CONNECTING THE POINT(s)

HUNTS POINT, BRONX, NEW YORK
Acknowledgements

Our team owes a tremendous debt of gratitude to Hunts Point residents and leaders who shared their time, networks and knowledge of the community with us. In particular, we would like to thank Angela Tovar at Sustainable South Bronx (SSBx) for orienting us to Hunts Point and guiding our work and recommendations. We thank the staff at SSBx, notably Ei Kyaw and Amilcar Laboy, for assisting us in our fieldwork, and Case Wyse for facilitating our participation in environmental indicators research.

We are extremely grateful to our Advisory Committee for piloting our participatory vacant lot mapping exercise: Tanya Fields of the BLK Projek, Wanda Salaman of Mothers on the Move, Nina Sandler of Rocking the Boat, Kate Shackford of GRID Alternatives, and David Shuffler of Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice.

The community meeting was made by possible by all the residents, community leaders and local politicians in attendance, by The Point CDC, specifically Shukura McDavid, Dania Silvero, Rachelle Fernandez, and Alejandra Delfin for generously providing us with use of their incredible space, and Blank Plate for catering a healthy and delicious meal.

We also owe gratitude to all of the individuals who took the time to share their insights and expertise with us and helped us get up to speed on the issues and opportunities in the community: Assemblyman Marcos Crespo from the 85th Assembly for New York State; Maria Carmen del Arroyo from NYC Council - District 17; Rafael Salamanca from Community Board 2; Susan McSherry from the DOT Hunts Point Clean Trucks Program; Robin West from Urban Health Plan; Charlie Samboyo, Julie Stein and Kate Van Tassel from NYC Economic Development Corporation; Natasha Dwyer and Juan Camilo Ossorio from the NYC Environmental Justice Alliance; Emily Walker and Lucy Robson from New Yorkers for Parks; and Tawkiyah Jordan and Sartt Platkin from the Department of City Planning.

We could not have accomplished everything we did without the support of Hunter College, and the faculty members who put their faith in us and provided useful feedback, including Professors Jochen Albrecht, Jill Gross, Owen Gutfreund, Matt Lasner, Lynn McCormick, and William Milczarski, as well as our Program Coordinator, Melissa Haldeman. Thank you as well to the students outside of our studio, Justin Rivera, Serge Del Grosso and Marco Castro, who volunteered their time to assist with our community meeting.

We also owe a big thank you to the media for helping to highlight our work, including the hosts of WHCR's show Musical Pathways (DJ Black Icon and Lady Scorpio) and the Hunts Point Express, notably Ajhani Ayres.

Finally, this would not have been possible without the guidance of our faculty advisor, Dr. Laxmi Ramasubramanian, whose strong passion for empowering marginalized communities with alternative tactics and Participatory GIS helped us to think outside the box and create a community-driven plan. Thank you for your wisdom, your guidance, and your willingness to let us find our own way.
INTRODUCTION

ABOUT HUNTS POINT STUDIO //

The Hunts Point Studio is a team of seven graduate students: Corey Clarke, Jocelyn Dupre, Leah Feder, Sarah Gelder, Nate Heffron, Stephanie Printz, and Josh Thompson. The team worked with their academic advisor, Dr. Laxmi Ramasubramanian during the 2014-2015 academic year. Léa Duget, an exchange student from France participated in studio activities during Fall 2014 as part of this team. The Hunts Point Studio was commissioned by Sustainable South Bronx, a local community based organization, to carry out a study in the Hunts Point neighborhood of the South Bronx.

Connecting the Point(s) — a community driven plan for the Hunts Point neighborhood — is the final outcome of a year-long planning process that has resulted in actionable recommendations to positively impact the community in the near future. This planning process and this report fulfill the capstone studio requirement for the Master of Urban Planning degree at Hunter College.

ABOUT SUSTAINABLE SOUTH BRONX //

Founded in 2001, Sustainable South Bronx (SSBx) began out of a desire to advocate for parks and green development in the South Bronx and to promote environmental justice. Over the past 10 years, SSBx has broadened its focus by linking environmental restoration to the economic needs of low-income New Yorkers who are seeking a fresh start. Today, the mission of SSBx is to address economic and environmental issues in the South Bronx — and throughout New York City — through a combination of green job training, community greening programs, and social enterprise.

PLANNING PRINCIPLES

The team sought to create a plan that is grounded in the following principles:

1. Focus on engaging and serving the residents of Hunts Point at every stage of the planning process
2. Make data and information publicly available to empower community members to continue our work after the studio is over
3. Develop recommendations that are actionable and small scale
4. Ensure proposed projects are financially feasible and non-capital intensive
Hunts Point is a notoriously over-planned neighborhood. As the exploration of recent plans on page 15 illustrates, Hunts Point has been both the beneficiary and victim of planning efforts that have left many in the community feeling over-surveyed with inadequate results to show for it. Our client made it clear from the beginning that the community did not need another plan to sit on a shelf. Therefore, the team chose to focus on small-scale, actionable interventions that could be implemented without significant capital outlays.

To this end, we began by conducting an analysis of existing conditions, investigating both the physical and social landscape of Hunts Point in order to begin to identify opportunities for transformative action that can be taken on by local community groups. We interviewed experts within and outside the community. We engaged residents in community preference mapping, gaining valuable information about the key physical assets in the neighborhood, including an understanding of where local people felt safe or unsafe. Through this work, we identified a number of challenges and opportunities.

Through decades of poor land use planning decisions, Hunts Point has become a community beset with vacant and underutilized land and buildings. We chose to look at this as an opportunity: physical space that is not being used to its full potential offers the basic unit for a process of reimagining. It can activate the potential of both the space itself and the community that lives and works around it. Lots and buildings also lend themselves to piecemeal intervention: they can be imagined in connection with one another as a network or tackled one by one — a community garden here, new housing there, a farmers’ market here, a community center there. They offer the opportunity for small-scale intervention that adds up to large-scale transformation.

We conducted a vacant land survey in order to determine the scale of this resource and develop an up-to-date and accurate catalog of vacant spaces in the area — a data set we are making publicly available to community stakeholders who are looking to take real, concrete action around these spaces.

As we began the broader community outreach portion of our research, it was with the question of how to activate the potential already existing within the community. We hosted a series of meetings in which we posed a question, first to a small Advisory Committee of key community stakeholders (see page 8), and then to a larger forum of community members. We wanted to know what they wanted to see done with the vacant land, anticipating that out of this work we would achieve at least two outcomes: concrete ideas for vacant space repurposing, and a larger narrative about the most immediate concerns for Hunts Point residents.

To complement and quantify this research, we also conducted outreach around questions of connectivity. It is not enough simply to activate spaces in isolation — in fact, Hunts Point has some beautiful newly-created park spaces, but many are outside of a reasonable walking distance for most residents and require walking down industrial streets burdened with heavy truck traffic. We wanted to get a sense of how residents perceive access to existing park spaces in order to facilitate recommendations on improving connections to these amenities. Alongside this questionnaire, we conducted a GIS analysis showing the number of residents within a 5, 10 or 15 minute walk of each of the neighborhood’s parks.

The connectivity survey also included questions about access to healthy and affordable food. Given that food access had come up throughout our research, we saw an opportunity to quantify residents’ perceptions of their access to food, while also developing a data product that we could share with those seeking to advocate for food-based projects within the community. To complement this survey, we aggregated information about food vendors in Hunts Point and compiled the data into an accessible and easy-to-use map.

We’ve been able to produce a vision for the spaces and places that could be reimagined in order to transform Hunts Point into a place that better meets the needs of residents. We’ve also identified potential places to improve connectivity to neighborhood amenities, which are currently cut off from the rest of the community. And we’ve developed recommendations on what form the transformation of spaces could take, while developing datasets that can be used by others seeking to carry this work forward.

We are excited to share our work with you.

- The Hunts Point Studio, May 2015
Hunts Point is a 690-acre peninsula located in the Southeast Bronx, bounded by the Bronx River, the East River and the Bruckner Expressway. The entirety of the peninsula, from the Bruckner Expressway to the water, is within zip code 10474.

The neighborhood is home to a vibrant residential community, while also serving as a hub of industry. According to US Census Business Patterns for 2013, there are over 12,000 residents, 14,000 workers, and 667 businesses in Hunts Point. Over 74 percent of Hunts Point residents identify as Hispanic. Key indicators suggest that the community is economically vulnerable, with a median income at half the New York City average, and a poverty rate more than double. The residents here bear more than their fair share of undesirable land uses, including polluting industries and waste transfer stations, along with heavy truck traffic to and from the Hunts Point Food Distribution Center. At the same time, these industries are crucial to the infrastructure of the city, with the distribution center supplying over 60 percent of the fresh food and produce consumed in New York City. There is a tension between the essential role of this neighborhood in providing regional services, while at the same time meeting the needs of the local community.

Due to this tension, this neighborhood has received a lot of attention in the past. Many plans and studies have looked to improve the balance between the industry and the residential community through better land uses, the development of a greenway and improvements to truck routes and highway connections. However, many of the proposed capital intensive and long term projects have not yet been completed.

The civic institutions in Hunts Point are strong, with a long history of fighting for environmental justice and against the marginalization of this low-income community of color. The community-based organizations (CBOs) and local politicians have paved the path forward for community organizing and innovative solutions to the challenges the neighborhood faces. The community has had many wins, from the transformation of former industrial sites into waterfront parks to the development of the South Bronx greenway. This social infrastructure provides a solid foundation to develop a community-driven plan.
METHODOLOGY

CONTEXTUAL RESEARCH //
In order to better understand the present conditions in Hunts Point and approach the neighborhood from an informed place, the studio team consulted historical accounts, researched past plans and studies, and analyzed publicly available information, including census data and relevant literature. The team also examined geographical data, including historical and present land use patterns, as well as the impacts of unique events such as Hurricane Sandy. From this, the team derived a preliminary understanding of the existing conditions in Hunts Point.

BEST PRACTICES AND CASE STUDIES //
In an attempt to explore creative solutions, the team analyzed other communities that have faced or continue to face similar obstacles to those found in Hunts Point, and investigated the approaches and interventions they have used to tackle them.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION //
The team engaged with community members in a variety of ways, from formal community meetings and surveys to attending community board meetings and engaging in informal conversations during field visits. Ultimately, the studio team estimates that they connected directly with over 100 people over the course of the year, and many more indirectly.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The team conducted a community preference mapping exercise, where they visited public places with a map of the area and spoke with community members about which places they like and don’t like in the neighborhood and where they feel safe or unsafe. Team members spoke with 50 community members and collected 98 data points. These were all digitized into an interactive online map which can be viewed at http://wikimapping.com/wikimap/HuntsPointCommunityMap.html.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE
The team assembled an Advisory Committee comprised of leaders from Hunts Point organizations in order to guide them as they moved their work forward. On March 19th, 2015, this group participated in a meeting at which the team piloted an exercise called “What Do You Want to See in That Lot?” The team visualized the vacant spaces in the community on a large map, and asked committee members to use colored stickers to show what they would like to see in these vacant spaces, and facilitated discussion about these possibilities. The committee also gave feedback to help refine this exercise for use at an open-invitation community meeting one week later.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS
Tanya Fields, BLK Projek
Wanda Salaman, Mothers on the Move BX
Nina Sander, Rocking the Boat
Kate Shackford, GRID Alternatives
David Shuffler, Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice
Angela Tovar, Sustainable South Bronx
COMMUNITY VISIONING SESSION

On March 26th, 2015, the team hosted a public community meeting at The Point CDC, located at 940 Garrison Avenue in Hunts Point. There were approximately 30 community members in attendance. This meeting was advertised via flyer, social media, email, phone call, web, and word-of-mouth, and included one primary activity, “What Do You Want to See in That Lot?” and one secondary activity, “Hunts Point Is…”

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO SEE IN THAT VACANT LOT?

Participants gathered around three tables, each of which had a 32" x 40" map of the community showing the vacant lots and buildings identified in the vacancy survey. Facilitators then invited participants to talk about what they wanted to see done with the vacant spaces and place color-coded drafting dots on the map to signify their preferred uses. Participants worked in groups and studio team members facilitated discussion. Towards the end of the meeting, each table reported their results to the rest of the group. Studio members collected and aggregated this data in order to gain a more robust picture of community members’ desires for the community.

HUNTS POINT IS...

As participants arrived at the meeting, they were directed toward four poster boards hung on the wall inviting them to recall and write down or illustrate a feeling or experience within the neighborhood, a change they would like to see, or something they love about the area. This was intended to help facilitate conversation between residents and studio members about daily life and in Hunts Point.
STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

The team interviewed stakeholders to hear from them what they thought the key challenges and opportunities are in the neighborhood and to glean their expertise on key topic areas. Team members spoke with sixteen individuals from local nonprofits and CBOs, the community board, and city agencies, as well as local politicians.

FOOD AND PARK ACCESS QUESTIONNAIRE

The team crafted a Food and Park Access Questionnaire to better understand perceptions of access to food and parks in the community. This 24-question survey assessed current food purchasing and consumption habits in the community, current park usage, and obstacles to both. Survey participants were recruited at the community meeting and via tabling at strategic community locations, with a couple of more responses obtained via the web. The survey yielded 46 respondents in total, 30 of whom were residents.

