Introduction

Vision Port Richmond is a comprehensive community plan produced by the fall 2012 Hunter College Urban Planning Studio. The plan was created for the Port Richmond Anti-Violence Task Force, a community organization dedicated to combatting racism and anti-immigrant sentiment, reducing violence, and easing racial and cultural tensions in the Port Richmond community of Staten Island’s North Shore. The Task Force was formed in 2003 but became more active in 2010 after a series of assaults that were characterized in the media as racially biased. Since then, the Task Force has taken an interest in addressing many of the root socioeconomic issues that drive violence within the community.

Methodology

The Task Force challenged the studio group to create a comprehensive vision for Port Richmond that would act as a guide for bringing about short- and long-term improvements in the community. The studio group consisted of twelve graduate urban planning students and was led by Professor Pablo Vengoechea, himself a long-time Staten Island resident. The project spanned four months from September through December, 2012, and consisted of three phases. First, initial research was conducted on the history and current conditions of Port Richmond. Next, research findings were presented to community members and used to facilitate a visioning workshop where over forty people shared their concerns, opinions, and visions for what Port Richmond could be in the future. Finally, the studio group synthesized the preliminary research, community input, and further investigations into a set of goals and recommendations for the Task Force to pursue.

Vision Port Richmond

Driven largely by input from Port Richmond residents, the content of this report promotes the following overarching goal for the community:

To unlock the potential of Port Richmond and increase opportunity for all residents by building a safer community, advancing economic development, and fostering neighborhood cohesion.

To advance this vision, this report puts forth seven general goals for Port Richmond.

For each goal, the studio group has proposed a series of recommendations that the Task Force can pursue in the short or long term. The studio aimed to make this report as actionable as possible so as to arm the Task Force with many different avenues to take toward improving their community.

• Create a Safer Community
• Foster Pride in Cultural Diversity
• Promote Economic Justice and Development
• Manage Growth
• Connect Community to Its Waterfront
• Enhance the Built Environment
• Strengthen the Anti-Violence Task Force
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Goal 1: Create a Safer Community

Feedback from community members made clear that three main factors contribute significantly to violence in Port Richmond: strained relations with police, economic vulnerability of residents, and a general perception of danger on neighborhood streets.

To strengthen relations between the police and community members, the Task Force should lobby the local police precinct to hire Spanish-speaking officers and provide existing officers with Spanish language training. The Task Force should also initiate a “Know Your Rights” campaign for non-English-speaking residents and become more active in citywide police-reform efforts.

Many violent incidents in Port Richmond involve robberies of residents who have no access to banking and thus tend to carry cash on their person. The Task Force should work to establish a community development credit union to relieve this situation and enhance economic opportunity. Credit unions provide a safe place for residents to deposit cash as well as banking and credit services to those excluded from traditional banks.

Lastly, to reverse the general perception of danger in Port Richmond, the Task Force should increase efforts to clean up street trash and document neglect by residents and local government.

Goal 2: Foster Pride in Cultural Diversity

The Task Force has worked to build cultural awareness and acceptance of diversity in Port Richmond. Monthly Friendship Dinners have opened cross-cultural dialogue, but this success must be built upon in order to foster a more holistic revitalization of the neighborhood. To bring about long-term, sustainable commitments to cultural cohesion, the Task Force should form a Multicultural Activities Committee (MAC) dedicated to creating opportunities for cross-cultural interactions. The MAC could promote activities such as festivals, street fairs, and art exhibits that could take place in public and vacant commercial spaces. These “pop-up” events could enliven the streetscape and encourage social interaction. Once multicultural events are established, the Task Force should launch a neighborhood marketing campaign to draw positive attention to Port Richmond. The campaign could include a Port Richmond Visitor Guide to promote neighborhood attractions and reestablish Port Richmond as a destination of historical and cultural significance.

Goal 3: Promote Economic Justice and Development

Port Richmond residents suffer from higher unemployment and poverty rates than Borough of Staten Island as a whole. The lack of jobs and job training services, economic vulnerability of immigrants, and the underutilized commercial core of Port Richmond Avenue are three specific issues that contribute to these circumstances. The Task Force can foster economic development in the neighborhood by supporting several initiatives that empower local residents to put their skills to work for themselves. The development of a local business incubator, cooperative businesses, and microfinance resources would create jobs, provide opportunities for vocational training, and spur commercial activity along Port Richmond Avenue.

In addition to bringing these resources to Port Richmond, the Task Force should also take action to support the neighborhood’s significant number of day laborers. The creation of a secure hiring location for day laborers would reduce loitering, protect them from wage theft and other abuses, and connect them to various job training and employment resources.

Goal 4: Manage Growth

Port Richmond’s recent population growth has contributed to a lack of affordable housing, health care, and transit options within the community. The Task Force should take an active role in addressing these challenges and preparing the neighborhood to accommodate future growth. To create affordable housing, the Task Force should advocate for the
creation of a Community Land Trust that would permanently preserve land for community uses and facilitate the creation of housing that meets the needs of current residents. The Task Force should also support the rezoning of certain areas to support higher-density housing.

To help provide health care for Port Richmond’s expanding population, the Task Force should support the creation of a health care cooperative comprised of small, independent health care providers, their employees, and the patients they serve. This type of health care cooperative could stimulate the local economy and provide primary medical care for the neighborhood’s uninsured residents.

To improve transportation, the Task Force should work to reestablish Port Richmond as a transportation hub, featuring a multi-modal station on Port Richmond Avenue serving bus riders, drivers, and bicyclists. Specifically, the Task Force should advocate for the establishment of a bus rapid transit (BRT) line on the currently unused North Shore Railway. This plan would connect Port Richmond to St. George and the rest of Staten Island, thus decreasing commuting times and facilitating economic development along Port Richmond Avenue. Coordinating a neighborhood marketing campaign to support BRT usage and steering housing and commercial development around the multi-modal station on Port Richmond Avenue (transit-oriented development) would tie transportation improvements to the rest of the goals contained in this report.

Goal 5: Connect Community to Its Waterfront

Though blessed with a historic shoreline along the banks of the Kill Van Kull, Port Richmond exhibits a distinct separation between its residential community and waterfront assets. With few exceptions, residents of Port Richmond enjoy minimal connection either to the neighborhood’s waterfront spaces or to the water itself.

The Task Force should form a Waterfront Committee to raise awareness of the area’s rich history, educate the public on its current value, and promote its development as an active and integrated part of the neighborhood. Vision Port Richmond includes a Waterfront Access Plan to serve as a vision and guide to accomplish this task. The plan calls for the opening of view corridors by removing opaque barriers, adding waterfront access points, and replacing non-water dependent industry with recreational and commercial spaces that invite pedestrian activity.

Key elements of the plan include sports fields, festival grounds, and a park, all connected by a boardwalk that would facilitate pedestrian usage of the area. In addition to creating a unique attraction to the neighborhood, these features will add soft, permeable infrastructure to help protect Port Richmond from future flooding and storm surge.

Goal 6: Enhance the Built Environment

The built environment of Port Richmond consists of a variety of historic and modern architectural elements. While the majority of residential and commercial buildings are in good condition, Port Richmond Avenue contains many vacant and underutilized buildings and lots that discourage a revitalization of the neighborhood.

The Task Force should take steps to enliven these areas and add vibrancy to Port Richmond Avenue. For instance, streetscape improvements should be made to create a social atmosphere through better lighting for the street and sidewalk, more greenery in the form of planter boxes and curb extensions, and the encouragement of sidewalk cafes. The Task Force should work with business owners and local stakeholders to create a basic design code for Port Richmond Avenue that would maximize storefront visibility and create visual cohesion among buildings.

Goal 7: Strengthen the Anti-Violence Task Force

The Task Force is a productive, positive presence in Port Richmond with the ability to bring various stakeholders together to create a safe
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

community. The Task Force should capitalize on its strengths by investing in its own growth and development. Its current lack of a clear mission statement, as well as a formal communications method and structure, prohibit it from obtaining funding and achieving results on a wider scale across the community.

The Task Force should take steps to become a formal organization, such as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, with a rebranded name that better reflects its broader efforts to improve the community. As a formal organization, the Task Force would be able to apply for grants, would be more attractive to potential donors, and would be better situated to expand its role as a coalition builder throughout Port Richmond.

As a formal organization, the Task Force should maintain its own website to become more visible, project a clear and consistent image, and communicate effectively with the community and stakeholders. The studio group has created a website whose ownership and maintenance responsibilities will be passed on to the Task Force.

Lastly, to strengthen its infrastructure, the Task Force should establish a college public service internship program and should take advantage of the many support resources at the disposal of community organizations in New York City.

Conclusion

Vision Port Richmond is an expression of community needs, a prioritization of actions, and a guide toward the attainment of better living standards for all Port Richmond residents. The Task Force should begin to take any actions that can be completed in the short term and start to prepare a plan to implement long-term actions. At each step, the Task Force should closely monitor successes and failures and adjust accordingly. The Task Force's continued enthusiasm and hard work is the single most important element to ensuring a bright future for this historic, diverse, and vibrant neighborhood.

Studio Team Members

Emily Anderson
Bradley Brashears
David Ludwig
Harrison Peck
Tiffany Rosa
Scheedie Russell
Deborah Stattel
Nathan Storey
Ahmed Tigani
Chris Van Eyken
Mary Kate Wise
Dan Zajackowski

Faculty Advisor
Professor Pablo Vengoechea
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Make the Road New York
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INTRODUCTION

A preliminary glance at Port Richmond reveals a community of contrasts. While Port Richmond Avenue bustles to a frenetic soundtrack of hurried pedestrians, honking horns, and Latin pop music, a recurrence of crumbling building façades and shuttered storefronts lends an air of desolation to this otherwise lively commercial strip. On side streets, stately homes set amid meticulously manicured gardens sit beside abandoned houses, buildings barely staving collapse, and vacant lots. Along Richmond Terrace, active maritime industry and sweeping waterfront vistas are shielded from public view, while a rail line once critical to Staten Island’s North Shore lays utterly dormant, looming overhead as a constant reminder that modern Port Richmond exists merely as a shell of its prosperous past.

But Port Richmond residents tell a different story; what they see is a neighborhood in the early stages of a renaissance. To them, recently opened businesses breathe new life into the storied Avenue, filling the air with the sweet aromas of spicy tamales and fresh-cut shawarma. Redolent of small-town living, friends greet one another as they pass by on the street, and a cast of ubiquitous neighborhood characters lends a sense of familiarity that has all but departed from much of New York City. Finally, a slew of hard-working organizations bring Port Richmond residents together, nurturing community cohesion and encouraging civic involvement. Boasting this wealth of assets, Port Richmond teeters on the brink of a magnificent resurgence. The potential is there—it simply needs to be unlocked.

HISTORY OF PORT RICHMOND

Since Staten Island’s earliest days, Port Richmond has been recognized as an epicenter for commerce and industry intertwined with day-to-day residential life. With a history that stretches back to the original settlement of Lenape Indians from the Delaware River Valley, the story of Port Richmond is long and rich. The first inhabitants of the island were Native Americans—members of the expansive, Algonquian-speaking Lenape Nation, who came to Staten Island’s shores as far back as 10,000 BC. The Dutch were the first Europeans to establish a trade post on the island in the 1500s, but it would be several more decades before a Dutch-French collaborative venture would build the town of New Dorp, anchored five miles inland from present-day Port Richmond.

The area of Port Richmond was first used as the local cemetery for Staten Island’s European population, but after 1696 the surrounding area was rapidly converted to commercial and residential uses. In the early 18th century a Dutch Reform Church was built in Port Richmond and became an anchor for the community. The church’s leaders, attracting residents with the lure of waterfront industrial opportunities, built a larger agricultural community that would eventually grow Port Richmond into an incorporated village in 1866.

Port Richmond’s waterfront access was a significant factor in positioning it for commercial success. The North Shore would soon be home to shipbuilding, whaling, fisheries, distilleries, textiles, and grain and timber mills, to name just a few industries. Additionally, its favorable position as a transportation hub would continue to factor prominently into its growth. Land routes connecting Philadelphia, New Jersey, and New York by stagecoach made it an important
communication node, and titans of industry like Cornelius Vanderbilt ran ferries and tugboats across the Kill Van Kull. In 1860 Vanderbilt’s company opened the Staten Island Railway, which ran along the east coast of the island. The construction of the railway was a turning point in the Staten Island manufacturing community, since the railway’s connection to New Jersey businesses facilitated more rapid distribution of Staten Island goods to other parts of the country. Thus, the end of the 19th century saw a conversion of Port Richmond’s agriculturally based economy into a center for manufacturing and distribution. With industry came retail and commercial stores.

In 1898 Staten Island became an officially incorporated borough of New York City, but even after the consolidation, the borough was given a degree of self-governance. As a pillar of success on the island, Port Richmond served as a thriving business district whose crown jewel, Port Richmond Avenue, was often referred to as the 5th Avenue of Staten Island. The sentiment is best described in an excerpt from a 1922 Port Richmond Board of Trade report, which states that, in that year alone, their business community had “175 industrial plants, employing 35,000 people covering every branch of manufacture, among which are some of the largest concerns in the country.” Many of the products manufactured on the North Shore were quickly accessible to consumers at the many small businesses and high-end retailers that lined Port Richmond Avenue, which had grown into a bustling commercial and entertainment corridor that attracted shoppers from across the island.

This golden age would not last forever. The construction of the Bayonne Bridge, Goethals Bridge, Verrazano Narrows Bridge and Outerbridge Crossing, brought on by the growth in popularity of the private automobile, encouraged suburban expansion into New Jersey. Consumer shopping behavior changed with the proliferation of strip malls, drawing business away from the Avenue’s commercial strip, but the construction of the Staten Island Mall in 1973 would prove to be the major undermining factor to the economic viability Port Richmond Avenue and the broader Port Richmond community.

After decades of stagnant conditions within the community, particularly its central commercial corridor, Port Richmond began to see a turnaround in the 1990s with an influx of Latino immigrants, attracted to the neighborhood for its affordability and diverse, vacant housing stock. This new migration followed in the footsteps of the Irish, Norwegian, Italian, and Greek waves before them, who contributed to Port Richmond’s role as a first residence for new immigrant communities. Latino entrepreneurs and members of the African-American community, a presence in the area since the 1930s, slowly began to reverse decades of disinvestment along the main shopping corridor, reclaiming abandoned storefronts and opening businesses to cater to the needs of the rapidly growing community.

In recent years, incidents of racially motivated attacks have mobilized faith, business, and social service leaders in Port Richmond to seek a holistic approach to defusing violence and building a strong fabric between the old and new communities of Port Richmond. This comes with new investments in public transportation, waterfront redevelopment, and business opportunities underwritten by public- and private-sector actors. All this may add up to a new period of prosperity for Port Richmond and another chance to reclaim its title as the “5th Avenue of Staten Island.”
The Port Richmond Planning Studio consists of twelve graduate urban planning students from Hunter College, led by Professor Pablo Vengoechea. The studio spearheaded a four-month planning process to formulate specific recommendations to our client, the Port Richmond Anti-Violence Task Force. The studio obtained pertinent data and research related to the study area, conducted various interviews with stakeholders and community members, held a Visioning Workshop to gather community insight, and researched several related case studies to provide context. From this process, the studio was able to produce specific recommendations to address the various issues identified within the community.

In addition to compiling demographic and historical information, our research included analyses of land use, vacancy, and building conditions across Port Richmond. We also looked at transportation, the waterfront, the built environment, housing, and issues of social justice.

Our primary study area, see map in Appendix 1, in which all of our recommendations directly apply, is defined by Sharpe Avenue to the west, Heberton Avenue to the east, Post Avenue to the south, and the Kill Van Kull to the north, as well as all waterfront lots between the Bayonne Bridge and the Port Richmond Wastewater-Pollution Control Plant. In order to contextualize our study and gain a deeper understanding of how
our recommendations would affect the larger North Shore community, we conducted research on a secondary study area as well, which stretches south to Forest Avenue, west to the Bayonne Bridge, and east to Jewett Avenue.

This information was presented to the Task Force and the community of Port Richmond at our Visioning Workshop on October 16, 2012, at the Christian Youth Organization (CYO) Center in Port Richmond. About 40 community members were in attendance, with three tables of English speakers and two of Spanish speakers. The purpose of the evening was to encourage dialogue and elicit proposals regarding the future of Port Richmond from neighborhood residents themselves. To begin, we asked participants to draw mental maps of Port Richmond that represented their physical, emotional, and practical connections across the neighborhood’s built environment. Groups then made consensus maps that spoke to their combined visions for their neighborhood. We then presented our own research to contextualize our final discussion. Finally, each group presented its consensus map and facilitated dialogue among all attendees.

After conducting the Visioning Workshop, we compiled the issues and recommendations identified by participants. Based on those issues, we developed a recommendations map outlining interventions to the commercial corridor, residential zones, the waterfront, and reuse options for the unused North Shore train tracks. Recommendations include (but are not limited to), a reduction in storefront signage, the establishment of a diverse retail mix, creation of affordable housing options, increase in access to the waterfront, and the reuse of the abandoned train tracks. The studio produced a Visioning Workshop Booklet detailing this information, which was given to the Task Force, various stakeholders, and community members (and is included as an appendix to this report).

From the Visioning Workshop, the studio came together and formulated seven different goals to address the issues identified through research and community involvement. Various recommendations were made to address each goal. These recommendations, explained in depth below, constitute our comprehensive community plan and were presented to the Task Force on December 4, 2012.

**PORT RICHMOND DEMOGRAPHICS**

Port Richmond today has over 14,000 residents. In the past ten years alone, its population has grown by 19%, much faster than Staten Island and New York City as a whole, which grew by just 6% and 2%, respectively, in the same time period (see Figure 0.1). The Latino population in Port Richmond has more than doubled in the past ten years. Latinos now make up about half of the Port Richmond population, with whites and blacks each comprising about 25% (see Figure 0.2).12

![Figure 0.1: Population Growth from 2000 to 2010](image)

![Figure 0.2 Population Change by Ethnicity](image)
Compared to Staten Island and New York City as a whole, Port Richmond is much younger (see Figure 0.3), has higher poverty (see Figure 0.4), more single parents (see Figure 0.5), higher unemployment (see Figure 0.6), a lower median income (see Figure 0.7), and lower educational attainment (see Figure 0.8). ¹³
indicators such as lead poisoning (see Figure 0.9)\textsuperscript{14} and asthma (see Figure 0.10)\textsuperscript{15} were also higher in Port Richmond than on Staten Island and in New York City as a whole, as was access to health insurance (see Figure 0.11)\textsuperscript{16} and medical care (see Figure 0.12).\textsuperscript{17}
Throughout New York City there is an acute lack of affordable housing, especially for renters. More than half of Port Richmond residents are renters, which is lower than New York City as a whole (66.1%) but is significantly higher than for the population of Staten Island (28.9%). We looked at the Census measure called “Gross Rent As A Percentage Of Household Income In 2009” to gauge the availability of affordable housing—defined as no more than 30% of household income—in Port Richmond compared to Staten Island and New York City. In Port Richmond 59% of households paid more than 30% of their income on housing, with some paying 50% or more. Port Richmond has a higher proportion of its renters living in unaffordable housing than Staten Island or New York City, as indicated by Figure 0.13.
THE PORT RICHMOND ANTI-VIOLENCE TASK FORCE

Established in 2003, the Port Richmond Anti-Violence Task Force was created by residents who wanted to take a proactive role in combating violence in Port Richmond. The Task Force began as a community organization focused on creating sustainable community-police relations to deal with the substantial number of criminal offenses that occur in Port Richmond.\textsuperscript{19}

The Task Force’s presence in the community expanded on April 5, 2010, when a Mexican immigrant named Rodulfo Olmedo was brutally attacked while being called anti-Mexican slurs by four teenagers, three of them black and one of them Latino.\textsuperscript{20} Olmedo’s story prompted a police investigation about the incident constituting a hate crime, attracted the spotlight of the national news media, and brought to light more than a dozen other attacks that may have been motivated in part by ethnic bias.\textsuperscript{21}

The Olmedo attack, and subsequent attacks with possible biased undertones, galvanized the Task Force to take more actions to promote safety.\textsuperscript{22} The purpose of the Task Force evolved into a mission to “combat racism, hate crimes, anti-immigration sentiment, youth violence, and [to] reduc[е] racial and cultural tensions in the [Port Richmond] community.”\textsuperscript{23} Working with the U.S. Department of Justice, the Task Force established a successful model for promoting tolerance and cohesion in Port Richmond in the form of monthly Friendship Dinners. Additionally, the Task Force responded to the crisis by hosting meetings and vigils where community leaders, both African-American and Latino, spoke about whether the attacks were biased crimes or purely the result of high unemployment and social injustices and strategized community responses to the attacks.\textsuperscript{24} They also co-sponsored a memorial for the victims on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day in 2011.\textsuperscript{25}

Since the attacks, the Task Force has continued to host monthly Friendship Dinners for community members to mingle and eat dinner together.\textsuperscript{26} They also started the Friday Night Midnight Sports Program to “forg[e] positive relationships between African-American and Latino neighborhood youth.”\textsuperscript{27} Under the supervision of community volunteers, the Friday Night Midnight Sports Program entertains between 60 and 80 neighborhood youths with basketball and soccer games from 10pm until 12am every Friday night.\textsuperscript{28} Additionally, in August, 2011, the Task Force co-sponsored an event called Speak Out on Youth Violence, where youths aged 14 and older attended lunch and a two-hour dialogue about violence.\textsuperscript{29} The Task Force has also implemented the following anti-violence initiatives: (1) the safe zone campaign, (2) the formation of a safety patrol, (3) the release of a youth safety survey, and (4) an interracial dialogue program to train community leaders to facilitate interracial activities.\textsuperscript{30} The Task Force even goes as far as cleaning the streets on the weekends, because, as one resident puts it, “If we don't do it, who will?”\textsuperscript{31}

The Task Force’s ongoing efforts with the Friendship Dinners, along with their commitments to youth programming, transportation safety, police department policies, unsafe street conditions, and economic vulnerability, have made Port Richmond a safer place.
INTRODUCTION

SOURCES


15-17. NYC Community Health Survey 2002-03-04.


GOAL 1: CREATE A SAFER COMMUNITY

We are all the same, no more violence.
SUMMARY

The Port Richmond Anti-Violence Task Force was created by residents concerned with taking a proactive role in combatting violence in Port Richmond. The Task Force’s ongoing efforts with Friendship Dinners, youth programming, transportation safety, reforming police department policies, unsafe street conditions, and economic vulnerability, have made Port Richmond a safer place. But as we heard in the Visioning Workshop, concern about safety in Port Richmond is still a top priority. In this section we will outline recommendations that address some of the major safety issues in Port Richmond.

