



OFFICE OF THE
BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT

VANESSA L. GIBSON

Harlem River Gateway District Downtown Revitalization Initiative Application

New York City Regional Economic
Development Council

Bronx, New York City
November 2025

New York City has submitted a letter of intent to be a **Pro-Housing Community**

Contact: **Juton M. Horstman**,
Director, Planning & Development - Bronx Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson
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DRI Application Number: **154461**

Table of Contents

Basic Introduction	4
Executive Summary	5
Geographic Area and Justification	6
DRI Readiness	7
Vision Statement	8
Past investment and Future Potential	9
Recent and Impending Job Growth	11
Jobs and Employment Data	12
Quality of Life	13
Supportive Local Policies	15
Public Support	17
Transformative Project Opportunities	18
Administrative Capacity	20
Letters of Support.....	21
Appendix	
Detailed Project List	A1-A5
References	BX1



Bronx Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson

It is an honor to present our application for the 2025 New York State Downtown Revitalization Initiative for the Harlem River Gateway District. I am grateful for New York State's continued partnership in helping local communities transform long-standing plans into tangible benefits for residents. The 56,000 residents who call this district home have long awaited meaningful investment in their neighborhood. Their resilience through decades of disinvestment demands action and deserves recognition. Our shared vision is clear: a sustainable, equitable future that benefits current residents first.

The revitalization of the South Bronx is underway, but it must correct environmental and social injustices by prioritizing projects that promote smart growth and deliver prosperity to existing residents. The Harlem River Gateway District is located within the nation's poorest congressional, where 69% of households low-income, is positioned to succeed. With its rich cultural heritage and strong connectivity, this neighborhood is emerging as a dynamic hub for residents, businesses, and visitors alike.

This effort builds on years of community-driven planning and recent public and private investment. Foundational initiatives such as the Lower Concourse Roundtable, the Mott Haven–Port Morris Waterfront Plan, and the Special Harlem River Waterfront District have aligned policy, design, and community leadership to foster sustainable growth and empower residents. Together, these efforts are positioning the Harlem River Gateway as a model for equitable, community-driven revitalization.

Since taking office, I have advocated for the redevelopment of the Harlem River waterfront and supported cultural institutions that strengthen this neighborhood's identity, including the Bronx Children's Museum and the world's first Hip Hop Museum. We have expanded access to the waterfront through improvements at Mill Pond Park and are advancing the forthcoming Lower Concourse Park, set to open in 2026. These projects, alongside new housing and local business growth, are transforming the Harlem River waterfront into a place where families can live, work, and thrive.

My vision for the Harlem River Gateway District is to create a vibrant, economically diverse community that exemplifies modern, inclusive urban revitalization. By integrating economic opportunity with environmental stewardship, the district continue evolving into a dynamic, mixed-use neighborhood where growth benefits both residents and businesses.

With DRI support, we will unify ongoing investments into a coordinated framework that strengthens infrastructure, enhances neighborhood amenities, and expands small-business growth. This partnership will advance health, access, and economic mobility while establishing a sustainable foundation for future generations.

Thank you for your consideration and for the opportunity to partner with New York State in realizing this transformative vision for the Harlem River Gateway District.

Vanessa L. Gibson
Bronx Borough President



Basic Information



REDC Region	New York City
Applying for Which Program	Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI)
Municipality Name	New York City
Downtown Name	Harlem River Gateway District
County Name	Bronx
Applicant Contact	<p>Primary: Office of the Bronx Borough President Name/Title: Juton Horstman, Director, Planning and Development Email: jhorstman@bronxbp.nyc.gov</p> <p>Secondary: Bronx Economic Development Corporation Name/Title: Marshall Strawbridge, Director of Outreach Email: mstrawbridge@bxedc.org</p>
Applicant Partners	<p>Bronx Economic Development Corporation Bronx Children’s Museum Bronx Works, Inc Justive Innovation Inc. Mott Haven–Port Morris Community Land Stewards NYC Parks Department ReBORN FARMS Success Academy The Hip Hop Museum</p>

Executive Summary

Mott Haven is undergoing a renaissance, marked by improved quality of life, increased job growth, and robust economic development. This revitalization is being driven by recent rezonings and the establishment of the Special Harlem River Waterfront District and Special Mixed-Use Districts, which have paved the way for both new housing development and the preservation of the area's light industrial activity. Rezonings have spurred job growth across various sectors, creating a vibrant, interconnected community that enhances both livability and economic viability.

Key initiatives and supportive policies, in addition to rezonings, like the Mott Haven-Port Morris Waterfront Plan, are fostering sustainable growth and empowering local residents, positioning Mott Haven as a model for urban renewal and community revitalization.

Recent developments, which include community amenities, such as the Hip Hop Museum at Bronx Point, luxury housing projects like Third at Bankside, new affordable housing developments, and infrastructure improvements like the Exterior Street Reconstruction Project, are catalyzing growth while maintaining a strong focus on affordable housing and community engagement. Mott Haven's rich cultural heritage and strategic location near Manhattan and Queens further establish it as a dynamic hub for residents, businesses, and visitors alike.



East 138th Street



Hip Hop Museum



Source: Google Maps

Brookfield Properties



3rd Avenue Bridge Street Art

Geographic Area & Justification



Study Area

The Harlem River Gateway District area's approximate boundaries are the Harlem River to the west, the Harlem River and Bronx Kill to the south, Jackson Avenue to the east, and East 149th Street to the north. It includes the neighborhoods of Mott Haven and Concourse. The Harlem River Gateway District is bordered by the neighborhoods of Melrose, Concourse, and Port Morris in The Bronx, with Harlem in Manhattan across the river to the west and south.

The Harlem River Gateway district is largely composed of Community Board 1, as well as part of Community Board 4, and covers the ZIP codes 10451, 10454, and 10455. The district lies within New York's 15th Congressional District, represented by Congressman Ritchie Torres, and New York City Council District 8, 16, and 17, represented by Diana Ayala, Althea Stevens, and Rafael Salamanca Jr, respectively. The New York State Senate representative is Jose M. Serrano, District 29, and New York State Assembly representatives are Amanda N. Septimo, District 84, and Landan Dais, District 77.

DRI Readiness

The Harlem River Gateway District is experiencing significant revitalization driven by coordinated rezonings, targeted investments, and community-led planning. These efforts are improving infrastructure, expanding public access, and establishing a strong foundation for sustainable growth. DRI funding would accelerate this progress with capital investments that support existing residents and catalyze further development.

The Special Harlem River Waterfront District plays a crucial role in these efforts by promoting the creation of parks, public access areas, and a balanced mix of residential, commercial, and industrial uses, while addressing environmental inequities and long-term goals for sustainability, resiliency, and equity.¹

According to the Bronx Borough President’s annual development reports, Bronx Community District 1 saw roughly 6,900 new housing units filed or under construction between 2022 and 2024, representing a substantial share of New York City’s new housing. This level of production underscores the area’s emergence as a leading development hub and makes DRI a strategic, long-term investment in inclusive, sustainable growth.

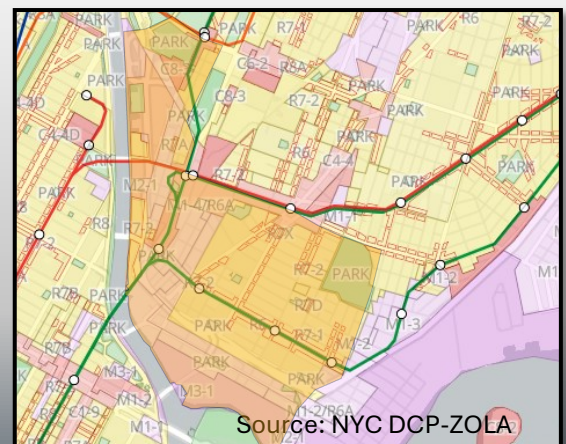
With focused DRI funding and ongoing community engagement, this initiative is well-positioned to create sustained economic growth and enhance the quality of life for residents. Further details on projected job creation, housing development, sustainability initiatives, and transportation enhancements will be outlined in the following sections.