This questionnaire can be found in the appendix of this report.

FIELD OBSERVATIONS

After an initial briefing with Sustainable South Bronx, the team took a number of walking tours through the community, documenting via notes and photography the physical dimensions of the neighborhood. The team visited community centers and neighborhood parks, while also experiencing firsthand the hindrances to pedestrian movement and the noxious odors and pollutants that are openly released throughout the streets. As part of these observations, the team participated in an AirCasting exercise whereby they walked around the community with sensor devices and contributed air quality data to a crowd-sourced map of environmental contaminants.

VACANT LOT AND BUILDING SURVEY

The team found that existing data, including City data, on vacant lots in Hunts Point was inconsistent and at times unreliable. Therefore the group decided to conduct a large scale vacancy survey. The team crafted and conducted the survey in order to catalog the state of (1) city-designated vacant lots, (2) lots that were not city-designated vacant but which we found to be vacant, and (3) vacant buildings.

The team began by developing a working definition of a vacant lot (“a parcel of land on which no lawful structure or any active business or community use exists”) and one for vacant buildings (“any structure with signage indicating that it is ‘officially condemned’ or with a boarded front door”). Team members then surveyed each vacant lot and building in the residential core and the surrounding Special Zoning district by walking down every block taking a survey of each lot and photographing each lot and building that fit the definitions.

The data collected was verified by multiple team members using Zola (NYC Department of City Planning’s land use database), Google maps, and field notes and photographs. The data was then analyzed in ArcGIS. Results from this survey can be found on page 39.
On November 22, 2014, members of the Hunts Point Studio team participated in an AirCasting session held at Sustainable South Bronx. The AirCasting program uses small air quality sensors that are paired with a smartphone app to record hyper-local air quality measurements on the street level. The data is then crowd-sourced and mapped to display air quality conditions at specific locations. The devices capture data on particulate matter and are sensitive to certain polluting sources such as idling trucks and open repair shops. Although the data that is collected is not as reliable as that collected from more sophisticated air quality measurement tools, the devices we used were able to display more fine-grained data on air quality in specific areas. As one would expect, air quality is much worse near highly trafficked intersections in the industrial areas of Hunts Point and much better in parks, such as Barretto Point Park. The AirCasting initiative partners with local schools in Hunts Point and throughout New York City and also holds public air quality measurement sessions. To learn more about AirCasting or to view maps of collected data, visit aircasting.org.

DIGITAL PRESENCE //
In February 2015, the Hunts Point Studio launched a web presence at huntspointstudio.org, showcasing the studio’s work. The team is also on Twitter @hunts_studio and maintains a Facebook page to share news and events.
PLANNING CONTEXT

PAST PLANS AND STUDIES //

Since 2000, there have been seven studies and/or plans focused on Hunts Point. These plans addressed a number of issues facing the community from the abundance of noxious land uses and heavy truck traffic to the availability of quality jobs and flood resiliency. While the solutions proposed varied, many centered around a few common themes: improving land use and transportation; enhancing streetscapes and pedestrian safety; creating new parks and open space; and developing new workforce opportunities. Although many aspects of these plans have been implemented, other components have yet to be realized as of the date of this report.

HUNTS POINT VISION PLAN (2004)

The Hunts Point Vision Plan was a multi-agency, NYC EDC-led initiative that began as a task force of community leaders, business owners, local constituents, elected officials, and government agencies, focused on addressing critical issues facing the community. Recommendations from this plan fall into four categories: optimizing land use; implementing workforce solutions; creating connections; and improving traffic safety & efficiency. Land use recommendations from this plan led to DCP's creation of a Special Hunts Point District in 2008, designed "to encourage the growth and expansion of the food industry sector on the Hunts Point peninsula, while creating a buffer between the manufacturing district and adjacent residential neighborhood."

In addition, the plan led to the initial phases of the South Bronx Greenway, outlined below, and a new Workforce1 Center. Most of the Hunts Point Vision Plan recommendations have been implemented or are currently underway through other plans and initiatives. However, the development of an energy efficient fuel station for trucks and upgrades to the wastewater treatment plant are currently stalled and the new special zoning district has not solved many of the land use issues. Some of these challenges will be discussed in the recommendation section of this report.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PLAN</th>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>LEAD AGENCIES &amp; ORGANIZATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THE HUNTS POINT VISION PLAN</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>NYC EDC, NYC DCP, NYC SBS, NYC DOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NYS DOT TRUCK STUDY</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>NYS DOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE SOUTH BRONX GREENWAY PLAN</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>NYC EDC, THE POINT CDC, SSB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPECIAL HUNTS POINT ZONING DISTRICT REPORT</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>NYC DCP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE SOUTH BRONX WATERFRONT BROWNFIELD OPPORTUNITY AREA NOMINATION STUDY</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>YOUTH MINISTRIES FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE, SSB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHERIDAN HUNTS POINT LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION STUDY</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>NYC DEP, NYC DOT, NYC EDC, NYC HFD, NYC OUTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HUNTS POINT LIFELINES - REBUILD BY DESIGN</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>CITY OF NEW YORK, BRONX RIVER ALLIANCE, COMMUNITY BOARD 2, HUNTS POINT ALLIANCE FOR CHILDREN, HUNTS POINT DEC, HUNTS POINT TERMINAL CO-OP ASSOC, HUNTS POINT COOPERATIVE MARKET</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
South Bronx Greenway Plan (2007)

The South Bronx Greenway Plan has led to the creation of a number of new greenway connections throughout the Hunts Point peninsula, from landscaped medians and median upgrades to new bicycle lanes, street trees and street furniture, as well as fishing piers and recreational areas. Street improvements on two main streets (Hunts Point Avenue and Lafayette Avenue) through the residential core have been made and a new park (Hunts Point Landing) has been built on the waterfront. Larger projects from phase one, such as the Randall’s Island connector, are still in progress. Many of our recommendations around connectivity and access to parks complement this plan. SSBx and other local community organizations have played a key role in advocating for the implementation of this plan.

New York State Department of Transportation Truck Study (2004)

The New York State Department of Transportation Truck Study was an effort by the NYS DOT in collaboration with hired engineering consultants URI/Goodkind & O’Dea, Inc. to study truck movement in Hunts Point. As a part of the study, interviews and surveys were conducted with company owners and truck drivers to look at how drivers for the distribution center were entering, exiting, and using the truck routes in and out of the neighborhood. The study found that 45 percent of those surveyed listed traffic congestion as an issue. “No Street Name Signs” and “Poor Signing on the Truck Route” were also identified as problems for drivers. This study was conducted prior to the relocation of the Fulton Fish Market, however, so it would seem prudent to conduct a more updated survey to assess truck traffic in the neighborhood. This study was also limited in that it lacked outreach to local residents. Truck idling and truck routes are still a major issue in the community.


The Special Hunts Point District was approved by the city planning commission in 2008 and has led to the rezoning of 70 blocks from M1-1, M2-1, and M3-1 to M1-2. This has created a buffer zone between the residential core of the neighborhood and the industrial area. Further it encourages the development of other food-related businesses in the neighborhood and also prohibits new waste-related uses. As stated previously, the special zoning has not solved many of the issues of land use or connectivity in the Hunts Point neighborhood to date.

South Bronx Waterfront Brownfield Opportunity Area Nomination Study (2009)

The South Bronx Waterfront Brownfield Opportunity Area Nomination Study was a New York State-funded plan compiled by YMPJ, SSBx and the Point CDC to “identify under-used land and buildings that have the potential to be transformed into community resources that can benefit neighborhood residents.” The plans in the study are in the nomination phase currently waiting to receive funding for implementation. However, in conversations with local community members the team learned that funding on this initiative is currently stalled.
The Sheridan Expressway-Hunts Point Land Use and Transportation Study, is another multi-agency city effort, aimed at striking “a balance between an increasingly vibrant residential area and the need to maintain efficient routes for traffic traveling to Hunts Point, the economic and employment core of the area.” This study proposes to build three new ramps on Oak Point Avenue in order to better connect the Hunts Point Food Distribution Center to the Sheridan Expressway. The study also recommends improving public access to parks along the Bronx River, increasing the safety of the pedestrian network, changing neighborhood zoning, and encouraging appropriate mixed-use development. The main goal of this plan is to remove the Sheridan Expressway completely. However, this plan has not seen any implementation, primarily due to both political and financial constraints.

Hunts Point Lifelines, is one of the winning projects of the Rebuild By Design competition, an initiative led by the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development post-Hurricane Sandy to improve flood resilience. The goals of Hunts Point Lifelines are to create a flood protection system; improve access to a waterfront greenway; and develop new energy generation and infrastructure to ensure food supplies and distribution are operational in the event of future storms. To date, the federal government has committed $20 million in funding and Mayor Bill De Blasio has promised over $25 million more; however, this is only a small portion of the total funds needed to realize this plan. Current efforts are underway to decide how to spend this first portion of the funding.
Hunts Point is a low-lying, 690-acre peninsula located in the southeast Bronx. Much of the land is comprised of an industrial area, which includes the largest food distribution center in the United States. The industrial portion of the neighborhood remains close to sea level until inclining near what is now the residential core of Hunts Point. The highest point on the peninsula is 90 feet above sea level.1

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Hunts Point was primarily a suburban retreat for well-to-do Manhattan residents. A shift occurred with the establishment of Greater New York City in 1898 and the construction of the Pelham subway line in 1904. With its position next to the East River, the neighborhood became a key location for industrial uses in the City, which led to an influx of working-class residents — most of whom were Jewish, Irish and Italian immigrants.2

In the 1950s and 1960s, due to several decades of city abandonment and the outward migration of the white middle-class toward the suburbs, Hunts Point transformed once more. The demographics shifted towards a population of mostly African-American and Puerto Rican residents living in poverty, and many of the resources moved out of the area. Crime rates rose, much like in the rest of the South Bronx, and many buildings were left vacant.3

During this time, Hunts Point was also becoming increasingly industrial, with the siting of large facilities, including the Hunts Point Wastewater Treatment Plant, which opened in 1952. The construction of the Bruckner Expressway, a Robert Moses-era project that opened in 1973, further isolated Hunts Point from the rest of the South Bronx, displacing residents and local businesses and decreasing property values.4 Finally, in the latter half of the 20th century, the City’s municipal waste disposal system transformed from one that relied on City-owned landfills and apartment incinerators into a privately-operated network of waste transfer stations; With this shift a number of commercial waste transfer stations located in the Hunts Point.5

Hunts Point has made remarkable changes and progress over the past few decades. Efforts by nonprofits, community groups and community development corporations (CDCs), as well as investments made by the public and private sectors have significantly improved quality-of-life for residents in Hunts Point and the South Bronx.6 However, despite the significant drop in crime and the return of residents and businesses to the area, the neighborhood still experiences numerous challenges, many of which are the result of the environmentally noxious uses that were concentrated in the neighborhood during the mid-to late-20th century.
The team asked the 16 interviewees to identify what they perceived as the issues and assets in the community. The interviewees identified many of the issues that were found in the existing conditions research conducted by the team, including: truck traffic, lack of accessibility to and awareness of parks, a lack of follow through and funding from some city initiatives, crime, poor sidewalk conditions and lighting, and a stigma of the neighborhood. They also identified many of the assets that the team observed, including: active community based organizations, tight-knit and engaged residents, quality parkland, and ample waterfront space for potential future reuse. This valuable information further reinforced and complemented the team’s findings.

Hunts Point has an estimated residential population of 12,519, according to the 2013 5-Year ACS estimates, which is up 10 percent from the year 2000, when the population was 11,354. Population density is low, with roughly 7,929 people per square mile (compared to 27,012 for New York City overall). This corresponds with the land use patterns in the neighborhood, with the vast majority of land dedicated to industrial uses and only a small portion to housing. The population is relatively young, at a median age of 28.8 years, when compared to the Bronx, which has a median age of 32.7 years, and New York City, which has a median age of 35.5 years. Hispanic residents make up 75 percent of the total population, according to the 2013 5-Year ACS estimates. This percentage is much higher than both the New York City average (28.6 percent) and the Bronx average (53.5 percent). The remainder of the neighborhood’s population is 23 percent African American and 1.1 percent white.

According to the 2013 5-Year ACS estimates, the median household income in Hunts Point is $23,363 per year, which is roughly $10,000 less than the median income in the Bronx and less than half of the median income in New York City. This is further demonstrated by the population living below the poverty line — 41.8 percent of Hunts Point families have incomes below the poverty level compared to 29.8 percent in the Bronx and 20.3 percent citywide. Educational attainment is also lagging behind, with over 50 percent of the population without a high school diploma or equivalency degree, one of the highest rates in NYC.
The land use in Hunts Point is dominated by industries, with almost 90 percent of the total land area categorized as manufacturing. These uses surround the small residential core, which makes up almost eight percent, as well as parks, which make up nearly three percent of the Hunts Point land area.

The zoning further demonstrates this pattern. The residential core is at the center of the peninsula, zoned R6, a medium-density residential district. This area has one commercial overlay along Hunts Point Ave, resulting in local retail. This is surrounded by the “Special Hunts Point District,” which was approved by the City Planning Commission in 2008 and rezoned 70 blocks to M1-2, from M1-1, M2-1 and M3-1. This district provides a buffer between the residential area and heavy industry. Within this Special District overlay, there are two sub-districts: the Residential Buffer Subdistrict and the Food Industry Subdistrict.