Many Latino immigrants expressed fear they are targets of muggings and home robberies due to their lack of access to financial institutions. There is only one bank in Port Richmond, and, according to reports from residents, it does not offer bilingual services and refuses to serve people without social security numbers. Since many residents, especially new immigrant groups, face significant barriers to utilizing financial institutions, they must deal in cash and store their money using less-secure methods. Many criminals see this population as “walking banks” because they are more likely to carry cash on their persons and less likely to report crimes committed against them.

Community relations with the police force in the area are strained. Within the Latino population, there are language barriers, since not all residents are fluent in English, and, based on the Visioning Workshop’s reports, few police officers speak Spanish. Accordingly, police confrontations often result in confusion, fear, and miscommunication; there is a sense among the African-American and Latino populations that the police engage in harassing behavior.

Overall, there is a perception that the streets of Port Richmond are dangerous. This likely results from a combination of strained police relations and racial conflicts, as well as from a general sense of neglect, evidenced by the many vacant lots dispersed throughout the community and piles of trash on Port Richmond Avenue.

OBJECTIVES

1. Reduce economic vulnerability.
2. Improve community/police relations.
3. Clean up Port Richmond Avenue.

OBJECTIVE ONE: REDUCE ECONOMIC VULNERABILITY

RECOMMENDATION: Open a community development credit union.

As access to credit and financial services in Port Richmond is inadequate, particularly among the neighborhood’s low-income and immigrant populations, we recommend the Task Force partner with the Lower East Side People’s Federal Credit Union (LES People’s FCU) to open a community development credit union (CDCU) in Port Richmond. The credit union would give residents a safe place to deposit cash and reduce their risk of being targets of theft. Additionally, the LES People’s FCU will consciously reinvest in the Port Richmond community and provide banking and credit services to populations that have been excluded from traditional banking institutions. Reinvestment in the community may also lead to safer streets, improved building maintenance, and economic growth.

CDCUs are an alternative approach to conventional banking. Usually located in low-income, underserved communities, CDCUs give
Staten Island presents a prime opportunity because the borough is unserved by credit unions.

Ms. Linda Levy, CEO of the LES People’s FCU, suggested three ways her organization can serve Port Richmond:

1. The LES People’s FCU could serve Port Richmond via a mobile credit union. It has already applied for a grant to serve the outer-boroughs by a mobile credit union based out of a secure van.

2. A community organization could allow the LES People’s FCU to keep a portable vault at their location and to allow the credit union staff to operate out of the community organization’s space a few times per week to take deposits.

3. The LES People’s FCU could locate permanently in Port Richmond.

If the LES People’s FCU located permanently in Port Richmond, they would need a minimum of 500 square feet of space, but 1,500 square feet would be better so they could have a conference room to meet with, and educate, credit union members. The LES People’s FCU could also share a space with another organization, but they would need to be separated by a secure wall with a steel door due to security issues.
POSSIBLE LOCATIONS

We have identified two possible sites where the LES People's FCU could locate as a stand-alone site:

1. The first site is located on the west side of Port Richmond Avenue at the intersection of Ann Street, adjacent to the railroad tracks. The property is presently owned by the New York City Department of Citywide Administrative Services, and, through concerted outreach efforts, could likely be used for the LES People's FCU. The downside to this property is that there is presently no building on the land; if the LES People's FCU located here, a new building would have to be constructed. The lot size is 1,267 square feet.

2. The second possible site for the LES People's FCU is located at the intersection of New Street and Port Richmond Avenue. It is presently vacant and owned by a religious institution. The building was previously a bank, and may already possess some of the design features necessary to set up a secure credit union. The lot size is 3,150 square feet.

Latino Community Credit Union

The Latino Community Credit Union (LCCU) is model for the ways in which credit unions can be beneficial to neighborhoods. In terms of members, the LCCU is one of the nation’s fastest-growing credit unions, and targets neighborhoods similar to Port Richmond with a growing population of Latino immigrants. The LCCU targets unbanked, low-income Latino households.

Following a rapid increase in the Latino population in Durham, North Carolina, the Latino community in Durham became the target of serious crimes such as robberies, home invasions, and murders. Community activists determined that one of the reasons Latinos were the targets of such assaults was because they did not have a safe place to deposit their money. One such activist articulated the problem, stating, “There was a criminal element that knew that immigrants kept their money at home, under their mattresses, in coffee cans in the freezer; or in boxes in a closet.”

To respond to this problem, with the support of Self-Help Credit Union, the State Employees Credit Union, the North Carolina Minority Support Center, and the North Carolina Credit Union Division, Latino community leaders in Durham learned how to run a credit union, raised five million dollars in initial capital, and, in 2000, opened the first financial services institution in North Carolina aimed at serving the Latino population.

While many Latinos initially distrusted financial institutions—as undocumented immigrants feared listing their names with authorities, and many had previous negative experiences with volatile Latin American banks—during its first year of operation, the Latino Community Credit Union (LCCU) grew to 1,139 members by recruiting through a network of churches, Latino leaders, and patrons. Many of its members had never had access to a banking institution before. For example, one North Carolina resident, a Mexican woman who had lived in the United States for 20 years, brought bags of cash to the credit union to open her first bank account; she had $40,000 in cash.

Today, the LCCU has twelve branch locations and has received numerous awards for its top financial performance and social responsibility. Latinos are able to open savings and checking accounts, wire money to family in other countries, take out loans for cars and houses, apply for a federal tax identification number (which is not reported to immigration officials), and participate in other banking transactions from which they had long been unable.

In order to become a member of the LCCU, a person must first become a member of the LCCU’s sponsor organization, the Latino Community Development Center (LCDC), which provides free, bilingual, financial education workshops on topics such as how to manage a checking account and use an ATM, build a credit history, purchase a car, prepare to buy a home, file taxes, and other financial necessities. The LCDC and LCCU have also developed a trainer’s guide to help organizations throughout the United States provide financial education to Latino immigrant populations.

The LCCU improved safety for Latinos in North Carolina to a great degree. Two years after the LCCU branch in Durham opened, 163 fewer robberies were reported. Additionally, a year after an LCCU branch opened in Charlotte, armed robberies against Latinos in the area dropped by 22.6 percent. In fact, in all of the counties in which an LCCU branch opened, robberies declined about 4.2 percent. By enabling Latinos to take proactive roles in their finances, the LCCU was able to help them become less vulnerable targets for crime, while empowering them to invest in their futures.
GOAL 1: SAFER COMMUNITY

OBJECTIVE TWO: IMPROVE COMMUNITY/POLICE RELATIONS

RECOMMENDATION: Lobby for a commitment from the local police precinct to hire police officers fluent in Spanish and to provide Spanish language training to existing police officers.

Police harassment, particularly of Hispanic immigrants, has negatively affected safety in Port Richmond. Members of the Task Force have repeatedly attempted to work with their local 120th police precinct. The Task Force has advocated for a commitment from the department to deploy more Spanish-speaking officers to Port Richmond, or to offer Spanish language training to existing officers. Even though the police have thus far been unwilling to entertain such commitments, the Task Force should not abandon these important goals.

The creation of a new 121st police precinct will hopefully offer a better opportunity to engage with the police department, but the Task Force should set its goals in the framework of an advocacy campaign that uses community organizing and activist tools such as petition gathering, street protests, or direct action to push for reform instead of waiting for reform from within the police department.25

IN ORDER FOR THE TASK FORCE TO GET THE WHEELS IN MOTION, THEY NEED TO DO THE FOLLOWING:

1. Contact Linda Levy to set up an initial meeting (we have been informed this step has already been completed).

2. Conduct a pledge drive or a survey of community residents to determine how much money would be put in the credit union and what the community interest is.

3. Find a site.

4. Get this funded. Linda said that funding is always the hardest part, because the Lower East Side People’s Federal Credit Union is a nonprofit and does not have a lot of extra money sitting around for expansion.

See Appendix 2 for additional credit union resources.
RECOMMENDATION: Distribute “Know Your Rights” information throughout Port Richmond

The Task Force should work to distribute “Know Your Rights” information throughout Port Richmond. “Know Your Rights” campaigns collect legal information pertinent to a variety of situations involving law-enforcement officers. They have been used successfully in many communities that have experienced police harassment. The New York Civil Liberties Union publishes a series of “Know Your Rights” palm cards, including one entitled “What to Do If You’re Stopped by the Police,” in both English and Spanish.26

In addition, in 2011 Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer published a Spanish-language comprehensive guide to rights and services available to immigrants in New York City.27 We are confident that El Centro, Make the Road, and other organizations will continue to work tirelessly to help immigrant residents in Port Richmond to make use of these resources. We encourage the Task Force to support this work but also to take on a specific “Know Your Rights” initiative of their own. They should work with local businesses and community organizations along Port Richmond Avenue to place NYCLU “What to Do If You’re Stopped by the Police” palm cards in as many establishments as possible. If the Task Force ends up joining a larger police reform advocacy campaign (more details below), flyers inviting Port Richmond residents to join the advocacy campaign could be distributed at the same time.

RECOMMENDATION: Join police reform advocacy campaigns in New York City.

The NYPD’s primary responsibility is to keep all New Yorkers safe, and every day many courageous officers work to do just that. However, in recent years specific incidents of police shootings and brutality (notably the Sean Bell killing in 200628) have strained relations between the NYPD and, in particular, low-income neighborhoods of color. Some policing policies—particularly Stop and Frisk, a policy which justifies random street stops in the hopes of finding and removing weapons—have been connected to police harassment and racial profiling.29 Many residents we spoke with in Port Richmond felt harassed by police who stopped them on the street, perhaps as part of Stop and Frisk. In 2011, Port Richmond experienced hundreds of police stops, yet no guns were recovered.30 Thanks in large part to coalition-based advocacy campaigns such as the Police Reform Organizing Project (PROP), initiated by the Urban Justice League, efforts to reform the NYPD, especially around the Stop and Frisk effort, have received citywide attention. Councilwoman Debi Rose, who represents Port Richmond, has been a vocal opponent of Stop and Frisk.31

We recommend the Task Force officially join and publicly support advocacy campaigns such as PROP. Becoming involved in citywide campaigns like PROP could bring more attention to police harassment in Port Richmond. Citywide organizers may also be able to offer technical and possibly material support in this effort.
GOAL 1: SAFER COMMUNITY

OBJECTIVE THREE: CLEAN UP PORT RICHMOND AVENUE

RECOMMENDATION: Support the community in cleaning up street trash and documenting neglect in order to encourage accountability of both local residents and city government.

In our conversations with community residents and Task Force members, no issue arose more frequently than the preponderance of trash on Port Richmond’s streets. Our research suggests an excess of street trash conveys a sense of neglect to a passersby and creates a perception of danger. The Task Force, Northfield LDC, and Wagner College have made concerted efforts to remove trash from Port Richmond’s streets, though a long-term solution is necessary to tackle the neighborhood’s larger issue of neglected public space.

To identify specific locations that are prone to excessive neglect, encourage more residents to participate in general neighborhood upkeep, and hold the Department of Sanitation accountable for continual neglect, we recommend the Task Force make use of the online tool SeeClickFix (seeclickfix.com). Using this tool, anyone in the community can identify a trash problem, take a photo, and submit it into a collaborative database. An extensive database of images of long-term neglect can be a powerful tool for lobbying City Council or the Department of Sanitation for improved street maintenance. To ensure the creation of a robust image database, the Task Force and Wagner College can train volunteers to use SeeClickFix during community cleanups.

We have created a flyer that can be distributed or hung at local businesses, see Appendix 3.
GOAL 1: SAFER COMMUNITY

SOURCES


IMAGES


GOAL 2: FOSTER PRIDE IN THE CULTURAL DIVERSITY OF PORT RICHMOND
SUMMARY

After the wave of violence struck Port Richmond in 2010, local civic leaders came together and developed the I AM Staten Island initiative, an anti-bias campaign designed to "develop strategies to prevent more hate crimes from taking place on Staten Island" and "promote diversity and inclusion throughout the borough." City Council Members Debi Rose and Christine Quinn released a ten-point plan to combat the hate crimes that afflicting the borough; the plan enlisted local businesses, the Department of Parks and Recreation, the Department of Transportation, local clergy, the Department of Education, and the College of Staten Island.

I AM Staten Island was a strong and effective initiative. At their 25th monthly Friendship Dinner, the Task Force celebrated zero reported biased incidents during the prior year.

This powerful support and collaboration from local community organizations, businesses, clergy, and city agencies, was a positive step toward addressing the 2010 violence. However, in order to continue building a tolerant community in Port Richmond, and create real change that will prevent hate crimes in the long term, the community needs an enduring, sustainable commitment to building cultural cohesion. The Port Richmond community can begin to address the root of the problem by fostering a nexus between the different ethnic groups within the neighborhood and building pride in the community's ethnic diversity.

At the Vision Port Richmond workshop, participants emphasized the need for a place where they could all go to organize cultural events. The provision of space for multicultural celebrations and activities would help bridge the gaps between the neighborhood's various ethnicities while giving different groups space to celebrate their cultures. Port Richmond has many vacant commercial spaces of varying sizes that can be eyesores and serve to engender negative perceptions about the community. Occupying these empty buildings with weekend, weekly, or monthly multicultural music events, dances, community performances, language classes, or art exhibits would help address community safety and the lack of gathering spaces for multicultural celebrations.

Additionally, there was a general consensus from the participants of the Vision Port Richmond workshop that Port Richmond has a "bad" reputation. Changing that negative perception of Port Richmond, among both residents and nonresidents alike, can help revitalize the commercial corridor and build a safer community. There are various initiatives to improve the neighborhood that are currently underway, including initiatives by the Northfield Community Local Development Corporation (Northfield LDC) to recruit new businesses to the commercial corridor, create parking, and develop cooperative marketing programs to attract more consumers to the area. However, in order to reverse deeply rooted negative perceptions of Port Richmond, there is a need to recognize and highlight the positive social aspects of the community, particularly its dynamic cultural diversity.

Beyond the commercial corridor’s sanitation issues, there is a general perception of danger in the neighborhood. This perception of danger could be attributed to racial prejudice and anti-immigrant sentiment in the community. Despite the challenges of having a diverse population whose interests sometimes are in conflict with one another, we believe this character of the community needs to be embraced in order to demonstrate that cultural diversity is an asset rather than a problem.

ISSUES

- Lack of long-term, sustainable commitments to cultural cohesion
- Dearth of venues devoted to multicultural activities
- Negative perception of Port Richmond
OBJECTIVES

1. Promote cultural cohesion through multicultural activities for youth and adults.

2. Activate vacant spaces with multicultural activities, such as pop-up exhibitions, to improve the streetscape and encourage social interaction.

3. Reverse the negative perception of Port Richmond by creating a cohesive identity that speaks to the neighborhood’s cultural diversity

OBJECTIVE ONE: PROMOTE CULTURAL COHESION THROUGH MULTICULTURAL ACTIVITIES FOR YOUTH AND ADULTS

RECOMMENDATION: Establish a Multicultural Activities Committee (MAC) to promote cross-cultural interaction and discourage local violence.

Bringing youth from different ethnic groups together at The Task Force’s monthly Friendship Dinners and at the Catholic Youth Organization’s Friday Midnight Sports Program, are examples of effective multicultural activities. With cross-cultural integration already one of the Task Force’s successful strategies to combat violence, we recommend building upon this approach by establishing a Multicultural Activities Committee (MAC) as a cornerstone of the Task Force’s long-term strategy to combat local violence. Because the Task Force invests its time and resources in various strategies aimed at creating a safer community, such as advocating for street lighting and garbage pick-up, a Multicultural Activity Committee is an appealing option because all of its resources could be focused on efficiently carrying out a single strategy. MAC should be made up of Port Richmond community leaders who have a shared vision for cultural cohesion.

So it may operate in a more official capacity, we also recommend the MAC adopt a formalized mission statement, such as, “To prevent local violence and intolerance and create a safer community through engagement in culturally relevant events, educational programs, and workshops that will bring the neighborhood together while contributing to a deeper appreciation of Port Richmond’s cultural diversity.”

MAC’s responsibilities could consist of organizing local street festivals, fairs, and other indoor and outdoor events in Port Richmond enabling cross-cultural networking, attracting visitors and tourists into the community, to provide opportunities to showcase local artisans’ crafts, and to allow local businesses to market themselves. MAC could reach out to local not-for-profits and other entities for sponsorship of a street festival/fair and apply for a Street Activity Permit from the Street Activity Permit Office (SAPO) in the New York City Office of Citywide Event Coordination and Management. According to El Centro Del Inmigrante’s (El Centro) website, they have already launched their own cultural initiative, which promotes “Latino culture through different art forms to the surrounding Staten Island Community.” MAC could coordinate with El Centro, local community organizations, and local clergy to build on this initiative, or develop a similar initiative, that is inclusive of all the diverse ethnic groups in Port Richmond.

MAC should also develop educational programs and workshops that promote cross-cultural awareness, break down cultural barriers, emphasize cross-cultural common ground in history and in social struggles and open up lines of communication between different ethnic groups. MAC should identify potential social justice organizations to invite to Port Richmond.
Richmond to advise on various workshops and activities that foster a nexus between different ethnic groups. For instance, we have looked to AfroLatin Forum and the Staten Island Chapter of the NAACP for best practices as to how to move forward with this new level of engagement. To improve our chances of success, we have already taken the first step and reached out to both organizations about committing to this plan and are hopeful they will sign on.

The Community Tool Box

The Work Group for Community Health and Development at the University of Kansas provides a free online service called The Community Tool Box. As stated on their website, “The Community Tool Box is a global resource for free information on essential skills for building healthy communities. It offers more than 7,000 pages of practical guidance in creating change and improvement.” The Tool Box provides practical resources such as step-by-step, how-to guidance, toolkits that explain key activities in community work, troubleshooting to help solve common problems in community work, and evidence-based practices that are promising processes for community change and improvement. [Image 2.3]

OBJECTIVE TWO: ACTIVATE VACANT SPACES WITH MULTICULTURAL ACTIVITIES, SUCH AS POP-UP EXHIBITIONS, TO IMPROVE THE STREETSCAPE AND ENCOURAGE SOCIAL INTERACTION

RECOMMENDATION: Encourage ‘pop-up’ occupations of vacant buildings.

Pop-up shops, commercial uses filling vacant spaces for shorter-than-average periods of time, are a relatively new trend being used increasingly as a tool to not only to fill spaces for building owners attempting to lease property, but also to provide space for those who would otherwise have neither the means nor the need to sign long-term leases. In the past, these temporary uses have been employed by small fashion designers, holiday-specific retailers, art galleries, and other limited-run functions. In the same vein, Port Richmond residents could repurpose vacant spaces to hold multicultural events and temporary exhibitions. Showcasing local art, music, food, dance, and crafts would also improve the streetscape and pedestrian experience along Port Richmond Avenue, while bringing the community together with a celebration of differences. In addition, temporary use of vacant space benefits property owners by promoting commercial viability for the property and the commercial district, demonstrating an active use of space to potential permanent tenants, and helping owners develop good relationships within the community.

After determining a short-term use that could utilize a vacant space (like a multicultural activity created by the MAC), the next step is to contact building owners, property managers, or the real estate brokers handling the space. Typical pop-up shops can be negotiated for a weekend, week, or even month-to-month lease and cost only a fraction of the typical rent charged for the space.
Through its Department of Economic and Community Development, Northfield LDC is currently recruiting new retailers and restaurants to Port Richmond Avenue. MAC can coordinate with Northfield LDC, leveraging the organization's knowledge of local property owners who are seeking full-time leases, and possibly organize a meeting to identify which property owners would be willing to administer short-term, flexible leases and put temporary uses on their liability insurance until their vacant space is filled with a long-term occupant. Northfield LDC has expressed a willingness to work with the Task Force and other community organizations in order to combine resources and develop ways to better the community.

Storefronts are not the only vacant space available for showcasing community pride and diversity. There are also many potential wall spaces that could be utilized for murals within Port Richmond. Some groups, such as the New York-based organization Groundswell, work with a community's youth to design murals based on a shared community vision. Murals are especially desirable in Port Richmond because they provide a forum for cultural expression and pride while increasing aesthetic appeal and improving the pedestrian experience.

Should the Task Force identify a highly visible wall space to paint, the first step would be contacting the building owner and pitching the idea of a mural. After a willing property owner has been identified, the Task Force, or MAC, should fundraise within Port Richmond, while advocating for funding from local community organizations and non-profits, then commission Groundswell to begin the collaborative process of fabricating the mural.

**Staten Island Creative Community**

The Staten Island Creative Community (SICC) is a non-profit coalition of Staten Island artists. They offer their coalition and others “opportunities and support by providing venues and publicity for their creative endeavors.” Through collaboration with the business community, they “take un-leased spaces and turn them into temporary galleries and performance spaces.” This coalition may be an ideal candidate to contact for advice on best practices for acquiring and using vacant spaces. SICC’s website is: http://www.statenislandcreativecommunity.org/sicc/SICC.html, and they can be contacted at: info@statenislandcreativecommunity.org. [Image 2.4]
other positive characteristics in order to promote a positive reputation of the neighborhood.

For instance, community-organized events can help correct misconceptions about the neighborhood. Activities will bring people into the neighborhood and allow them to experience a safe and active community. Local development corporations and nonprofits should sponsor these types of events—such as summer street fairs, neighborhood strolls, or a Port Richmond Restaurant Week—to help instill pride in the community and its cultural diversity.13

El Centro is presently exploring the idea of developing a cultural arts and crafts market; this will provide MAC with an opportunity to coordinate with El Centro to create a local, multicultural entity that is more inclusive of all of the cultures that comprise the Port Richmond community. MAC could conduct community surveys to determine what skill sets Port Richmond residents have, as well as how many of them are willing to teach their skills and sell their crafts at the multicultural market.

On May 4, 2012, Northfield LDC and the Port Richmond Board of Trade sponsored the first annual Cinco De Mayo Bar and Restaurant Crawl on Port Richmond Avenue. Local restaurants and bars offered specials and discounts from 6pm to 10pm. While this type of promotion is beneficial to the local business community, the Task Force, or MAC, could collaborate with Northfield LDC to ensure a more holistic district marketing campaign that promotes Port Richmond’s dynamic diversity, history, architecture, and resources, in addition to its commercial corridor. One of SBS’s most prominent district marketing techniques is the organization of public events. MAC can coordinate with Northfield LDC, as well as other relevant community organizations and local clergy, to ensure that such events are a key component of Port Richmond’s district marketing initiative.