Overview of New York City



MX Districts and Commercial overlays





Vision Statement

The vision for the Harlem River Gateway District is to transform the area into a vibrant, economically diverse community that exemplifies modern urban revitalization. This transformation will prioritize equitable prosperity, addressing long-standing social and environmental injustices, through sustainable and inclusive growth. The district will serve as a model for how smart development can elevate a community, fostering opportunities for residents of all income levels while creating an inviting environment for new businesses and industries.

A cohesive revitalization plan will focus on enhancing infrastructure and prioritizing the creation of sustainable waterfront spaces and green areas that promote quality of life. By integrating economic growth with environmental stewardship and community empowerment, the Harlem River Gateway District will continue to grow into a dynamic, mixed-use neighborhood where revitalization efforts benefit residents and businesses alike. The rezonings and planned developments represent a timely opportunity to create lasting change, allowing both residents and industries to fully benefit from the renewal of their neighborhood.

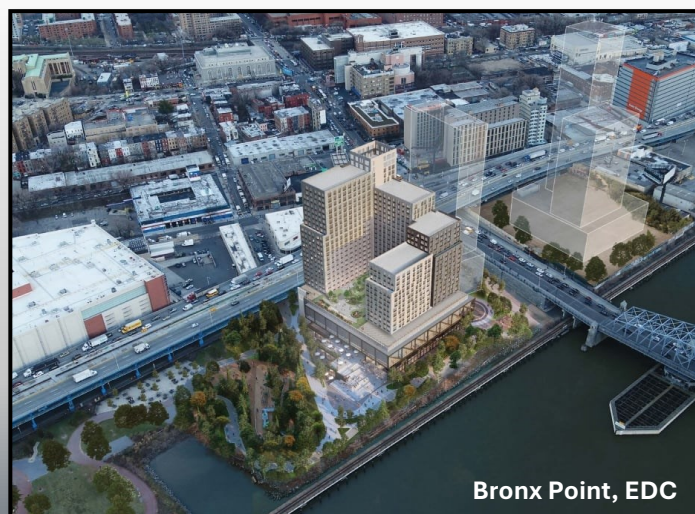


Past Investments and Future Potential

New York City, through the NYC Economic Development Corporation (EDC), has made substantial public investments in Mott Haven to spur growth and enhance community amenities, particularly following recent rezonings. A cornerstone initiative is the \$194.5 million Lower Concourse Investment Strategy,³ which supports three transformative projects within the Harlem River Gateway District:

- **Bronx Point:** Delivering 540 units of affordable housing, 2.5 acres of new waterfront open space, and community facilities. Phase 1 will feature the Universal Hip Hop Museum (opening in 2026), expected to become a cultural anchor drawing visitors from across the city and beyond.
- **Exterior Street Reconstruction and Infrastructure Project:** Upgrading 11 blocks between East 138th Street and East 149th Street to improve local infrastructure, accessibility, and resilience.
- **Lower Concourse Park:** Creating 2.3 acres of waterfront parkland with a playground, picnic areas, and a living shoreline.

These targeted capital projects demonstrate the City's commitment to equitable revitalization, coupling housing production with enhanced access to the Harlem River.



Private investment has accelerated as well. In 2024, The Bronx delivered 6,526 units of new housing⁴ (19.2% of the citywide total) raising the total number of units to 570,439 in the borough.⁵

Notably, in 2022, **Brookfield Properties' Bankside** completed a \$950 million development spanning seven buildings with 1,379 residential units, 34,000 square feet of waterfront access, 15,000 square feet of retail, and new community facilities.⁷

Complementing housing and infrastructure, cultural and retail anchors are strengthening the district's economy:

The Bronx Children's Museum opened in 2022 following a \$16.8 million investment, providing a vital educational hub for youth.⁸

The Yankees remain a major economic driver, drawing 3.4 million fans to Yankee Stadium in 2025.¹⁰

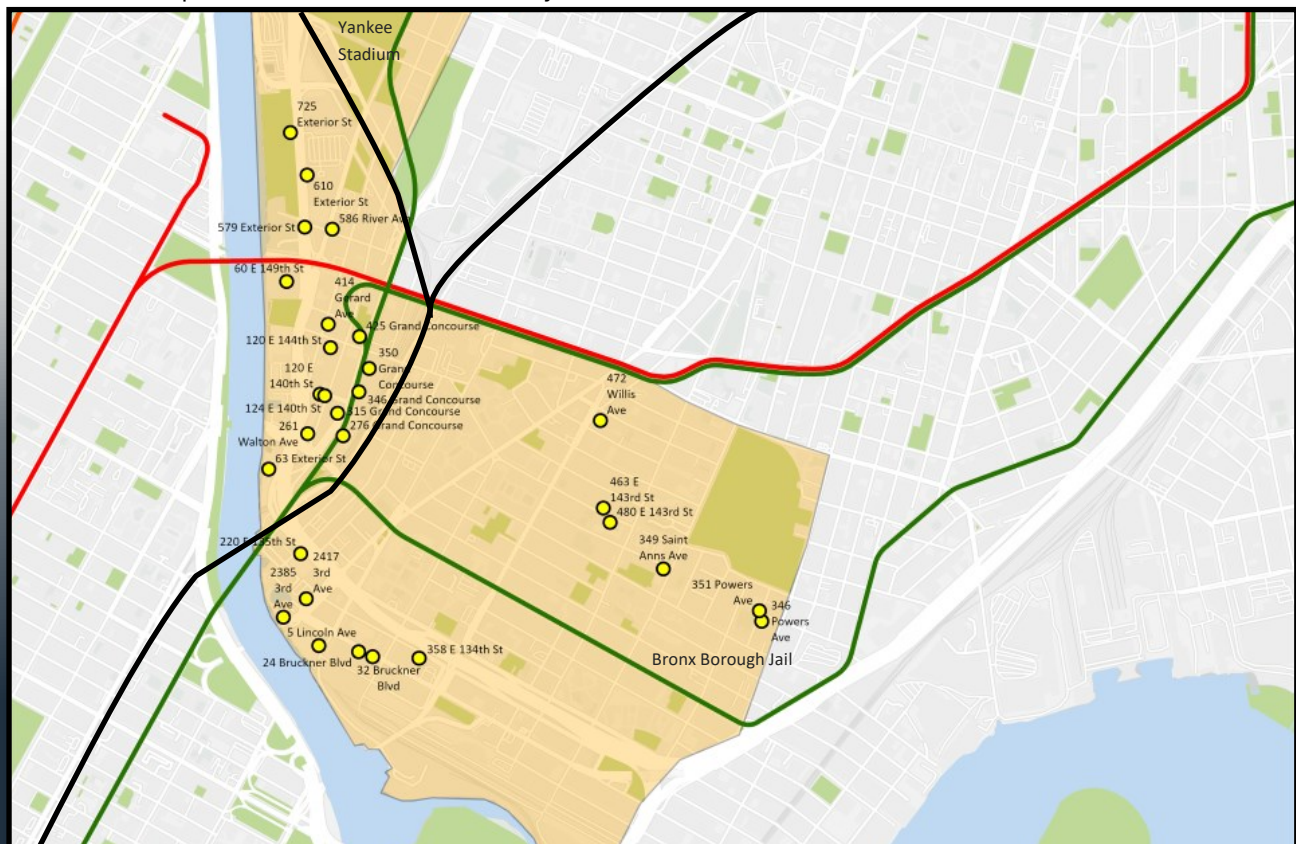
The Bronx Terminal Market Gateway Center, a 17-acre retail destination with nearly 1 million sf of space, continues to attract regional shoppers.⁹

The East 153rd Street Metro-North Station, improved through a \$62 million investment, reinforces the area's regional accessibility.¹¹

Together, these investments illustrate a powerful trajectory:

Mott Haven is already experiencing substantial public and private commitments that are reshaping the district's physical, cultural, and economic landscape. With additional support through the DRI, these past investments will catalyze further growth, unlock underutilized sites, and ensure that revitalization delivers benefits equitably to local residents.