The Residential Buffer Subdistrict allows for commercial uses and community facilities “that promote local and regional arts and culture, and provide options for communal activities on the peninsula.” Examples of commercial uses that are allowed include clothing stores, department stores, dry goods or fabric stores, furniture stores, and household appliance stores. Examples of community facilities that are allowed include libraries, museums, community centers, and non-commercial recreational centers.

In the Food Industry Subdistrict, the focus is on the prohibition of certain new uses. Specifically, waste-related and heavy industrial uses are prohibited “regardless of performance standards.” The perimeter of Hunts Point is zoned M3-1, which allows for heavy manufacturing uses, that “generate noise, traffic, or pollutants.”

Vacant lots
There are over 70 city-designated vacant lots within the residential core and special zoning district. Vacancies can have a profound impact on quality of life. In a marginalized community struggling against numerous structural barriers, vacant lots have the potential to communicate a sense that a neighborhood is an undesirable place in which to live. Furthermore, a number of these lots are brownfields, which are sites that have previously hosted hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants, and require remediation before they can host any new uses. Recognizing this, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation has designated Hunts Point, along with its surrounding neighborhoods in the South Bronx, as a Brownfield Opportunity Area.

Noxious uses
Noxious uses are at the heart of the environmental justice (EJ) issues in Hunts Point, with the neighborhood bearing an unequal burden of the City’s undesirable land uses. In New York City, commercial waste is handled by private companies through 63 waste transfer stations, 9 of which are located in Hunts Point. The EJ communities of the South Bronx and Newtown Creek, Brooklyn bear the burden of managing over 60 percent of the city’s total commercial waste, while making up only a small percentage of the total population. Beyond commercial waste, there are 23 auto dismantlers and 11 scrap metal processors in Hunts Point. One of the city’s largest wastewater treatment plants is also located in Hunts Point, with 13 others located throughout the city. The disproportionate concentration of noxious land uses and heavy industry places an unjust environmental burden on the community of Hunts Point, leading to an abundance of odors and pollutants, as well as poorly maintained land throughout the peninsula.
RESILIENCY

Along the periphery of the peninsula, the area is relatively flat until it hits a relative steep incline as one approaches the residential core. The highest point on the peninsula is 90 feet above sea level. This geographical configuration leaves the peninsula at great risk of flooding, particularly in the area occupied by the food distribution center at the southeastern end of the peninsula.

This vulnerability is made all the more acute by the fact that the Hunts Food Distribution Center is vital to the New York Metro Area food distribution network, serving over 22 million people. Superstorm Sandy exposed the vulnerability of Hunts Point to flooding, as well as power and fuel outages. According to future projections, Hunts Point will become increasingly at risk with the added impact of sea level rise.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

The parks of Hunts Point are among the neighborhood’s most promising assets. Barretto Point Park, Hunts Point Landing and Hunts Point Riverside Park all provide spectacular waterfront views with well-maintained green space. Julio Carballo Fields and Hunts Point Playground provide facilities for physical activity during all times of the year and the Floating Pool Lady, a former barge converted into a floating pool at Barretto Point, provides residents a fun way to cool off during the summer.

Despite these open space assets, Hunts Point does not meet the minimum standards for access to park space. As defined by New Yorkers for Parks, 100 percent of residents should be within a five minute walk of a neighborhood park (a park between one and twenty acres). However, the four neighborhood parks in Hunts Point reach only half of the population within a five minute walk.

Further, it can be quite challenging to access some of these parks, either via foot or bicycle, from the neighborhood’s residential core. Traveling to the parks often involves bypassing long stretches of heavily industrial areas and designated truck routes; further, idling trucks can often be observed along the periphery of these open spaces, presenting another barrier. Improving access to Hunts Point’s parklands is central to improving the quality of life in the neighborhood.
COMMUNITY HEALTH //

According to NYC DOH, Hunts Point-Mott Haven residents suffer disproportionately from high rates of asthma and heart attack hospitalizations. The asthma hospitalization rate among children less than five years old is more than three times the New York City average at 203 per 10,000 people, while it is 149 for the Bronx and 76 for New York City. Heart attack hospitalizations among adults aged 65 or older is also much higher than in the Bronx or New York City. The heart attack hospitalization rates in Hunts Point-Mott Haven are 144 per 10,000 residents versus 76 in the Bronx and 68 in New York City.

A study funded by the United States EPA and conducted in collaboration with the NYU School of Medicine, the Robert F. Wagner School of Public Service, and a number of local community organizations, studied air quality in Hunts Point starting in 2000. Their results showed that NYC DEC air monitoring was inadequate for measuring air quality at the human level and that low-income, minority children are disproportionately attending schools too close to highways and major roadways, affecting their health and quality of life. The study advocated pushing NYC DEC to monitor NO2 levels closer to ground level; it also suggested new regulations to prevent schools from being built near highways and the creation of more green spaces near highways and industrial facilities.

FOOD ACCESS

The health struggles of Hunts Point and the surrounding area have been well-documented. The Bronx has New York City’s highest rate of obesity, as well as the highest percentage of food insecure households. In 2009, 37 percent of residents of the 16th congressional district, of which Hunts Point is part, said they lacked money to buy food at some point in the past 12 months. That is more than any other congressional district in the country, and more than twice the national average. The New York Times has called this the “Bronx Paradox”, a counterintuitive phenomenon where residents are both obese and hungry at the same time. This paradox is perpetuated by the fact that there is a lack of sufficient food access in Hunts Point.

A 2008 study by the NYC Department of City planning mapped all of the supermarkets over 10,000 square feet in the city, and Hunts Point had none. The one supermarket in the neighborhood is around 9,000 square feet in size and serves a population of over 12,000 people. The NYC standard is three times this, recommending 30,000 square feet per 10,000 residents.

There are also many wholesale distributors throughout the peninsula, in addition to the cooperative market — however, these do not directly serve individuals and families in Hunts Point. From the Hunts Point Studio’s conversations with the community, the team learned that there have been past efforts to connect the market’s wholesale distribution with a local distribution system, but nothing has come to fruition. Lack of food access within the neighborhood, leads to residents either traveling outside of their neighborhood or relying upon local delis and bodegas with limited options for fresh healthy food. This is further documented in the team’s food and park connectivity questionnaire on page 45.
According to the 2013 5-Year American Community Survey, Hunts Point has approximately 4,100 housing units. Multi-family apartment buildings with 20 or more units represent the majority of the housing stock at 43 percent, with 3-4 unit buildings making up the second most common housing typology, at 15 percent. Buildings with 50 or more units are also somewhat prevalent, as they make up 14 percent of the housing stock, the third most common housing typology in the neighborhood.29

Most residents in Hunts Point are renters, with 93.5 percent renter-occupied units, compared to 80.1 percent in the Bronx and nearly 70 percent for New York City. The median rent in Hunts Point is $970, according to the 2013 5-Year ACS, while in the Bronx, it was just over $1,000 and in NYC, it was $1,200.30

As of 2013, there were 667 businesses located in Hunts Point, one-third of which are classified under wholesale trade.31 These establishments provide nearly half of all the jobs in the area, with the majority of those jobs coming from the Meat and Meat Product Merchant Wholesalers industry, the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Wholesalers industry, the General Line Grocery Merchant Wholesalers industry, and other food-related industries. With over 155 public and private wholesalers (including the Hunts Point Terminal Produce Market, the Cooperative Meat Market and the New Fulton Fish Market), the food production center currently employs over 6,000 people, according to a study done by the New York City Economic Development Corporation.32

The transportation and warehouse sector makes up the second highest percentage of employment at 16 percent. This sector consists of 61 establishments in total, with local freight trucking industries accounting for 26 percent of all employment within that sector and School and Employee Bus Transportation accounting for 33 percent.33

There are a number of government incentives for businesses to locate in Hunts Point, including the Hunts Point and Port Morris Empire Zone, which offers a number of tax credits, zone capital credit and a new business refund. The Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation offers loan programs as the administrator of the Bronx Empowerment Zone, as well as tax-related incentives. There are also a number of economic development organizations in the neighborhood, such as the Hunts Point Business Outreach Center and the Bronx Women’s Business Resource Center.34
EMPLOYMENT

As of 2013, the unemployment rate in Hunts Point was 18.2 percent, which was slightly higher than the 15.2 percent unemployment rate of the Bronx and nearly double that of New York City (10.6 percent). The most common occupations for males 16 years and older are Construction and Extraction; Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance; and Office and Administrative Support. For the female population, the most common occupations are Office and Administrative Support; Personal Care and Service; and Healthcare Support.

While the top employing industry on the peninsula is Wholesale Trade, the majority of jobs held by residents are in Construction and Extraction, and Office and Administrative Support, for males and females respectively. This data suggests a disconnect between locally available jobs and where residents are employed. Given this analysis, there is a potential opportunity to strengthen the local job pipeline for residents who desire to work in the Wholesale Trade industry. This will be discussed further in the recommendations section of this report.

TRANSPORTATION AND CONNECTIVITY // PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Hunts Point is fairly well served by public transit. The 2, 5, and 6 subway lines are all a short distance from the neighborhood’s residential core. The peninsula is also served by two bus routes: the Bx 6 and the Bx 46. On weekdays, the Bx 6 runs about every six minutes. This route runs through the center of the peninsula down Hunts Point Ave and terminates at the Hunts Point Market. The Bx 46 is a relatively new bus route that provides an additional connection to the market and Barretto Point Park. However, this route only runs every 30 minutes. Among those commuting to work, Hunts Point residents have high rates of public transit use, and low rates of car usage as compared with the Bronx as a whole.

TRUCK TRAFFIC

Due to the industrial uses in Hunts Point, a large number of trucks frequently travel to and throughout the area. The Bruckner and Sheridan Expressways are important connections for truck traffic to New York City and the rest of the region, and nearly 15,000 trucks travel through the peninsula on a daily basis. There are a number of designated truck routes on the peninsula; however, the NYS DOT Truck Study found a significant amount of usage taking place on non-designated truck routes. Over 62 percent of trucks exit on marked truck routes, including Tiffany Street, Leggett Avenue, Edgewater Avenue. However, a number of trucks also travel down residential streets. The main artery of the residential district (Hunts Point Ave between Garrison and Randall) was found to be used by trucks between 25 and 38 percent of the time, which is the highest rate among non-truck routes. This can negatively impact the quality of life for those living on those streets through exposure to noise and air pollution, as well posing a risk to pedestrians and cyclists.
Truck idling is also a pressing issue in Hunts Point, as the team learned from SSBE and community members, as well as via observation during visits to the neighborhood. With the many large food distributors in the area that supply the entire region, there are also a large number of refrigerator trucks that park along streets overnight and keep their engines running to preserve their loads. Truck idling degrades the air quality of the neighborhood and obstructs many pedestrian and bicycle thoroughfares.

CRIME

Crime in Hunts Point has been decreasing dramatically since the mid- and late-1990s. According to NYPD CompStat data from the 41st Precinct, murder is down 95.5 percent in 2013 from 1990, and robberies are down 70.1 percent. Like many neighborhoods in the South Bronx, Hunts Point experienced high levels of crime during the 1960s, 70s and 80s. This was largely the result of rapid disinvestment by the city and shifting demographics. The significant drop in crime is promising, but crime is still identified as a pressing quality of life issue by the community. During the team’s interviews with stakeholders, it was found that there is still a strong public perception that the neighborhood is unsafe. Further, during the community preference mapping, respondents cited issues of drug use and prostitution in the neighborhood.

While crime is not the focus of this report, it is critical to quality of life. To this end, the recommendations included in this report around improving land uses and connectivity in the neighborhood consider the implications of crime and perceptions of safety.
1. Geographical data was gathered from the NYC Open Data Portal and rendered in ArcGIS.


6. Ibid.


8. U.S. Census Bureau, (2013) 5-Year American Community Survey for 10474 ZCTA.

9. U.S. Census Bureau, (2013) 5-Year American Community Survey for 10474 ZCTA.

10. U.S. Census Bureau, (2013) 5-Year American Community Survey for 10474 ZCTA.

11. U.S. Census Bureau, (2013) 5-Year American Community Survey for 10474 ZCTA.

12. U.S. Census Bureau, (2013) 5-Year American Community Survey for 10474 ZCTA.

13. Ibid.

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid.


19. Geographical data was gathered from the NYC Open Data Portal and rendered in ArcGIS.

gpinm_J_P_Briefing_Book.pdf


22. The NYC Department of Health (DOH) does not provide data for Hunts Point specifically. Instead, it combines Hunts Point with the Mott Haven neighborhood that is located to the southwest and faces similar challenges with regard to health.


29. U.S. Census Bureau, 5 Year ACS for the 93, 115.02, & 117 Census Tracts, 2013

30. U.S. Census Bureau, 5 Year ACS for the 93, 115.02, & 117 Census Tracts, 2013

31. U.S. Census Bureau, 5 Year ACS for the 93, 115.02, & 117 Census Tracts, 2013


34. Ibid

35. U.S. Census Bureau, 5 Year ACS for the 10474 ZCTA, 2013

36. U.S. Census Bureau, 5 Year ACS for the 10474 ZCTA, 2013


38. U.S. Census Bureau, (2013) 5-Year American Community Survey, Table 508301


40. MTA New York City Transit, (2015) Bx46 Local Service, Bus Timetable

41. U.S. Census Bureau, (2013) 5-Year American Community Survey, Table 508301


43. U.S. Census Bureau, (2013) 5-Year American Community Survey, Table 508301

44. In this time, crime at the prison on nearby Rikers Island has been removed from the 41st Precinct’s statistics, playing a role in the dramatic decreases. Even taking this into account, however, the community has seen an appreciable decrease in crime.