Red Hook Visitor Guide

The Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Business Corporation’s commercial revitalization program, using public funds provided by local council member Gonzalez and Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz, promoted the Red Hook neighborhood of Brooklyn through a district marketing campaign. They created a neighborhood guide and map that promotes the neighborhood’s historic landmarks, shops, restaurants, and activities, as well as provides a short history of the neighborhood. The Task Force, or MAC, could advocate for Northfield LDC to collaborate with the New York City Department of Small Business Services, as well as other local non-profits, to develop a Port Richmond Visitor Guide.14
GOAL 2: PRIDE IN DIVERSITY

ACTION ITEMS

• Form a multicultural activities committee.

• Contact Northfield LDC to coordinate meetings with owners of vacant property to discuss the possibility of pop-up reuse.

• Create a list of highly visible wall spaces to locate a mural.

• Identify potential social justice organizations to invite to Port Richmond to advise MAC on best practices.

• Coordinate with community organizations and clergy to conduct surveys to quantify the possibility of a Port Richmond multicultural market.

• Advocate for a Port Richmond Visitor Guide.

LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

• Organize street festivals and fairs.
GOAL 2: PRIDE IN DIVERSITY

SOURCES


IMAGES


GOAL 3: PROMOTE ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND DEVELOPMENT
SUMMARY

Community leaders have cited a lack of economic opportunity and accessibility to employment as root causes of violence in Port Richmond. Though it was at one time one of the most important commercial centers on Staten Island, the neighborhood currently suffers from high unemployment and weak economic development. In 2011, unemployment in our primary study area (census tract 207) was 10.6%, significantly higher than that of Staten Island (6.8%) and New York City (9.5%). The unemployment rate for youths, a particular concern due to its relationship to street crime and violence, paints an even more dire picture; unemployment among those aged 20-24 was 26.4%.1

The poverty rate is also higher in Port Richmond (12.7% in 2009) than on Staten Island (8.5%) and New York City (12.2%).2 Along the same lines, in 2009, 19.2% of the population attained less than a high school education—a rate higher than Staten Island at 12.7%, and New York City at 15.8%.3 Taken together, these issues manifest in a lack of economic opportunity for many residents in Port Richmond across all racial and ethnic groups. Many residents who do have jobs work far away from home; 30% of Port Richmond residents commute more than an hour, underscoring the need for more local employment options.4

This section offers a number of recommendations regarding how to help those seeking work in Port Richmond, including expansion of day-laborer and job-training services. These resources can help with immediate needs, but we do acknowledge that they treat the symptoms rather than the root causes of economic injustice; education reform in underserved communities and labor reform on a national level are necessary pieces to comprehensive and long-term economic justice.

We also included suggestions for alternative economic models that focus not only on helping people earn income but also on strengthening ties within the community. We acknowledge economic development is not the Task Force’s specialty, but by using its organizing ability and status as a forum for the gathering of community members, the Task Force can help address some of the immediate and specific local issues that have arisen due to the scarcity of economic opportunity.

ISSUES

- Lack of jobs
- Insufficient job training resources
- Economic vulnerability experienced by immigrant populations
- Lack of economic opportunity contributing to violence in the neighborhood
- High poverty rate
- Underutilized commercial core along Port Richmond Avenue

OBJECTIVES

1. Enhance workforce development and increase access to employment.
2. Promote economic security.
3. Build community through jobs.
OBJECTIVE ONE: ENHANCE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, AND INCREASE ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT

RECOMMENDATION: Support the implementation of a local small business incubator.

A business incubator is a comprehensive assistance program targeted to help start-up and early-stage firms, with the goal of improving their chances to grow into healthy, sustainable companies.

At our visioning workshop, community members mentioned several small business incubators they envisioned in Port Richmond. People expressed enthusiasm for retail-oriented business incubators that would encourage entrepreneurship or build skills to help people obtain a job. Community members imagined a place that offered some combination of the following: job training (especially vocational), shared workspace and/or work equipment such as computers or carpentry machinery, and small business assistance including accounting services, financial counseling, help with taxes, and help obtaining business licenses.

We envision a small business incubator operated or chartered by a community organization such as Project Hospitality that would operate from a commercial storefront on Port Richmond Avenue. The store would sell items made by community members, and would be an interface between the community and the organization that operates the incubator. Depending on the type of businesses that the organization chooses

Business incubator case study: Mama’s Hot Tamales, Los Angeles, CA

Once a leisure destination for well-to-do families and tourists, MacArthur Park and its surrounding neighborhood followed the pattern of decline familiar in many American inner-city neighborhoods in the second half of the 20th century. By the 1980s the area had become a center for crime including gang violence, drug peddling, and prostitution. According to Joe Colletti, an economic development consultant who worked with locals to help revitalize the neighborhood, the MacArthur Park area was mostly a transitional neighborhood for low- and moderate-income Latinos, many of whom were undocumented immigrants. Street vending was a common occupation among many immigrants, but they often lacked proper licenses to do so legally. Colletti teamed up with local vendor Sandi Romero to reach out to the other vendors and open up a space dedicated to helping local vendors get their businesses properly licensed and legalized. They created a restaurant called Mama’s Hot Tamales (Romero was dubbed “Mama”) that both serves tamales and prepares them for many local tamale vendors (using a variety of recipes from the vendors themselves). The restaurant operates in a storefront across the street from MacArthur Park, but the building also serves as a community outreach center teaching local vendors proper sanitary and food handling procedures, as well as helping them to upgrade their food carts and obtain licenses. The organization also helps coordinate educational events, arts and crafts events, picnics, and youth activities in the park.

Classroom instruction and training take place at Mama’s, and the space is used for preparation of many other kinds of food including pizza, cookies, and jams. People who come to Mama’s also have the possibility of finding a variety of other services, including help obtaining citizenship, high school equivalency degrees, and financial advice—including help for first-time homebuyers. Mama’s Hot Tamales has become an anchor within the neighborhood. This type of model could be useful for Port Richmond. Locals in Port Richmond could benefit from many of the same services and training offered by Mama’s.

Further kitchen incubator examples include

- Hot Bread Kitchen (East Harlem): Job training and kitchen incubator that employs low-income New Yorkers and new immigrants in a bakery and has shared kitchen facilities for entrepreneurs. Hot Bread Kitchen recently opened a retail storefront in La Marqueta.

- Blue Ridge Food Ventures (Asheville, North Carolina): Shared-use kitchen incubator and natural products manufacturing facility that offers support in product development and help navigating legalities of food production and sales.

- La Cocina (San Francisco, CA): Kitchen incubator that provides commercial kitchen space and technical assistance focusing on low-income women and immigrant entrepreneurs who are launching, growing, and formalizing food businesses.
to focus on, the store would have an area set aside for shared workspace, a shared kitchen, or other shared equipment. Members of the public would be invited to come get involved, become members, take classes, and volunteer to help with job training, upkeep of the store, or other fundraising and outreach efforts needed to sustain the facility and its programming.

Community members said they would like to see a place where people could make and sell cultural arts and crafts, furniture, clothing, household items, and food. A food incubator could take many forms, for example a restaurant-type model with a shared kitchen where food is sold on or off the premises or a food-production model where food ranging from cookies, to bread, to salsa, to pickles, is prepared and packaged.

To get the wheels in motion, we recommend the Task Force convene a meeting with city government and community leaders including the New York City Economic Development Corporation, El Centro del Inmigrante, Project Hospitality, and Northfield Local Development Corporation to focus on the establishment of a local small business incubator.

RECOMMENDATION: Support implementation of a more secure day labor hiring location, and work with local worker center organizations to advocate for more comprehensive participation from the whole community.

The practice of day labor has become increasingly common across the United States in the last 30 years. A 2006 study estimated that in the United States, approximately 117,600 people are either looking for a day-labor job or working as a day laborer on a given day. Day laborers have been known to gather in Port Richmond, which has been the source of friction in the neighborhood. Day laborers report harassment from police and other community members, and that one of their known waiting areas was made less hospitable by the removal of fixed outdoor furniture.

Across the United States, at least 139 worker centers have sprung up as a comprehensive response to help protect workers’ rights, offer assurance to employers, and mitigate conflict within local communities. Worker centers offer formal, physical gathering places for day laborers to connect with potential employers with the help of an organization. Day laborers placed with an employer through a worker center generally earn a higher wage and are less susceptible to wage-theft or other abuses. Worker centers also help mitigate conflict within the community related to “residents complaining of undesirable social behavior such as loitering, intimidation, and public intoxication.”

Despite the benefits of a more formal framework and location for hiring, nationwide only about 20% of day laborers use worker centers to gain employment. Anecdotal evidence points to a similar situation in Port Richmond, contributing to continued conflict between local day laborers and the general community.

El Centro del Inmigrante offers worker center services and facilitates the connection of day laborers and employers. This is a valuable service to both day laborers and employers; in doing this, El Centro is helping to mitigate the conflict that can occur when day laborers must gather in public to search out employment. However, their reach is limited, as their efforts largely target only the Latino immigrant community.

Due to high unemployment rates and lack of opportunity for both new and longtime residents of Port Richmond (particularly those aged 20-24), the community at large would benefit from accessibility to resources or involvement in an organization such as El Centro. Accordingly, we recommend the Task Force support the expansion of day labor hiring options in Port Richmond; the first step being the establishment of a
designated hiring site. This would create a space for day laborers to gather without charges of loitering. Outreach to local property owners of vacant or underutilized land could help to identify a property that could be used as a hiring site, and outreach to the New York City Police Department could protect day laborers from harassment.

We also recommend the Task Force meet with members of El Centro to explore how partnerships with other community groups, or outreach to longtime residents, could help bring more diversity into the organization. This type of inclusion will help address rifts within the community and enable El Centro to better develop and implement strategies for achieving common goals across race, nationality, and citizenship status. El Centro would benefit from broader support from the whole community and would be able to better help their Latino membership become more integrated into both Port Richmond and United States society in general.

Greater participation in El Centro from the whole community, in particular longtime residents, could help foster stronger connections among community members. Expanding El Centro’s membership and capacity could help expand economic opportunity for the whole community and help encourage greater neighborhood cohesion.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Help connect job seekers to employment and education resources.

The Task Force is a well-known and well-respected organization both in Port Richmond and on Staten Island. This status could be harnessed and used to help connect employers and job seekers. A simple and effective way to do this is to create and maintain a local job listing. Employers could email a help wanted posting to the Task Force, who could then share the listing at local events and post it on a website; the list could be updated as little as once per week. A job listing website could also contain links to job listings outside the community as well as programs that help people create résumés, apply to jobs, or provide information about job-training classes. The Task Force could also host events (perhaps at the monthly Friendship Dinners) to help people with these tasks.

**OBJECTIVE TWO:** Promote economic security

**RECOMMENDATION:** Help educate the community about microfinance resources.

In addition to the establishment of a Port Richmond credit union (described in more detail in Goal 1), there are other financial strategies that the Task Force can leverage to improve access to capital in Port Richmond. Microfinance is a type of banking that is generally geared toward low-income businesses or individuals who would not otherwise be able to obtain a loan. Traditional microfinance provides loans to small businesses for expansion or credit building. The New York State Small Business Development Center (NYSSBDC) maintains a list of financial institutions that provide these services (http://nyssbdc.org). The NYSSBDC also maintains an office on Staten Island where they provide additional consulting services; these loans are appropriate for established businesses with some credit history. The services provided by NYSSBDC are available to business owners regardless of immigration status, but some business owners may not be aware of these valuable services. We recommend that the Task Force work with Northfield LDC to develop and conduct a needs assessment survey of all small businesses in Port Richmond in order to determine which businesses have the need and are eligible for microfinancing from the NYSSCBDC.
In recent years, a new form of microfinance has emerged whereby many people band together to collectively fund a project. This model is commonly referred to as crowdfunding. Innovative new crowdfunding platforms (such as ioby, Kickstarter, and IndieGoGo) are based on internet technologies, so utilizing these sources of microfinancing requires access to internet-connected computers. While a significant proportion of Port Richmond residents lack such access, community and faith-based organizations in Port Richmond have facilitated computer and internet access in the past, and the barrier of getting people access to internet-connected computers can become an opportunity to train more people in computer literacy—a key skill set in the current economy.

In addition to the crowdfunding platforms mentioned above, group-lending microfinance platforms, such as Grameen America and Kiva, target loans towards entrepreneurship that are meant to bring people out of poverty. These loans may be appropriate for new businesses or businesses with no established credit, but business owners may be unfamiliar with this new type of funding. We recommend the Task Force organize a small business financing workshop to educate Port Richmond business owners about traditional microfinancing as well as group lending microfinancing.

Other crowdfunding platforms target individuals who may need a small grant to deal with an unexpected medical bill, damage to a business or residence from a storm, or rising college tuition costs. Port Richmond has many strong community organizations that have facilitated neighbors helping neighbors for generations. Crowdfunding platforms that raise money for individuals may be a great tool for community organizations to help lift more individuals and families out of poverty in Port Richmond.

Using a platform like GoFundMe, a coalition of Port Richmond community organizations could take turns nominating a crowdfunding target on a monthly basis. This program, which could potentially be named “Neighbors Helping Neighbors,” could generate funds for individuals in the greatest need. Since each participating organization would take turns nominating a small crowdfunding goal each month, everyone would end up doing outreach for a project that affects individuals and families outside of their immediate constituency. Community organizations would be expanding their reach and contributing to neighborhood cohesion. By using online crowdfunding platforms, money from outside of Port Richmond can also be raised.
GOAL 3: ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND DEVELOPMENT

OBJECTIVE THREE: BUILD COMMUNITY THROUGH JOBS

RECOMMENDATION: Bring the cooperative businesses model to Port Richmond.

As stated in our summary, Port Richmond has faced several obstacles to generating the kind of economic activity that local residents have envisioned for their community. One way to overcome such obstacles would be to establish local cooperative businesses to help create new jobs in Port Richmond. A Cooperative business is legally owned by the workers who make the company function. Different variations of the business model exist, but essentially, employees share equally in management responsibilities and reap equal profits.

As of 2009, there were more than “29,000 US cooperatives that operate at some 73,000 places of business throughout the United States”. These cooperatives own more than $3 trillion in assets and generate over $500 billion in revenue, $133.5 billion in value-added income and creates good paying jobs that gave out $25 billion in wages.”17

We suggest the Task Force create a cooperative model combining “free market principles with the democratization of economic power and capital ownership,”18 and create a subcommittee on job creation focused on coordinating resources of local groups that are concerned with workers’ needs in the community. El Centro and Project Hospitality would be good candidates for such a committee, and could recruit candidates for cooperative businesses based on existing trades of Port Richmond’s residents. Our suggestion is adaptable to consumer and worker-based co-op models, but retains a focus on ensuring worker participation, equal distribution of profit, and a system of checks and balances.

Cooperatives In New York

One neighborhood similar to Port Richmond, is Sunset Park, Brooklyn. Home to a large Latino community and bordered by a long waterfront dominated by manufacturing and industrial uses. Sunset Park also has a commercial corridor—5th Avenue—that, after experiencing a deep decline, has witnessed a revival over the past 20 years.

After the economy faltered and job losses piled, members of the Center For Family Life (CFL), a community organization based in Sunset Park, began to talk about ways they can help each other find work. Many knew about the cooperative model, and discussed it with CFL staff; soon a ten-week course was developed to give participants a crash course in business management. Lawyers from the Urban Justice League partnered with CFL to create the bylaws and file the proper papers so the companies could be recognized under New York State Law.

The effect on the quality of life of the worker-owners seemed positive. One worker at Si Se Puede said “I have jobs that take me three to five hours to complete…and I make the same amount I used to make for 12 hours of work. I can also control my hours, which has been the biggest benefit, especially now that I have two children. Plus, I’ve gotten so much help from other co-op members. I don’t have any family in the United States, so the other co-op members have become my family.”19 The CFL Cooperative Project estimates these workers make nearly $20 an hour, much more than the below-minimum-wage earnings many took home prior to creating this business.

Due to the hard work and ingenuity of local community organizations like the Center for Family Life and international microfinancing nonprofit, The Working World, a number of cooperatives have been able to form and still exist today. They include Beyond Care (a child care worker cooperative), Si Se Puede (a cleaning worker cooperative), and Emigre Gourmet (a catering co-op), to name a few. They undoubtedly benefit from the help and guidance provided by the Center for Family Life, a fixed institution in the community that helps to promote and give managerial advice.

We believe this success can be replicated in Port Richmond, as it also benefits from strong community organizations who have a presence among the immigrant population. Support organizations like The Working World are eager to expand; they are looking for a partner on the ground, which the Task Force or one of its member organizations, could be.
Based on extensive research prepared by Northfield LDC and their consultant, the JGSC Group earlier this year, we believe Port Richmond’s unique commercial landscape would lend itself well to a furniture cooperative and recommend pursuing this option as the neighborhood’s first cooperative business. After conducting a community survey and compiling economic data of Port Richmond’s past and present commercial activity, Northfield representatives proposed focusing on increasing the number of furniture retail locations along Port Richmond Avenue. They cited existing sizable, ground-level showrooms and vacant manufacturing buildings that can be converted for immediate use. A potential site we believe would be a good choice for this new business is the former H.S. Farrell Lumber building, located at 2076 Richmond Terrace. It possesses many of the aforementioned qualities and already has a connection to the industry its new owners would soon adopt.

To help get initial funding for the cooperative, the subcommittee could reach out for assistance from organizations like The Working World, a nonprofit focused on supporting the growth of cooperative businesses through microfinance, as well as larger entities such as the Cooperative Community Fund (CCF). CCF is an endowment fund wherein the interest earned each year is returned to the general fund for future use by all the participating co-ops. A similar example exists in the food co-op world with the Davis, California-based Twin Pines Cooperative Foundation, which, as a supporter of food co-ops all over the country, acts as a steward for individual regional development funds. Federal funding is now a real possibility with the recent rule change by the Small Business Association to allow work cooperatives to be included for consideration to receive grants authorized under the Small Business Jobs Act of 2010.

Why Port Richmond?
There are a number of compelling reasons why a community-centric economic development plan would be the best growth model for Port Richmond. First of all, the locality has been recognized by both federal and local authorities for having strong local leadership that has had success in tackling environmental issues and making gains in bridging cultural divides. Second, as mentioned before, a central business corridor with available space to house new businesses already exists, and the high number of vacant property suggests low rents. Third, floor space is unusually large in many shops because of their history as showrooms and places for industrial activities. Fourth, there is already a base industry of home furnishing sales and repair and an available talent pool to help if business were to increase. Finally, a cooperative business model would be a great way of bringing together some of our other recommendations in this section. Credit unions with a focus on fostering local economic development would be able to look at these nurtured ventures more favorably and feel comfortable in extending loans to businesses that have been vetted by the incubator process.

In addition to being an easier entry into business ownership than shouldering the load on your own, promoting a cooperative culture could attract young people and entrepreneurs who are looking for a supportive community. Port Richmond can be the place where small firms congregate with little overhead, and tackle huge projects.

Finally, with a large, and still growing, immigrant population, studies have indicated there is an untapped potential in small business development. According to The Partnership for a New American Economy, immigrants are increasingly likely to start a business, while the rate of new business generation among the native-born is declining. In fact, the rate at which immigrants started new businesses grew by more than 50% between 1996 and 2011 alone, while for the native-born it declined by 10%.
Worker cooperatives as a tool for improving social justice for Port Richmond
Worker cooperatives are perfect examples for showing the benefits of engaging in participatory development and showcasing the fruits of direct democracy. As a model, cooperatives show that stakeholders are an integral part of making the larger process of creating services and generating improvements in the places they live and/or work. It may inspire some to seek more active roles in other areas of public life. Dickstein also writes that worker cooperatives present an “alternative institutional structure which changes basic property relations and provides a conducive vehicle for worker empowerment and social change.” She goes on to say this influence can be a first step for changing how participants feel about having a larger role in the economic and political spheres of their community.

**ACTION ITEMS**

- Convene a meeting with community leaders, including El Centro del Inmigrante and the NYPD, about expanding worker center outreach and investigating establishment of a formal hiring site.
- Convene a meeting with city government and community leaders, focused on the establishment of a local small business incubator.
- Create an inventory of local employment resources, and make it available on a centralized Port Richmond website.
- Organize events focused on how to find job postings, create résumés, and prepare for job interviews.
- Implement Neighbors Helping Neighbors, a community-funded small grants program initiated and promoted by community organizations with diverse constituencies.
- Conduct a needs assessment survey of all small businesses in Port Richmond.
- Assemble a job creation subcommittee under the direction of the Task Force, consisting of community organizations and local lending institutions, and recruit assistance from one or more of the cooperative support organizations to research the possibility of supporting a cooperative startup.
- Complete a skillset assessment of employable adults in Port Richmond through a community survey, and use the results to focus on one or two industries for potential cooperatives.
- Organize informational sessions, led by the subcommittee, for local residents and potential clients who have an interest in supporting, participating, and contracting with cooperative businesses.

**LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Organize a small business finance event with partners like NYSSBDC, Kiva, and the Grameen Foundation.
- Establish a spin-off organization dedicated to creating cooperative business opportunities in Port Richmond and throughout the North Shore.
GOAL 3: ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND DEVELOPMENT

5. As defined by National Business Incubation Association.

IMAGES
3.1. Photo credit: Robert Gallagher People. 8/15/05
3.3. Source: http://portlandvoz.org/hire-a-day-laborer/
3.4. Source: kiva.org
3.5. Source: ioby.org
3.6. Source: gofundme.com
3.7. Source: indiegogo.com
3.8. Source: kickstarter.com
3.9. Source: grameenamerica.org
3.11. http://hungermountain.coop/portals/0/images/ourcommunity/5412_129647050078_78500745078_2977248_4400419_n.jpg
GOAL 4: MANAGE GROWTH
SUMMARY

Port Richmond is experiencing a high rate of population growth; between 2000 and 2010 alone, the neighborhood’s population grew by 19%. This is much higher than the growth rates of Staten Island and New York City, which grew by just 6% and 2%, respectively. Port Richmond’s growth has been largely fueled by the arrival of Latino immigrants and has created both opportunities and challenges. While Port Richmond Avenue has seen reinvestment, population growth has created some problems for the community, including an insufficient stock of affordable housing, inadequate health care, and inefficient transit that fails to match the needs of the new population.

OBJECTIVE ONE: INCREASE THE NUMBER OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNITS

The New York City Department of City Planning estimates that New York City’s population will increase by 1 million people by 2030. With current trends in Port Richmond supporting this projection, measures must be taken to ensure that residents have access to adequate and affordable housing and are not displaced. According to interviews conducted with community members during the Visioning Workshop, many Port Richmond residents are currently living in crowded, unsafe conditions. The need for safe, affordable housing was highlighted in January 2012, when an overcrowded house burned to the ground, displacing its 23 residents and destroying much of their personal property.