Recent Developments in Harlem River Gateway District Area:

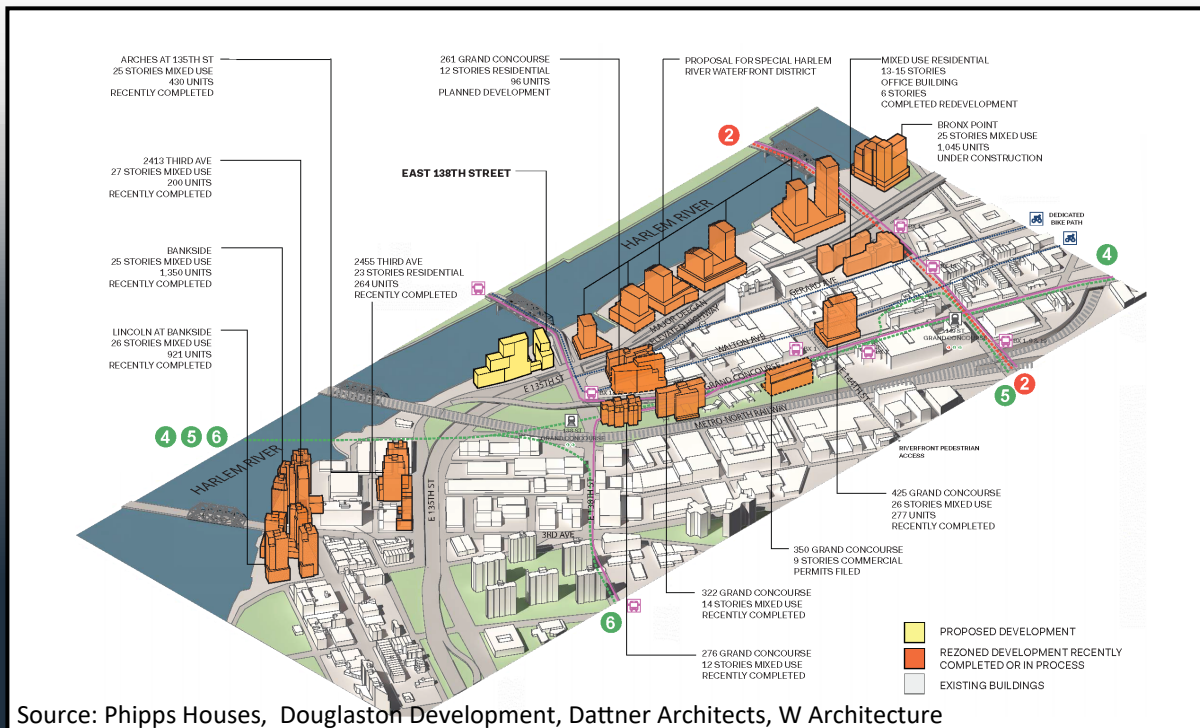


Recent and Impending Job Growth

The Harlem River Gateway District, with a population of approximately 56,000 residents, has an employment rate of 87.1%.¹² This figure does not account for many commuters who contribute to the workforce in the district's anchor institutions and businesses. Job accessibility is enhanced by robust public transportation options including the 2, 4, 5, and 6 subway lines and various bus routes such as the BX1, BX2, BX17, BX19, BX21, BX32, BX33, BXM1, BXM2, BXM3, BXM4, BxM18, and M125, as well as regional connections via Metro-North at Yankees–East 153rd Street.

The leading sectors for employment: education, healthcare, and social assistance, account for nearly 34% of local resident's jobs.¹² The Harlem River Gateway District features a dynamic blend of long-standing family-owned businesses alongside newer enterprises. Key commercial corridors, such as the Hub at Third Avenue, East 149th Street, East 138th Street, and Bruckner Boulevard serve as vital economic engines,

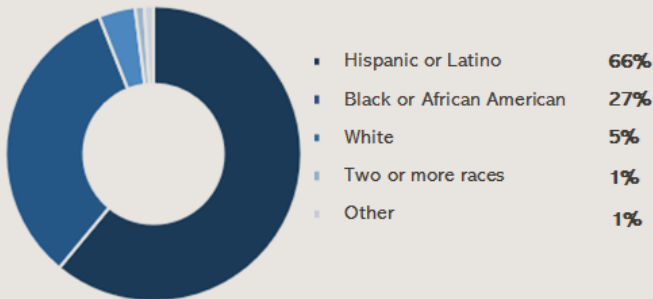
providing essential services to local residents. As the area continues to grow, new and upcoming developments will further drive job growth and increase the demand for commercial activity. Notably, newer projects like the Bronx Children's Museum and the highly anticipated Hip Hop Museum will be a regional draw that will bring visitors and enhance tourism in the area that already supports the Yankees. Anchor institutions like Lincoln Medical Center and Hostos Community College provides both essential services as well as being major employers, reinforcing the district's economic foundation. Small businesses, including bodegas, restaurants, and retail stores, are crucial to the local economy, and as new residents move into developments like Bronx Point and Bankside, the demand for diverse local commercial offerings will increase, further stimulating economic activity and job creation in the Harlem River Gateway District.



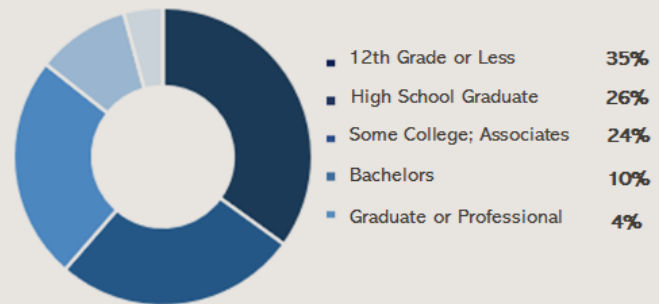
Jobs and Employment Data

Harlem River Gateway District

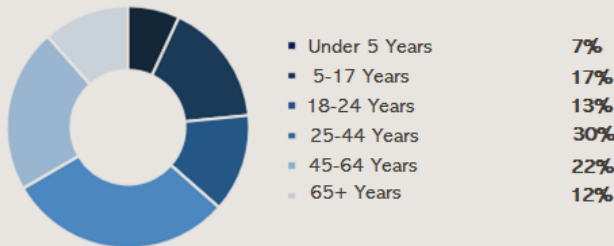
RACE & BACKGROUND



EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT



POPULATION AGE



Population

55,754 Harlem River Gateway District

Median Age

34 Years Harlem River Gateway District

INCOME

Median Household Income Avg.

\$30,596 Harlem River Gateway District

Pop. Below Poverty Line

41% Harlem River Gateway District

Employment

Population in Labor Force

64.7% Harlem River Gateway District

Unemployment

12.9% Harlem River Gateway District

LOCAL JOBS & EMPLOYMENT

LOCAL RESIDENTS EMPLOYMENT



Source: Data available through American Community Survey (ACS) 2019-2023

Quality of Life

Housing and Community Fabric

The Harlem River Gateway District contains a wide mix of housing types, from large NYCHA developments to older walk-ups to new mixed-income buildings. With roughly 92.5% of households renting,¹² the biggest quality of life gains will come from a diverse, thriving commercial center. Additionally, strengthening neighborhood-serving retail and small business space will create jobs within walking distance, deliver everyday amenities, and activate streets, improving affordability.

Small Business and Economic Vitality

While certain corridors are thriving, others remain underutilized and in need of targeted support. Bruckner Boulevard and Exterior Street show visible growth, while corridors such as 138th Street east of Brook Avenue continue to struggle with foot traffic. Merchant associations remain underdeveloped, limiting advocacy and collective action. Yet the economic potential is strong: In Mott Haven, residents spend an estimated \$1.19 billion annually on retail goods and services, projected to rise to \$1.47 billion by 2027. Targeted support for merchant organizing, corridor

branding, and storefront improvements can help local businesses capture this spending power.²

Community Priorities

Through engagement, residents and merchants identified several pressing issues:²

Safety: Expanding street lighting and improving public spaces to deter crime.

Sanitation and Beautification: Cleaner streets, plantings, tree pits, and pocket parks to create a more welcoming environment.

Wayfinding and Identity: Branding materials and signage for Willis Avenue, 138th Street, and Bruckner Boulevard to strengthen corridor identity and navigation.

Street Improvements: Creating a safer environment for residents to access Exterior Street from the MTA overpass at 153rd Street and the intersection of Exterior Street and East 149th Street.

These investments would directly improve daily life, while reinforcing the district's appeal as a destination for new residents, workers, and visitors.