Vacant land can be found throughout New York — some are waiting for imminent development, while others have lain vacant for years, whether due to lack of real estate value, environmental issues, or any number of other factors. As the city continues to grow and develop, very little land is left for development, and what is done with existing vacant land will be critical to the future of the city’s neighborhoods. Vacant land can also be seen an asset for communities. It has the potential to provide an opportunity to think about how space can be redeveloped to meet an array of community needs, including access to affordable housing, fresh and healthy food, and green space.

Initial investigation regarding vacant lots showed many inconsistencies between data from the City and studio observation. The team undertook an extensive vacant lot and building survey, with the goal of developing a current and reliable database of vacant lots and buildings that could later be shared with the community.

The team began with a database of 70 city-designated vacant lots in the Residential Core and the Special Hunts Point District. During field research, the team found that a number of the 70 original lots were currently in use; in addition the team added two lots that weren’t in the original database but were found to be vacant through observation.

Through the team’s data collection and analysis of these lots, they broke down the data into active uses and vacant lots, with a number of subcategories to further delineate their status. In total 50 of the lots were found to have active uses and only 22 were deemed to be vacant.

Lots with active uses

Of the 70 City-designated vacant lots, 50 were found to have active uses, including active businesses operating on the sites, community parks and gardens, as well as lots with active construction.

Active business

Active business uses were observed on 43 lots, all found within the special zoning district; these are defined as lots with either clear signage of a business or use by a business adjacent to the lot. In this heavily industrial area, many businesses lacked signage and well-maintained fences, making it difficult to make definitive determinations as to whether certain sites were active businesses or lots being used for illegal dumping. Further complicating the task of identifying active business uses, no comprehensive database exists on industrial businesses in the city. Where it was unclear whether there was an active business use or not, the team erred on the side of recording an active business use, so as to not penalize legally operating businesses.

Community uses

Four lots were being used by the community as parks and community gardens within the residentially zoned area. Given that these were not in the PLUTO database and are not designated as park land, it will require dedicated advocacy to ensure that these community uses are sustained into the future.
CONSTRUCTION

Three lots were found to be under construction.

These City-designated vacant lots with active uses make up almost half a million square feet. This analysis illustrates that there are many discrepancies between the City’s PLUTO database and the on-the-ground reality. Accurate public access to information on vacant spaces is essential to empowering local residents to take control of land in the community, as well as ensuring that once the community does take control of these spaces they are able to retain that control. When active uses are recorded as vacancies, it makes it easier for local uses to be undermined by outsiders — including developers and real estate speculators — seeking to capture control of the land; this is particularly true in the case of community parks and gardens.

VACANT LOTS

In total, the team found 22 vacant lots, 20 of which were designated to be vacant by the city. While these were all deemed vacant, as no active use was observed, many of these lots had some type of waste on the site. Therefore, we created two sub-groups for vacant lots: “Lots with Waste” and “Empty Lots.”

LOTS WITH WASTE ON SITE

There were 15 lots in the special zoning district that had waste on the site, amounting to 68 percent of all the vacant lots. This is defined as any type of garbage, industrial waste, or abandoned cars, but excludes any small debris, including plastic bags or glass bottles. 100 percent of these lots were found in the special zoning district.

These lots amounted to a total of almost 100,000 square feet. They are a high priority for intervention, as they can be disruptive to a sense of pedestrian connectivity, as well as being eyesores emitting unpleasant odors. The widespread nature of this issue shows that there are clear problems with the enforcement and monitoring of dumping and waste on these lots. Further, waste can be a barrier to reuse, especially if this waste is leaking any toxic materials into the soil.
Finally, the team found seven empty vacant lots, which were observed as being completely empty and had no use or waste on the site. Three of these are city-owned lots. These high potential lots amounted to 376,000 square feet of land. These lots are empty, and therefore have a high potential for reuse. The three lots with public ownership are each owned by different NYC agencies: the DEP, DPR, and DOT.

The team found 15 vacant buildings. The largest of these buildings is the Spofford Detention Center, located within the residentially zoned area. The Spofford Detention Center is city-owned property and under consideration for redevelopment. Two thirds of the vacant buildings were found in the residentially zoned area and one third were found in the special zoning district.

This analysis shows a snapshot in time. While it provides valuable information and insight, the Hunts Point Studio team believes it is essential that:

- The City take action to update vacant lot data
- The community maintain and update this database

These recommendations will be further discussed as a part of the Vacant Lot Toolkit recommendation on page 52.
CONNECTIVITY TO PARKS AND OPEN SPACE //

Parks and open space play a direct role in the public health of a community and its residents. Living near open spaces and parks has many benefits, including: encouraging physical activity by providing opportunities to engage in exercise; providing an environmental amenity through better air quality and water quality, as well as mitigating climate change; bringing positive benefits to mental health and well-being; and providing a place to engage the community and serve as a common space for events and activities. Limited or no public access, inadequate signage, public safety, and park maintenance can all result in inactive parks, contributing to unhealthy communities. If parks and open space cannot be accessed or utilized by residents, those residents run a higher risk of developing long-term health problems, such as obesity, diabetes, and asthma; these abandoned and underutilized open spaces also have the potential to attract increased criminal activity.

PARK ACCESS QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

The studio team developed a food and parks access questionnaire to gather original data from Hunts Point residents. The portion of the questionnaire relating to parks consists of five questions, which sought to determine which parks residents utilize, how they get there, and their perceived barriers to visiting the parks. The survey also includes five questions that collect demographic information. The full survey can be found in the Appendix of this report.

The survey resulted in 46 responses completed by respondents at locations around Hunts Point, including on the sidewalk, in parks, and at The Point CDC. From the 46 surveys collected, 30 respondents indicated that they live in Hunts Point. The analysis focuses on these 30 surveys. Key findings are summarized below.

When asked which parks they visit most frequently, respondents indicated that Hunts Point Riverside Park and Baretto Point Park were visited most often, at 40 percent and 30 percent respectively. Joseph Rodman Drake Park and Hunts Point Landing were visited the least, with only three percent of respondents indicating that they visited these parks most often. Almost a quarter of respondents indicated that they visit a park almost every day, while another quarter indicated that they only visit a park a few times per year. When asked why they do not visit the parks more often, 19 percent of respondents reported that the parks are too far away, an additional 19 percent reported that there are no activities in the parks in which they want to participate. 23 percent indicated that either the parks or the streets on the way to the parks are unsafe. Another 23 percent of respondents reported that it would be easier for them to visit the parks if there were more transportation options.

Surveys were collected from respondents of all age ranges, with 87 percent between the ages of 20 and 59. 67 percent of the respondents were female, and 27 percent were male. Three percent indicated they were White, 40 percent indicated they were Black or African-American, and 43 percent identified as Hispanic or Latino.

This research has some clear limitations, the most obvious being the small number of respondents. Although the 30 responses are significant, a much more robust understanding could be derived from data gathered from a larger sample size. Because of this relatively small sample size, a more in-depth statistical analysis was not performed. The team recommends that further distribution of the survey be undertaken, with results analyzed along with the data already collected.

WHAT STOPS YOU FROM GOING TO THE PARK?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nothing</td>
<td>30.77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Activities</td>
<td>19.23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too Far</td>
<td>19.23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsafe Parks</td>
<td>13.58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know When They Are</td>
<td>13.58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dirty</td>
<td>11.54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsafe Streets</td>
<td>11.54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>7.69%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HOW DO YOU GET TO THE PARK?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Walk</td>
<td>76.92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bike</td>
<td>11.54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxi</td>
<td>7.69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subway</td>
<td>7.69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus</td>
<td>7.69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessible</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

field research

what stops you from going to the park?

how do you get to the park?
While there is no standard definition of a “food desert,” the Center for Disease Control defines it as an area with little to no access to fresh, healthy, quality food. Similarly, an area that has been inundated with processed and unhealthy food, with little-to-no fresh food available, is considered a “food swamp.” These areas generally occur in low-income neighborhoods that are situated far from public transportation or where residents cannot afford to travel to obtain fresh food. As explained in the existing conditions analysis, Hunts Point can be characterized as such a community.

FOOD ACCESS QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

The studio team developed a food and parks access questionnaire to gather original data from Hunts Point residents. The portion of the questionnaire relating to food consists of 13 questions. The first seven questions address where and how residents go food shopping, as well as the challenges they face when food shopping. The next six questions address access to fresh fruits and vegetables and any challenges residents may face when shopping for fresh produce. The results are summarized below.

43 percent of respondents indicated that they go food shopping within Hunts Point most often. 92 percent of respondents frequently go food shopping at grocery stores, while almost one out of three frequently shop for food at bodegas or delis. From a crosstab analysis, the team found that over half of those who get most of their food from within Hunts Point frequently buy food at bodegas or delis. Meanwhile, 60 percent of respondents walk to go food shopping and 27 percent use a taxi or car service. One out of four indicated that they also drive to go food shopping. 23 percent of respondents said it was very easy to go food shopping, while 23 percent indicated that the difficulty was a seven or higher on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the most difficult. 31 percent of respondents indicated that it would be easier if groceries were more affordable, and 25 percent indicated that it would be easier if grocery stores were closer to where they live. 17 percent of respondents indicated that food shopping would be easier if the streets on the way to the grocery store were safer.

When asked about the ease of buying fresh fruits or vegetables, 31 percent of the respondents indicated a seven or higher on a scale of one to ten, with ten being the most difficult. When asked what would make it easier to buy fruits or vegetables, 42 percent of respondents indicated that they would like to see more fruits and vegetables in existing stores, and 42 percent indicated that they would like to see more locations to shop for fruits and vegetables. 30 percent indicated that they would like to have more Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) or similar programs. When asked about growing food at home, 77 percent of respondents indicated that they currently grow their own fruits or vegetables, or they have grown them in the past. Once food is purchased, 77 percent of respondents indicated that they cook a meal at home almost every day.

The results of this questionnaire were promising, and the studio team recommends that it continue to be administered in order to gain a larger sample size. Questions could also be added to assess residents’ interest in participating in urban farming, or which specific fruits and vegetables they would like to be able to buy from local producers. For further analysis of this instrument, see “Parks Survey.”
COMMUNITY MEETING RESULTS

The team hosted a community meeting centering on vacant land and space in Hunts Point. This meeting served as a way to gain knowledge from the people who live and work in the community, and gave community members the opportunity to share what they wanted to see in the vacant spaces in Hunts Point.

The team conducted an interactive mapping exercise, which revealed a common set of desires for the community among participants. Requests for affordable housing, healthy restaurant options, more local CSA programs, community gardens and urban agriculture were all in high demand. Participants also cited the need for community facilities and spaces that could be built in conjunction with new affordable housing and which would offer services such as employment assistance and youth programs. Open space was also a priority, particularly for youth participants, who had ideas for a skate park and outdoor picnic area that could connect all of the Barretto Point Park land parcels. Other ideas included the development of a parking structure for trucks, and a community shuttle or trolley to improve transportation around the peninsula.

The team identified five major areas of interest from the meeting:

• Affordable Housing
• Healthy Food and Restaurants
• Community Gardens and Urban Agriculture
• Community Spaces and programming
• Improvements to connectivity

These ideas from the community led directly to the development of the studio’s recommendations.

FOOD VENDOR SURVEY

While conducting the vacancy survey, the team also recorded data on the location of every supermarket, deli, or bodega in the residential core and special zoning district.
RECOMMENDATIONS

Through analysis of findings from community outreach, observation, data aggregation and original field research, the studio team devised a set of five recommendations:

1. Develop a Vacant Land Toolkit to provide opportunities for public control of vacant space.
2. Advocate for the creation of a Food Restaurant Incubator to stimulate entrepreneurship and the creation of new healthy food restaurants.
3. Develop a new Urban Farm to provide fresh healthy produce to the community, while creating jobs and stimulating the local economy.
4. Advocate for fresh food incentives for bodegas to increase healthy options in neighborhood stores where many Hunts Point residents shop.
5. Advocate for placemaking and design interventions to allow the community to take ownership of their streets, mitigate truck traffic and improve connectivity.

Although these recommendations range in terms of the capital, community organizing and time necessary for their implementation, all of them can be spearheaded by SSBx and are within reach in a 1-5 year timeline. Each of these can play a role in transforming what might currently appear as disuse or neglect into a reflection of the vibrant, tight-knit community that lives and has the potential to thrive in Hunts Point.

VACANT LAND TOOLKIT //

Under the right circumstances, vacant land can serve as an opportunity for the surrounding community. With that in mind, the team recommends that SSBx develop a catalog of resources to equip the Hunts Point community with tools that can aid them in taking more control of their environment and improving their quality of life through the cleaning up and repurposing of vacant land.