The lack of affordable housing is an acute problem throughout New York City, especially for renters. More than half of Port Richmond residents are renters, significantly higher than the proportion for Staten Island as a whole, and roughly six out of ten Port Richmond residents devote more than 30% of their household income to housing.

Within our primary study area, there are 1,965 total rental units. Of these, 1,117, or about 57%, were being rented for more than 30% of occupants’ household income. With an average household size of about 3 people, it is safe to say that at least 3,351, or about one quarter of all Port Richmond residents, are in need of more affordable housing.

Affordable housing should be developed within the general context of Port Richmond’s existing housing stock. Larger, higher-density apartment buildings should be developed along Port Richmond Avenue above existing commercial uses, while vacant, detached single- and multi-family homes should be converted into creatively designed housing units that can accommodate a variety of traditional and nontraditional arrangements.

ISSUES

• Lack of affordable housing
• Lack of access to adequate health care
• Insufficient transportation options

OBJECTIVES

1. Increase the number of affordable housing units.
2. Create a community-empowered health center.
3. Reestablish Port Richmond as a major transportation hub by providing more transportation options and increasing transit capacity.
RECOMMENDATION: Hold a design contest to repurpose Port Richmond’s existing housing stock.

In July 2012, the New York City Mayor’s Office and the Department of Housing Preservation and Development held a design contest called adAPT NYC. The contest called for innovative designs for single- and double-occupant dwellings of 300 square feet or less. The contest was formulated to help the city meet the needs of its rapidly expanding population, much of which lives in households of just one to two people. These micro-dwellings are reminiscent of single-room occupancies, or SRO’s. SRO’s are a common living arrangement set up for single residents who often share common spaces such as bathrooms and kitchens. Though they have long been a staple of New York City’s affordable housing landscape, SRO’s have often been stigmatized because they tend to serve the city’s most vulnerable and at-risk populations.

Using the SRO concept as a model, existing single- and multi-family houses in Port Richmond could be creatively repurposed to meet the various needs of residents who cannot afford traditional single-family housing. These redesigned residences could meet safety regulations, generate sufficient rent for landlords, and provide affordable and safe living option for tenants.

The Task Force should organize a contest similar to adAPT NYC to demonstrate the feasibility of applying this idea in Port Richmond. Such a contest would bring positive attention to Port Richmond as an area with development potential and appeal for its historic attributes and ethnic diversity. Arts, planning, and housing organizations—such as Planning Corps (planningcorps.org) or the Municipal Art Society (mas.org)—are available to help the Task Force implement this recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION: Establish a community land trust.

Community Land Trusts (CLTs) are nonprofit, tax-exempt organizations dedicated to preserving land for beneficial community uses, the most common of which is affordable housing. The abundance of vacant land and buildings in Port Richmond makes it a prime location to establish a CLT. While the majority of these vacancies are privately owned and thus difficult to acquire, CLTs often obtain ownership of land with the help of public and private donations as well as government programs and subsidies.

Pursuing funding to renovate, build, and maintain housing units is a complex undertaking. The Task Force should therefore...
advocate for another organization or entity to create a CLT. Project Hospitality may be a good candidate since they have experience managing residential properties. Northfield LDC provides services to homeowners and first-time homebuyers and may be interested in CLTs as well. There are many other organizations based in New York City that could be interested in working in Port Richmond (listed in the Community Land Trust Resources figure to the right).

If another organization does not take the lead, the Task Force should attempt to establish a CLT on its own. This makes most sense as a long-term goal once the Task Force has the organizational capacity to manage this type of project.

**How CLTs Work**

Most home-ownership assistance programs help lower payments for home buyers but do nothing to ensure the long-term affordability of the housing unit, which remains at the mercy of market fluctuations. CLTs solve this problem by separating the ownership of land and buildings. Under the CLT model, land is owned in perpetuity by the trust and is issued by long-term leases to building owners. Removing the cost of the land from the cost of the buildings on it makes it affordable and able to be sold or leased in a variety of ways that meet community needs. Stipulations in the leases ensure that the trust is able to re-purchase buildings at a fair price should owners choose to sell. To create affordable housing, CLTs can sell buildings to limited-equity cooperatives, nonprofit community development corporations, mutual housing associations, or individual homeowners. Thus, CLTs are flexible enough to steer development from rehabilitating single-family homes to building large-scale, multi-family apartment complexes.

**Governance**

CLT boards of directors usually consist of three equal parties: building residents, other community residents, and other stakeholders such as elected officials, nonprofits, and funders. This three-pronged structure ensures that varying interests within the community are equally represented and that any changes in land and building ownership or usage are consistent with the trust’s mission to act as a permanent steward of affordable housing.

**Operation**

CLTs often play a major role in how land and buildings are developed and maintained. While the main focus of most CLTs is housing, commercial and community spaces can also be created. As stewards of the land, CLTs provide oversight to ensure that housing remains affordable, in good condition, and occupied by residents within the intended income range. CLTs also collect revenue through their ground leases. This income helps them remain financially stable and in a position to expand the amount and range of property in the trust.

**Community Land Trust Resources**

**Burlington Associates in Community Development**

This website provides a comprehensive compilation of resources and information about Community Land Trusts including detailed steps on how to start a CLT.

http://www.burlingtonassociates.com

**Picture the Homeless**

This website provides a good overview of CLTs within the context of New York City.

http://www.picturethehomeless.org

**Cooper Square Committee**

Community Land Trust in the Lower East Side of Manhattan.

http://www.coopersquare.org/home
Active CLTs

There are currently more than 200 active CLTs in 41 states in the U.S. New York City is home to several CLTs, most notably the one operated by the Cooper Square cooperative on the Lower East Side. This CLT has functioned successfully for two decades and receives support from the city’s housing programs. The Cooper Square CLT provides affordable housing by leasing over 300 housing units to the Cooper Square Mutual Housing Association. Mutual housing associations can manage low-income housing for renters or homeowners, making them excellent prospective partners for CLTs.

Acquiring Land

The main avenue for acquiring land and developing affordable housing is through the pursuit of public funding. There are a myriad of programs available for this purpose; some of the best prospects for Port Richmond are listed above. Organizations dedicated to developing and managing housing are best positioned to receive and implement this type of funding.

In addition to pursuing public funds, several other methods of land acquisition have been identified by Picture the Homeless, an organization that advocates for CLTs as a viable method to combating homelessness in New York City:

1. Vacant lots or buildings owned by a bank, the City, or investment corporations can be gifted to a CLT or purchased with support from the City. The CLT can then work with a nonprofit developer to create affordable housing units.

2. Distressed rental buildings whose owners face bankruptcy and struggle with building management can gift land to a CLT, or it can be purchased by a CLT with support from the city. The CLT leases the building to a tenants association or limited-equity co-op run by residents.

3. Foreclosed property owned by banks, including single- and multi-family buildings, can be purchased by CLTs. Homeowners and tenants facing eviction can be protected by a title transfer to the CLT. The CLT, working with legal defense lawyers, can negotiate the purchase of the land and lease the unit or units to the homeowner at an affordable price, with resale restrictions.

Potential Partner Organizations

Northfield LDC

http://www.northfieldldc.org/

Urban Homesteading Assistance Board

The Urban Homesteading Assistance Board works to help renters become homeowners through collective, affordable housing projects.

http://www.uhab.org

Mutual Housing Association of New York

MHANY is an organization that promotes, develops, and manages affordable housing in New York City.

http://www.mutualhousingny.org

NYS Land Bank

The NYS Land Bank allows communities to create land banks for themselves.

http://www.esd.ny.gov/BusinessPrograms/NYSLBP.html
RECOMMENDATION: Rezone underutilized areas to accommodate natural growth and density trends.

There are many underutilized areas within Port Richmond that could be repurposed to suit the neighborhood's growing housing needs, including vacant lots near the abandoned railway, along Port Richmond Avenue, and other locations spread throughout the residentially zoned area to the east and west of Port Richmond Avenue. There are vacant lots, blighted blocks, empty buildings, and under-occupied buildings (referring to commercially occupied buildings along Port Richmond Avenue that do not utilize upper floors for possible residences).

The majority of Port Richmond's residential areas are currently zoned R3A, which allows for a maximum building height of 35 feet, as well as single-detached and semi-detached housing. Many residential nonconformities exist within the R3A zone, which we believe exhibits housing demands that are not met within the current zoning.

Higher density allows for an increase in the amount of available housing stock and more opportunity to provide affordable housing to a growing population. Thus, we recommend upzoning from R3A to R3-2 to the west of Port Richmond Avenue. This would allow for higher density on a single lot without straying too far from the existing neighborhood character.

Two lots near the end of Port Richmond Avenue (Figure 4.2) are currently zoned M1-1, which supports light industrial activity. We recommend the lots keep their industrial designations but the zoning be altered to allow live-work spaces. Many residents who attended the Vision Port Richmond workshop mentioned wanting a furniture cooperative business and training facility; in addressing that desire, as well as expanding on worker incubator facilities mentioned in Goal 3, either of these lots would be an option for this type of use. An M1-1D designation would provide an opportunity for those Port Richmond residents interested in learning a woodworking skill (or perhaps training others) with a place to do so, as well as an affordable place to live.

Along Port Richmond Avenue, the zoning is C4-2. This supports most commercial activity as well as high density residential; according to the New York City Department of City Planning, the residential equivalent is R6, which allows for apartment buildings with no specific height limits (that will be determined by the lot size and the width of the fronting street). The residential uses along Port Richmond Avenue need to grow up, literally. Many of the businesses along the Avenue have vacant second floors with no use—residential or otherwise—occupying the space, and very few buildings have built much higher than two or three stories.
GOAL 4: MANAGE GROWTH

RECOMMENDATION: Apply for affordable housing grants.

Federal funding initiatives like HOME—a federal block grant program from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)—are directed toward state or local initiatives that have affordable housing programs. In this program, monies are given to municipalities or community organizations for their dispersal. The funds can be spent on broader housing programs or even funneled directly to low-income renters or homeowners in need of assistance. We recommend the Task Force advocate for Project Hospitality to formalize an affordable housing plan, as well as appeal to building owners along Port Richmond Avenue with underdeveloped upper stories. The building owners could use HOME funds to expand their residential higher floors for families in need of affordable units. More information can be found at the local HUD office, which is located at the Neighborhood Housing Services Office at 1205 Castleton Avenue.

Other grants, like the Homeownership Zone Program, assist communities in reclaiming sites they feel are blighted or unsafe and help to redevelop them as single-family homes. Others, like the Self-Help Homeownership Opportunity Program (SHOP), are available to nonprofit organizations who want to purchase home sites to improve their infrastructure and make way for sweat-equity homeownership programs similar to Habitat for Humanity.

OBJECTIVE TWO: CREATE A COMMUNITY-EMPOWERED HEALTH CENTER

RECOMMENDATION: Create a local health care cooperative in Port Richmond.

Lack of health care

During our community visioning group discussion, a common theme articulated by the participants was a strong desire to see more affordable, across-the-board health care options located within Port Richmond. The absence of health care options in the community has been a concern in Port Richmond for some time; according to a study by the NYC Department of Health in 2006 titled “Take Care Port Richmond,” 20% of neighborhood residents did not have a regular doctor. Any obstacle to health care poses an issue for the neighborhood as a whole and poorly positions it to recover from a natural or manmade disaster.

Figuring out how to bring health care options to the community is not an easy task. In recent years, hospitals are finding it more difficult to operate, regardless of whether they are for- or nonprofit entities, due to pressure to pay for more advanced equipment, wage negotiations with in-house staff, and the increasing numbers of chronically ill and impoverished patients who need progressively more expensive procedures and medications but lack the coverage to pay for more long-term solutions. New models need to be considered in order to provide the locally available, affordable health care that Port Richmond needs.

Health care cooperatives

Health care cooperatives are a promising option for tackling this problem. Similar to other cooperative models mentioned in Goal 3, health care cooperatives consist of communities of consumers and workers or are hybrids comprised of multiple stakeholders cooperating to achieve common goals that may include all or part of the following:

Saskatoon Community Clinic

To look at a successful multi-stakeholder example, the Saskatoon Community Clinic in Canada was a joint project embarked upon by doctors and patients in 1962. This hybrid doctor/user experiment has transformed itself into a vast health provider serving approximately 5,500 households and close to 10,000 adult members using a $9.3 million budget. It offers a primary health care co-operative, which provides a wide range of health care services to 3,500 impoverished Aboriginal clients at their Westside Clinic.
• Keeping healthcare costs and insurance premiums affordable
• Controlling the high cost of drugs and medical treatments
• Providing employees with a stake in their business and incentives to seek savings and improvements to patient care
• Helping small, independent medical facilities compete with larger entities, allowing them to offer locally available service

According to a University of Wisconsin study, health care cooperatives account for approximately 961,000 members and 73,000 employees. Their impact on the economy is estimated at nearly $5 billion in revenue, creating close to 500,000 jobs, generating $1 billion in wages paid, and $1 billion in valued-added income. There are three common types of health care cooperatives: consumer-led cooperatives, health care worker-led cooperatives, and multi-stakeholder cooperatives.

**Hybrid cooperative for Port Richmond**

All three of these models offer their own unique benefits and disadvantages, but we believe the model most fitting for the Port Richmond community is the multi-stakeholder health care cooperative. The emphasis on solidarity and cooperation among users and employees creates a work environment focused on positive experiences for both parties. Bringing together such a diverse set of stakeholders can yield a wealth of qualitative and quantitative institutional knowledge, which allows for smarter cost-saving decisions and actionable programs that can tackle a range of issues from preventative care for young adults to treatment of homebound users.

**Is it needed? Could it work?**

A number of existing indicators suggest that a new health care model could work for the community. According to “Take Care Port Richmond,” one out of every ten residents uses local emergency rooms for non-emergency medical issues, which points to the need for more primary clinics. With regard to a local workforce that could be recruited, the American Community Survey 2005-2009 points to a considerable presence of female workers (9% of respondents) who identify as health care workers and

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**Health Care Model**

**Image 4.3**

Cooperative Home Care Associates is a worker-owned home health care service created in 1985 and based in the South Bronx. The nation’s largest worker cooperative, with more than 1,000 employees, its serves as a solid example for other worker-cooperatives looking to succeed in high-cost urban cities like New York City. The quality of their worker-owners and the solidarity among those involved allows for an added benefit in the contract negotiations between themselves and large health-care providers when deciding wages and job benefits. With the Bureau of Labor Statistics, expecting job opportunities for home health aides to grow by 69% by 2020, faster than the average for all jobs, the long-term possibilities for Cooperative Home Care Associates are strong.

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**Addressing minority health care concerns**

We believe this cooperative could do more than just provide primary health care; the space could also be used as a center for exploring environmental and personal health issues facing minority communities. It can also be made available for forums and workshops addressing issues around environmental and health care justice. We have spoken to existing Task Force partners including Edward Josey, President of the Staten Island chapter of the NAACP, who seemed interested in learning more, should the Task Force choose to pursue this recommendation and our suggestions for its subsequent uses.
GOAL 4: MANAGE GROWTH

Funding

Funding for the cooperative could be easier now with New York State preparing to comply with the Affordable Care Act in January 2014. Federal offices such as the Center for Consumer Information and Insurance Oversight, under the auspices of the U.S. Health and Human Services Administration, have already set the precedent for supporting health care cooperatives with $638 million in startup money for health insurance co-ops in eight states (through the Consumer Operated and Oriented Plan Program),22 in an effort to improve consumer options and install accountability. On the state level, the focus for funding could be on services that the cooperative would provide. The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) currently has numerous grants and open requests for proposals ranging from soliciting partners in expanding preventive care to facilitating a smooth transition from pediatric care to adult general physician care. A review of the contract renewals from the fiscal year 2013 budget revealed that the NYC Department of Health is open to partnering with community-based organizations and could be a useful ally in the future once a health care cooperative is up and running.

OBJECTIVE THREE: REESTABLISH PORT RICHMOND AS A MAJOR TRANSPORTATION HUB BY PROVIDING MORE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS AND INCREASING TRANSIT CAPACITY

Reestablishing Port Richmond as a transportation hub would decrease passenger travel times, provide more transportation options, better connect the community to surrounding areas, and spur economic, housing, and job development. Currently, Port Richmond residents have some of the longest commutes in New York City; nearly 30% of Port Richmond residents commute over an hour each way, resulting in large amounts of lost time that could be better utilized.25 Providing Port Richmond and the North Shore of Staten Island with a bus rapid transit (BRT) line could reduce passenger travel times, better connect residents to surrounding areas, and provide a faster way to connect to the St. George Ferry Terminal. In addition, establishing a transit station on Port Richmond Avenue, improving the bicycle network, and crafting zoning regulations would support a transit-oriented environment that would support many of the goals laid out in this report.

The following sections explore the myriad benefits to reestablishing Port Richmond as a transportation hub that will better serve residents and create better opportunities in the immediate area.

RECOMMENDATION: Improve Port Richmond’s bicycle infrastructure.

Many participants at the Visioning Workshop mentioned that they rode a bicycle to make work trips despite the lack of bicycle infrastructure in the neighborhood. These participants expressed concerns about access and safety on Port Richmond Avenue. In order to support Port Richmond’s cyclists and encourage additional bicycle travel, we have created a network of bike lanes and sharrows (lanes designed to be shared by both bicycles and cars).

Port Richmond Avenue, Castleton Avenue, and Heberton Avenue lack...
GOAL 4: MANAGE GROWTH

sufficient space for bicycle lanes but can still serve bicyclists well with the addition of sharrows. Signs will be used to clearly indicate that the travel lanes are meant to be shared by both cyclists and drivers; this will help to improve motorists’ visibility of cyclists, improving bike safety. Where appropriate, a solid white line will be painted at the end of a row of parking spaces to ensure that enough space is available in the travel lane.

We suggest that the New York City Department of Transportation explore extending the Richmond Terrace bicycle lanes further east in order to provide the North Shore with a safe route to the Staten Island Ferry Terminal. In addition, a bicycle lane on Nicholas Avenue would provide Port Richmond High School students with a safe route to school. It would connect with the Castleton Avenue sharrow and the Richmond Terrace bicycle lane.

Port Richmond is also in need of bicycle parking. This will provide cyclists with a secure place to leave their bicycles across the neighborhood. Figure 4.3 includes possible locations for bicycle parking, each of which is sited near bicycle infrastructure or near an attraction.

RECOMMENDATION: Create a transit facility with multimodal access.

Responding to the lack of rapid transit options on the North Shore of Staten Island, in August 2012 the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) produced the North Shore Alternatives Analysis, which explores four transit options for the North Shore: existing conditions (no change), Transportation Systems Management (TSM), electric light rail, and bus rapid transit (BRT). Bus rapid transit was chosen as the locally preferred alternative mainly due to its greater rush-hour capacity; its quicker implementation time frame; and its lower operating, maintenance, and upfront capital costs compared to other alternatives (projected total capital costs to construct light rail are estimated at $645 million, while BRT is nearly half that at $371 million). Moreover, in contrast to traditional bus service, BRT has been praised worldwide as a more enhanced transit alternative, as it is characterized by off-board, prepaid fare collection; more frequent service and station spacing; traffic signal priority; real-time bus information; level boarding; and, perhaps most importantly, dedicated bus lanes. These elements help to improve speed and reliability of service.
The MTA’s bus rapid transit alternative proposes paving the abandoned North Shore train tracks (henceforth referred to as the “right-of-way”) so they may carry rapid buses between St. George and Arlington, with a continued bus lane in mixed traffic from Arlington to West Shore Plaza on South Avenue (See Figure 4.4). The new bus rapid transit system would replace the existing S40 and S90 bus routes on Richmond Terrace. Several existing bus routes would access the right-of-way via a ramp placed on Alaska Street. S48 and S98 service would be extended west of Arlington, and the S46 and S96 would terminate at Elm Park/Morningstar. The number of stops would be reduced between Arlington and St. George Terminal, ultimately increasing overall bus speeds and reducing passenger travel times. In fact, it is estimated that buses could reach maximum speeds of 60 miles per hour on the rapid busway, which, modeled after Pittsburgh’s Eastbusway BRT system, could accommodate up to 90 buses per hour at maximum capacity.27


Given the myriad benefits of BRT, we fully endorse the MTA’s decision to adapt the right-of-way for use as a BRT busway, and we recommend that the Task Force do the same. However, Port Richmond residents have expressed concern that the MTA’s plan in its current form does not meet their transportation needs. Accordingly, we recommend that, in its efforts to promote the arrival of BRT to the North Shore, the Task Force lobby for certain modifications to the MTA’s plan in order to better accommodate the needs of Port Richmond’s rapidly growing population.

At present, the MTA plans to site the Port Richmond BRT station near Jewett Avenue, removed from the neighborhood’s chief pedestrian corridor. We recommend the MTA keep the right-of-way’s current alignment in place and site the Port Richmond BRT station on Port Richmond Avenue, capitalizing on the Avenue’s heavy foot traffic in order to increase ridership. A Port Richmond Avenue BRT station would also serve as an important revitalization tool for the Avenue, as it would increase access from other North Shore neighborhoods. This station would also help to reestablish Port Richmond as a transportation hub, funneling all transportation modes to Port Richmond Avenue, and would help to revitalize the neighborhood as a whole, supporting economic, housing, and community development.
RECOMMENDATION: Develop a BRT branding/marketing strategy that would resonate with the North Shore community and various stakeholders.

Branding and marketing strategies are paramount to attracting riders to BRT. Marketing strategies that portray BRT as being more “rail-like” and distinguish BRT from regular bus service have the ability to capture more users and support. Features such as exclusive lanes, traffic signal prioritization, level boarding stations, real-time information, and off-board fare collection are features that lend themselves to marketing BRT as more modern and attractive than congested city buses. The design of the vehicles is also important in changing perception of BRT. Rapid-transit vehicles (RTVs) that operate on BRT lines are more rail-like than city buses, ultimately creating a more modern perception. In addition to the appearance and performance of the vehicles, the transit stations must employ consistent and attractive color schemes, graphics, maps, and logos.

The Cleveland Healthline serves as a prime example of successful BRT branding and marketing, as well as modern design elements (see case study). Marketing for the Healthline focused on faster commutes, fewer emissions, $2.3 billion in business development, 13,000 new jobs, hybrid technology, and connection from Downtown Cleveland to University Circle. Utilizing a strategic branding strategy has the ability to gain local support and position BRT as the most cost-effective solution that has all the desirable qualities of rail transit. The North Shore right-of-way can be approached in the same way, focusing on increased revenue, reduced congestion, job creation, and economic development.

Formulating a strong identity for the North Shore corridor is key to attracting riders and gaining overall support. The North Shore transit line could be branded as the “North Shore Express” or the “North Shore Bullet,” making it stand out from the city’s Select Bus Service and branding it as a modern BRT line. A distinct identity would resonate with community members and various stakeholders and lead to more support for BRT implementation.