St. Mary's Park

Source: NYC Department of Park & Recreation



Cultural and Recreational Assets

The district's cultural and historical character is a defining strength. Three historic districts, Mott Haven, Mott Haven East, and Bertine Block, reflect the neighborhood's 19th-century origins, while projects such as The Mott Haven Project¹³ and the Mott Haven Oral History Project¹⁴ celebrate community voices and heritage. New spaces like the H.E.Arts Center will expand access to health, education, and arts programming. Recreational resources are anchored by St. Mary's Park, the largest park in the South Bronx, complemented by Mill Pond Park, Lower Concourse Park, People's Park, and Pulaski Park. These assets enhance livability and create opportunities for community engagement and placemaking.

Education, Health, and Services

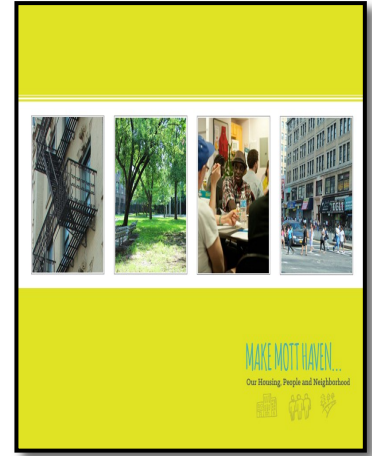
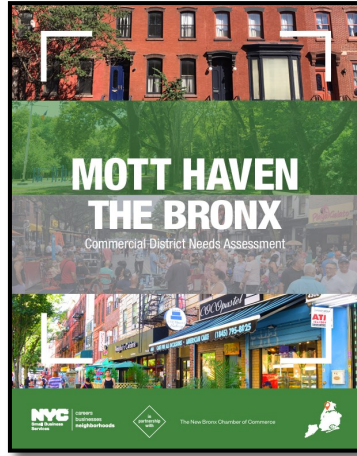
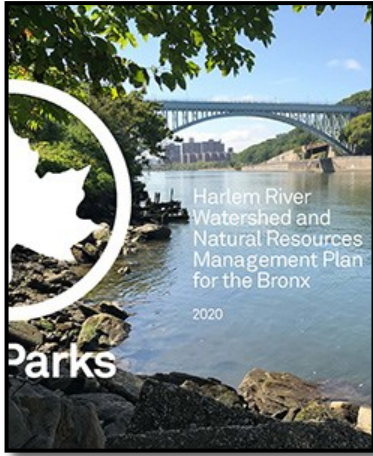
In addition to its cultural and recreational assets, the Harlem River Gateway District boasts essential educational and healthcare services. There are numerous public, private, and charter schools in the area, including P.S. 18, P.S. 49, and M.S. 223, which play a crucial role in

shaping the future of the community. Healthcare providers such as Tres Puentes Community Health Center and NYC Health + Hospitals Lincoln ensure access to care, while the Mott Haven Library continues to serve as a hub for learning, workforce preparation, and community programs. Strengthening these institutions through improved connectivity and complementary investments will further stabilize the district.

Connectivity and Environmental Barriers

Despite these assets, physical barriers remain. The Major Deegan Expressway separates the Harlem River waterfront from the broader neighborhood, creating both real and perceived divides. Strategic investments in pedestrian safety, beautification, and wayfinding can bridge this gap and ensure that waterfront growth benefits the northern communities within the study area. Environmental challenges, including air quality, flood risk, and limited tree canopy, also require targeted responses to improve health outcomes and resilience.

Supportive Local Policies



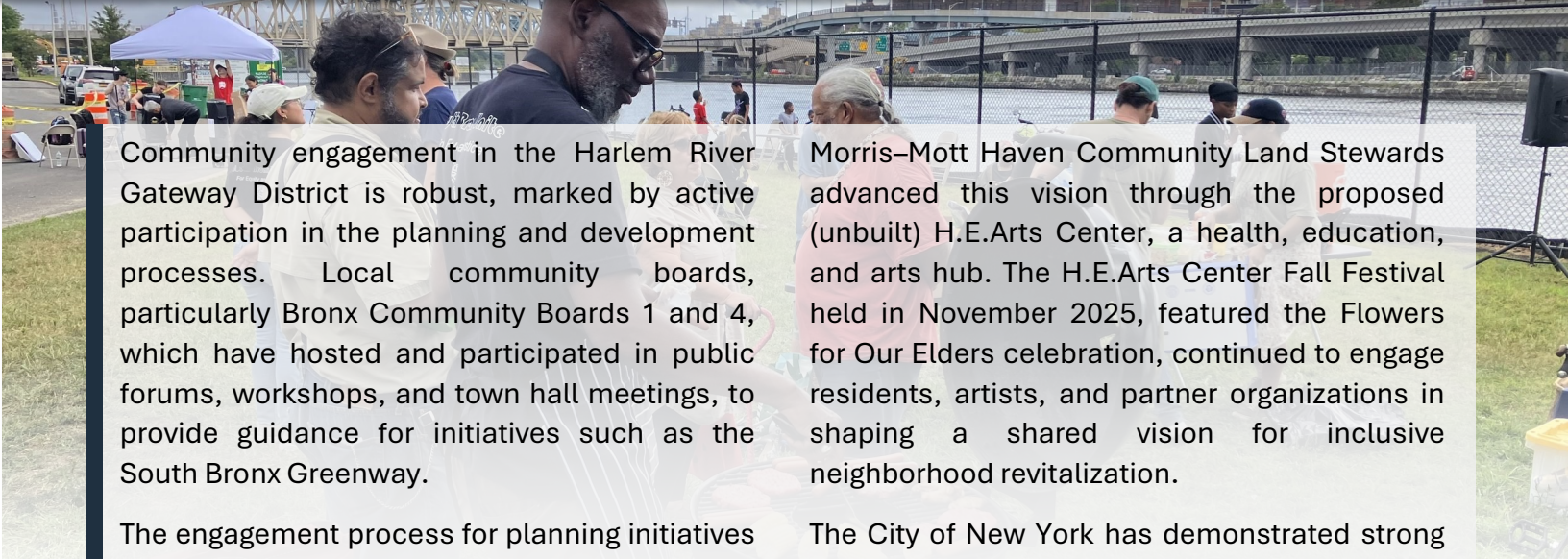
The Mott Haven–Port Morris Waterfront Plan,¹⁵ developed by South Bronx Unite, is a transformative initiative to provide more than 100,000 residents with long-overdue access to the public waterfront. Recognized as a New York State Priority Project under the Department of Environmental Conservation’s Open Space Plan, the plan is also incorporated into the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation’s Harlem River Watershed and Natural Resources Management Plan for The Bronx and is aligned with the Vision 2020 and Vision 2030 Comprehensive Waterfront Plans. The proposal addresses climate change impacts on maritime industrial areas located within flood zones while creating essential open space for an underserved community facing high rates of pollution and health disparities from highways and truck-intensive industries.

Supporting this vision, the Mott Haven–Port Morris Community Land Stewards, a land trust project by South Bronx Unite, will lead the development and long-term stewardship of the waterfront.¹⁶

The Mott Haven Commercial District Needs Assessment (2022)² further identifies challenges in the local business landscape. Conducted in partnership with community organizations, the study analyzed storefronts, retail conditions, merchant and consumer surveys, and streetscape factors that shape the shopping experience. By centering resident and stakeholder input, the assessment prioritizes solutions that strengthen resilience, improve access to resources, and reflect the identity of Mott Haven’s diverse population.

Earlier efforts also shaped the neighborhood’s planning framework. The “Make Mott Haven... Transformation Plan” (2014)¹⁷ outlined a comprehensive strategy to revitalize housing, education, workforce development, health, and safety. Developed through community engagement, it called for preserving and rehabilitating public housing, encouraging new mixed-use developments, and enhancing existing amenities to foster economic stability and social cohesion.¹⁶

Public Support



Community engagement in the Harlem River Gateway District is robust, marked by active participation in the planning and development processes. Local community boards, particularly Bronx Community Boards 1 and 4, which have hosted and participated in public forums, workshops, and town hall meetings, to provide guidance for initiatives such as the South Bronx Greenway.