This “toolkit” would include:

- A digital portal through which community members can organize around specific lots
- Steps for alerting the appropriate City agencies of misuse (e.g. dumping)
- A guide to acquiring a lot
- Sample governance structures that could allow the lots to remain under community control

This toolkit is intended to provide a useful starting point to help empower the Hunts Point community to navigate the complex process of activating vacant land, in addition to providing strategies used in other cities that could be adopted by SSBx or other CBOs in Hunts Point.

ACTION STEPS

In order to develop a Vacant Lot Toolkit for Hunts Point, the studio team recommends that SSBx follow the steps outlined below:

- Host a hackathon in the community to develop the digital portal
- Upload the existing vacant lot catalog to portal
- Work with a student group to develop additional research on acquisition strategies for vacant land
- Organize and train residents and/or students from the community to conduct a semi-annual vacant lot survey to maintain and update the database
- Develop an internship program for local high school students to monitor and maintain the digital portal
- Consult with City agencies and community partners to develop relationships that can facilitate the use of vacant land by community members in the future
To house and maintain the data collected by the Hunts Point Studio, the team proposes that SSBx establish and maintain a digital portal with information on each vacant lot and building in Hunts Point. To help provide spatial context about where these lots and buildings are located, this portal would have an interactive map that would allow users to view information on individual lots or buildings. While the information provided would be left up to the discretion of SSBx, it is recommended that it include a link to a form or forum that could allow users to share their knowledge about the lot or building and propose ideas for repurposing the space. This portal should also be set up to incorporate data received via text message, so as to be more accessible to those who may have limited access to the internet. This information could then be used as a basis for advocacy efforts.

An example of such a portal can be found in New Orleans, which partnered with Code for America (a nonprofit organization that specializes in developing open-source projects for the benefit of local government) to develop an open-source web application called blightstatus.nola.gov. Through this app, data including, but not limited to, inspections, code complaints, hearings, judgments, and foreclosures is aggregated for each lot. This information is then displayed through an interactive map that allows users to either enter a specific address or click on a lot of interest. The app also includes a “watch list,” which allows users to keep tabs on lots of interest via email and/or phone alerts. This app has been met with so much success that cities like Dallas and Palo Alto have signed on as clients of Code for America, which has tailored the app to their specific needs.

The team recognizes that a significant number of homes in Hunts Point may not have internet access. However, through partnerships with other CBOs, such as The Point CDC, or the local library, this portal can be made more widely available.

Furthermore, SSBx could create analog counterparts to these digital tools, including printed copies of resource guides, flyers around the community, and paper feedback forms. SSBx could also host semi-annual meetings where the most current data from the digital toolkit — including ideas received for specific lots and buildings — could be presented to the community for feedback.

The vacant lot toolkit would include ways to report the misuse of land by taking advantage of a program that already exists in New York City. Through the Department of Sanitation’s (DSNY) Illegal Dumping Tip Program, anyone who provides information that leads the DSNY to catch someone in the act of illegal dumping is eligible for a reward of up to 50 percent of any fine collected. Community members can report illegal dumping by calling 311 and explaining what they have observed, or via the 311 online portal or mobile application built by the NYC Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications (DoITT). While the DSNY must then catch the person(s) dumping waste in the act, resident reporting of this activity is still an important first step. While it is not always easy to identify dumping, the DSNY definition provides a good starting point: “Illegal dumping is when one cubic yard or more of material (about twice the size of a bathtub) is thrown out onto public or private property.”

SSBx could make information about how to report illegal dumping, and the rewards available for reporting, available to residents on the digital portal, as well as through flyers posted around the neighborhood.

SSBx could make information about how to take steps towards acquiring land that community members might wish to repurpose into a new neighborhood park or community garden. One can look to gain access to public land through the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS), which maintains a database of all City-owned property along with their current use or vacancy status and the managing agency. Interested parties can either look into a short term lease that runs 30 days or less, or they could go through the Public Lease Auction if they want to lease a lot for an extended period of time. However, through partnerships with other CBOs, such as The Point CDC, or the local library, this portal can be made more widely available. Furthermore, SSBx could create analog counterparts to these digital tools, including printed copies of resource guides, flyers around the community, and paper feedback forms. SSBx could also host semi-annual meetings where the most current data from the digital toolkit — including ideas received for specific lots and buildings — could be presented to the community for feedback.

The DEP, which owns one of the vacant lots identified in Hunts Point, also has a process for obtaining land on a temporary basis, in the form of a Revocable Land Use Permit. While these permits are typically issued to public entities, they can also be obtained by nonprofit organizations for “special projects such as recreational trails or ball fields.” Additionally, land owned by DEP can be used at no charge for “short term and low impact activities, such as fund-raising events or scientific studies.” In order to take this step, interested parties have to submit an application at least thirty days prior to the day on which the activity is to be held. However, it is recommended that applications be submitted much earlier as they can require a complex review process by a host of experts from various fields, including real estate and engineering, with regard to a site’s feasibility. Nevertheless, this is one instance whereby land could be acquired and utilized at a low cost.
COMMUNITY LAND GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

Finally, once land is accessed, especially in the cases where it is acquired for long-term use, whoever is using the land will require a governance structure to manage it. To this end, the toolkit would include possible governance structures to facilitate effective community management and decision-making.

This could include information about community land trusts, a model of governance that can provide stability and community ownership. The Dudley Neighbors, Inc. (DNI) in Boston is an example of a neighborhood with a large minority population in a dense urban environment that has been plagued by the failed policies of urban renewal, dumping, and disinvestment, similar to Hunts Point. While its primary goal is to establish housing that is permanently affordable, DNI has also been able to develop community spaces, such as a community greenhouse, an urban farm, and a playground.

Our team also encourages SSBx to reach out to some New York City-based Land Trusts, as they are more familiar with the process specific to New York. These include the Bronx Land Trust and the Brooklyn Queens Land Trust, both of which are supported by the Trust for Public Land, and could prove to be valuable resources with regard to developing and preserving community gardens.

If SSBx decides to establish a Land Trust itself, the organization might seek support from the New York City Community Land Initiative (NYCCLI), which is currently in the process of establishing a land trust in the El Barrio section of East Harlem.

The Community Land Trust Network is also an excellent resource, especially when it comes to funding, as they provide a comprehensive list of options, along with the locations they serve and their respective application deadlines.

VACANT BUILDINGS REHABILITATION

There are a number of opportunities with regard to the vacant buildings in the community as well. For starters, SSBx could organize a vacant building survey, similar to the vacant lot survey mentioned earlier, as there is currently no regularly maintained database that keeps such records. Furthermore, SSBx could extend their current efforts at workforce development by designing a vacant building rehabilitation program. Together, these two efforts could help prevent buildings from falling into a state of disrepair, while also providing skills training.

If properly implemented, these recommendations would lead to a physical environment that lends itself to an improved quality of life that better meets the needs of the community.

FOOD RESTAURANT INCUBATOR

Community kitchens and food incubators provide a large, accessible commercial kitchen space that can be rented for a small fee by community groups or aspiring restaurant owners who lack or cannot afford kitchen space. They have the potential to support local entrepreneurs, create a pipeline to food-related jobs, provide cooking classes, and bring residents together from the community. They can help disadvantaged small businesses by giving them the knowledge and space that they need to develop thriving businesses, while also promoting healthier lifestyles by serving as venues for community dinners and classes that teach about healthy cooking.

The studio team found from the food access questionnaire and through conversations at various points that there is a need and desire for healthy restaurant options, reliable cooking space, and entrepreneurial opportunity in Hunts Point. Given the need to address unemployment issues and the lack of healthy food options in the neighborhood, the team recommends that SSBx advocate for the development of a community kitchen and food incubator in Hunts Point.

A community kitchen and food incubator could host programs that teach healthy cooking techniques that are tailored to the local culture in the community. It could also help aspiring restaurateurs who may not have the space or resources to take an idea for a restaurant and turn it into a reality. Programming at the kitchen could serve as a means to gather families from across Hunts Point and strengthen bonds in an already tight-knit neighborhood. Additionally, the siting of the kitchen could make use of an underutilized space in the neighborhood, such as the Spofford facility, and transform it into a community hub. Lastly, the kitchen could help to create a stronger pipeline to jobs at the Hunts Point Food Distribution Center.

ACTION STEPS

In order to develop a Food Restaurant Incubator in Hunts Point, the studio team recommends that SSBx follow the steps outlined below:

• Conduct a preliminary skills research and needs assessment via a community survey
• Work with the local community to distribute the survey to as many people as possible
• Identify and work with community partners who might wish to develop, program and manage the incubator
• Seek public and private grant support to provide a clearer basis for advocacy
• Advocate for the City to assist in the development of the food restaurant incubator and community kitchen

To develop a Food Restaurant Incubator in Hunts Point, the studio team recommends that SSBx follow the steps outlined below:

• Conduct a preliminary skills research and needs assessment via a community survey
• Work with the local community to distribute the survey to as many people as possible
• Identify and work with community partners who might wish to develop, program and manage the incubator
• Seek public and private grant support to provide a clearer basis for advocacy
• Advocate for the City to assist in the development of the food restaurant incubator and community kitchen

In order to develop a Food Restaurant Incubator in Hunts Point, the studio team recommends that SSBx follow the steps outlined below:

• Conduct a preliminary skills research and needs assessment via a community survey
• Work with the local community to distribute the survey to as many people as possible
• Identify and work with community partners who might wish to develop, program and manage the incubator
• Seek public and private grant support to provide a clearer basis for advocacy
• Advocate for the City to assist in the development of the food restaurant incubator and community kitchen

In order to develop a Food Restaurant Incubator in Hunts Point, the studio team recommends that SSBx follow the steps outlined below:

• Conduct a preliminary skills research and needs assessment via a community survey
• Work with the local community to distribute the survey to as many people as possible
• Identify and work with community partners who might wish to develop, program and manage the incubator
• Seek public and private grant support to provide a clearer basis for advocacy
• Advocate for the City to assist in the development of the food restaurant incubator and community kitchen
COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Thorough research is needed to determine how many potential clients and community members the kitchen will serve, and how they will use the space. This information is key as it will determine the cost of renting the kitchen space, and how much funding will be needed to support its ongoing operation. The studio recommends that SSBx launch a detailed questionnaire to determine which skill sets exist within the community, as well as the demand for a commercial kitchen, food business incubator, and related programming.

SITE SELECTION

Once the specific needs of Hunts Point residents are determined, a site must be designated for the kitchen. Using an existing space is one tactic to achieve a lower start-up cost for this project. The studio team recommends that SSBx and the City of New York consider the former Spofford Juvenile Facility, the Banknote Building, or a vacant commercial property in a central location in Hunts Point to site the community kitchen.

SECURING FUNDING

Securing funding for the community kitchen is imperative for its success. Funding can come in the form of grants and can be supplied either publicly or privately. The NYC EDC helped to support Entrepreneur Space in Long Island City by providing a $170,000 grant to start the incubator. SSBx should consider starting their search for grant support with NYC EDC to cover the start up costs of the kitchen.

COMMERCIAL KITCHENS

The Women’s Housing and Economic Development Corporation (WHEDco) in the Highbridge neighborhood in the Bronx already operates such a kitchen. The 4,000 square foot commercial kitchen can be rented on a per diem or monthly basis and is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It is a fully licensed space that provides numerous pieces of restaurant-scale appliances and a loading dock.

The NYC EDC has also started several food business incubators for emerging restaurateurs. Entrepreneur Space in Long Island City has a 5,000 square foot kitchen that is also open 24/7. In addition to a rentable commercial kitchen, there is also 7,000 square feet of office space and business support so that entrepreneurs can not only expand their operation, but become more savvy business owners as well.

PROGRAMMING PARTNERSHIPS

The programming that the community kitchen offers will be central to its ability to transform the lives of Hunts Point residents. Collaborating with many partners can help to not only ensure the kitchen’s success, but also to tighten the bonds within the community. SSBx can work with the existing network of community gardens and urban agriculture, or partner with the Hunts Point Food Distribution Center or other food distributors in Hunts Point.

The team’s economic analysis of existing conditions in Hunts Point (see page 32) showed a weak pipeline for local residents to gain employment at the Hunts Point Food Distribution Center. The kitchen could partner with the distribution center and supply skills training opportunities, including Food Handling Certificates, which could help connect residents to these local employment opportunities. The incubator could also lead to new businesses from food trucks and mobile vending carts to restaurants, all with a healthy food focus.

COMMUNITY KITCHENS

The Women’s Housing and Economic Development Corporation (WHEDco) in the Highbridge neighborhood in the Bronx already operates such a kitchen. The 4,000 square foot commercial kitchen can be rented on a per diem or monthly basis and is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It is a fully licensed space that provides numerous pieces of restaurant-scale appliances and a loading dock.

The NYC EDC has also started several food business incubators for emerging restaurateurs. Entrepreneur Space in Long Island City has a 5,000 square foot kitchen that is also open 24/7. In addition to a rentable commercial kitchen, there is also 7,000 square feet of office space and business support so that entrepreneurs can not only expand their operation, but become more savvy business owners as well.

PROGRAMMING PARTNERSHIPS

The programming that the community kitchen offers will be central to its ability to transform the lives of Hunts Point residents. Collaborating with many partners can help to not only ensure the kitchen’s success, but also to tighten the bonds within the community. SSBx can work with the existing network of community gardens and urban agriculture, or partner with the Hunts Point Food Distribution Center or other food distributors in Hunts Point.