Cleveland, Ohio: The Healthline

In 2008, the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (GCRTA, also known as RTA) opened the Euclid Corridor Transportation Project, known as the Healthline in Cleveland, Ohio. This BRT line stretches 7.1 miles and connects Downtown to University Circle. The line has contributed to increased economic development, revitalized the Euclid Corridor, and has become well-known as one of the most successful BRT lines in the nation. The Healthline has brought the following benefits to the city:

- $5.8 billion in investment—$3.3 billion for new construction and $2.5 billion for building rehabilitations—accounting for more than 110 projects.
- $31.6 million in non-transit improvements such as sidewalks, utilities, and local public art.
- Increased bus speeds of 34%, with average time savings of 12 minutes, and a 60 percent ridership increase.
- Transit signal priority and articulated buses with multiple points of entry, contributing to decreases in travel times.
- An affordable alternative to rail, which was estimated at $7 million per mile.
- 5,100 new housing units, contributing to the overall revitalization of the Euclid Corridor.
GOAL 4: MANAGE GROWTH

RECOMMENDATION: Encourage the Task Force to partner with advocacy groups, such as Transportation Alternatives, and city officials in order to help facilitate the implementation of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) on the North Shore right-of-way.

The Task Force need not act alone in its lobbying efforts for the reestablishment of Port Richmond as a transit hub. Transportation Alternatives is New York City’s leading advocacy organization for safe transportation options, working to promote bicycle infrastructure, pedestrian space, and public transit. In the early 2000s Transportation Alternatives introduced to New York policymakers to the concept of dedicated bus lanes, which the city consequently implemented for its Select Bus Service (SBS) starting in 2007.30

Having reputable support for bus rapid transit (BRT) on the North Shore of Staten Island could help fulfill the vision for the reuse of a rail line that has been abandoned since 1953. Transportation Alternatives currently has a Staten Island Volunteer Committee that meets every third Thursday of each month at the Everything Goes Book Cafe at 208 Bay Street in Tompkinsville. During meetings, the committee discusses transportation goals and projects that can benefit pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users. In addition to reaching out to Transportation Alternatives, contacting city officials can spark momentum for BRT. For instance, the Staten Island Borough President’s Office has expressed interest in expanded transit in the borough, contributing funds to the MTA’s North Shore Alternatives Analysis study. The Borough President’s Office supports the reuse of the tracks to better connect residents to each other and to job opportunities, as well as to help foster economic development along the transit-poor North Shore.31

RECOMMENDATIONS: Explore zoning regulations that would foster a transit-oriented environment

In contrast to other cities, New York City’s zoning code does not have a “Transit-Oriented Development” (TOD) district, which is a mixed-use district characterized by pedestrian-oriented development and affordable housing located in close proximity to a transit station. However, it does have “special districts” that can accomplish similar goals. For example, in Brooklyn, the Fourth Avenue Special Enhanced Commercial District was created to provide a mix of vibrant commercial and community facilities on ground-floor spaces. In addition, parking and curb cut regulations were put into place to improve the pedestrian environment, fostering an active streetscape to better serve the community. We recommend advocating for a special district zoning designation around the new BRT station on Port Richmond Avenue.

We propose creating a special district along Port Richmond Avenue to encourage the
development we feel is best-suited to meeting the goals of the Task Force and the larger Port Richmond community, while promoting a pleasant pedestrian experience and enhanced retail activity. Our new zoning overlay would be applied along Port Richmond Avenue, from Richmond Terrace to Post Avenue, and would encourage a more active pedestrian experience. This means limiting the amount of residential uses on the ground-floor level of buildings, as well as the types of non-residential uses permitted along the Avenue. Community facilities, churches (non-storefront), and schools will be exempt from these restrictions.

In addition, streetscape improvements could be funded by development projects along Port Richmond Avenue. Developers completing a project within our proposed Enhanced Commercial Special District will be required to contribute $20 for every square foot of new development to a Community Improvement Fund. This would create a resource to help fund future streetscape improvements in maintaining an enhanced pedestrian environment.

 ACTION ITEMS
- Organize informational sessions for local residents and potential clients who have an interest in supporting, participating, and contracting with cooperative health care businesses.
- Partner with Transportation Alternatives and elected city officials to support and encourage BRT implementation.
- Hold a design contest to repurpose Port Richmond’s existing housing stock.

 LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS
- Establish a community land trust in Port Richmond.
- Rezone underutilized areas to accommodate Port Richmond’s housing needs.
- Apply for housing grants.
- Work with the NYC Department of Health and the Primary Care Development Corporation to plan a process for bringing a health care cooperative to the community.
- Reestablish Port Richmond as a North Shore transit hub.
- Improve bicycle infrastructure.
GOAL 4: MANAGE GROWTH

SOURCES


9. Picture the Homeless 2012


18. University of Wisconsin Center for Cooperatives 2006


GOAL 4: MANAGE GROWTH


IMAGES


4.3 Source: http://www.chcany.org/

4.4 Photo credit: Flicr user litlnemo http://www.flickr.com/photos/litnemo/3615826903/ (Creative Commons License)

4.5 Source: metroplanning.org

FIGURES

4.4 Metropolitan Transportation Authority. “North Shore Alternatives Analysis”
GOAL 5: CONNECT COMMUNITY TO ITS WATERFRONT
GOAL 5: CONNECT COMMUNITY TO ITS WATERFRONT

SUMMARY

Inviting, easily accessible waterfront spaces can foster a higher quality of life by offering residents an opportunity for contemplative tranquility, economic activity, sustainable transit, physical fitness, and natural beauty. In recent years, New York City has taken notice; after generations of neglect and disuse, New Yorkers are reorienting their attention to the water, and waterfront spaces across the five boroughs—from Brooklyn Bridge Park and the High Line to Socrates Sculpture Park in Queens and the South Bronx’s Barretto Point Park—are gradually coming back to life as vibrant destinations for New Yorkers to work, play, and simply pass the time.

Though blessed with an historic shoreline along the banks of the Kill Van Kull, Port Richmond exhibits a distinct separation between its residential community and its waterfront assets. With few exceptions, residents of Port Richmond enjoy minimal connection either to the neighborhood’s waterfront spaces or to the water itself. Along Richmond Terrace, opaque fencing obstructs views of the water and active industry, while public access to waterfront space is limited to Faber Park, and opportunities for on-water recreation are completely non-existent. Moreover, while some waterfront lots are occupied by water-dependent industries that provide jobs and generate economic activity (particularly the lots east of Port Richmond Avenue), the majority of waterfront sites are occupied by non-water-dependent industry and parking lots that fail to maximize the value that waterfront land inherently offers. Furthermore, many of these non-water-dependent businesses necessitate the handling of toxic substances that place Port Richmond at risk of further environmental degradation in the case of extreme flooding. This chapter proposes a number of recommendations for connecting Port Richmond residents to their waterfront through open view corridors and expanded access to the water’s edge, while safeguarding upland communities from the hazards of flooding and storm surge.

OBJECTIVES

1. Galvanize local interest in, and political support for, waterfront projects.

2. Open view corridors both to the water itself and to active water-dependent industry.

3. Discourage non-water-dependent land uses on waterfront lots.

4. Expand public waterfront access to the waterfront.

5. Safeguard the waterfront and upland community from flooding and storm surge.

ISSUES

- Impeded access to the waterfront
- Obstructed view corridors
- Lack of neighborhood connectivity to the waterfront
- Abundance of non-water-dependent industry handling hazardous chemicals on waterfront land
- Underutilized waterfront space
- Vulnerability to flooding and storm surge

OBJECTIVE ONE: GALVANIZE LOCAL INTEREST IN, AND POLITICAL SUPPORT FOR, WATERFRONT PROJECTS

RECOMMENDATION: Raise awareness of the Port Richmond waterfront’s rich history and present-day importance to the neighborhood.

Long cut off from the community by opaque fences and land uses incompatible with public access, the Port Richmond waterfront represents a repellent force in the neighborhood. A critical step in connecting Port Richmond residents to their waterfront is to make them aware of its past and present value to the North
Shore, Staten Island, and the New York City region as a whole. To do so, we recommend the Task Force install a temporary exhibit (similar to the September 15th Brownfield Opportunity Area Open House at the former Wexler’s Bedding and Furniture) that educates residents about Port Richmond’s critical waterfront activity, its significance to the neighborhood’s development, and the contributions it makes today. Through mounting photos, videos, and narratives about the waterfront, the Task Force can promote a renewed appreciation of and enthusiasm for the Port Richmond waterfront and get the wheels in motion for more publicly accessible waterfront spaces.

RECOMMENDATION: Form a Task Force Waterfront Committee.

In addition to restoring interest in the Port Richmond waterfront among neighborhood residents, it is critical to garner support for waterfront projects among a diverse cross section of waterfront stakeholders. To accomplish this end, we recommend that the Task Force form a Task Force Waterfront Committee exclusively dedicated to advancing waterfront projects. The committee’s membership base should draw representatives from the public, private, and nonprofit sectors who have a vested interest in the future of the Port Richmond waterfront such as local waterfront business owners, representatives from the Department of City Planning and Community Board 1, and delegates from the NY-NJ Harbor Coalition, to name just a few. Committee members can leverage their own areas of expertise to exchange ideas, develop funding mechanisms, and ensure a broad set of benefits from a repurposing of the Port Richmond waterfront.

Moreover, as a cross section of influential actors, the committee can represent a formidable neighborhood force that can present ideas at Community Board 1 meetings, as well as advocate for political attention and funding from the local and state governments.

OBJECTIVE TWO: OPEN VIEW CORRIDORS BOTH TO THE WATER ITSELF AND TO ACTIVE WATER-DEPENDENT INDUSTRY

RECOMMENDATION: Lobby for the removal of opaque fences.

The ongoing effort to reclaim New York City’s status as a premiere waterfront city is driven by the idea of reconnecting New Yorkers to the waterfront. In Port Richmond, the public is physically and visually cut off from most of the waterfront and cannot enjoy this valuable asset. Industrial properties, barricaded land, and opaque fences border the shoreline from adjacent neighborhoods, disconnecting residents from the shoreline. It is our recommendation that the Task Force lobby for the removal of opaque fences along Richmond Terrace. This is a short-term, achievable request which falls in line with the goals put forth in Vision 2020: New York City Comprehensive Waterfront Plan. A major goal of the plan is to “Consider appropriate alternatives to the zoning requirement
for opaque fences around open industrial uses” and “to facilitate public views of the waterfront.” The plan also aims to “examine opportunities to preserve or create panoramic water views from public spaces.” To achieve these goals, Vision 2020 recommends a number of design guidelines for waterfront spaces, including transparent sea rails and strategic placement of rails so as to not obstruct the line of sight of people seated at the water’s edge.

The Task Force can also suggest design standards that have been successfully implemented in a number of waterfront communities in New Jersey. For instance, the Township of Stafford’s zoning code states that “fencing along a lagoon or waterfront property must be 50% open for 15 feet from the water or bulkhead.” Moreover, in Barnegat, New Jersey, design guidelines encourage waterfront property owners to provide unobstructed views of the water or waterways by limiting fencing to 48 inches in height and requiring the usage of transparent materials. Applied to the Port Richmond waterfront, guidelines like these could provide residents with consistent view corridors both to active water-dependent industry and to the water itself.

**OBJECTIVE THREE: DISCOURAGE NON-WATER-DEPENDENT LAND USES ON WATERFRONT LOTS**

**RECOMMENDATION:** Implement a Port Richmond Waterfront Access Plan that addresses the need for a publicly accessible, working waterfront. Waterfront Access Plans allow for distinct zoning designations on a lot-by-lot basis. Implementing a Waterfront Access Plan is particularly appealing to the Port Richmond waterfront, as it is home to a myriad of uses. While some of the existing industrial uses do not rely on their waterfront locations to carry out their functions, and thus do not technically need to be sited on the water, the water-dependent industrial uses are a great example of the community’s vibrant and economically viable shipping industry and should not be disturbed.

The Waterfront Access Plan we propose (Figure 5.1) aims to balance the needs of a working waterfront with residents’ desire for public access, while simultaneously seeking to fortify the shoreline with soft groundcover to absorb flood water and storm surge. As indicated in our proposed waterfront zoning map, on the lots east of the Bayonne Bridge, an area currently zoned as M1-1 and M2-1 (light-to-moderate industrial), we recommend a zoning change that would only allow for green space; for anything to be built into the ground on these 12 lots, a special permit would be required. Faber Park would remain a public park, which, in all likelihood, would be enhanced by the newly expanded green space to the west. The three lots to the east of Faber Park, which are now zoned M3-1 (heavy/water-dependent industry), we recommend be rezoned to permit light, water-compatible commercial uses (such as a seafood restaurant, a bait-and-tackle shop, an ice cream parlor, or a cafe). Currently, these lots are occupied by an auto mall, which does not qualify as a water-dependent industry. Our recommended zoning change would repurpose the existing structures while doing away with the risk of toxic chemicals and oils being washed into Port Richmond in the event
GOAL 5: CONNECT COMMUNITY TO ITS WATERFRONT

of a flood or storm surge. We also recommend that the two lots shaded green at the north end of Port Richmond Avenue be converted into a public park, which will be discussed in further detail later in this chapter. Lastly, the lots shaded purple in our proposed Waterfront Access Plan map should remain occupied by the water-dependent industry currently there. A Port Richmond Waterfront Access Plan would facilitate the growth of appropriate uses desired by the community, while preserving economically viable, locationally appropriate industry.

The New York State Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) allocates grant funding for the sole purpose of acquiring underutilized waterfront land and converting it into open space. Particularly after Hurricane Sandy, as the criticality of soft shorelines has become especially evident, the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) is especially interested in discouraging non-water-dependent land uses on waterfront lots. To help put the Port Richmond Waterfront Access Plan into practice, we recommend that the Task Force set up a meeting with the Trust for Public Land—a national organization that has already received significant EPF funding to acquire waterfront property on Staten Island—to lobby for grant money to purchase waterfront land for conversion into open space. To help put the Port Richmond Waterfront Access Plan into practice, we recommend that the Task Force set up a meeting with the Trust for Public Land—a national organization that has already received significant EPF funding to acquire waterfront property on Staten Island—to lobby for grant money to purchase waterfront land for conversion into open space. To help put the Port Richmond Waterfront Access Plan into practice, we recommend that the Task Force set up a meeting with the Trust for Public Land—a national organization that has already received significant EPF funding to acquire waterfront property on Staten Island—to lobby for grant money to purchase waterfront land for conversion into open space. To help put the Port Richmond Waterfront Access Plan into practice, we recommend that the Task Force set up a meeting with the Trust for Public Land—a national organization that has already received significant EPF funding to acquire waterfront property on Staten Island—to lobby for grant money to purchase waterfront land for conversion into open space.

We have already made contact with Mr. Sheehan, and he looks forward to hearing from the Task Force. He can be reached at the following:

Phone: (518) 402-9405
Email: fesheeha@gw.dec.state.ny.us

RECOMMENDATION: Develop and activate attractive waterfront spaces.

While the addition of access routes will create physical connections between Port Richmond's residential districts and its waterfront, the development and activation of attractive waterfront spaces will open up waterfront land and motivate people to cross Richmond Terrace. It is our recommendation that the following waterfront lots be repurposed to allow for public access:

OBJECTIVE FOUR: EXPAND PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE WATERFRONT

RECOMMENDATION: Create additional waterfront access points and wayfinding signage.

In spite of Port Richmond’s proximity to—and historical reliance on—the Kill Van Kull, residents are unlikely to venture north of Richmond Terrace to take in waterfront vistas. A key impediment to waterfront access is, simply, that the waterfront itself is difficult to access on foot. In general, due to a virtually uninterrupted stretch of private, fenced-off lots, it is either unsafe or physically impossible to access waterfront land north of Richmond Terrace. To facilitate easier access to the water, we propose the creation of eight additional upland access routes to be spaced, pursuant to Section 62-56 of the New York City Waterfront Zoning Resolution, no more than 600 feet apart. Specific locations can be found in Figure 5.1. Clear wayfinding signage, installed along Richmond Terrace and at key north-south traffic arteries, will orient attention toward the water and help pedestrians locate access routes.

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as the main commercial corridor in the neighborhood, Port Richmond Avenue already carries the foot traffic necessary to encourage pedestrian access to the waterfront. Third, the two lots that flank Port Richmond Avenue are presently vacant, and the lot to the west is city-owned (by the Department of Small Business Services). Finally, the New York City Department of City Planning has proposed to eliminate the Significant Maritime and Industrial Area (SMIA) designation currently imposed on this site, which will facilitate the redevelopment of the land for non-industrial usage. Accordingly, it is our recommendation the two lots on either side of Port Richmond Avenue be joined in the creation of one public park.

To ensure this park maximizes the benefits of its waterfront location while simultaneously serving the unique needs of Port Richmond residents, we recommend this street-end park employ the following design guidelines:

- Demap the section of Port Richmond Avenue north of Richmond Terrace to enable safe and easy pedestrian access to the park.
- Extend the Richmond Terrace bicycle lane north on Port Richmond Avenue and Ferry Street to allow for bicycle access to the park.
- Install speed bumps on Ferry Street to make for safer pedestrian access to the park.
- Construct a staircase leading from Port Richmond Avenue down to the water so park visitors can descend to the shoreline.
- Create sites for both passive recreation (benches, picnic tables, barbecues, open lawns) and active recreation (playground).
- Ensure a variety of interesting seating options including benches, swing chairs, picnic tables, steps, and ledges.
- Install transparent guard rails at the water’s edge to ensure open view corridors.
- Construct a salt marsh to absorb stormwater and flood water and restore habitat.
- Build a bandshell to host concerts and other neighborhood events.
- Develop a community garden—employing raised beds—to encourage community cohesion and provide educational opportunities.
- Construct a grassy hill near the water’s edge to act as a dune protecting Port Richmond from storm surge.
- Utilize the façade of the existing building facing the park as the site of a community-driven mural project that captures the spirit of Port Richmond.
- Site points of interest along and/or at the ends of access routes so that pedestrians, bicyclists, bus riders, and drivers traveling along Richmond Terrace can see and will be drawn into the park.

Sports fields/festival grounds

Port Richmond is conspicuously lacking in open green space for outdoor recreation, public gathering, and economic activity. Consistent with the recommendations laid out above to rezone the waterfront lots situated between Faber Park and the Bayonne Bridge (stretching approximately one-half mile in length) to discourage non-water-dependent industry, and in conjunction with environmental remediation efforts already underway across the neighborhood, we propose repurposing this land into waterfront soccer fields and festival grounds.
Opening this land for public usage would satisfy a number of community needs and complement several other recommendations of this report. For instance, there are presently just five public outdoor soccer fields on Staten Island, and just two on the North Shore. Conversations during our Visioning Workshop revealed that soccer fields are indeed an unmet desire among community residents. Moreover, given the shortage of outdoor soccer fields across Staten Island, it can be assumed that leagues from all over the borough will come to Port Richmond to play. In addition to paying a fee to use the field—which can contribute to building and maintenance costs—groups are likely to hold post-game meals in Port Richmond’s breadth of restaurants, generating additional foot traffic and economic activity along Port Richmond Avenue.

Furthermore, as stated in Goal 2, we propose the organization of cultural festivals that speak to the diversity of the Port Richmond community in order to help foster cross-cultural networking and to create a venue for the sale of local goods and crafts. As a scenic public space that traverses different segments of the neighborhood, this swathe of waterfront land represents an optimal, democratic setting for cross-cultural events. For instance, akin to Brooklyn’s Red Hook Food Vendors—a weekly gathering of purveyors of authentic Latin American cuisine—Port Richmond residents could assemble to form a vendors committee and, for a small fee to support the construction and maintenance of public waterfront spaces, hold weekend food festivals on repurposed waterfront land. Finally, transforming this waterfront land into grassy park space will promote the reinforcement of Port Richmond’s shoreline with soft edges to absorb storm surge.

**Waterfront boardwalk**

To create a physical connection across these new waterfront spaces, and provide consistent access to and vistas of Port Richmond’s shoreline, we recommend constructing an uninterrupted waterfront boardwalk stretching approximately two-thirds of a mile in length from Port Richmond Avenue to the Bayonne Bridge. However, given the unique circumstances each waterfront lot represents, the boardwalk should consist of a combination of shoreline esplanades (upland paths that follow the coastline), raised walkways, and floating boardwalks (see Figure 5.1). For instance, while the boardwalk may begin as a shoreline esplanade in the new Port Richmond Avenue street-end park, it must be elevated by roughly 20 feet above Flag Container Services’ property so as to avoid disruption of water-dependent industrial activity. Next, when the raised boardwalk returns to grade, it can be continued floating atop the water, bringing visitors closer to the water itself and avoiding disturbance of adjacent upland uses. The existing shore esplanade in Faber Park should be integrated into the proposed boardwalk, and all guardrails must be transparent so as to preserve waterfront views. Electrified bollards running along the boardwalk can serve to both catch debris during floods and light the waterfront for nighttime strolls.
RECOMMENDATION: Build an educational visitor center and nature walk at the Port Richmond Wastewater-Pollution Control Plant.

Handling 1.4 billion gallons of wastewater that travels through over 6,000 miles of sewer pipes per day, and serving a population of more than eight million people, New York City’s wastewater treatment system constitutes a remarkable engineering achievement. The most conspicuous manifestations of the city’s wastewater treatment system are the fourteen treatment plants that, scattered throughout the five boroughs, are responsible for removing pollutants from wastewater before releasing it into waterways.10

Situated at the corner of Clove Road and Richmond Terrace, the Port Richmond Wastewater-Pollution Control Plant (WPCP) is an integral component of the city’s extensive water treatment system. One of only two wastewater treatment plants on Staten Island, the Port Richmond WPCP, constructed in 1953, filters sixty million gallons of wastewater per day and serves nearly 200,000 Staten Islanders.11 While residents of Port Richmond and its surrounding neighborhoods are reliant on the WPCP every day, most residents are unlikely to pay it any mind. A bulky eyesore whose aesthetics and odors are less than pleasing to common sensibilities, the WPCP repels people from the waterfront and serves as a physical and visual barrier to the water.

However, wastewater treatment plants need not act as inhospitable neighbors; in fact, precedent shows that, when inviting to the public, treatment plants can actually be neighborhood assets that serve community functions beyond the treatment of human waste. For instance, the Newtown Creek WPCP—which, at 310 million gallons per day, boasts the highest capacity of the city’s 14 plants—not only filters the wastewater for a population larger than the entire city of Detroit, but it also contains a visitor center that educates curious New Yorkers about the inner workings of their wastewater treatment system. Moreover, the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) constructed the Newtown Creek Nature Walk, a quarter-mile trail that affords views of the treatment plant as well as the creek itself.12 Essentially, DEP ensured that, rather than alienating its neighbors, the Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant would be fully integrated into surrounding communities.

