 3,700 new housing units will be built on City-owned sites, with particular attention to urban design and sustainability.

The Hub is a regional commercial center of the South Bronx, where more than 200,000 pedestrians pass through daily. By 2010, there will be approximately 400,000 square feet of retail space built on public sites around Melrose Commons and the Hub. Improved streetscapes and enhanced bus service along Webster or Third Avenue would better connect the growing residential population to the subway system at the Hub, while spurring additional development.

Melrose Commons is envisioned as an attractive mixed-income urban village with balanced neighborhood retail, new parks, and a college campus. It will demonstrate market potential for mixed-income residential development and a diversity of retail in the South Bronx.

Boricua Village

The Hub Retail & Office Center

Via Verde/The Green Way

STRATEGIC ACTIONS

Short-term → Long-term

GOALS

Continue to establish Melrose Commons as a mixed-income & balanced retail community

ACTION ITEMS

Develop last remaining City-owned sites to create affordable housing and ground-floor retail space

Lead Agency: HPD

Strengthen retail corridors by supporting commercial continuity and diversity

Market Melrose Commons to major retailers and support local businesses

Lead Agencies: EDC, SBS

Improve mobility at key intersections and transit service along major corridors

Upgrade Roberto Clemente Plaza, at the E. 149th St./Third Ave. Hub, and reconfigure the E. 161st St./Elton Ave. intersection

Evaluate feasibility of providing Bus-Rapid Transit service on Webster Ave. or Third Ave.

Lead Agencies: DCP, DOT, MTA

Create opportunities for new or enhanced public open spaces

Pursue funding to develop new parks, while upgrading and preserving existing parks, open spaces, and community gardens

Lead Agency: DPR

BRONX CIVIC CENTER

East 161st Street is the civic center of the South Bronx. With new destinations like the Harlem River waterfront parks, and a new Yankee Stadium, the Civic Center is expanding west to include the River Avenue corridor and fast-becoming a dynamic urban center of year-round activity for residents, workers, and visitors.

This area has some of the best transit access in the Bronx, with stops on the B, D, and 4 subway lines and several bus lines, a new Metro North Yankee Stadium Station scheduled to open in 2009, and a Metro North Melrose Station near 161st Street and Park Avenue.

This center of activity in the South Bronx is envisioned as a transit-oriented, higher-density district that elevates the Bronx Civic Center. The vision includes a mix of office, retail, and residential development enhanced by a pedestrian-friendly environment, convenient public transportation access, and improved traffic flow. Together, new development and greater transit options will attract economic activity to the area, while providing jobs and new amenities for residents and visitors to enjoy.

New Yankee Stadium

Gateway Center

Harlem River Waterfront Parks

STRATEGIC ACTIONS

Short-term — Long-term

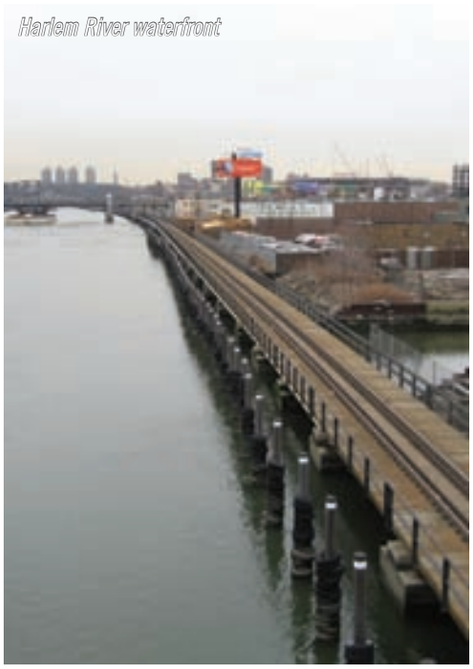
GOALS	Strengthen the Bronx Civic Center with additional opportunities for office, retail and residential development	Improve mobility along E. 161st Street and River Avenue	Create a consistent identity along E. 161st Street and River Avenue and enhance the area's public spaces	Activate River Avenue with a dynamic mix of uses
ACTION ITEMS	Rezone to encourage high-density commercial and residential development	Make targeted transportation improvements such as signal timing and pedestrian crossings Extend BX13 bus service further south to 149th Street	Make targeted streetscape improvements along E. 161st Street and River Avenue, including new distinctive lighting and street furniture	Facilitate the planning and development of City-owned sites along River Avenue
	Lead Agency: DCP	*Lead Agencies:* DCP, DOT, MTA	*Lead Agencies:* DOT, DCP	*Lead Agencies:* EDC, DPR

LOWER GRAND CONCOURSE

In the nineteenth century, the Lower Grand Concourse was a manufacturing center that produced goods ranging from pianos to ironworks, including the dome of the U.S. Capitol building. However, since the 1960's, as manufacturing needs changed, the area experienced minimal investment.