The team’s economic analysis of existing conditions in Hunts Point (see page 32) showed a weak pipeline for local residents to gain employment at the Hunts Point Food Distribution Center. The kitchen could partner with the distribution center and supply skills training opportunities, including Food Handling Certificates, which could help connect residents to these local employment opportunities. The incubator could also lead to new businesses from food trucks and mobile vending carts to restaurants, all with a healthy food focus.

COMMUNITY KITCHENS

The Women’s Housing and Economic Development Corporation (WHEDco) in the Highbridge neighborhood in the Bronx already operates such a kitchen. The 4,000 square foot commercial kitchen can be rented on a per diem or monthly basis and is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It is a fully licensed space that provides numerous pieces of restaurant-scale appliances and a loading dock.

The NYC EDC has also started several food business incubators for emerging restaurateurs. Entrepreneur Space in Long Island City has a 5,000 square foot kitchen that is also open 24/7. In addition to a rentable commercial kitchen, there is also 7,000 square feet of office space and business support so that entrepreneurs can not only expand their operation, but become more savvy business owners as well.

PROGRAMMING PARTNERSHIPS

The programming that the community kitchen offers will be central to its ability to transform the lives of Hunts Point residents. Collaborating with many partners can help to not only ensure the kitchen’s success, but also to tighten the bonds within the community. SSBx can work with the existing network of community gardens and urban agriculture, or partner with the Hunts Point Food Distribution Center or other food distributors in Hunts Point.

The team’s economic analysis of existing conditions in Hunts Point (see page 32) showed a weak pipeline for local residents to gain employment at the Hunts Point Food Distribution Center. The kitchen could partner with the distribution center and supply skills training opportunities, including Food Handling Certificates, which could help connect residents to these local employment opportunities. The incubator could also lead to new businesses from food trucks and mobile vending carts to restaurants, all with a healthy food focus.
Urban agriculture can be defined as growing fresh food within urban areas and cities. It can take many forms, including community gardens, backyard farming, rooftop gardening, or the repurposing of urban vacant space to grow food. With the resulting local fresh food, vendors, CSAs, farmers’ markets and food coops are often started in tandem with or shortly after urban agriculture projects as a response to the consistent demand for fresh produce in an area. Goals of urban agriculture include:

1. Providing fresh food to residents and communities who have limited access to healthy food options.
2. Fostering entrepreneurship and local commerce.
3. Promoting a healthy and a general sense of community.

Based on feedback from the community meeting, the studio team recommends that SSBx consider partnering with other local CBOs to advocate for the repurposing of one or more vacant lots in Hunts Point to develop a for-profit urban farm.

More urban agriculture could have a profound effect on Hunts Point, bringing public health benefits and environmental and economic gains, while strengthening community ties.

ACTION STEPS

In order to spearhead an urban agriculture project on one of the vacant lots in Hunts Point, the studio team recommends that SSBx follow steps outlined in the vacant lot toolkit, including the following:

1. Choose a site
2. Ensure that brownfields are identified and remediated
3. Create a budget, apply for grants, look for local sponsors, obtain farming tools, and recruit volunteers from the community
4. Design a financial plan with the community and make decisions about the pricing of products, what kinds of produce should be planted, and potential local food service programs in which to participate

SITE SELECTION

Finding suitable vacant land for urban agriculture in urban areas can be a challenge. Vacant land can be contaminated from past uses such as industrial, chemical, and other harmful wastes, creating a brownfield. While there are many different ways to remediate land, there are knowledge gaps in remediation strategies for land intended to be used for urban agriculture and farming. There is significant testing done for brownfields intended for residential and commercial use, but no specific guidelines exist for remediating land for the growing of food. With that in mind, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) developed and introduced an interim set of guidelines for converting a brownfield into safe and workable farm land. The step by step guide can be found through this link: http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/urbanag/pdf/bf_urban_ag.pdf, Brownfields and Urban Agriculture: Interim Guidelines for Safe Gardening Practices.

In Hunts Point, cost-effective solutions for remediation are needed before any form of urban agriculture can develop. Two alternative remediation solutions, are contained raised beds and soil covers; the latter creates a layer between the contaminated soil and new soil. While this does not remove the contamination, it keeps it in place to prevent it from spreading to the new soil that will be used to grow food.

Since the process of remediation can be costly and long, communities like Hunts Point need alternative programs to advocate for the clean-up of a proposed site. The New York City Voluntary CleanUp Program is one way to encourage citizen participation at a local level and could be a valuable tool in helping to identify and remediate land in Hunts Point. This municipal program created by the OER asks citizens to apply and submit a brownfield site that they feel deserves attention and would like to see remediated. 200 of these projects have been completed and have led to successful projects such as affordable housing and community gardens.

The team recommends that the following land parcels be considered for an urban agriculture pilot project, with the understanding that remediation efforts would be a critical component to the planning effort:

LOT 901

Lot 901 is part of the same waterfront land parcel as Barretto Point Park, which was formerly an illegal dumping site. In the past it was also occupied by an asphalt plant, a sand and gravel manufacturer, and a paint and varnish manufacturer. According to DEP, this brownfield is a part of the Barretto Point park land, but is currently fenced off and inaccessible to the public.

LOTS 100 AND 105

Lots 100 and 105 are directly across from Lot 901, and have the ability to be combined, with only Barretto Street in between them. In February of this year, these lots were granted an environmental easement from the DEP and given to the NYS DEC to finalize plans for remediation.

Since these are both city-owned sites, the City could consider a program similar to what New Orleans did after Hurricane Katrina with the LivingLots program, leasing out land for a low cost to uses that have a positive impact on the community.
Many grants are available for communities interested in urban agriculture. The Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program was created by the USDA’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture to provide a one-time federal award to an organization whose missions is to provide an in-need neighborhood with better food service programs. Other grant programs, such as the Fiskars Project Orange Thumb, and the Somerton Tank Farm in Philadelphia are prime examples of successful for-profit distinct from SSBx, which is a nonprofit. The Brooklyn Grange rooftop farm in New York utilizing a for-profit model. Of course, such an effort would have to be organizationally 61 62

Crowdfunding within communities for urban agriculture is also a popular option. A local Hunts Point organization could set up a Kickstarter or IOBY (In Our Back Yard) account, an online resource that connects people and money to neighborhood based projects. This account could be used to raise money for plot purchase or farming materials. Since the site is available globally, people all over the world are able to contribute. When the Stone’s Throw Urban Farm in Minneapolis, Minnesota feared it would not get a small business loan, they took to Kickstarter to ask for donations to fund their project. Their goal was to raise $15,000, which they surpassed with the help of 347 backers.26

SSBx could help ensure the financial sustainability of an urban farm that it incubates by utilizing a for-profit model. Of course, such an effort would have to be organizationally distinct from SSBx, which is a nonprofit. The Brooklyn Grange rooftop farm in New York and the Somerton Tank Farm in Philadelphia are prime examples of successful for-profit urban farms.

After Hurricane Katrina ripped through New Orleans, 40,000 public and private properties were left vacant or blighted – and food security was acutely low. The New Orleans Redevelopment Authority (NORA) stepped in with their Growing Green Program in May of 2014. This program allows people to apply for use of public land for urban agriculture as long as it improves neighborhood stability, fosters neighborhood safety and sustainability, makes fresh produce available, and/or promotes a general sense of community.

URBAN AGRICULTURE IN NEW ORLEANS

In Somerton, a neighborhood in northeast Philadelphia, a small half acre of land sandwiched between two large water towers provides communities not only with a cash award, but tools and resources for gardening and farming, direct from their own online tool company.25

The farm could be developed in partnership with other local CBOs working in this area. Grassroots initiatives have already emerged to attempt to fill the food gap in the South Bronx. In June 2013, the BLK ProJek launched the South Bronx Mobile Food Market,31 “a former school bus running on used veggie oil,” in order to “provide local, mostly organic produce to South Bronx Communities.”29 As of January 2015, the organization was fundraising the costs of launching Libertad Urban Farm on land for which they acquired a license, just outside of Hunts Point on Fox Street between 156th St. and Leggett Ave.

For urban agriculture, as long as it increases local food production, farmers’ markets, CSAs and other food assistance programs have been established.

The farm could provide skills training for local residents and they could sell their produce at many different green and farmers’ markets and CSAs, as well as providing restaurants and stores. Further, while this is a recommendation for a for-profit model, the farm could also provide affordable food to those in need. They could use their profits to subsidize a weekly food bag for low-income residents of Hunts Point, similar to the Good Food Program in Seattle.

There are also many federal, state and city programs to assist communities in the remediation of contaminated land. The NYC OER has two grants available for Community Planning Districts. The first is the Brownfield Opportunity Area Match Grant, which provides communities in need with 10 percent of the funds, or a maximum of $25,000.24 This allows the grantee the freedom to focus on the development plan for remediation, and relieve some of the financial strain on the organization. The second grant aids the organization with a maximum of $5,000 for technical assistance. This assistance can come in the form of a professional grant writer who can develop a strong proposal, thereby improving the organization’s chance of receiving funding for their remediation plan. Both of these grants are part of the NYC Brownfield Incentive Grant Program, which was created to help reduce the costs of remediation efforts and redevelopment of land.

Crowdfunding within communities for urban agriculture is also a popular option. A local Hunts Point organization could set up a Kickstarter or IOBY (In Our Back Yard) account, an online resource that connects people and money to neighborhood based projects. This account could be used to raise money for plot purchase or farming materials. Since the site is available globally, people all over the world are able to contribute. The Stone’s Throw Urban Farm in Minneapolis, Minnesota feared it would not get a small business loan, they took to Kickstarter to ask for donations to fund their project. Their goal was to raise $15,000, which they surpassed with the help of 347 backers.25

SSBx could help ensure the financial sustainability of an urban farm that it incubates by utilizing a for-profit model. Of course, such an effort would have to be organizationally distinct from SSBx, which is a nonprofit. The Brooklyn Grange rooftop farm in New York and the Somerton Tank Farm in Philadelphia are prime examples of successful for-profit urban farms.

After Hurricane Katrina ripped through New Orleans, 40,000 public and private properties were left vacant or blighted – and food security was acute. The New Orleans Redevelopment Authority (NORA) stepped in with their Growing Green Program in May of 2014. This program allows people to apply for use of public land for urban agriculture as long as it improves neighborhood stability, fosters neighborhood safety and sustainability, makes fresh produce available, and/or promotes a general sense of community.

URBAN AGRICULTURE IN NEW ORLEANS

In Somerton, a neighborhood in northeast Philadelphia, a small half acre of land sandwiched between two large water towers provides communities not only with a cash award, but tools and resources for gardening and farming, direct from their own online tool company.25

The farm could be developed in partnership with other local CBOs working in this area. Grassroots initiatives have already emerged to attempt to fill the food gap in the South Bronx. In June 2013, the BLK ProJek launched the South Bronx Mobile Food Market,31 “a former school bus running on used veggie oil,” in order to “provide local, mostly organic produce to South Bronx Communities.”29 As of January 2015, the organization was fundraising the costs of launching Libertad Urban Farm on land for which they acquired a license, just outside of Hunts Point on Fox Street between 156th St. and Leggett Ave.

The farm could provide skills training for local residents and they could sell their produce at many different green and farmers’ markets and CSAs, as well as providing restaurants and stores. Further, while this is a recommendation for a for-profit model, the farm could also provide affordable food to those in need. They could use their profits to subsidize a weekly food bag for low-income residents of Hunts Point, similar to the Good Food Program in Seattle.

PHILADELPHIA: SOMERTON TANK FARM

There are also many federal, state and city programs to assist communities in the remediation of contaminated land. The NYC OER has two grants available for Community Planning Districts. The first is the Brownfield Opportunity Area Match Grant, which provides communities in need with 10 percent of the funds, or a maximum of $25,000.24 This allows the grantee the freedom to focus on the development plan for remediation, and relieve some of the financial strain on the organization. The second grant aids the organization with a maximum of $5,000 for technical assistance. This assistance can come in the form of a professional grant writer who can develop a strong proposal, thereby improving the organization’s chance of receiving funding for their remediation plan. Both of these grants are part of the NYC Brownfield Incentive Grant Program, which was created to help reduce the costs of remediation efforts and redevelopment of land.

PARTNERSHIPS AND PROGRAMMING

The farm could be developed in partnership with other local CBOs working in this area. Grassroots initiatives have already emerged to attempt to fill the food gap in the South Bronx. In June 2013, the BLK ProJek launched the South Bronx Mobile Food Market,31 “a former school bus running on used veggie oil,” in order to “provide local, mostly organic produce to South Bronx Communities.”29 As of January 2015, the organization was fundraising the costs of launching Libertad Urban Farm on land for which they acquired a license, just outside of Hunts Point on Fox Street between 156th St. and Leggett Ave.