It is our recommendation that the Task Force lobby the city’s Department of Environmental Protection to develop a similar concept for the Port Richmond WPCP. Education about wastewater treatment processes will likely promote enhanced environmental stewardship, encouraging Port Richmond residents to conserve waste and care for their natural resources. Lastly, a roughly half-mile nature walk—running along the west bank of Bodine Creek, crossing the water via a floating boardwalk just north of the train tracks, continuing along the Kill Van Kull shoreline, and looping back around just north of the treatment plant (see Figure 5.1)—will provide additional waterfront access as well as fresh vantage points of the Bodine Creek, the Kill Van Kull, and the WPCP.
GOAL 5: CONNECT COMMUNITY TO ITS WATERFRONT

RECOMMENDATION: Create opportunities for on-water recreation.

Perhaps the most significant way to connect residents to their waterfront is to offer them opportunities to get not just near the water, but on the water itself. The city’s waterways are now cleaner than they have been in a century, and across the five boroughs, from the Bronx River to the Gowanus Canal, New Yorkers are exploring their waterways in human-powered boats. In conjunction with the Army Corps of Engineers’ Comprehensive Restoration Plan, which aims to clean the water and restore habitat within the New York-New Jersey Harbor, we propose the provision of opportunities for on-water recreation along the Kill Van Kull in Port Richmond.

To allow for the safe launch of kayaks, canoes, and other human-powered boats into the Kill Van Kull, we recommend constructing an Eco Dock in the proposed Port Richmond Avenue street-end park. Eco Docks are ADA-compliant, floating docks that rise and fall with the tide and are equipped to accommodate both small and large vessels; case studies can be found in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn, and in Northern Manhattan. These two Eco Docks were funded by local City Council members, the Borough President’s Office, and the New York State Department of State through Title 11 of the Environmental Protection Fund.

OBJECTIVE FIVE: SAFEGUARD THE WATERFRONT AND UPLAND COMMUNITY FROM FLOODING AND STORM SURGE

RECOMMENDATION: Install soft infrastructure on waterfront lots to protect Port Richmond from storm surge.

New York City is surrounded by a network of waterways influenced by the change in tide and weather conditions. Neighborhoods such as Port Richmond that are built along the water’s edge are at high risk of storm surges and flooding, which could result in massive property damage and loss of lives. In October 2012, Superstorm Sandy demonstrated how highly vulnerable Port Richmond and Staten Island as a whole are to storm surge and flooding. Sandy had sustained winds of 80 mph, driving waves as high as 10 feet onto the shores of Staten Island. The storm left a trail of devastation in its path, flooding most of the coast, downing trees and utility poles, and destroying homes and businesses as it left large portions of the island in darkness. According to NBC News, Sandy claimed the lives of 22 Staten Island residents and caused billions of dollars in property damage. Most of the damage created by Sandy was a result of tidal surge and flooding, which washed boats and other debris ashore and swept people from their homes. In the aftermath of the storm, we are reminded that the issue of storm surge and climate resilience is still a matter of great concern that needs to be urgently evaluated and addressed.

As outlined in Vision 2020: New York City Comprehensive Waterfront Plan, there are many ways of protecting shorelines from storm surge and flooding, and although creating a bulkhead or breakwater would be the first choice in protecting the Port Richmond shore, the construction and maintenance of these structures are prohibitively expensive and would not adequately address all the risks faced during a storm surge.

It is our recommendation that Port Richmond adopt a soft-infrastructure approach to mitigating storm surge and flooding. Research indicates that wetlands and waterfront parks can significantly dissipate storm surges and should be considered when developing a comprehensive plan for coastal restoration and storm damage risk reduction. The cost of creating or restoring soft infrastructure investments is only a fraction of the cost of constructing expensive seawalls; waterfront lots along the coast of Port Richmond should be fitted with soft infrastructure where applicable.
An article in the *Homeland Security News Wire*—published on November 20, 2012, and entitled “Soft Infrastructure as Storm Surge Defense”—stated that the flooding of New York City caused by Superstorm Sandy has prompted the state’s Governor to consider building storm surge barriers to protect Lower Manhattan from future catastrophes. However, such a strategy has been strongly opposed by architects and engineers who believe this approach could impose negative effects on neighboring areas, such as Staten Island and the New Jersey Shore, which were hit hard by the hurricane.

Landscapers and engineers agree that soft infrastructure would mitigate flood damage without sending harm elsewhere. In Port Richmond, building storm surge barriers could reduce the impact of storm surge and flooding but could have an adverse effect on nearby towns. Using soft infrastructure in Port Richmond would improve resiliency by way of natural and ecologically restorative techniques.

**ACTION ITEMS**

- Install a temporary exhibition attesting to the value of Port Richmond’s waterfront.
- Form a Task Force Waterfront Committee to garner political will for waterfront projects.
- Get on Community Board 1 meeting agendas so the Waterfront Committee can make presentations advocating for waterfront projects.

**LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Remove opaque fences blocking water/industrial views, or replace them with transparent barriers to open view corridors.
- Discourage non-water-dependent land uses on waterfront lots.
- Create additional waterfront access points and wayfinding signage.
- Develop and activate attractive waterfront spaces.
- Build educational visitor center and nature walk at Port Richmond Wastewater-Pollution Control Plant.
- Create opportunities for on-water recreation.
- Install soft infrastructure on waterfront lots to protect Port Richmond from storm surge.
GOAL 5: CONNECT COMMUNITY TO ITS WATERFRONT

SOURCES


2 ibid., 27.


GOAL 5: CONNECT COMMUNITY TO ITS WATERFRONT
GOAL 6: ENHANCE THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT
GOAL 6: ENHANCE THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

SUMMARY

Port Richmond boasts a varied built environment, consisting of historic architecture enriched by generations of immigrants contributing distinctive cultural flourishes to their homes and businesses. The architecture of our study area is mainly defined by the residential districts flanking the commercial core on and around Port Richmond Avenue. Many of the residential buildings of these areas—most constructed before 1941, with a large portion built before 1915—are three stories high, making up most of the tallest buildings in the study area. There is a great range between the types and conditions of the residential buildings, from large Victorian homes to smaller rowhouses. Many residential lots suffer from long-term vacancy and general neglect, particularly to the west of Port Richmond Avenue. Vacancies are more frequent on the commercial corridor, particularly north of the abandoned railroad tracks.

Port Richmond Avenue has a mix of one-, two-, and three-story commercial and mixed-use buildings constructed between 1916 and 1941. The commercial buildings boast an historic character, but many are covered with signs or applied building materials. The current built environment along Port Richmond Avenue is in need of a revitalization in order to restore its character and increase its commercial vitality. Implementation of the following recommendations will enliven the streets and help unify the character of Port Richmond Avenue (see Appendix 1 for building age and height maps).

ISSUES

- Vacant and underutilized buildings and lots
- Large advertisements covering buildings
- Hidden historic building character
GOAL 6: ENHANCE THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

OBJECTIVES

1. Enliven underutilized spaces and buildings.
2. Recapture the vibrancy of Port Richmond Avenue.

OBJECTIVE ONE: ENLIVEN UNDERUTILIZED SPACES AND BUILDINGS

RECOMMENDATION: Activate vacant indoor and outdoor spaces with public events.

The built environment of Port Richmond Avenue is overwhelmed with vacancies, specifically north of the abandoned railroad tracks (see Vacancy Map, Figure 4.1). In addition to contributing to a negative perception of Port Richmond and pointing to its neglect, vacancies limit activity on the streets, which can lead to unsafe conditions. As such, enlivening the neighborhood’s vacant spaces is a key component to fostering cohesion along the commercial corridor and creating a safer neighborhood. We propose the employment of “pop-up” occupancies—including live music, art exhibits, dances, performances, and classes—in order to activate vacant spaces. This is discussed in detail in Goal 2.

OBJECTIVE TWO: RECAPTURE THE VIBRANCY OF PORT RICHMOND AVENUE

RECOMMENDATION: Implement streetscape improvements.

Streetscape improvements along Port Richmond Avenue will help to make the corridor more vibrant, interesting, and usable. The elements we chose to address along Port Richmond Avenue are the urban forest, lighting, bike parking and trash receptacles near transit stops, gateway signs, and sidewalk restaurant seating.

The urban forest—which refers to street trees, planters, hanging baskets, and storm-water management systems—is, due to Port Richmond’s close proximity to the waterfront, is an important consideration for any streetscape improvement.

Port Richmond Avenue has a unique block structure. Within our study area almost all side streets terminate at the Avenue, rather than crossing uninterruptedly. We recommend adding new curb extensions—making street crossings both shorter and safer—and extending and greening the existing curb extensions to beautify the streets and allow for water to be absorbed into the ground instead of running into the city’s drainage system (see Image 6.5). We also recommend paving the parking lanes with permeable pavers to allow water to flow through the surface. These measures will improve the visual look of Port Richmond Avenue while simultaneously lessening the burden on the city’s sewer system.

An increase in street lighting would be an effective measure to enhance public safety in Port Richmond. In order to improve the overall aesthetics of the Avenue and create a more cohesive feel, we recommend employing a streetlight that provides lighting for both street traffic and pedestrians on the sidewalk. On these light poles we also propose the use of hanging planters—holding drought-resistant perennials—and banner holders. We also recommend leveraging Port Richmond’s existing partnership with Wagner College to get

Image 6.5: Rendering of curb extensions on Church and Port Richmond
students to help sustain the plants in these hanging baskets.

Additionally, participants at the Visioning Workshop frequently noted the inhospitable environment surrounding the neighborhood’s bus stops. To improve the general waiting experience for transit users, we recommend targeting the neighborhood’s bus stops as sites for additional trash receptacles, as many residents remarked about the excess of trash at bus stops. Furthermore, the installation of bicycle parking near bus stops will facilitate faster trips to mass transit for residents who may not live within easy walking distance of certain bus routes.

To augment a sense of place while demarcating the boundaries of Port Richmond’s historic commercial core, we recommend installing grand gateway signs over two intersections along the Avenue: at Richmond Terrace to the north and Post Avenue to the south. These signs will give a unique character to the neighborhood and ultimately draw in visitors passing by to stop and explore the commercial corridor.

Better Streets Plan: San Francisco

The Better Streets Plan advances city street improvements in San Francisco. Implemented in 2010 as a guideline for any new street improvements, the plan is a complete look at elements that make up a city street. It begins by identifying different types of streets in order to better understand how a particular street may work with the guidelines. The plan then goes into an in-depth discussion of street design elements such as crosswalks, corner curb radii, parking lane treatments, and traffic calming. Next, the plan then discusses specific streetscape elements that can enhance the street, such as the urban forest, paving, and treatment of utilities.

The Better Streets Plan is an overall success because of its specific recommendations for different street types and the easily understandable graphics it uses to describe its recommendations.1

GOAL 6: ENHANCE THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

RECOMMENDATION: Encourage sidewalk cafes.

Many of the current restaurant storefronts allow little to no visibility to the inside of their establishments. We propose opening up these restaurants into the public sphere to help enliven the streets with small sidewalk cafes. The sidewalk is wide enough to propose one row of seating at the building face. The proposed furniture co-op (see Goal 3) can provide the skilled labor to construct the required partitions that separate the cafe from the rest of the sidewalk. This is an item that can be accomplished relatively inexpensively by existing building owners, and the review process runs about six months. We encourage the Task Force to partner with Northfield LDC in reaching out to business owners to promote this new use of the sidewalk.

RECOMMENDATION: Implement a design code.

The purpose of instituting a design code for Port Richmond Avenue is to create a visually appealing and welcoming environment for patrons and pedestrians. This can attract more businesses and improve the safety of the neighborhood. To be effective, the design code should be mandatory so all businesses benefit from the improved conditions. At the same time, the design code should be straightforward, affordable, and easy to implement. We have identified three key elements that meet these requirements: maximizing interior visibility, controlling sign awning placement and size, and removing applied building materials from façades.

Many businesses along Port Richmond Avenue currently post signs, flyers, and posters in their windows, blocking the line of sight into their establishments and detracting from the general pedestrian experience along the Avenue. Posted items in windows should be limited to displays of pertinent store information such as hours of operation or store logos. When possible, windows should display products or services that add color and texture and bring visual activity to pedestrians and shoppers.

The signs and awnings of businesses along Port Richmond Avenue come in a wide variety of styles, colors, sizes, and placements. This variety gives the Avenue a unique feel but also creates an unbalanced and, in some places, an unsightly visual experience. This can be remedied by restricting signs and awnings to the space above building entryways and below second-story windows. For one-story commercial buildings, signs and awnings should conform in size and placement with adjacent buildings.

There are many historic buildings along Port Richmond Avenue. Some retain original features that are well-maintained, while others are in need of repair or full restoration. As it would be desirable for all historic features to be restored, this should be a long-term goal; it is not currently within the budget of building and business owners to make these improvements. As an alternative, the design code should call for buildings to remove applied surface materials such as tiles and vinyl siding. By having one
uniform surface, buildings will draw attention away from these inconsistent surfaces and direct it toward storefronts. Building surfaces, whether exposed or painted, should be well-maintained to promote a clean and inviting feel to the Avenue.

To facilitate implementation of the design code, we recommend that the Task Force partner with Northfield LDC, which has already begun implementing a holistic revitalization of Port Richmond Avenue. For additional ideas on main street improvement, the Task Force can reference the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s Main Street Four-Point Approach.²

ACTION ITEMS

- Encourage “small sidewalk cafes” outside existing restaurants.
- Develop a Port Richmond Design Code.

LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

- Construct sidewalk infrastructure that expands Port Richmond’s storm-water management system.
- Advocate for new street lighting design.
- Install bicycle parking and garbage receptacles at transit stops.
- Construct gateway signs over Port Richmond Avenue.

SOURCES


IMAGES

STRENGTHEN THE PORT RICHMOND ANTI-VIOLENCE TASK FORCE
SUMMARY

The Port Richmond Anti-Violence Task Force is a productive, positive organization in Port Richmond. One of its greatest strengths is its ability to bring together many community organizations with different interests in support of a common goal: improving safety in Port Richmond. Between the Friendship Dinners, the Friday Night Midnight Sports Program, the Safe Zone Campaign, the release of a youth safety survey, and an interracial dialogue program, the Task Force has made a significant impact on the community.

The Task Force does, however, suffer from a few organizational weaknesses that could hinder its future growth and its ability to implement the recommendations in this report.

First, the Task Force operates with very little funding, which makes the implementation of larger projects financially infeasible. Also, the Task Force operates many programs without protecting its leaders from potential legal liability for accidents.

Additionally, the Task Force’s purpose is not clear from an outsider’s perspective because it does not have a written charter or mission statement in an easily accessible, centralized location like a website. Therefore, prospective members or donors are deterred from contributing money to the Task Force.

Lastly, the Task Force’s programs are publicized primarily by word of mouth, which limits their beneficiaries to those the members (and their friends) already know personally.

OBJECTIVES

1. Formalize the Port Richmond Anti-Violence Task Force to make it friendlier to donors and new members.
2. Increase the operating budget of the Task Force.
3. Improve communication and distribution of information within the community and to potential donors.

OBJECTIVE ONE: FORMALIZE THE PORT RICHMOND ANTI-VIOLENCE TASK FORCE TO MAKE IT FRIENDLIER TO DONORS AND NEW MEMBERS

RECOMMENDATION: Rebrand the Task Force.

Since 2003, the Port Richmond Anti-Violence Task Force has experienced tremendous success in its efforts to unify a culturally diverse community and combat violence—so much so that its scope (perhaps unknowingly) has broadened, and its numbers and ability to reach the community in a creative, comprehensive way have expanded. Due to the organization’s recognizable presence and respected standing among Port Richmond residents and representatives, we suggest a new branding strategy. Instead of the “Port Richmond Anti-Violence Task Force,” the simply put “Community Task Force,” would describe the group’s purpose of elevating the status of Port Richmond, without carrying the heavy stigma of a policing organization.
GOAL 7: STRENGTHEN THE TASK FORCE

RECOMMENDATION: Offer an internship.

Many nonprofit organizations use internships to accommodate their need for office workers. These internships offer college students the ability to earn college credits while receiving valuable hands-on work experience. The Task Force should seek out a partner college, such as CUNY or Wagner College, that would be able to provide at least one student each semester.

For example, Hunter College’s Public Service Scholar Program matches students interested in public service with nonprofit organizations. The core of the program is an internship with a nonprofit, a public agency, or an elected official. Students enroll for a full academic year (September to May) and may receive a stipend, depending on funding.1

Another resource is Wagner College’s Port Richmond Partnership. Wagner College students are matched with clients in Port Richmond in order to provide them with needed assistance. Organizations in Port Richmond that currently work with Wagner College include El Centro del Inmigrante and Make the Road New York.2

RECOMMENDATION: Incorporate as a nonprofit organization.

We strongly recommend the Task Force consider incorporating as a nonprofit organization for funding purposes. Presently, the Task Force is applying for grants with the intent of receiving funds through a fiscal sponsor. Unfortunately, the grant applications have not been successful arguably because, from an outside funder’s perspective, the Task Force has not legitimized itself as a corporation that will be present for the long term. By incorporating, the Task Force proves it is an organization with staying power. Additionally, incorporating would allow the Task Force to directly receive grants and donations from private foundations and the government and eliminate the extra administrative step of using a fiscal sponsor to receive funding.

Incorporating would give the Task Force needed tax benefits. Nonprofit organizations are tax-exempt, so even as the Task Force continues to grow, it would not have to pay taxes if it incorporates in this structure.3

SAMPLE INTERNSHIP LISTING:

The Port Richmond Anti-Violence Task Force is looking for a dedicated Community Events Intern for the Spring 2013 semester. The Port Richmond Anti-Violence Task Force is an organization dedicated to reducing incidents of violence in Port Richmond, Staten Island.

The Community Events Intern will work with our partner organizations to gather information related to community events. The intern will develop skills in:

- community outreach
- coalition building
- database management
- event planning

Applicants must be committed to community-organizing practices. Applicants must possess strong interpersonal and communication skills. Spanish-speaking applicants strongly encouraged to apply.

This internship is a semester-long, part-time commitment; specific hours and dates can be tailored to a successful applicant. The internship is unpaid.

To apply, submit a one-page cover letter and a résumé to [email@email.com].

Individual donors could also claim personal federal income tax deductions for their donations.4

In addition, by incorporating as a nonprofit organization, Task Force members will be shielding themselves from personal liability if something goes wrong at one of their events.5 For instance, if a youth gets injured at the Friday Night Midnight Sports Program, under the Task Force’s current structure, the youth could sue individual Task Force members
in their personal capacity. If the Task Force is incorporated, however, the youth would only be able to sue the Task Force as an organization, and the personal assets of Task Force members would not be at risk.

Incorporating the Task Force would also encourage it to grow. Incorporation documents would force the Task Force to formulate a mission statement and create and fine tune its operating rules and decision-making procedures. It could also open the door for the Task Force to obtain lower postal rates on bulk mailing, free and reduced-cost computer software and hardware, free radio and television public service announcements, and a variety of other services.

The disadvantages of incorporation include an abundance of paperwork, both at the outset and on an annual basis. Additionally, there is a cost associated with hiring an attorney to prepare the papers, and, if the directors of the Task Force decide to shut down, it would have to formally dissolve, and its assets would have to go to another nonprofit organization. Finally, if it incorporates, the Task Force cannot engage in political campaigning or lobbying. These disadvantages, especially the task of paperwork and preparing the papers for incorporation, could be easily mitigated by using volunteer services. For instance, Brooklyn Law School operates a Community Development Clinic where, under the supervision of a licensed attorney, law students represent community organizations in drafting business formation documents. They will do this free of charge, and the Task Force would only have to pay for the fees required by the New York State Secretary of State and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). To make an appointment with Brooklyn Law School’s Community Development Clinic, contact Professor David Reiss at 718-780-0636 or at david.reiss@brooklaw.edu.

OBJECTIVE TWO: IMPROVE COMMUNICATION, BOTH WITHIN THE COMMUNITY AND TO POTENTIAL DONORS

RECOMMENDATION: Create a website.

To remedy the Task Force’s communication issues, the Task Force should create and maintain a comprehensive website equipped with multiple means of communication (written in both English and Spanish). The website should include the Task Force’s mission statement, organizational history, an updated calendar of events, and contact information. We have already created a website for this plan, which can be converted for the Task Force’s use if so desired. The website’s address is http://visionportrichmond.weebly.com.
RECOMMENDATION: Draft a donor information sheet.

To lend legitimacy to the Task Force’s fundraising efforts, we recommend that the Task Force create a written document to communicate to prospective donors regarding how donations will be used and how they will positively impact the community. Donor information sheets typically include background on the organization, the goal of the project for which funding is being sought, anticipated results, and a summary of past accomplishments. More examples of donor information sheets are in Appendix 4.

RECOMMENDATION: Increase the Task Force’s operating budget.

Many grants are available to nonprofit organizations. Some of the grants require that the organization be incorporated as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. Other grants will be awarded to unincorporated organizations, provided they are able to use a fiscal sponsor. We have listed many grants for which the Task Force should consider applying. This list is not exhaustive, and the Task Force should regularly look for new grant opportunities. Please see Appendix 5 for the list of grants.

Fundraise.

To increase its operating budget, the Task Force should host an annual fundraising dinner and seek sponsorship from local businesses.

Assess membership dues.

The Task Force can increase its operating budget by requiring that member organizations pay annual dues, perhaps on a sliding scale based on the organizations’ operating budgets.

Take advantage of community organization support resources.

Many organizations, such as the Foundation Center, Taproot, Grant Space, GuideStar, TechSoup, and the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development, offer resources for community organizations. We recommend that the Task Force utilize these resources rather than taking on all of the burden themselves. For instance, these organizations offer classes on grant seeking, fundraising, proposal writing, and other courses specific to the operation of nonprofit organizations for little or no cost. Additionally, the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development also provides technical and budgetary assistance.

We have already made contact with Kathryn McCarthy from the Foundation Center, who would be willing to talk to the Task Force about the appropriate classes to take and how to move forward stronger. Kathryn McCarthy can be contacted at (212) 807-3632 or at kmm@foundationcenter.org.
Advocate for participatory budgeting.