The engagement process for planning initiatives has been open and collaborative. A prime example is the End-of-Summer Waterfront BBQ held in September 2024 at 56 Lincoln Avenue, organized by South Bronx Unite. This event brought together community members of all ages to connect at one of the few waterfront access points in the neighborhood, highlighting the community's commitment to revitalizing the Mott Haven-Port Morris waterfront. This event received broad support from numerous community partners reflecting a broad coalition committed to the community's revitalization efforts.²⁰

The South Bronx Waterfront Community Envision Sessions held in April and May of 2024 provided a vital platform for residents to shape the future of the Mott Haven-Port Morris Waterfront. These sessions fostered open dialogue and solicited community feedback on activating key locations, specifically the southern end of Lincoln Avenue and the eastern end of East 132nd Street. The active public engagement in these sessions underscores the community's determination to reclaim and transform the waterfront.¹⁹

Since 2013, South Bronx Unite and the Port

Morris–Mott Haven Community Land Stewards advanced this vision through the proposed (unbuilt) H.E.Arts Center, a health, education, and arts hub. The H.E.Arts Center Fall Festival held in November 2025, featured the Flowers for Our Elders celebration, continued to engage residents, artists, and partner organizations in shaping a shared vision for inclusive neighborhood revitalization.

The City of New York has demonstrated strong public support for the revitalization of the Lower Concourse area, as evidenced by the recent Lower Concourse Roundtable which began in April 2023 and has had follow-up meetings to continue collaboration, the lasted occurring in August 2025. This group, hosted by the Mayor's Community Affairs Unit, in collaboration with the NYC Department of Transportation (DOT) and the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs (DCLA), focused on the City's development plans for Mill Pond Park and the surrounding area. The discussion aimed to explore how the area can be made safer, more accessible, provide better wayfinding, and become more aesthetically enhanced. Bronx Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson, alongside DOT Commissioner Ydanis Rodriguez and DCLA Commissioner Laurie Cumbo, emphasized their commitment to ensuring the safety of residents and visitors while promoting the area as a cultural hub. The roundtable highlighted the City's intention to create a holistic blueprint that addresses all aspects, including climate change and future mobility challenges, to ensure the area continues its smart-growth transformation into a vibrant, interconnected, and thriving corridor for all.

Transformative Project Opportunities

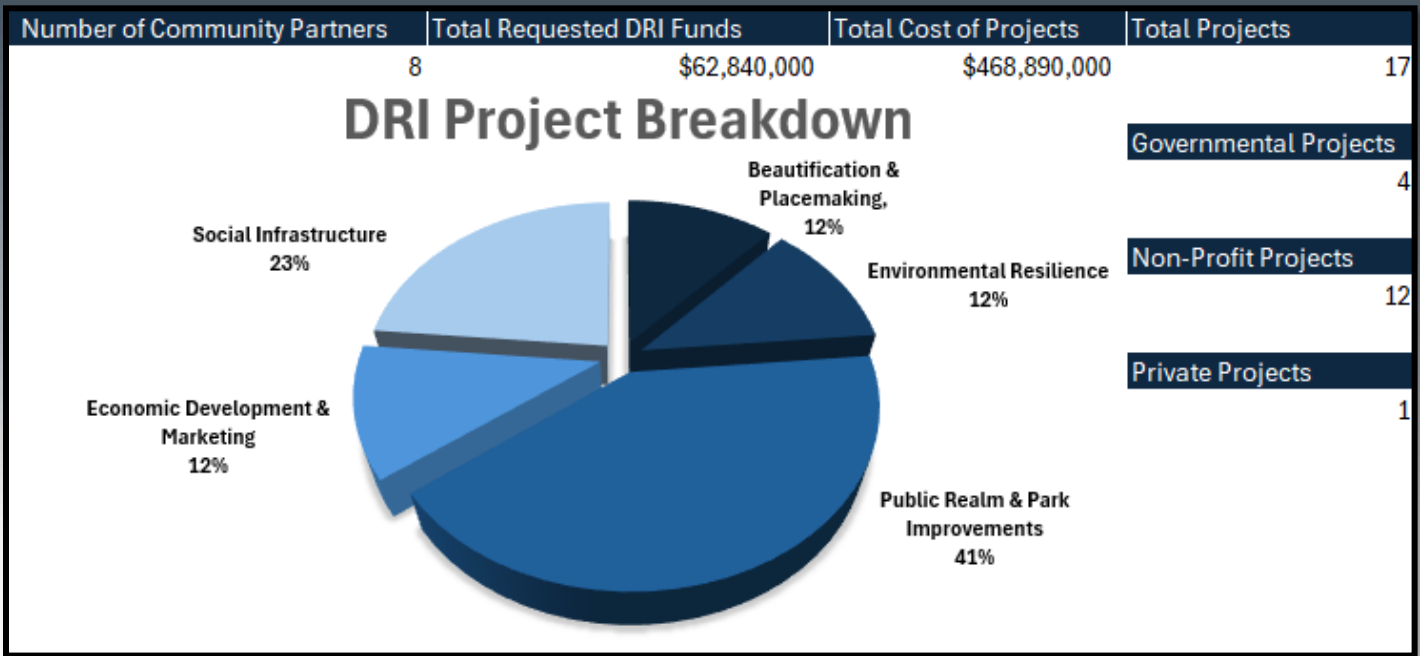
The Mott Haven community stands at a pivotal moment, with numerous transformative projects and partner organizations poised to reshape the neighborhood’s waterfront and public spaces. These proposed initiatives, include revitalizing waterfronts with flood

protection and pollution mitigation to creating dynamic public art installations and upgrading essential recreational facilities. The Bronx Borough President’s Office has been in contact with local partners regarding the following projects:

	Title	Partner	Description	DRI Funding Request
1	Food Justice-Centered Commercial Kitchen	Mott Haven-Port Morris Community Land Stewards	A 1,600-SF ground-floor commercial kitchen at the HEArts Center delivering culinary job training and affordable, culturally relevant fresh food in Mott Haven-Port Morris.	\$1,000,000
2	H.E.Arts Community Center	Mott Haven-Port Morris Community Land Stewards	Transformation of the building at 349 East 140th Street into a H.E.Arts, a center to provide health (H), education (E), and Arts programming.	\$10,000,000
3	Mott Haven Port Morris Waterfront Plan – Lincoln Ave Street End Pier	Mott Haven-Port Morris Community Land Stewards	The waterfront project at Lincoln Avenue will provide flood protection, pollution mitigation, green space, and oyster reefs to improve water quality while stabilizing the shorefront and rebuilding the existing pier.	\$5,000,000
4	People’s Park Playground Reconstruction	NYC Parks	The reconstruction and improvements to People’s Playground.	\$12,000,000
5	St. Mary’s South Playground Reconstruction	NYC Parks	This project will reconstruct structures and utilities at St. Mary’s South Playground, located in St. Mary’s Park.	\$6,500,000
6	St. Mary’s East Playground Reconstruction	NYC Parks	This project will reconstruct St. Mary’s East Playground, located in St. Mary’s Park with new equipment and court areas.	\$7,800,000
7	St. Mary’s Running Track, Fitness Equipment and Synthetic Turf Field Reconstruction	NYC Parks	This project will reconstruct St. Mary’s Running Track, located in St. Mary’s Park.	\$9,200,000

Transformative Project Opportunities (Cont.)