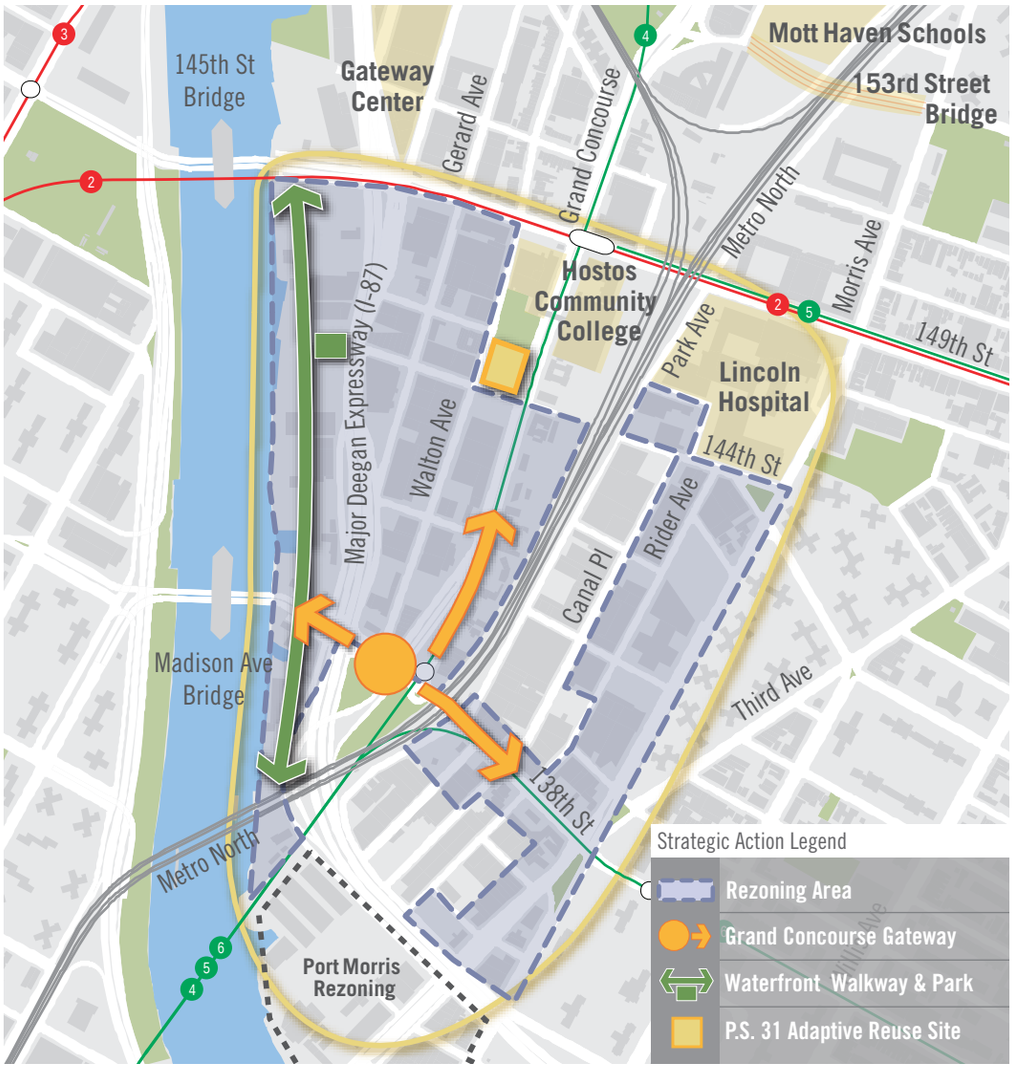
Today, the area's excellent transit access, underutilized lofts, and underdeveloped land provide an opportunity to support a growing population and help meet demands for affordable housing. With major investments such as the Gateway Center to the north, and the success of the Port Morris mixed-use district to the south, the Lower Grand Concourse area is primed for change.