Participatory budgeting is a process whereby a public agency allocates a portion of its budget to be decided upon by its constituency. Participatory budgeting was implemented in 2011 in four NYC council districts to give local residents direct control over how discretionary money was allocated. The response to the first round of participatory budgeting in New York City was very positive.13

In 2012 participatory budgeting has expanded to eight council districts.14 By giving residents a greater stake in local budgeting decisions, participatory budgeting has strengthened civic engagement in general and brought about greater community cohesion in the places it has been implemented. We recommend that the Task Force ask Councilwoman Debi Rose to join with her colleagues for the next round of participatory budgeting at the city level in the 2013-2014 fiscal year.

Convince a major nonprofit to engage in a participatory budgeting process.

Participatory budgeting does not have to be limited to government funding. In 2012 the student government at Brooklyn College voted to allocate 10 percent of their annual budget to direct democratic control.15 Students were asked to submit suggestions for what they would like their student government to do, and then all students had a chance to vote on which projects they wished to see take place.

Port Richmond boasts significant civic engagement through nonprofit organizations that provide numerous direct services. We recommend that a large nonprofit, or a group of nonprofits, in Port Richmond set aside a portion of their budget to a participatory budgeting process. Participatory budgeting at the nonprofit level could generate larger levels of participation and a feeling of ownership over major projects in the neighborhood. Applying participatory budgeting principles to a nonprofit budget is an innovative approach that, to our knowledge, has not yet been tried, so it could attract pilot project funding from foundations and earned media. Since it is a new idea it would require leadership to implement, but luckily, the national umbrella organization of the U.S. participatory budgeting movement is located in New York City16.
GOAL 7: STRENGTHEN THE TASK FORCE

SOURCES


IMAGES

The creation of this plan is just the beginning of a renewed effort to realize Port Richmond's potential as a vibrant community that provides all its residents with access to a comfortable standard of living. The Task Force should begin to take any actions that can be completed in the short term and start to prepare a plan to realize long-term goals. At each step, the Task Force should closely monitor successes and failures and adjust accordingly. The Task Force's continued enthusiasm and hard work is key to ensuring a better future for Port Richmond.

We hope that, in the future, other groups will focus their attention on Port Richmond and assist its residents in building a better neighborhood. Future studies should consider the effects of any actions taken from this and other existing plans for Port Richmond, including the Department of City Planning's North Shore 2030 plan, Northfield LDC's Brownfield Opportunity Area plans, and the implementation of bus rapid transit along the unused North Shore railway.
Port Richmond Anti-Violence Task Force
El Grupo de Trabajo Contra la Violencia en Port Richmond
Hunter College
Through late 1600s: Inhabited by Lenape Indians

1661: Dutch founded Port Richmond as a cemetery for established New Dorp

1866: Official incorporation of the Village of Port Richmond

1990s: Wave of Mexican immigrants move to Port Richmond, reopening vacant stores and moving into abandoned homes

2000s: Racially motivated attacks; Community leaders attempt to forge neighborhood ties

1960s-70s: Construction of highways, Verrazano Bridge, strip malls, and Staten Island Mall. Disinvestment and “white flight” to New Jersey and southern Staten Island

1990s: Wave of Mexican immigrants move to Port Richmond, reopening vacant stores and moving into abandoned homes

New investments in public transit, waterfront redevelopment, and business opportunities

The Palace Theatre of Port Richmond was built in 1916 and operated until 1950

1960s-70s: Construction of highways, Verrazano Bridge, strip malls, and Staten Island Mall. Disinvestment and “white flight” to New Jersey and southern Staten Island

2000s: Racially motivated attacks; Community leaders attempt to forge neighborhood ties

1990s: Wave of Mexican immigrants move to Port Richmond, reopening vacant stores and moving into abandoned homes

New investments in public transit, waterfront redevelopment, and business opportunities

The Palace Theatre of Port Richmond was built in 1916 and operated until 1950
DEMOGRAPHICS/DEMOGRAFÍA

PORT RICHMOND AT A GLANCE

PORT RICHMOND STATISTICS - 2010 US CENSUS

<table>
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<th></th>
<th>Total Units</th>
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Source: 2010 US Census

RACIAL AND ETHNIC MAKEUP - 2010

- White: 45%
- Black: 23%
- Asian: 3%
- Other: 3%
- Hispanic: 25%

Political Districts:
- Community Board 1
- New York City Council District 49
- New York State Assembly District 61
- New York State Senate District 23
- US House of Representatives District 13

Complete list of Port Richmond elected officials can be found at: www.visionportrichmond.com/electeds
DEMOGRAPHICS/DEMOGRAFÍA

PORT RICHMOND COMPARISONS

POP GROWTH 2000 TO 2010 (%)

2010 POP - FOREIGN-BORN (%)

GROWTH IN HISPANIC POP 2000 to 2010 (%)
DEMOGRAPHICS/DEMOGRAFÍA

PORT RICHMOND COMPARISONS

- 2010 POP - % LIVING IN POVERTY
- 2010 POP - % 19 YEARS OR YOUNGER
- 2010 POP - % SINGLE MOTHERS
APPENDIX 1: VISIONING DOCUMENT

DEMOGRAPHICS/DEMOGRAFÍA

PERCENTAGE OF RENTERS

LEGEND
- Primary Study Area
- Secondary Study Area
  - Under 40%
  - 41% - 50%
  - 51% - 60%
  - 61% - 70%
  - Over 70%
DEMOGRAPHICS/DEMOGRAFÍA

MEDIAN INCOME

Primary Study Area
Secondary Study Area

$33,540 - $36,500
$36,501 - $42,280
$42,281 - $50,300
$50,301 - $68,780
$68,781 - $89,720
PORT RICHMOND has the lowest prison admission rate among North Shore communities.

Port Richmond’s incarceration rate is comparable to other industrial waterfront neighborhoods such as Queensbridge, Williamsburg, and Sunset Park.
Residents of Port Richmond are less likely than the general population to have received a high school degree:

- Port Richmond: 76%
- Staten Island: 87.5%
- New York City: 79%
- New York State: 84%
- United States: 85%

...or a Bachelor’s degree:

- Port Richmond: 8.2%
- Staten Island: 28.5%
- New York City: 33.3%
- New York State: 32.1%
- United States: 27.9%

...or a Graduate or Professional degree:

- Port Richmond: 3.2%
- Staten Island: 11.3%
- New York City: 13.5%
- New York State: 13.8%
- United States: 10.3%
Port Richmond schools do not meet the performance level of the average Staten Island or New York City school.
- Average school grade in New York City: B
- Staten Island: B
- Port Richmond: C

Port Richmond High School’s achievement rates reflect this:
- 63.9% of students graduate within four years.
- 17.7% are prepared for college coursework
- 41.4% enroll in a two- or four-year college
- SAT scores are lower than New York City, New York State, and United States averages
Port Richmond is part of the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) North Shore Environmental Justice (EJ) Showcase Community

- One of ten EJ Showcase Communities in the U.S.
- Disproportionate environmental health burdens
- Opportunities for federal, state, and local collaboration
- Population vulnerability
- Limited community control over environmental and health decisions
- North Shore has seen an increase in the number of people with asthma and elevated levels of lead in their blood
ENVIRONMENT & HEALTH/AMBIENTE & SALUD

CONTAMINATION

LEGEND
- NYS Open Petroleum Spill Location
- NYS Chemical Bulk Storage Location
- Major Oil Storage Site Facility
- Natural Resource Conservation and Recovery Act Facility
- NYS Solid Waste Facility
- Industrial (Lead)
- Atomic Waste Storage (Uranium)
- Transport Related Contaminants
- Machine Shop Contaminants

The EPA found high levels of lead throughout Port Richmond
- Industrial uses and widespread usage of lead-based paints (indicated by purple stripes)
8 NYS open petroleum spill locations
NYS chemical bulk storage locations and major oil storage site facilities
- Can result in leaks and spills; pose serious threat to environment
Natural Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) Facility
- Generates hazardous waste; subject to waste accumulation and recordkeeping standards
NYS solid waste facility
- Flag Container Services - regulated by EPA

Significant Sites
1. Jewett White Lead Co. Superfund Site
2. Port Richmond Waste Water Treatment Plant
3. Municipal Ferry Building
4. Edkins Auto Sales and Salvage Yard
5. Truscanti Boat Co. Site
6. Manhattan Project Site
7. Dep’t of Env’t Protection Garage
8. MTA Depot
9. Veterans Park
10. Kill Van Kull
ENVIRONMENT & HEALTH/AMBIENTE & SALUD

BUILDING AGE

LEGEND - YEAR BUILT

Before 1915
1916 - 1941
1942 - 1972
1973 - 1995
1996 - 2010

- Most buildings on Port Richmond Avenue built 1916-1941
- All of the structures built before 1915 are residential
- Few buildings were built after 1941 (mostly residential)
APPENDIX 1: VISIONING DOCUMENT

ENVIRONMENT & HEALTH/AMBIENTE & SALUD
PUBLIC HEALTH

Childhood Lead Poisoning

Asthma in Adults and Children

Health Insurance

Access to Care

Lead poisoning is defined as a blood lead level ≥10 µg/dL.
Data Source and Analysis: Lead Poisoning Prevention Program, NYC DOHMH, 2004

Port Richmond Staten Island New York City

Percent are age-adjusted.
Data Source: NYC Community Health Survey 2002-03-04

Port Richmond Staten Island New York City

No personal doctor Go to ED when sick or need health advice

Insurance rates are calculated for adults aged 18-44 and age-adjusted.
Data Source: NYC Community Health Survey 2002-03-04
**ENVIRONMENT & HEALTH/AMBIENTE & SALUD**

**ACCESS TO FOOD**

Port Richmond lacks access to supermarkets
- High need across North Shore; minimal need on South Shore
- Highest need in Port Richmond, St. George, and Mariners Harbor

A 2006 study from the American Journal of Preventive Medicine found that the presence of a supermarket within a Census tract led to lower numbers of obese and overweight residents.

Tax incentives are available to markets and supermarkets willing to locate in Port Richmond.

Zoning incentives are available to locate markets and supermarkets in the other boroughs, but not Staten Island.

---

Source: New York City Economic Development Corporation
APPENDIX 1: VISIONING DOCUMENT

LAND USE/USO DEL SUELO

NEIGHBORHOOD LAND USE MAP

LEGEND

Residential
Commercial
Mixed Use
Industrial and Manufacturing
Public Institutions
Parking
Transportation & Utility
Open Space
Missing Data
Vacant

PERCENTAGE OF LOT USE

67.0%
20.5%
10.6%
2.0%
BUILDING CONDITIONS

The study area's building stock is generally in good condition:
- Critical/Poor: 10.5%
- Fair/Good: 59.0%
- Excellent: 26.5%

The majority of the buildings fronting Port Richmond Avenue are in fair or good condition.

There is a cluster of buildings in critical or poor condition on Port Richmond Avenue at Harrison Avenue. There is also a high concentration of buildings in critical or poor condition throughout the residential area west of Port Richmond Avenue.
• 8.0% of the study area’s buildings are vacant or partially vacant
• 2.4% of the study area’s lots are vacant
• Large concentration of vacant buildings along Port Richmond Avenue North of Bennett Street
• The majority of the vacancies are located near Port Richmond Avenue, though there is a high concentration of vacant lots throughout the residential neighborhood west of Port Richmond Avenue
LAND USE/USO DEL SUELO

RESIDENTIAL, VACANT LAND, AND PARKING

LEGEND
- Residential
- Mixed Use
- Parking
- Vacant Land
- Open space

Vacant or underdeveloped lots common within residential communities
LAND USE/USO DEL SUELO

INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL, MIXED-USE, AND TRANSPORTATION/UTILITY

LEGEND
- Commercial
- Mixed Use
- Industrial
- Transportation

- Buildings along Port Richmond Avenue evenly split between mixed-use and commercial
- Most prevalent businesses: furniture retail, restaurants/bars, beauty salons, variety stores, bodegas
- Railroad track:
  - Creates north-south divide
  - Area surrounding train tracks underutilized
LAND USE/USO DEL SUELO

WATERFRONT

- Limited waterfront views
- Waterfront land use:
  - East of Port Richmond Avenue—mostly water-dependent businesses
  - West of Port Richmond Avenue—mostly non-water-dependent businesses
  - Minimal ground coverage on waterfront lots; parking is the primary land use
- Entire waterfront area is part of the Howland Hook/North Shore Industrial Ombudsman Area:
  - Incentive program designed to attract industrial businesses to NYC waterfront sites
- Two vacant waterfront lots
- Four combined sewer overflows in study area
Public facilities/areas are mostly concentrated east of Port Richmond Avenue.

Includes several churches, a school, fire department, library, health facilities, employment resource centers, and two parks.
TRANSPORTATION/TRANSPORTE

TRANSPORTATION MODES & COMMUTE TIMES

Port Richmond

- Motor Vehicle: 32.4%
- Public Transit: 5%
- Bicycle: 1.9%
- Walk: 5%
- Other: 2.8%

Richmond County

- Motor Vehicle: 57.8%
- Public Transit: 31%
- Bicycle: 2.5%
- Walk: 3.5%
- Other: 6.6%

New York City

- Motor Vehicle: 55%
- Public Transit: 28.4%
- Walk: 10%
- Other: 6.6%

People in Port Richmond drive more than the average New Yorker, but slightly less than the average Staten Island resident.

2% Of people in Port Richmond bike, even with no official bike lanes.

Port Richmond Residents represent both extremes in commuting time to work.

Port Richmond has some of the highest travel times in the city.

There is also a high percentage of under 20 minutes, which indicates residents may work close to home.
Port Richmond Avenue is the most heavily traveled thoroughfare in the neighborhood.

Pedestrian traffic is also heavy around bus routes on Richmond Terrace.

There are only three one-way streets at the south of the study area.

There are many dead ends.
TRANSPORTATION/TRANSPORTE

BUS ROUTES

LEGEND
Serves Ferry
Serves Staten Island
Express Route

- Five bus routes serve St. George Ferry Terminal
- Two bus routes serve the Staten Island Mall
- One express bus route
- Buses idle at the terminal on Port Richmond Avenue
APPENDIX 1: VISIONING DOCUMENT

URBAN DESIGN/DISEÑO URBANO

BLOCK SHAPE

LEGEND
- East Blocks
- West Blocks
- Dead Ends
- Connectors to Port Richmond Ave
- Through Street

- Short blocks east of Port Richmond Avenue
- Long blocks west of Port Richmond Avenue
- More access to the avenue from the east
- Many dead end blocks within study area
- Only two through blocks within the study area
• All buildings along Port Richmond Avenue are built to the lot line creating a continuous streetwall
• Large building footprints along Richmond Terrace
• Minimal ground coverage along the shoreline
URBAN DESIGN/DISEÑO URBANO

TREES AND OPEN SPACE

• No trees on Grove Street
• No trees on Maple Avenue between Grove and Harrison Avenues
• Park area per person is low: 1.2 acres per 1,000 people, well below citywide standard of 2.5 acres
APPENDIX 1: VISIONING DOCUMENT

URBAN DESIGN/DISEÑO URBANO

SIGNIFICANT BUILDINGS/STRUCTURES

LEGEND
- Landmark building
- Historically significant
- Architecturally significant
URBAN DESIGN/DISEÑO URBANO

SIGNIFICANT BUILDINGS/STRUCTURES

2044 Richmond Terrace
Victorian House
Farrell Lumber
Senior Apartments
Saint Mary’s Church
APPENDIX 1: VISIONING DOCUMENT

URBAN DESIGN/DISEÑO URBANO

ARCHITECTURALLY SIGNIFICANT BUILDINGS

CYO Center

Faith United Methodist

Private Residence

Logistico Mexicano

Historic Commercial Strip
URBAN DESIGN/DISEÑO URBANO

SITE CHARACTERISTICS
URBAN DESIGN/DISEÑO URBANO

SITE CHARACTERISTICS - SECTION ONE: THE AVENUE

Section One:
- Buildings constructed together in groups, creating commercial row of similar architectural details
- Building materials: brick and wood-faced facades, plate-glass storefronts with signage in windows, brick-work ornamentation, wood-detailed cornices, facades, and shingles
- Buildings constructed in 1920's and 30's
- 1-3 story buildings, multiple mixed-use buildings
- Signage located between first and second floors creating a continuous band of signage
- Metal security gates
URBAN DESIGN/DISEÑO URBANO

SITE CHARACTERISTICS - SECTION TWO: EAST SIDE & WEST SIDE RESIDENTIAL

Section Two:
• Colonial, Victorian, Queen Anne, Wooden Shingle, and Bungalows: strong sense of historical place
• Attached housing: row of uniform buildings with setbacks utilized for parking space
• Historical “workers’ housing”: brick construction and ornamentation; uniform, continuous row of front porches

Section Three:
• Single-family detached housing, wooden shingle construction, setbacks for yards and private parking, many front porches and gabled roofs
• Historical homes mixed with new construction
• Many homes with private and gated front and back yards
URBAN DESIGN/DISEÑO URBANO

SITE CHARACTERISTICS - SECTION FOUR: INDUSTRIAL WATERFRONT

Section Four
- Industrial area mixed with moderate amount of commercial buildings, some of historical significance
- Continuous row of metal fencing to shelter industrial areas along Richmond Terrace
- Limited waterfront views across waterfront
URBAN DESIGN/DISEÑO URBANO

BUILDING HEIGHTS

LEGEND

1 Story
2 Stories
3 Stories
4-6 Stories

- Mostly one- and two-story buildings on the Avenue
- Many three-story residential houses
Visioning Workshop: Identified Threats

- Port Richmond Avenue
  - Complaints about sanitation
  - Empty storefronts
  - Lack of retail diversity
  - Public drunkenness

- Residential Areas
  - Overcrowding
  - Unsafe housing conditions
  - Too expensive for many people

- Waterfront
  - Lack of access
  - Lack of view
  - No open spaces

- Rail Right-of-Way
  - Unused resource
  - Create unsafe conditions

- Veterans’ Park
  - Police harassment in park

- Manhattan Project
  - Community unaware of hazard

- Jewett-White
  - No potential for reuse

- House fire
  - Identified hazards
Visioning Workshop Recommendations

**Commercial Corridor**

*Streetscape Improvements:*
- Reduce storefront signage
- Restore architectural identity
- Increase trash/recycling receptacles
- Identify important cultural figures
- ADA accessibility

*Suggested Facilities:*
- Multi-cultural community center
- New medical center
- Establish diverse retail mix
- Diversify food/restaurant options
- New coffee shop
- Facility for a worker’s workshop
- Credit union
- Facility for legal assistance

**Residential Zone**

- Reduce overcrowding
- Affordable housing
- Multi-family housing
- Single occupancy housing

**Waterfront**

- Increase access to waterfront
- Boardwalk
- Open space
- Restaurant
- New ferry terminal

**Reuse of Rail Right-Of-Way**

- Train
- Bike Path
- Green space


New York City Department of Planning. Lion, 12B. New York City: New York City Department of City Planning, 2012.

New York City Department of Planning. Primary Land Use Tax Lot Output (PLUTO) Data, 12v1. New York City: New York City Department of City Planning, 2012.


BIBLIOGRAPHY/BIBLIOGRAFÍA


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<th>Name of Organization</th>
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| **District Government Employees Federal Credit Union** | Carla Decker, the President and CEO of the District Government Employees Federal Credit Union and board member for the Network of Latino Credit Unions & Professionals, recommended most of these resources on credit unions. She has also generously offered to speak to the Task Force about general information related to serving low income Latinos, particularly new immigrants, her credit union’s experience, and answer any questions you might have. | Carla Decker  
President / CEO  
Phone: (202) 671-1728  
Fax: (202) 671-2961  
cdecker@dgefcu.org | [http://www.dgefcu.org/](http://www.dgefcu.org/) |
| **Community Development Financial Institutions Fund** | Created for the purpose of promoting economic revitalization and community development through investment in and assistance to community development financial institutions (CDFIs). The CDFI Fund was established by the Riegle Community Development and Regulatory Improvement Act of 1994, as a bipartisan initiative. Directly invests in, supports and trains CDFIs that provide loans, investments, financial services and technical assistance to underserved populations and communities. | U.S. Department of the Treasury  
Community Development Financial Institutions Fund  
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20220  
Phone: (202) 653-0421  
Email: cdfihelp@cdfi.treas.gov | [http://www.cdfifund.gov/how_to_apply/](http://www.cdfifund.gov/how_to_apply/) |
| **Internet Archive Federal Credit Union** | The Internet Archive Federal Credit Union has recently opened in New Brunswick, NJ. Jordan Modell has chronicled his experience chartering the credit union on his blog. Contacting Mr. Modell may give the Task Force some more insight into the efforts opening a new credit union in Port Richmond will entail. | Jordan Modell | [http://creditunion.blog.archive.org/](http://creditunion.blog.archive.org/) |
| **Latino Community Credit Union ("LCCU")** | The LCCU is one of the nation’s fastest-growing credit unions, and targets neighborhoods in North Carolina that are similar to Port Richmond with a growing population of unbanked low-income Latino households. The LCCU’s background and services are very well documented, and they have published guidance documents for groups working to open community development credit unions, and financial literacy programs of their own. They are also well versed in grant-seeking for community development credit unions. | Emily Polanco  
Communications and Outreach Specialist  
Phone: (919) 688-9270  
Fax: (919) 688-9309  
Emily@latinoccu.org | [http://latinoccu.org/](http://latinoccu.org/)  
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</table>
| National Credit Union Administration’s Office of Small Credit Union Initiatives (“OSCUI”) | The National Credit Union Administration is the government agency that charts, supervises and insures credit unions. OSCUI is the office that helps groups like the Task Force charter new credit unions. Their resources include free consultancy services provided by their Economic Development Specialists, and grants and loans through the National Credit Union Administration’s Grant and Loan Program. OSCUI is also the office that provides support to all Low-Income Designated credit unions, regardless of size, that serve primarily low income consumers. | Diane Rector  
Manager of OSCUI's Training Division  
director@ncua.gov | http://www.ncua.gov/Resources/OSCUI/Pages/default.aspx |
| National Federation of Community Development Credit Unions | The National Federation of Community Development Credit Unions bridges financial service delivery and wealth building in low to moderate income communities | Pablo DiFillipi  
Membership Director  
(212) 809-1850 ext. 304  
Pablo@cdcu.coop | http://www.cdcu.coop/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=1 |
LET’S GET THIS TRASH CLEANED UP!

USE SEE, CLICK, FIX ON OUR PHONE OR COMPUTER TO DOCUMENT TRASH ON PORT RICHMOND AVE

SEARCH FOR WATCH AREA:

Staten Island Ani-Violence Task Force Trash Watch

www.SeeClickFix.com
Habitat for Humanity fact sheet (frequently asked questions)

What is Habitat for Humanity International?
- A nonprofit, ecumenical Christian housing ministry that has helped to build or repair over 600,000 decent, affordable houses, serving more than 3 million people worldwide.
- Our vision: a world where everyone has a decent place to live.
- Founded in 1976 by Millard Fuller and his wife, Linda.