	Title	Partner	Description	DRI Funding Request
8	Success Academy Bronx K-12	Success Academy	Construction of a 300,000+ SF, three-building K-12 campus in the Bronx, opening Q2 2026 to serve 2,400 students.	\$5,000,000
9	Patterson Community Barbeque Pit Area	Justice Innovation Inc.	Construction of a new community barbecue pit area behind 301 East 143rd Street.	\$100,000
10	Mitchel Houses Basketball Court Renovation	Justice Innovation Inc.	Reconstruction of the basketball courts and the handball courts.	\$80,000
11	Patterson Houses Water Play Area - 271 East 143rd Street	Justice Innovation Inc.	Enhance the toddler playground by installing functional water play areas.	\$250,000
12	Patterson Houses Water Play Area - 304 Morris Avenue	Justice Innovation Inc.	Enhance the young children's playground by renovating the playground's splash pad.	\$300,000
13	Interactive Installations in Mill Pond Park	Bronx Children's Museum	Installation of an exterior public art gallery at Mill Pond Park	\$350,000
14	Farm & Food Lab	ReBORN FARMS	Redeveloping and improving the long-abandoned space under the Major Deegan Highway, adjacent to NYCHA public housing for access to hyper-locally grown food.	\$2,100,000
15	Bronx Point Early Childhood Learning Center Branding and Marketing Project	BronxWorks, Inc	Marketing plan to increase awareness of the Bronx Point Early Childhood Learning Center by area employment establishments.	\$160,000
16	Five Knives	The Hip Hop Museum	Construction of Five Knives, the Hip Hop Museum's signature venue, will blend culinary craft and culture with a rotating five-borough menu and flexible event space.	\$2,000,000
17	Storefront Improvement / Small Project Fund	Bronx Economic Development Corporation	Provides financial support to eligible property owners and tenants within the Harlem River gateway District boundary to upgrade facades, signage, lighting, and other exterior elements.	\$1,000,000



Administrative Capacity

The Office of the Bronx Borough President will partner with the Bronx Economic Development Corporation (BXEDC) to administer funds for this initiative. Established in 1981, BXEDC serves as the borough’s primary economic development agency, with a mission to strengthen Bronx-based businesses and expand employment opportunities for residents. It operates in coordination with the Borough President’s Office and oversees two subsidiaries, the Bronx Tourism Council and the Business Initiative Corporation, placing it at the center of economic, workforce, and community development in the borough.

Since 2023, BXEDC has represented the Borough President’s Office on the Boards of Directors of all 12 Bronx Business Improvement Districts. It has also administered the Bronx Empowerment Zone since its inception in 1994, demonstrating the capacity to manage public, private, and philanthropic resources and implement capital access programs, including the SBA Community Advantage Loan Program and Bronx Business Loans.

BXEDC regularly collaborates with funders to provide grants to small businesses and community organizations. Recent initiatives include a grant program with Santander Bank and the 2023 Green Action Challenge, which awarded \$1 million to Bronx Community College in partnership with the New York Power Authority for environmental sustainability improvements.

For the past five years, BXEDC has served as the local administrator for a \$10 million Downtown Revitalization Initiative in the Hub/Third Avenue. It led the development of the Bronx Civic Center Strategic Investment Plan, a community-driven effort co-led by the Borough President. This five-month process engaged local stakeholders and produced 15 implementation-ready projects, such as a storefront improvement program along 161st Street and capital upgrades in the 149th Street/Third Avenue Hub. These efforts are expected to generate more than 800 jobs and leverage over \$21 million in additional investment. Additionally, BXEDC is facilitating the Greater Morris Park \$20 million Downtown Revitalization Initiative awarded in 2025. BXEDC’s experience, institutional relationships, and track record position it uniquely to implement a DRI project that is responsive to community needs and aligned with borough-wide development goals.



Letters of Support

Bronx Children's Museum



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3214

September 26, 2025

Mr. William D. Rahm, Co-Chair
Mr. Felix V. Matos, Co-Chair
New York City Regional Economic Development Council
633 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10017

Dear Co-Chairs Rahm and Matos,

I write to express my support for Bronx Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson and The Bronx Economic Development Corporation's joint application to the Regional Economic Development Council's Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) for up to \$20 million in funding for the Harlem River Gateway District.

The Harlem River Gateway District encompasses the Mott Haven neighborhood and adjacent waterfront areas, including several public housing developments such as Mill Brook Houses and Patterson Houses. On average, 40% of the area's residents live below the federal poverty level¹, making it a federally recognized Opportunity Zone². Lack of investments and opportunities limit the resources available to residents, exacerbating local substance abuse and public health crises. While local authorities often engage in quick fixes to these issues, long term investments are needed to address the underlying socio-economic conditions fueling this crisis. I understand that the DRI investment would go towards beautification projects, enhanced lighting along commercial corridors, investing in capital upgrades and other initiatives. Collectively, these improvements would enhance workforce opportunities, increase public safety, and help undo decades of harm to a borough known to have suffered from intentional burning and neglect.

As part of my Congressional Appropriations requests for Fiscal Year 2026, I requested \$10.7 million to support the New York City Department of Small Business in its efforts to revitalize the Mott Haven waterfront. It will take an all of government approach to support the comprehensive needs of the Harlem

¹https://mtgis-portal.geo.census.gov/arcgis/apps/experiencebuilder/experience/?id=ad8ad0751e474f938fc98345462cdfbf#data_s=id%3AdataSource_7-1956c056805-layer-6-17%3A79633

² <http://hud.gov/opportunity-zones>

River Gateway District. In keeping with all applicable rules and regulations, I request full and fair consideration for this application. Advancing this project will support economic development that reflects the needs, culture, and potential of the Harlem River Gateway District and The Bronx as a whole. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Daisy Abreu from my district office at Daisy.Abreu@mail.house.gov.

Thank you in advance for your time and full consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Alexia Ocasio-Cortez". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
Member of Congress

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3215

September 30, 2025

Mr. William D. Rahm, Co-Chair
Mr. Felix V. Matos, Co-Chair
New York City Regional Economic Development Council
633 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10017

Dear Co-Chairs Rahm and Matos,

I am writing to express my full support for the joint application submitted by Bronx Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson and the Bronx Economic Development Corporation for funding through the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) to support the Harlem River Gateway District.

The Harlem River Gateway District is undergoing a long-overdue economic resurgence, and this momentum presents an urgent need for strategic investment in infrastructure, public space, and small business development. A DRI award would provide essential resources to strengthen the local economy by supporting the small businesses, creative entrepreneurs, and service providers who are the backbone of this community.

It is my understanding that this initiative will prioritize inclusive and sustainable growth by focusing on workforce development, accessible public infrastructure, and equitable business opportunities. These investments will help ensure that longtime residents and small business owners are not displaced or overlooked as the district continues to evolve.

Strategically located at a key geographic and economic crossroads, the Harlem River Gateway District connects major Bronx institutions, transit hubs, greenways, and commercial corridors. Supporting this district represents a vital investment in the future of the Bronx.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I trust that this application will receive full and fair review, consistent with applicable agency guidelines.

Sincerely,



Ritchie Torres
Member of Congress

JOSÉ M. SERRANO
Senator, 29th District

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335 East 100th Street
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(212) 828-5829
FAX (212) 828-2420

Albany Office
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NEW YORK
STATE
SENATE

ALBANY, NEW YORK 12247



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CHAIRMAN
CULTURAL AFFAIRS, TOURISM,
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MILITARY AFFAIRS
WOMEN'S ISSUES

September 16, 2025

Bronx Economic Development Corporation
851 Grand Concourse #123
Bronx, NY 10451

To Whom It May Concern,

As the Senator representing the 29th State Senate District, I am writing to express support for Bronx Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson and The Bronx Economic Development Corporation's joint application for Regional Economic Development Council funding through the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) for the Harlem River Gateway District.

The Harlem River Gateway District is experiencing a resurgence in economic development. As a former industrial hub, the area is seeing a transformation into vibrant commercial and residential spaces. This district's rich cultural history, combined with the momentum of both private and public investments, positions it as a neighborhood full of potential.

Investment from the Regional Economic Development Council through this proposal would provide support for the Harlem River Gateway District's continued development and prosperity to help ensure that The Bronx's growth extends to the areas where it is most needed.

I appreciate your consideration of this matter. If you would like to discuss further, I can be reached at 212-828-5829 or serrano@nysenate.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "José M. Serrano".

José M. Serrano
29th Senate District



LANDON C. DAIS
Assemblymember 77th District
Bronx County

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10/8/25

Mr. William D. Rahm, Co-Chair
Mr. Felix V. Matos, Co-Chair
New York City Regional Economic Development Council
633 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10017

Dear Co-Chairs Rahm and Matos,

I am pleased to express my support for Bronx Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson and The Bronx Economic Development Corporation's joint application for Regional Economic Development Council funding through the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) for the Harlem River Gateway District.

The Harlem River Gateway District is experiencing a long-overdue resurgence in economic activity and investment in infrastructure. The DRI investment would address these needs directly by uplifting the small businesses, creative entrepreneurs, and service providers that form the backbone of this community.

By prioritizing local business development, workforce opportunities, and accessible public infrastructure, this initiative will cultivate inclusive, sustainable growth and provide much-needed support to local businessowners and service providers ensuring they are not left behind in the face of rising investment.