The Lower Grand Concourse is envisioned as a vibrant gateway into the Bronx. A mixed-use rezoning will allow the area to develop into a multi-faceted neighborhood that retains industry and jobs, supports new housing and retail, including grocery stores, and provides new public waterfront open spaces. Although the City-owned, former P.S. 31 building requires substantial rehabilitation, it presents an opportunity to leverage private resources with a community vision for alternative uses.



Harlem River waterfront

Multi-story loft



STRATEGIC ACTIONS

Short-term ——— Long-term

GOALS

Encourage residential development for different income levels, while retaining viable light manufacturing businesses

ACTION ITEMS

Rezone to allow mixed-uses and provide a zoning incentive for affordable housing

Lead Agencies: DCP, HPD

Establish a grand gateway to the South Bronx

Rezone and make streetscape and lighting improvements on the lower Grand Concourse

Improve the appearance, ADA accessibility, and structural condition of subway stations at 149th Street and 138th Street/ Grand Concourse

Lead Agencies: DOT, DCP, MTA

Develop new parks and open space

Map a new public park along the Harlem River and leverage private development to create continuous public waterfront access

Lead Agencies: DPR, DCP

Redevelop the former P.S. 31

Evaluate the feasibility of an adaptive reuse of P.S. 31

Lead Agency: EDC

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This SBI strategic plan will guide future City investments and support further dialogue with the community. Several of the proposed "strategic actions" will have their own public outreach or public review and approval processes, including the rezonings and park developments.

To realize the SBI vision, the City will work with elected officials and State agencies to secure the dedicated funding and commitments necessary for implementing capital projects and transit improvements.

The joint efforts of all key stakeholders – the City, elected officials, community, and private sector – to implement the plan's recommendations will ensure that current and future residents participate in the sustained revitalization of the South Bronx as an area with mixed-income neighborhoods, vibrant commercial districts, attractive public open spaces, an efficient transit network, and a diverse economy providing jobs for local residents.

TO LEARN MORE

VISIT OUR WEB SITE: www.nycedc.com/SouthBronxInitiative

E-MAIL: SBI@nycedc.com

Developed by the City of New York

www.nyc.gov provides links to:

Department of City Planning
Department of Housing Preservation and Development
Department of Parks & Recreation
Department of Small Business Services
Department of Transportation
New York City Economic Development Corporation

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & THANKS

Hon. José E. Serrano
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Hon. Adolfo Carrión, Jr.
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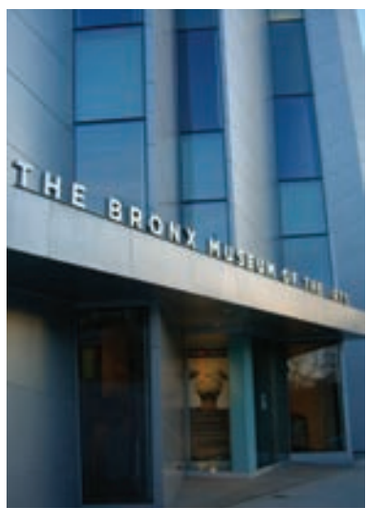
Hon. Maria del Carmen Arroyo
New York City Council Member - District 17

Hon. Helen D. Foster
New York City Council Member - District 16

Hon. Melissa Mark Viverito
New York City Council Member - District 8

Bronx Community Board 1
Bronx Community Board 3
Bronx Community Board 4
161st Street Merchant Association
167th Street Merchant Association
170th Street Merchant Association
44th Precinct Clergy Coalition
Atlantic Development Group, LLC
Banana Kelly
Bronx Academy of Arts and Dance
Bronx Council on the Arts
Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation (BOEDC)
Bronx Shepherds Restoration Corporation
Citizens Advice Bureau, Inc. (CAB)
District 16 Neighborhood Council
Eugenio María de Hostos Community College of CUNY
HUB - Third Avenue Business Improvement District
International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC)
Jackson Development Group, Ltd.
L & M Equity Participants, Ltd.
Lincoln Medical and Mental Health Center
Mid-Bronx Desperadoes Economic Development Corporation
Mid-Bronx Council (MBC)
Neighborhood Association for Inter-Cultural Affairs, Inc. (NAICA)
Neighborhood Housing Services of South Bronx
The Phipps Houses
Poko Partners, LLC
Pregones Theater
Procida Realty & Construction Corp.
South Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation (SoBRO)
South East Bronx Community Organization
The Bluestone Organization
The Related Companies
We Stay / Nos Quedamos Committee, Inc.
Women's Housing and Economic Development Corporation



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