The farm could provide skills training for local residents and they could sell their produce at many different green and farmers’ markets and CSAs, as well as providing restaurants and stores. Further, while this is a recommendation for a for-profit model, the farm could also provide affordable food to those in need. They could use their profits to subsidize a weekly food bag for low-income residents of Hunts Point, similar to the Good Food Program in Seattle.
SEATTLE: THE GOOD FOOD BAG

The Seattle Tilth, a nonprofit farming organization that focuses on urban food systems and organic farming, developed the Good Food Bag program, which provides a bag of healthy and affordable produce for the people in the community who need it most. Using fresh produce from partnering educational farms in the area, the Good Food Bag program is able to keep the price of the bag to $5, making it affordable to anyone in need. Each bag is full of foods from the local harvest, consisting of a variety of vegetables, fruits, and herbs, along with a healthy recipe to encourage healthy eating habits at home.33

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

SSBx can also investigate if their urban agriculture project would be suitable for a green infrastructure site. As a waterfront community, Hunts Point is at risk for flooding during inclement weather. Urban agriculture can be used as a mitigation strategy to combat flooding to the area with green infrastructure or restoration of wetlands. To protect the coastline community, a network of resilient urban agriculture projects could be established. Urban farms and community gardens with salt tolerant, flood-proof, and wind resistant vegetation, would naturally armor the shoreline by creating floodable and resilient urban agriculture sites.

The Rainier Urban Farm and Wetlands project provides a model for this type of development. In partnership with the non-profit Seattle Tilth, this farm and wetlands was created to address food access issues, provide green infrastructure, and restore the local wetlands in Seattle. By transforming a former underutilized plant nursery, an urban farm was built to provide produce to the low income community in need, as well as green infrastructure to the area.29 This 10 acre urban farm traps, stores and reuses excess rainwater from the area, reducing the risk of flooding to the residential community it borders. This farm also incorporates a demonstration wetlands restoration site that looks to preserve and enhance the habitat and its wildlife.

FRESH FOOD INCENTIVES FOR BODEGAS

The food vendor survey that the team conducted, shows that there are 19 bodegas/delis and one supermarket in Hunts Point. Because of this, many residents rely on bodegas and delis to fulfill their daily food and grocery needs. The food access questionnaire showed that, of respondents who do their food shopping in Hunts Point, over half often do so at bodegas and delis — which often do not carry fresh and healthy food or produce. Helping bodegas and delis stock their stores with fresh, healthy, affordable food can help improve access to these necessities.

Therefore, the team proposes that SSBx advocate for an increase in fresh food incentives for bodegas and delis in Hunts Point and other neighborhoods facing similar issues. Financial concerns are often paramount for bodega owners and therefore financial incentives and subsidies play a large role in encouraging owners to carry healthy food. Incentives can facilitate access to healthy food relatively quickly, without the construction of a new supermarket. These can be combined with existing programs currently underway in New York City, outlined below, which could benefit from increased funding and focus in Hunts Point.

ACTION STEPS

In order to develop fresh food incentives for bodegas in Hunts Point, the studio team recommends that SSBx follow the steps outlined below:

• Speak with and/or survey bodega and deli owners to better understand their current options and what incentives would help them carry more fresh and healthy food
• Advocate for the city to provide additional incentives to bodega and deli owners and to designate a local nonprofit organization to administer the program
• Assume the role of local administrator of the program or designate another nonprofit to fill this position
There are programs already underway in New York that seek to encourage the owners of bodegas and delis to carry healthier food options. However, these programs are not always effective in the long term. In order to establish more consistent aid and support for small business owners, it may be more effective to use some of the money from these existing programs to fund local administrators in targeted neighborhoods with the need for more healthy food options, such as Hunts Point. The nonprofit would be able to establish a relationship with the many bodega and deli owners in the neighborhood, offering consistent support over many years. This nonprofit could also help coordinate grants and donations, and administer them in a more targeted and effective fashion.

The team recommends that SSBy advocate both for grants to be made available for bodega and deli owners who agree to carry healthier food options, and that SSBy or another local nonprofit take on the role of the local administrator of the program. These can be purely financial grants, or various forms of store improvement grants. Local nonprofits can be employed to assist in making improvements to the landscaping, facade, or interior of the business, much like the Good Neighbor Program in San Francisco. Outside of financial grants, donations of fresh food and vegetables, as well as assisting people to access fresh food and produce qualifying it as a food desert. In 2002, the Good Neighbor Program in San Francisco partnered with the San Francisco Dept. of Public Health to tackle the problem of food deserts at a local level. They created the Good Neighbor Program, a program that encourages local residents to carry fresh, healthy food options for the community by offering incentives, such as renovating the facade of businesses, in exchange for merchants carrying produce or food in their stores. The overarching goal was to establish a more sustainable food system in which local merchants and residents that benefit everyone. With profits for farmers and merchants up and access to fresh food for residents increasing, the Good Neighbor Program has had a profound impact on the community. It put forth a bill to introduce a statewide pilot program called “Healthy Food Ventures” to incentivize local grocery stores to carry fresh fruits and vegetables, as well as assisting food stamp recipients in purchasing these products.

Given the issues of connectivity in Hunts Point, the studio team recommends that SSBy advocate for and undertake placemaking and design interventions among spaces in the area as follows: “Placemaking is more than how we design public spaces — it is a means by which people are collectively and intentionally shaping their environment and building deep and lasting community ties. Placemaking turns our approaches to land use, transportation, governance and the environment upside-down by asking people what they fundamentally need in a public space and empowering them to be a part of the development process.” To this end, simple, community-led design interventions can yield significant impact.

The Hunts Point Studio team recommends that SSBy advocate for and help to implement wayfinding signage to improve connectivity to parks; physical barriers and increased signage to prevent trucks from using non-truck routes; and increased community monitoring and engagement around the issues of truck traffic and truck idling. These placemaking and design interventions will help local residents take control of their streets, improving connectivity and creating a better sense of place. To that effect, they will also have the added benefits of increasing safety on the streets and beautifying the neighborhood.

ACTION STEPS
In order to implement placemaking and design interventions in Hunts Point, the studio team recommends that SSBy follow the steps outlined below:
• Bring these recommendations to the community to get their feedback
• Organize a day of guerrilla placemaking where community members can use chalk to make welcome signs and create signage on non-truck routes
• Organize volunteers to monitor truck traffic on non-truck routes and record data to aid in advocacy efforts
• Bring these recommendations to the city and advocate for implementation
• Seek private foundation support to fund some of these initiatives

PROGRAMMING AND PARTNERSHIPS

PLACEMAKING AND DESIGN INTERVENTIONS //
SECURING FUNDING

There are a number of resources where one can find funding for placemaking. Project for Public Places is a nonprofit organization that provides funding and training for placemaking projects, and which is holding an intensive two-and-a-half day training workshop in the fall of 2015 in New York City. This could provide an excellent opportunity for SSBx to share their own ideas, as well as learn from others.42

Artplace America is another potential funding source. Although they are not offering grants in the New York City region in 2015, it has provided funding to this region in the past and is still a valuable resource for research and ideas that SSBx should keep an eye on as this organization has a proven track record of helping blighted communities transform through art.43

These two potential funding sources are just the tip of the iceberg, so it is recommended that further research be done, possibly beginning with The National Associations of Realtors and the National Endowment of the Arts, both of which provide funding through grant programs for projects both big and small.44 45

More information can be found through their websites (for which a link can be found in the endnotes).

TRUCK ROUTE INTERVENTIONS: SIGNAGE AND PHYSICAL BARRIERS

Current signage in the neighborhood that indicates that truck traffic is prohibited should be enhanced in order to encourage community reporting. The enhanced signs should include a map of neighborhood truck routes, how to report idling or trucks using non-truck routes, and a list of fines for idling.

The work of the Pacific Institute in Oakland is instructive -- the group partnered with the community to employ residents to count trucks and develop recommendations for mitigating the negative impacts of this traffic. These recommendations include placing planters to stop trucks from going down residential streets and better signage to indicate where the truck routes are located.

Any barriers should be strategically placed to optimize traffic flows. Based on data from Vision Zero on accidents and fatalities in Hunts Point, the team recommends key corridors and spot locations where planters or other barriers could mitigate unsafe traffic conditions. These include locations along the entrances to the neighborhood on the Bruckner Expressway, such as at Hunts Point Avenue, Longwood, Leggett, Thrusult, Baretto, Tiffany, Edgewater, and Bryant Avenues. Leggett Avenue between the Bruckner Expressway and Randall Avenue has also been identified as a high accident corridor, along with Hunts Point Avenue between the Bruckner Expressway and East Bay Avenue. Vision Zero reports also show a need for mitigation along Spofford, Randall, and Oak Point Avenues, as well as around Joseph Rodman Drake Park, specifically at the intersections of Longfellow and Oak Point Avenues and the corner of Hunts Point Avenue and Whittier Street. It is recommended that this information be used to strategically place planters throughout the neighborhood to impede on the trucks ability to use non-truck routes, while also increasing pedestrian safety.46

DESIGN AND ADVOCACY INTERVENTIONS

WAYFINDING SIGNAGE

The group recommends that SSBx spearhead an effort to develop wayfinding signage and beautification to help improve visibility and access to parks and cultivate a sense of place. This could include signage to indicate park locations and culturally relevant “Welcome to Hunts Point” signs, making it easier for residents and visitors to locate the parks. Local artists and community-based organizations could produce such signage. Placement of these welcome to the neighborhood signs or murals would be useful at the many entrances to Hunts Point.

In the long term, the group encourages SSBx to advocate for more green and complete streets, such as Lafayette Avenue, which could be achieved via central medians, vegetation and bioswales. This would be particularly useful on streets that lead to parks, such as Tiffany Avenue.

In truck route interventions: signage and physical barriers, the group recommends that SSBx spearhead an effort to develop wayfinding signage and beautification to help improve visibility and access to parks and cultivate a sense of place. This could include signage to indicate park locations and culturally relevant “Welcome to Hunts Point” signs, making it easier for residents and visitors to locate the parks. Local artists and community-based organizations could produce such signage. Placement of these welcome to the neighborhood signs or murals would be useful at the many entrances to Hunts Point.
Oakland, CA is home to one of the largest ports in the nation, bringing a heavy burden of truck traffic through its residential neighborhoods. The region suffers from a range of health problems, including high rates of cancer and asthma. Pacific Institute partnered with the community to develop a study and recommendations for mitigating the negative health impacts from truck traffic. The study assessed where trucks were idling and the air quality conditions, finding that trucks were idling for hundreds of hours per day and traveling on residential streets. The study was able to map key areas of idling and idling conditions were significantly worse than in the city as a whole. The Institute then developed a list of short and long-term recommendations to achieve these primary goals of: reducing the impact of trucks, reducing diesel emissions, and improving community health.

### Recommendations

- Develop electric charging stations where trucks are currently idling
- Design street-level regulations
- Prohibit trucks from overnight parking on residential streets
- Create a community monitoring program
- Advocacy

### Alternatives to Idling

In the long term, SSBSx should consider advocating for an electric charging station for idling trucks, which could be useful in improving residential air quality. This was presented in the Harris Point Vision plan and should be considered for all future truck parking lots. It could greatly reduce idling, which is an issue not only for air quality, but for public health. It could reduce noise damages to homes and waste significant amounts out fuel. Given the issue of limited large spaces in Harris Point, these stations equipped with electrification systems, could be built to smaller scales at the periphery of the distribution center.

---

**Section Endnotes**


12. Ibid.

13. Ibid.

14. Ibid.


30. Ibid.


42. Project for Public Spaces, Past Events, May 19th, 2015, http://www.pps.org/training/PPSProjects/PPSProjects_Events


CONCLUSION

Hunts Point has received a lot of attention as a low-income community of color with a long history of environmental justice issues. Noxious land uses abound, sourced from the largest wastewater treatment facility in the city, a high concentration of polluting industries and the nine active waste transfer stations in the neighborhood. The Hunts Point Food Distribution Center, the largest of its kind in the US, provides a vital resource for the New York Metropolitan region, but it also relies on thousands of daily truck loads, which make their way up and down the local streets of Hunts Point, impinging upon the journeys of pedestrians and cyclists. Noxious land uses and heavy truck traffic have led to severe health issues, with key indicators showing that Hunts Point residents suffer disproportionately from diabetes, heart disease and asthma, with rates often more than double NYC averages. These negative public health impacts are further exacerbated by a lack of access to healthy, fresh and affordable food. While Hunts Point is a hub for jobs, the unemployment rate among residents is alarmingly high and thousands of jobs on the peninsula are not strongly connected to the local workforce.

While the challenges are plentiful, the studio team chose to focus on opportunities, because great communities are created from leveraging existing assets and resources. Hunts Point is home to a vibrant resident population, a plethora of indoor and outdoor community spaces and vibrant nonprofits and community based organizations. The social capital is high and the team chose to focus on how they could benefit this community with their knowledge and skills, while providing lasting resources that the community could use and build upon for years to come.

Given the many past plans and studies of the neighborhood, the Hunts Point Studio team also looked for ways to make a unique contribution. Early on, the team decided to focus on small scale interventions to improve quality of life for Hunts Point Residents. This work centered on three core areas: increasing connectivity on the peninsula so that residents could access key amenities, including open space and community centers; improving access to healthy and affordable food; and transforming vacant spaces into neighborhood amenities.