The Harlem River Gateway District sits at a critical geographic and economic junction, offering natural linkages to major Bronx institutions, greenways, transit hubs, and surrounding commercial corridors. Investment in this district is an investment in the future of The Bronx—one that ensures revitalization reaches those who need it most.

I fully support this application as this funding will help advance a vision of equitable economic development that reflects the needs, culture, and potential of the Harlem River Gateway District and The Bronx as a whole. With those remarks, I fully support this application.

Sincerely,

Hon. Landon C. Dais
Member of the Assembly
77th District, Bronx County



AMANDA N. SEPTIMO
Assemblymember 84th District

THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

SECRETARY
Majority Conference

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Veterans' Affairs
Ways and Means

September 18, 2025

Mr. William D. Rahm, Co-Chair
Mr. Felix V. Matos, Co-Chair
New York City Regional Economic Development Council
633 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10017

Dear Co-Chairs Rahm and Matos,

I am pleased to express my support for Bronx Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson and The Bronx Economic Development Corporation's joint application for Regional Economic Development Council funding through the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) for the Harlem River Gateway District.

The Harlem River Gateway District is experiencing a long-overdue resurgence in economic activity and investment in infrastructure. The DRI investment would address these needs directly by uplifting the small businesses, creative entrepreneurs, and service providers that form the backbone of this community.

By prioritizing local business development, workforce opportunities, and accessible public infrastructure, this initiative will cultivate inclusive, sustainable growth and provide much-needed support to local business owners and service providers ensuring they are not left behind in the face of rising investment.

As Assemblymember for the South Bronx, I have seen firsthand how critical the Harlem River and its riverways are to our community's daily life and long-term opportunities. Enhancing access to the waterfront not only connects residents to green space and transit, but also strengthens resilience, equity, and health for neighborhoods that have historically been cut off from these resources.

The Harlem River Gateway District sits at a critical geographic and economic junction, offering natural linkages to major Bronx institutions, greenways, transit hubs, and surrounding commercial corridors. Investment in this district is an investment in the future of The Bronx—one that ensures revitalization reaches those who need it most.

I fully support this application as this funding will help advance a vision of equitable economic development that reflects the needs, culture, and potential of the Harlem River Gateway District and The Bronx as a whole.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Amanda Septimo
Member, New York State Assembly
AD-84, South Bronx

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK

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RULES, PRIVILEGES, AND ELECTIONS
STANDARDS AND ETHICS

September 29, 2025

Mr. William D. Rahm, Co-Chair
Mr. Felix V. Matos, Co-Chair
New York City Regional Economic Development Council
633 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10017

Dear Co-Chairs Rahm and Matos,

I am pleased to express my support for Bronx Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson and The Bronx Economic Development Corporation's joint application for Regional Economic Development Council funding through the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) for the Harlem River Gateway District.

The Harlem River Gateway District is experiencing a long-overdue resurgence in economic activity and investment in infrastructure. The DRI investment would address these needs directly by uplifting the small businesses, creative entrepreneurs, and service providers that form the backbone of this community.

By prioritizing local business development, workforce opportunities, and accessible public infrastructure, this initiative will cultivate inclusive, sustainable growth and provide much-needed support to local businessowners and service providers ensuring they are not left behind in the face of rising investment.

The Harlem River Gateway District sits at a critical geographic and economic junction, offering natural linkages to major Bronx institutions, greenways, transit hubs, and surrounding commercial corridors. Investment in this district is an investment in the future of The Bronx—one that ensures revitalization reaches those who need it most.

I fully support this application as this funding will help advance a vision of equitable economic development that reflects the needs, culture, and potential of the Harlem River Gateway District and The Bronx as a whole. With those remarks, I fully support this application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Diana Ayala'.

Diana Ayala
Deputy Speaker
NYC Council District 8



The City of New York
BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD #1

3024 THIRD AVENUE
BRONX, NEW YORK 10455

(718) 585-7117 • Fax (718) 292-0558 • Email: BX01@CB.NYC.Gov

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VANESSA L. GIBSON
BOROUGH PRESIDENT

ANTHONY R. JORDAN
DISTRICT MANAGER

PAOLA M. MARTINEZ
CHAIRPERSON

October 14th, 2025

Mr. William D. Rahm, Co-Chair
Mr. Felix V. Matos, Co-Chair
New York City Regional Economic Development Council
633 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10017

Dear Co-Chair Rahm and Matos,

I am pleased to express our strong support for Bronx Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson and The Bronx Economic Development Corporation's joint application for Regional Economic Development Council funding through the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) for the Harlem River Gateway District.

The Harlem River Gateway District is undergoing a remarkable resurgence in economic development. Once an industrial hub, the area is now transforming into a dynamic center of commercial and residential activity. This district's rich cultural heritage, coupled with the growing momentum of both private and public investments, positions it as a neighborhood of exceptional promise and opportunity.

The Harlem River Gateway District is now home to an expanding array of small enterprises, creative industries, and service-sector occupations. However, residents continue to face significant economic and environmental challenges. Certain portions of the district experience persistent vacancies and limited commercial activity due to insufficient capital investment, even as the surrounding community experiences rapid growth. This underscores the urgent need to foster and sustain new ventures while continuing to support existing enterprises in order to fully realize the benefits of strategic and equitable development.

Investment from the Regional Economic Development Council through this initiative will provide the sustained support necessary to advance the Harlem River Gateway District's continued growth and long-term prosperity. This effort reflects our shared commitment to ensuring that The Bronx's revitalization reaches the areas where it is most needed.

With these remarks, Bronx Community Board #1 expresses its full and unwavering support for this application.

Sincerely,

Anthony R. Jordan
District Manager



The City of New York
COMMUNITY BOARD 4
1650 Selwyn Avenue, Suite 11A
The Bronx, New York 10457
Tel: 718-299-0800 Fax: 718-294-7870
Email: bx04@cb.nyc.gov

HONORABLE Vanessa L. Gibson
Bronx Borough President

Ms. Beverly Bond
Board Chair

Mr. Leonardo Coello
District Manager

Mr. William D. Rahm, Co-Chair
Mr. Felix V. Matos, Co-Chair
New York City Regional Economic Development Council
633 Third Avenue
New York, New York 10017

September 19, 2025

Dear Co-Chairs Rahm and Matos,

On behalf of Bronx Community Board 4, we are pleased to extend our strong support for the joint application submitted by Bronx Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson and The Bronx Economic Development Corporation (BXEDC) for Regional Economic Development Council funding through the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) for the Harlem River Gateway District.

The Harlem River Gateway District is experiencing a long-overdue resurgence in economic activity and investment in infrastructure. The DRI investment would directly address these needs by uplifting small businesses, creative entrepreneurs, and service providers that form the backbone of this community.

By prioritizing local business development, workforce opportunities, and accessible public infrastructure, this initiative will foster inclusive, sustainable growth. It will also ensure that long-standing neighborhood businesses and residents benefit from investment, rather than being left behind as the district continues to attract development.

The Harlem River Gateway District sits at a critical geographic and economic junction, linking major Bronx institutions, greenways, transit hubs, and surrounding commercial corridors. Investment in this district is not only an investment in local businesses but in the future of the Bronx as a whole. It will secure equitable economic development that reflects the needs, culture, and potential of this community.

With these remarks, Bronx Community Board 4 fully supports this application and looks forward to partnering in the advancement of the Harlem River Gateway District.

Sincerely,

Leonardo J. Coello

District Manager, Bronx Community Board 4

cc: Beverly Bond, Chair, Bronx Community Board 4

Leandro Monzon, Chair, Economic Development Committee, Bronx Community Board 4



Appendix

Bronx Children's Museum



Detailed Project List

H.E.Arts Community Center (Mott Haven-Port Morris Community Land Stewards)

1

DRI Funding Request: \$10,000,000

Total Project Cost: \$45,900,000

Through years of community-led engagement sessions and planning on how the building at 349 East 140th Street should be transformed and used, we arrived at the idea of H.E.Arts, a center to provide health (H), education (E), and arts (Arts) programming. The Mott Haven Port Morris Community Land Stewards (The Land Stewards) is converting the 22,750 square foot building into a community-controlled asset that would serve as a vital anchor and tool for local economic empowerment and self-determination.