How does it work?
- Through volunteer labor and donations of money and materials, Habitat builds and rehabilitates simple, decent houses alongside our homeowner partner families.
- In addition to a down payment and monthly mortgage payments, homeowners invest hundreds of hours of their own labor into building their Habitat house and the houses of others.
- Habitat houses are sold to partner families at no profit and financed with affordable loans.
- The homeowners’ monthly mortgage payments are used to build still more Habitat houses.

How are partner families selected?
- Families in need of decent shelter apply to local Habitat affiliates.
- The affiliate’s family selection committee chooses homeowners based on their level of need, their willingness to become partners in the program and their ability to repay the loan.
- Every affiliate follows a nondiscriminatory policy of family selection.
- Neither race nor religion is a factor in choosing the families who receive Habitat houses.

What are Habitat affiliates?
- Community-level Habitat for Humanity offices that act in partnership with and on behalf of Habitat for Humanity International.

Fact Sheet: Invisible Children

Background
A non-profit with a dual mission: to raise Western youth’s awareness of the impact of war on the children of northern Uganda while simultaneously pursuing economic development work on the ground in Uganda. Invisible Children is both an innovative media-based organization and an economic development NGO. Established in 2005, the organization formed following a groundswell of interest created by a student film chronicling the plight of children soldiers.

Revenue Growth
FY 2005: $303,355; FY 2006: $2.8m; FY 2007 $6.5m; FY 2008 $10.1m

Sample Programs and Initiatives

Social Action Awareness Programs
Global Night Commuters and Displace Me Event, gatherings of up to 80,000 youth in 126 locations around the nation coming together to learn about the situation in northern Uganda while forming a community for social change.

Fundraising/Awareness Programs
Visible Child Scholarship Program: a fund established to provide northern Ugandan children access to post-primary education.
National Tour (quickly becoming international) an awareness campaign which travels the country sharing stories and media about the plight of children in northern Uganda.
Schools for Schools: a fundraising and awareness campaign establishing clubs in high schools and colleges which raise funds to rebuild schools in Uganda.

Microeconomic Programs
The Bracelet Campaign: a microeconomic program in the DPS camps which makes bracelets for sale in the West.
Cotton Initiative: a microeconomic program to grow organic cotton and employee formerly displaced Ugandans.
Purse Project: microeconomic program for formerly abducted Ugandan women.

Staffing
120 full-time staff: 90 in Uganda; 30 in the US; only 1 person in the US is over 30—a 33 year old IT manager whom everyone calls Grandpa.

Web Traffic, Online Videos and Social Networks
Average daily visitors for March 2008 5,426; unique visitors 666,285/
Facebook friends (5th largest group on Facebook causes) highest average donation per user in the top 10 groups/1.2 million hits on MySpace; 150,000 MySpace friends.

School for Schools
1,212 registered US schools supporting projects in 10 Uganda schools impacting 8,400 kids.

Featured on
Oprah Winfrey Show, NBC Nightly News and CNN as well as in US News and World Report, People, GQ and New York Magazine.
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<th>Grant Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Annie E. Casey Foundation</td>
<td>Limited to initiatives that have &quot;significant potential to demonstrate innovative policy, service delivery, and community supports for disadvantaged children and families.&quot; Most grantees have been invited by the Foundation to participate in these projects.</td>
<td>The Annie E. Casey Foundation 701 St. Paul Street Baltimore, MD 21202 Phone: (410) 547-6600 Fax: (410) 547-6624 <a href="mailto:webmail@aecf.org">webmail@aecf.org</a></td>
<td><a href="http://www.aecf.org/AboutUs/GrantInformation.aspx">http://www.aecf.org/AboutUs/GrantInformation.aspx</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Booth Ferris Foundation</td>
<td>The Foundation issues grants periodically throughout the year to incorporated nonprofit organizations ($6,683,000 in 2010). The Foundation’s primary interest is in the field of education, including smaller colleges and public education initiatives in New York City. It also creates grants to strengthen the nonprofit sector and support cultural institutions in New York City. Grants in other areas are made occasionally.</td>
<td>The Booth Ferris Foundation c/o JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A. Philanthropic Services 270 Park Avenue, 16th Floor New York, NY 10017 Fax: (212) 464-2305</td>
<td><a href="http://www.foundationcenter.org/grantmaker/boothferris/contact.html">http://www.foundationcenter.org/grantmaker/boothferris/contact.html</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Charles Stewart Mott</td>
<td>The foundation has four programs through which it issues grants to nonprofit organizations: (1) Civil Society, which aims &quot;to strengthen philanthropy and the nonprofit sector as vital vehicles for increasing civic engagement and improving communities and societies,&quot; (2) Environment, which aims &quot;to strengthen philanthropy and the nonprofit sector as vital vehicles for increasing civic engagement and improving communities and societies,&quot; (3) Flint Area, which aims &quot;to foster a well-functioning, connected community in Flint, Michigan that is capable of meeting the economic, social and racial challenges ahead,&quot; and (4) Pathways Out of Poverty, which aims &quot;to identify, test and help sustain pathways out of poverty for low-income people and communities.&quot; Most grants range between $15,000 and $250,000 annually. Grant applications should follow the procedures listed on the Foundation’s website. Charles Stewart Mott Foundation. Funding Interests: Program Guidelines. 2012. <a href="http://www.mott.org/FundingInterests/programs/programguidelines2009">http://www.mott.org/FundingInterests/programs/programguidelines2009</a> (accessed December 15, 2012).</td>
<td>Charles Stewart Mott Foundation Mott Foundation Building 503 S. Saginaw Street, Suite 1200 Flint, MI 48502-1851 Phone: (810) 238-5651 Email: <a href="mailto:info@mott.org">info@mott.org</a></td>
<td><a href="http://www.mott.org/grantsandguidelines/ForGrantseekers/approcedures?__utma=179965729.154031335.1353272428.1353272428.1353272428.1353272428.1&amp;__utmb=179965729.0.1.1353272428&amp;__utmc=179965729.0.1353272428&amp;__utmz=179965729.1353272428.1.1.utmcsr=(direct)utmccn=(direct)utmcmd=(none)&amp;utmz=179965729.1353272428.1.1.utmcsr=(direct)utmccn=(direct)utmcmd=(none)&amp;utmz=179965729.1353272428.1.1.utmcsr=(direct)utmccn=(direct)utmcmd=(none)&amp;utmz=179965729.1353272428.1.1.utmcsr=(direct)utmccn=(direct)utmcmd=(none)">http://www.mott.org/grantsandguidelines/ForGrantseekers/approcedures?__utma=179965729.154031335.1353272428.1353272428.1353272428.1353272428.1&amp;__utmb=179965729.0.1.1353272428&amp;__utmc=179965729.0.1353272428&amp;__utmz=179965729.1353272428.1.1.utmcsr=(direct)utmccn=(direct)utmcmd=(none)&amp;utmz=179965729.1353272428.1.1.utmcsr=(direct)utmccn=(direct)utmcmd=(none)&amp;utmz=179965729.1353272428.1.1.utmcsr=(direct)utmccn=(direct)utmcmd=(none)&amp;utmz=179965729.1353272428.1.1.utmcsr=(direct)utmccn=(direct)utmcmd=(none)</a> &amp;__utmz=179798050</td>
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<td>Citizens Committee for New York City</td>
<td>&quot;Awards micro-grants to resident-led groups in low-income neighborhoods of New York City to carry out community improvement projects.&quot; Specific grants for 2012 are hurricane relief grants, &quot;Love Your Block&quot; grants for groups seeking to beautify their neighborhoods, community grants, &quot;Change by Us NYC&quot; grants for groups working on neighborhood improvement projects focused on the environment, and Manhattan Composting Grants.</td>
<td>Citizens Committee for New York City  77 Water Street, Suite 202 New York, NY 10005  Phone: (212) 989-0909  Fax: (212) 989-0983  Email: <a href="mailto:info@citizensnyc.org">info@citizensnyc.org</a></td>
<td><a href="http://www.citizensnyc.org/programs/grants.html">http://www.citizensnyc.org/programs/grants.html</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>City Council Discretionary Funding</td>
<td>The City Council &quot;allocate[s] funds to not-for-profit organizations and public entities to ensure that critical needs for programs, buildings and equipment in each councilmanic district [is] met.&quot; The funds can be used to provide useful programs or services and/or capital projects (e.g., acquiring or renovating property) that serve a city purpose and are available to the general public. This funding is only available to public entities or not-for-profit organizations that have been incorporated as a 501(c)(3). Mealy, Darlene. Letter regarding Discretionary Funding.</td>
<td>Councilmember Rose  130 Stuyvesant Place  6th Floor, Room 602  Staten Island, New York 10301  Phone: (718) 556-7370  Fax: (718) 556-7389  Email: <a href="mailto:cdfihelp@cdfi.treas.gov">cdfihelp@cdfi.treas.gov</a></td>
<td><a href="http://council.nyc.gov/d41/html/PDFs/UPDTED_CM_Mealy_Electronic_Letter_on_FY13_Discretionary_Funding.pdf">http://council.nyc.gov/d41/html/PDFs/UPDTED_CM_Mealy_Electronic_Letter_on_FY13_Discretionary_Funding.pdf</a></td>
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<td>Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) Fund</td>
<td>&quot;Created for the purpose of promoting economic revitalization and community development through investment in and assistance to community development financial institutions (CDFIs). The CDFI Fund was established by the Riegle Community Development and Regulatory Improvement Act of 1994, as a bipartisan initiative.&quot; &quot;Directly invests in, supports and trains CDFIs that provide loans, investments, financial services and technical assistance to underserved populations and communities.&quot;</td>
<td>U.S. Department of the Treasury Community Development Financial Institutions Fund  1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  Washington, DC 20220  Phone: (202) 653-0421  Email: <a href="mailto:cdfihelp@cdfi.treas.gov">cdfihelp@cdfi.treas.gov</a></td>
<td><a href="http://www.cdfifund.gov/how_to_apply/">http://www.cdfifund.gov/how_to_apply/</a></td>
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| Consumer Operated and Oriented Plans (CO-OPs)          | After the Affordable Care Act was passed, a new type of non-profit health insurer, called a Consumer Operated and Oriented Plan (CO-OP). CO-OPs are meant to offer consumer-friendly, affordable health insurance options to individuals and small businesses. The Federal government is providing loans to capitalize eligible prospective CO-OPs with a goal of having at least one CO-OP in each State. The statute directs the Secretary to give priority to applicants that will offer CO-OP qualified health plans on a Statewide basis, will use integrated care models, and have significant private support. | Consumer Operated and Oriented Plans (CO-Ops)  
Anne Bollinger  
Phone: (301) 492-4395  
Email: annie.bollinger@cms.hhs.gov | http://www.healthcare.gov/law/features/choices/co-op/index.html                                                                                                                |
| The Edna McConnell Clark Foundation                    | Conducts an annual grant competition to fund "not-for-profit organizations that help economically disadvantaged youth improve academic achievement, attain employment, and avoid risky behaviors." "Each investment may total up to $2.5 million over two to three years, with the largest amounts flowing to organizations with the strongest evidence and greatest growth potential."                                                              | The Edna McConnell Clark Foundation  
415 Madison Avenue, Tenth Floor  
New York, NY 10017  
Phone: (212) 551-9100  
Fax: (212) 421-9325  
Email: info@emcf.org | http://www.emcf.org/our-grantees/applying-to-emcf/2012-13-grants-competition/                                                                                                    |
| Federal Grants                                         | All grants from the federal government are advertised on www.grants.gov                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Transit Administration Region 2 Office  
One Bowling Green  
Room 429  
New York, NY 10004  
Phone: (212) 688-2170  
Fax: (212) 688-2136 | http://www.fta.dot.gov/12347_5221.html                                                                                                                                            |
| Federal Transit Administration New Starts and Small Starts Program | The federal government issues grants to support locally planned, implemented, and operated transit capital investments, such as light rail, heavy rail, monorail, busway, and facility extensions. Eligible applicants are public bodies and agencies. To become a candidate for funding, agencies have to complete certain steps in a major capital investment planning and project development process, including a lowest cost alternative analysis. Typically, federal funding comprises 80% of the today, and local funding is 20%.                      | U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Transit Administration Region 2 Office  
One Bowling Green  
Room 429  
New York, NY 10004  
Phone: (212) 688-2170  
Fax: (212) 688-2136 | http://www.fta.dot.gov/12347_5221.html                                                                                                                                            |
<p>| GoFundMe                                               | Organizations can create a personal crowdfunding website to receive donations for neighborhood projects at GoFundMe.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                      | <a href="http://www.gofundme.com/">http://www.gofundme.com/</a>                                                                                                                                                      |</p>
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</table>
| Grameen America                                    | Grameen America is a group-lending microfinance platforms that targets loans toward entrepreneurship that are meant to bring people out of poverty. | Grameen America  
Phone: (212) 735-4043  
Email: info@grameenamerica.org | http://grameenamerica.org/                        |
| ioby                                                | ioby is an environmental nonprofit crowdfunding organization that lists other nonprofit organizations projects on the Internet receive funding on behalf of those organizations. It is a way to receive donations from many different people. | ioby  
540 President Street, 3rd Floor  
Brooklyn, NY 11215  
Phone: (917) 464-4515 | http://ioby.org/                                      |
| IndieGoGo                                           | IndieGoGo is a crowdfunding organization that lists all types of campaigns on their website in order to advertise and receive funding for the campaigns. |                                                                 | http://www.indiegogo.com/                      |
| Kickstarter                                          | Kickstarter is a crowdfunding organization that lists creative projects (e.g., films, games, music, art, design, and technology) on their website to advertise and receive funding for the projects. |                                                                 | http://www.kickstarter.com/                    |
| Kiva                                               | Kiva is a group-lending microfinance platforms that targets loans toward entrepreneurship that are meant to bring people out of poverty. | Kiva Microfunds  
875 Howard Street  
Suite #340  
San Francisco, CA 94103  
Phone: (828) 479-5482 | http://www.kiva.org/                             |
| National Credit Union Administration’s Grant and Loan Program | Established by Congress "to make grants and loans to low-income designated credit unions."  
"The grants and loans program consists of Congressional appropriations that are administered by the Office of Small Credit Union Initiatives (OSCUI)." | The Office of Small Credit Union Initiatives  
Diane Rector  
1775 Duke Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314  
Phone: (703) 518-6610  
Email: director@ncua.gov or OSCUapps@ncua.gov | http://www.ncua.gov/Resources/OSCUI/Pages/GLMain.aspx |
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<td>NCB Capital</td>
<td>NCB Capital Impact is a financial institution built on diverse and extensive networks of alliances, emphasizing a cooperative approach. We partner with private organizations that are like-minded in mission, and dedicated to long-term success. NCB funding goes to improve &quot;access to high-quality health and elder care, healthy foods, housing, and education in low-income communities across the country. One of their initiatives is to finance community-based health care organizations to provide access to underserved, low-income communities</td>
<td>NCB Capital  Jon Kelly Director of Business Development Phone: (703) 647-2347</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ncbcapitalimpact.org/index.aspx">http://www.ncbcapitalimpact.org/index.aspx</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development - Preservation Participation Loan Program</td>
<td>&quot;HPD’s Preservation Participation Loan Program (&quot;PLP&quot;) was created to provide low-interest loans to private residential building owners for the moderate or substantial rehabilitation of housing for low-to-moderate income households.&quot;</td>
<td>New York City Department of Housing and Preservation and Development 100 Gold Street New York, NY 10038 Phone: 311</td>
<td><a href="http://www.nyc.gov/html/hpd/html/developers/new-partners-program.shtml">http://www.nyc.gov/html/hpd/html/developers/new-partners-program.shtml</a></td>
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<td>New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development - New Partners Program</td>
<td>&quot;The New Partners Program provides loans to owners to renovate small buildings where a portion of the building is vacant, and units are in need of rehabilitation. The Program is especially focused on buildings with existing commercial tenants and vacant residential space above.&quot;</td>
<td>New York City Department of Housing and Preservation and Development 100 Gold Street New York, NY 10038 Phone: 311</td>
<td><a href="http://www.nyc.gov/html/hpd/html/developers/new-partners-program.shtml">http://www.nyc.gov/html/hpd/html/developers/new-partners-program.shtml</a></td>
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<td>New York Community Trust</td>
<td>Provides grants for a wide range of charitable activity in New York and is the city's largest private funder of not-for-profit organizations ($137 million in 2011). The grants are issued in the following categories: (1) children, youth, and families; (2) community development and the environment; (3) arts, education, and human justice; (4) health and people with special needs; and (5) special projects.</td>
<td>The New York Community Trust 909 Third Avenue 22nd Floor New York, NY 10022 Phone: (212) 686-0010 Fax: (212) 532-8528</td>
<td><a href="http://www.nycommunitytrust.org/GrantSeekers/GrantmakingGuidelines/tabid/203/Default.aspx">http://www.nycommunitytrust.org/GrantSeekers/GrantmakingGuidelines/tabid/203/Default.aspx</a></td>
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<td>New York State Council on the Arts Grant</td>
<td>Provides grants to preserve and expand “the cultural resources that are and will become the heritage of New York’s citizens.”</td>
<td>New York State Council on the Arts 300 Park Avenue South, 10th Floor New York, NY 10010 Phone: (212) 459-8800 Fax: (212) 477-1471 Email: <a href="mailto:info@nysca.org">info@nysca.org</a></td>
<td><a href="http://nysca.org/public/grants/index.htm">http://nysca.org/public/grants/index.htm</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>New York State Small Business Development Center (NYSSBDC)</td>
<td>Maintains a list of financial institutions that provide loans to small businesses for expansion or credit building. The NYSSBDC also maintains an office on Staten Island where they provide additional consulting services.</td>
<td>New York State Small Business Development Center 22 Corporate Woods Building Third Floor Albany, NY 12246 Phone: (800) 732-SBDC</td>
<td><a href="http://nyssbdc.org">http://nyssbdc.org</a></td>
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<td>Open Space Funding from the New York State Environmental Protection Fund (EPF)</td>
<td>The New York State Environmental Protection Fund allocates grant funding for the sole purpose of acquiring underutilized waterfront land and converting it into open space. Particularly after Hurricane Sandy, as the criticality of soft shorelines has become especially evident, the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) is particularly interested in discouraging non-water-dependent land uses on waterfront lots. The Trust for Public Land - a national organization that has already received significant EPF funding to acquire waterfront property on Staten Island - can help lobby for grant money to acquire waterfront land for conversion into open space. New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.</td>
<td>New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Francis Sheehan, Director of Natural Resources Planning 625 Broadway Albany, NY 12233-4250 Phone: (518) 402-9405 Email: <a href="mailto:fesheeha@gw.dec.state.ny.us">fesheeha@gw.dec.state.ny.us</a></td>
<td><a href="http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/5071.html">http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/5071.html</a></td>
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<td>Surdna Foundation</td>
<td>Issues grants in the areas of sustainable environments (e.g., climate change, green economy, transportation, and smart growth), strong local economies (e.g., connecting people to opportunities, and creating economic opportunities), thriving cultures (e.g., teens' artistic advancement, artists engaging in social change, and community-driven design), and foundation initiatives (e.g., New Orleans fund, and capacity and infrastructure fund).</td>
<td>Surdna Foundation 330 Madison Avenue, 30th Floor New York, NY 10017 Phone: (212) 557-0010 Email: <a href="mailto:grants@surdna.org">grants@surdna.org</a></td>
<td><a href="http://www.surdna.org/grants/grants-overview.html">http://www.surdna.org/grants/grants-overview.html</a></td>
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<td>Neighborhood Stabilization Program Grants</td>
<td>Neighborhood Stabilization Program I (NSP I) was a formula allocated grant authorized by Congress under the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008 (HERA). Grantees, such as local municipalities, were made eligible for a range of funds based on the area’s foreclosure rates, percentage of subprime mortgages, abandoned homes, and other indicators of distressed housing. New York City received an allocation of $24.3 million to acquire and rehabilitate foreclosed and abandoned single-family and multifamily residential properties in targeted neighborhoods. HUD has deployed its NSP I funds using two strategies: the Owner-Abandoned Strategy and the Real Estate Owned Program (REO). The Owner-Abandoned Strategy (25 percent of NSP funds) will assist with the acquisition and rehabilitation of multi-family buildings in foreclosure where the owner has abandoned the property.</td>
<td>Contact via web form: <a href="https://hudnshelp.info/index.cfm?do=viewTaRequest">https://hudnshelp.info/index.cfm?d o=viewTaRequest</a></td>
<td><a href="http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/comm_planning/communitydevelopment/programs/neighborhoodspg">http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/comm_planning/communitydevelopment/programs/neighborhoodspg</a></td>
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Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: East, South, and West Busways

Since 1977, BRT in Pittsburgh has been responsible for drastic reductions in passenger travel times by nearly 52%. The BRT system consists of the East, South and West Busways, which run in dedicated lanes providing connections from downtown Pittsburgh and the various neighborhoods to the east, south, and west.1

In 2010, the Port Authority of Allegheny County and the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission produced the West Busway Area Transit-Oriented Development Assessment and Plan, which proposes transit-oriented development (TOD) zones along the five-mile West Busway, which consists of six stations and has a weekday ridership of 9,000 passengers. This plan focuses on:

- Sustainable patterns of development
- Construction of residential, educational, and cultural facilities
- Mixed-use configurations near transit facilities
- Creation of “... holistic communities where people can live, work, play, learn, create, and invest”2
- Overcoming challenges including market receptivity, business relocation, land acquisition, and brownfield remediation.3

Connecticut Department of Transportation: Major Capital Investments

The Connecticut Department of Transportation is developing an exclusive BRT line operating on an existing railroad right-of-way between downtown New Britain and Hartford’s Union Station. By 2030, weekday ridership is expected to be 16,300, relieving traffic congestion along I-84, which connects New Britain and Hartford. Both cities have a large number of transit-dependent riders that will use the new BRT line.4 The line will reduce passenger travel times, improve mobility for the transit-dependent population, and provide redevelopment opportunities for areas along the line. The project has been designated as a New Starts program, in which it receives funding from the federal government through the Federal Transit Administration.

New Starts Eligibility Requirements:

- Eligible applicants for the New Starts program have to be public bodies and agencies.
- Eligible projects include light rail, heavy rail, monorail, busway, and facility extensions.
- In order to become a candidate for funding, agencies have to complete certain steps in a major capital investment planning and project development process.
- Typically, federal funding comprises 80% of the total, while local funding must cover the remaining 20%.
- In order to become eligible, agencies have to conduct analyses that include the lowest capital cost alternative, such as BRT.5

SOURCES

3. Allegheny County Economic Development, Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission 2010