Food Justice-Centered Commercial Kitchen (Mott Haven-Port Morris Community Land Stewards)

2

DRI Funding Request: \$1,000,000

Total Project Cost: \$45,900,000

The HEArts Center will have approximately 1600 square feet on its ground floor designated for a commercial kitchen. This project centerpiece would be run by an experienced, mission-aligned operator who would provide our community with workforce development in the form of culinary job training, equipping residents with career-path opportunities. Additionally, the space would serve healthy fresh food options that are culturally sensitive, desirable, and, most importantly, accessible and affordable.

Lincoln Ave Street End Pier (Mott Haven-Port Morris Community Land Stewards)

3

DRI Funding Request: \$5,000,000

Total Project Cost: \$10,000,000

This site is located on Lincoln Avenue where it meets the Harlem River and is south of the Major Deegan Expressway. The waterfront projects are in a level B flood protection from coastal storms and sea level rise as well as pollution mitigation and direly needed green space. It will also entail establishing oyster reefs to enhance water quality and support the health of local waterways at Lincoln Avenue Street end and stabilizing the shorefront and rebuilding the existing street end pier on Lincoln Avenue.

People's Park Playground Reconstruction (NYC Department of Parks and Recreation)

4

DRI Funding Request: \$12,000,000

Total Project Cost: \$12,000,000

This project will reconstruct People's Park Playground. The reconstruction will include new play equipment, new spray showers, new seating area, new passive recreation area and safety surfacing and security lights. This project will upgrade water and electrical utilities at the site. This project will reconstruct the handball courts. This project will also reconstruct the multipurpose area, to include the reconstruction of the basketball courts.

St. Mary's South Playground Reconstruction (NYC Department of Parks and Recreation)

5

DRI Funding Request: \$6,500,000

Total Project Cost: \$6,500,000

This project will reconstruct St. Mary's South Playground, located in St. Mary's Park. The reconstruction will include new play equipment, new spray showers, new seating and safety surfacing and security lights. This project will upgrade water and electrical utilities at the site.

St. Mary's East Playground Reconstruction (NYC Department of Parks and Recreation)

6

DRI Funding Request: \$7,800,000

Total Project Cost: \$7,800,000

This project will reconstruct St. Mary's East Playground, located in St. Mary's Park. The reconstruction will include new play equipment, new spray showers, new seating, new safety surfacing and security lights. This project will upgrade water and electrical utilities at the site. This project will reconstruct the basketball courts and the handball courts.

St. Mary's Running Track, Fitness Equipment and Synthetic Turf Field Reconstruction

7

(NYC Department of Parks and Recreation)

DRI Funding Request: \$9,200,000

Total Project Cost: \$9,200,000

This project will reconstruct St. Mary's Running Track, located in St. Mary's Park. The reconstruction will include a new running track area, reconstruct the adult fitness area and reconstruct the synthetic turf field. This project will upgrade water and electrical utilities at the site and security lights

Success Academy Bronx K-12

8

DRI Funding Request: \$15,000,000

Total Project Cost: \$300,000,000

Success Academy is constructing a new K-12 school in the Bronx. Across three interconnected structures, the campus boasts more than 300,000 square feet of building and green space. The campus will serve 2,400 scholars in elementary (600), middle (600), and high school (1,200), with innovative settings for academics, co-curriculars, student life, and educator training. The mission is to demonstrate a bold new schooling model: efficient, cost-effective, tightly integrated, and excellent at preparing children for higher education and life challenges and opportunities. Here, they will see how public education can once again become an equitable and excellent pillar of our society – and a bright beacon of hope.

Patterson Community Barbeque Pit Area (Justice Innovation Inc.)

9

DRI Funding Request: \$100,000

Total Project Cost: \$100,000

Patterson Houses Community Barbeque Pit: Located behind 301 East 143rd Street, Bronx, adjacent to the playground near the Children’s Pride Patterson Community Center, the proposed community barbecue pit area will increase a much-desired amenity to Patterson residents. As it stands, there is one small BBQ area behind 320 Morris Avenue, Bronx that is mostly accessible to Patterson residents who are south of East 143rd Street, Bronx. Adding a secondary community BBQ area will reduce potential conflicts and provide a space for the community to host intergenerational activities, thereby promoting a safe and harmonious outdoor community living environment.

Mitchel Houses Basketball Court Renovation (Justice Innovation Inc.)

10

DRI Funding Request: \$80,000

Total Project Cost: \$80,000

This project will reconstruct St. Mary’s East Playground, located in St. Mary’s Park. The reconstruction will include new play equipment, new spray showers, new seating, new safety surfacing and security lights. This project will upgrade water and electrical utilities at the site. This project will reconstruct the basketball courts and the handball courts.

Patterson Houses Water Play Area (271 East 143rd Street) (Justice Innovation Inc.)

11

DRI Funding Request: \$250,000

Total Project Cost: \$250,000

This project aims to enhance the toddler playground by installing functional water play areas. The water play area enhancement at the toddler playground would replace outdated elephant sprinklers that have damaged sprinkler heads with new equipment that features smart water sensors.

Patterson Houses Water Play Area (304 Morris Avenue) (Justice Innovation Inc.)

12

DRI Funding Request: \$300,000

Total Project Cost: \$300,000

The young children's playground contains a splash pad that has poor drainage and is therefore rarely open during the summer. The Center proposes to renovate the splashpad to ensure proper drainage and functionality. These improvements will provide young children with safe, free, and engaging spaces to play and stay cool during the summer months.

Interactive Installations in Mill Pond Park (Bronx Children's Museum)

13

DRI Funding Request: \$350,000

Total Project Cost: \$700,000

This project will reconstruct St. Mary's East Playground, located in St. Mary's Park. The reconstruction will include new play equipment, new spray showers, new seating, new safety surfacing and security lights. This project will upgrade water and electrical utilities at the site. This project will reconstruct the basketball courts and the handball courts.

Farm & Food Lab (ReBORN FARMS)

14

DRI Funding Request: \$21,000,000

Total Project Cost: \$23,000,000

ReBORN aims to create ReBORN Farm and Food Lab, a modular urban farm, market, and learning space under the Major Deegan Highway at 135th Street in The Bronx. Utilizing retrofitted shipping containers, the project will house hydroponic and aeroponic farms, a marketplace for fresh produce, and an education lab. The farm will serve as a community hub, promoting food sovereignty and healing through a co-creative process with local residents. By collaborating with nearby NYCHA campuses, Hostos College, and other local institutions, ReBORN will celebrate the Bronx's cultural innovation and engage the community in shaping the project's development and offerings.

Bronx Point Early Childhood Learning Center Branding and Marketing Project (BronxWorks, Inc)**15**

DRI Funding Request: \$160,000

Total Project Cost: \$160,000

BronxWorks seeks to implement a marketing plan for the Bronx Point Early Childhood Learning Center, targeting local businesses and families with children ages 3 to 5. The plan will outline engagement strategies, guide outreach efforts by business and constituent consultants, and involve a design consultant to create outreach materials for increasing awareness among area employers and residents.

Five Knives (The Hip Hop Museum)**16**

DRI Funding Request: \$2,000,000

Total Project Cost: \$6,000,000

Five Knives is the signature food-and-beverage venue on the second floor of The Hip Hop Museum at Bronx Point. The 5,200-SF space will have a dedicated Esplanade entrance, flexible dining/event areas, and a state-of-the-art kitchen. A rotating menu and chef program—drawing on the five boroughs—will serve daily visitors and private events. Scope includes full architectural build-out, MEPFP, and equipment installation to enhance the museum experience and activate the Bronx waterfront.

Store front Improvement/Small Project Fund (Bronx Economic Development Corporation)**17**

DRI Funding Request: \$1,000,000

Total Project Cost: \$1,212,500

As part of the Harlem River Gateway District's Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI), the Storefront Improvement Fund aims to enhance the visual appeal and economic vitality of local businesses. This grant program provides financial support to eligible property owners and tenants within the Fordham DRI boundary to upgrade façades, signage, lighting, and other exterior elements. By investing in storefront improvements, the fund seeks to foster a more inviting, vibrant, and cohesive streetscape that attracts shoppers, strengthens community identity, and supports small business growth.

References

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