The team connected with residents early on in formal and informal conversations, went out on numerous field visits to observe the conditions in Hunts Point and scoured existing data and past plans to gain a comprehensive understanding of the neighborhood. The Hunts Point Studio was driven by a strong desire to make recommendations that grew out of public processes and community visions. The recommendations in this report are ones that SSBx can begin to act on or advocate for in the short term, alone or in partnership with other local organizations, community groups and/or relevant City agencies. These recommendations are all within the reach of grant funding and 1-5 year timelines — avoiding the multi-million dollar projects and 20 year visions for the future, which while valuable and essential, must exist in tandem with short-term interventions. Positive change can happen now. Small steps in the near future can lead to large scale transformation in the long term.

As civil rights activist Marian Wright Edelman once said:

“We must not, in trying to think about how we can make a big difference, ignore the small daily differences we can make which, over time, add up to big differences that we often cannot foresee.”
## VACANT LOT AND BUILDING SURVEY SHEET

**Date** ______________ **Surveyor Name** __________________________ Circle One: **BUILDING / LOT**

**Street Address** __________________________ **Borough/Neighborhood** __________________________

*If address is not visible, note side streets & addresses of nearby buildings—in regard to the building, i.e.: Smith St. between 3rd & 4th Ave; 2 houses from the left of 428 Smith St*

**Map #** __________ **Block** _______ **Lot** ________

Please record as much information as possible about all vacant buildings:

- **# Of Stories** __ Commercial Space? **Y / N**  **# Of Commercial Stories** __ Active Commercial Space? **Y / N**
- **Official Condemned Signage** __ **Boarded Windows** __ **Boarded Doors** __
- **Unkempt Yard (i.e. overgrown grass)** __ **Chained and locked fence** __

Please record as much information as possible about all vacant lots:

- **Waste on lot** **Y / N**  If Yes, Is all Waste in Dumpsters? **Y / N**
- **Advertising, Signage** **Y / N**  If yes, type and contact info: ____________________________

Is lot used by adjacent lot’s business? ______ Is lot used as a community use (i.e. community garden)? ______

Notes: ____________________________

## FOOD AND PARK ACCESS QUESTIONNAIRE (ENGLISH)

The Hunts Point Studio is a group of Urban Planning Graduate students from Hunter College. Their mission is to promote environmental justice and improve quality of life for residents and workers, through a community based planning process. This survey is designed to get your opinions about access to food, parks and open space in Hunts Point. Please take your time and answer as accurately as possible. Your answers are anonymous.

For all of the questions below, please circle only ONE answer to each question, unless the question says “check all that apply”.

### Where and how you get your food

1. Where do you go food shopping most often?
   - Hunts Point (East of the Bruckner)
   - Morrisania
   - Longwood
   - Other

2. Where do you get your food most often? (Check all that apply)
   - Grocery store
   - Bodega/Deli
   - Farmers market
   - CSA
   - Community Garden
   - Food pantry
   - Other

3. Why do you get your food there? (Check all that apply)
   - It is affordable
   - It is easy to travel there
   - It has good quality food
   - It has everything I need
   - Other

4. How do you usually travel to go food shopping? (Check all that apply)
   - Walk
   - Bike
   - Bus
   - Subway
   - Car service/Taxi
   - Access-a-ride
   - Other

---

The Hunts Point Studio is a group of Urban Planning Graduate students from Hunter College. Their mission is to promote environmental justice and improve quality of life for residents and workers, through a community based planning process. This survey is designed to get your opinions about access to food, parks and open space in Hunts Point. Please take your time and answer as accurately as possible. Your answers are anonymous.

For all of the questions below, please circle only ONE answer to each question, unless the question says “check all that apply”.

### Where and how you get your food

1. Where do you go food shopping most often?
   - Hunts Point (East of the Bruckner)
   - Morrisania
   - Longwood
   - Other

2. Where do you get your food most often? (Check all that apply)
   - Grocery store
   - Bodega/Deli
   - Farmers market
   - CSA
   - Community Garden
   - Food pantry
   - Other

3. Why do you get your food there? (Check all that apply)
   - It is affordable
   - It is easy to travel there
   - It has good quality food
   - It has everything I need
   - Other

4. How do you usually travel to go food shopping? (Check all that apply)
   - Walk
   - Bike
   - Bus
   - Subway
   - Car service/Taxi
   - Access-a-ride
   - Other
5. Roughly how long does it take you to get there from where you live?
☐ Less than 15 minutes  ☐ 15-30 minutes  ☐ 30-45 minutes  ☐ more than 45 minutes

6. On a scale of 1-10, rank the ease or difficulty of going food shopping.
(Please circle one number)
(easy) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (difficult)

7. What would make it easier to go food shopping? (Check all that apply)
☐ It is already easy
☐ If groceries were more affordable
☐ If the grocery store was closer to where I live
☐ Better public transportation
☐ If I had more time to go grocery shopping
☐ If the streets on the way to the grocery store were safer
☐ Other _______________________

8. On a scale of 1-10, rank the ease or difficulty of buying fresh fruits and vegetables.
(Please circle one number)
(easy) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (difficult)

9. What do you think would make it easier for you to buy fresh fruits and vegetables? (Check all that apply)
☐ It is already easy
☐ More fruits and vegetables at existing stores
☐ More locations to shop for fruits and vegetables
☐ More affordable prices
☐ Better public transportation
☐ More CSA/Fresh produce program drop off points
☐ Other _______________________

10. How often do you eat a meal that was cooked at home?
☐ Almost every day
☐ 2-3 times a week
☐ About once a week
☐ A couple of times a month
☐ I don’t eat meals cooked at home

11. What makes cooking at home difficult? (Check all that apply)
☐ It is not difficult
☐ Cooking takes too much time
☐ Cooking is too expensive
☐ Grocery shopping is difficult
☐ It is difficult to find ingredients
☐ Lack of knowledge/Interest in cooking
☐ Unsure

12. In the past year, did you shop at an outdoor farmers market in Hunts Point?
☐ YES ☐ NO

13. Have you ever grown your own fruits and vegetables?
☐ No, I have never
☐ Yes, I have, but I don’t currently
☐ Yes, I currently grow fruits and vegetables
☐ No, but I would like to

14. Which park do you visit most often?
☐ I don’t visit any of the parks (Please skip to question 16)
☐ Barretto Point Park
☐ Hunts Point Riverside Park
☐ Hunts Point Playground
☐ Joseph Rodman Drake Park
☐ Manida Park (Julio Carballo Ballfields/Hunts Point Rec. Center)
☐ Hunts Point Landing
☐ Other _______________________

15. How often do you go to this park?
☐ Almost every day
☐ About once a week
☐ Once or twice a month
☐ A few times a year

16. How do you usually travel to this park? (Check all that apply)
☐ Walk  ☐ Bike  ☐ Bus  ☐ Subway  ☐ Car service/Taxi  ☐ Access-a-ride  ☐ Other _______________________

17. Parks/Connectivity
17. What stops you from going to the parks in Hunts Point more often? (Check all that apply)
- Nothing, I go to the park a lot
- I don’t know where the parks are
- The parks are too far away
- There are no activities in the park that I want to participate in
- I have to walk down streets where I feel unsafe
- I feel unsafe in the parks
- The parks are dirty or poorly maintained
- Other ________________________________

18. What do you think would make it easier for you to visit parks in Hunts Point? (Check all that apply)
- It is already easy
- I don’t want to go to visit the parks
- If I knew where the parks were
- If I had more free time
- If there were more transportation options (bus, subway, etc.)
- If the streets on the way to the park were safer
- If the parks were safer
- If there were more events/programs
- If there was more equipment/facilities
- Other ________________________________

Demographics
19. Age
- 10-19
- 20-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- 60-69
- 70-79
- 80 years or over

20. Gender
- Male
- Female
- I’d prefer not to answer
- Other ________________________________

21. Ethnicity
- White
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latino
- American Indian or Native Alaskan
- Asian
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- Other ________________________________

22. Primary language spoken at home
- English
- Spanish
- Other ________________________________

23. How long have you lived in Hunts Point?
- I don’t live in Hunts Point
- 0-5 years
- 5-10 years
- 10-20 years
- 20+ years
- “My whole life”

Follow-up
24. Would you like us to share the results of this survey with you?
- YES
- NO
If so, please provide your email address: _______________________________________

Thank you for your participation!
Hunts Point Studio es un grupo de estudiantes urbanos graduados de Hunter College. Su misión es promover la justicia ambiental y la calidad de vida para residentes y trabajadores basado en la comunidad y en un proceso de planeamiento.

La encuesta está diseñada para obtener su opinión sobre el acceso a la comida, parques y espacios abiertos en Hunts Point. Por favor, tómese su tiempo y responda con la mayor precisión posible. Sus preguntas son anónimas.

1. Abóndé y cómo te obtienes tu comida?
   - Cuando vas de compra, donde vas más seguido?
     - Hunts Point (Este de el Bruckner)
     - Morrisania
     - Longwood
     - Otro ______________________________

2. Donde compras tu alimento? (marque todo lo que corresponda)
   - Supermercado
   - Bodega/Deli
   - Mercado de Productores
   - CSA
   - Huerto de la Comunidad
   - Despensa
   - Otro  _________________

3. Porque compras tu alimento allí? (marque todo lo que corresponda.)
   - Es asequible
   - Es fácil viajar allí
   - Tiene comida de calidad
   - Tiene todo lo que necesito
   - Otro ______________________________

4. En general, como viaja para ir hacer compra? (marque todo lo que corresponda)
   - Camina
   - Bicicleta
   - Bus
   - Tren
   - Servicio de Coche/Taxi
   - Access-a-ride
   - Otro _______________

5. Con qué frecuencia come una comida que fue preparado en casa?
   - Todos los días
   - 2-3 veces a la semana
   - Una vez de la semana
   - Una par de veces al mes
   - No como comidas cocinadas en casa

¿Cuando le viene bien llegar a su destino de donde vive?
- Menos de 15 minutos
- 15-30 minutos
- 30-45 minutos
- Más de 45 minutos

6. En una escala de 1-10, clasificar la facilidad o dificultad de ir de compras de alimentos. (Dibujar un círculo alrededor de uno)
   - (fácil) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (dificil)

7. ¿Que haría más fácil para ir de compras de alimentos? (marque todo lo que corresponda)
   - Ya es facil
   - Si comida era más asequibles
   - Si el supermercado estaba más cerca de donde vivo
   - Mejor transporte público
   - Si tuviera más tiempo para ir de compras
   - Si existen otras alternativas

8. En una escala de 1-10, clasificar la facilidad o dificultad de comprar frutas y verduras frescas (Dibujar un círculo alrededor de uno)
   - (fácil) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (dificil)

9. ¿Qué crees que haría más fácil para usted para comprar frutas y verduras frescas? (marque todo lo que corresponda)
   - Ya es facil
   - Más frutas y verduras en las tiendas existentes
   - Más lugares para hacer compras para las frutas y verduras
   - Precios más asequibles
   - Más puntos de CSA / programa de productos frescos
   - Mejor transporte público
   - Otro ______________________________

10. Con qué frecuencia come una comida que fue preparado en casa?
     - Todos los días
     - 2-3 veces a la semana
     - Una vez de la semana
     - Una par de veces al mes
     - No como comidas cocinadas en casa
11. Que hace cocinar en casa difícil? (marque todo lo que corresponda)
- No es difícil
- Cocinar toma mucho tiempo
- Cocinar es muy caro
- Compras es difícil
- Es difícil encontrar ingredientes
- La falta de conocimiento / interés en la cocina
- No estoy Seguro(a)

12. En el último año, usted hace compras en un mercado de agricultores al aire libre en Hunts Point?
- Sí
- NO

13. Alguna vez han crecido sus propias frutas y verduras?
- Nunca
- Sí, pero no lo hago actualmente
- Sí, cultivo frutas y verduras
- No, pero me gustaría

14. Que Parque visita más seguido?
- Y o no visito cualquiera de los parques (Por favor pase a la pregunta 16)
- Barretto Point Park
- Hunts Point Riverside Park
- Hunts Point Playground
- Joseph Rodman Drake Park
- Mandala Park (Julio Carballo Ballfields/Hunts Point Rec. Center)
- Hunts Point Landing
- Otro ______________________

15. Con qué frecuencia vas a este parque?
- Casi todo los días
- Una vez a la semana
- Una o dos veces al mes
- Una veces al año

16. Como viaja al parque? (marque todo lo que corresponda)
- Caminar
- Bicicleta
- Bus
- Metro
- Servicio de Coche/Taxi
- Access-a-ride
- Otro ______________________

17. Qué te impide ir a los parques en Hunts Point con más frecuencia? (marque todo lo que corresponda)
- Nada, voy al parque mucho
- No sé dónde los parques son
- Los parques están demasiado lejos
- No hay actividades en el parque que quiero participar en
- Tengo que caminar por las calles donde me siento seguro(a)
- Me siento seguro(a) en los parques
- Los parques están sucios o mal mantenidos
- Otro ______________________

18. Qué crees que haría más fácil para usted visitar los parques en Hunts Point? (marque todo lo que corresponda)
- Ya es fácil
- Si supiera donde los parques eran
- Si tuviera más tiempo libre
- Si hubiera más opciones de transporte (bus, metro, etc.)
- Si los parques estaban más cerca
- Si las calles en el camino hacia el parque eran más seguros
- Si los parques estaban más seguros
- Si hubiera más eventos/programas
- Otro ______________________

Demografía

19. Edad
- 10-19
- 20-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- 60-69
- 70-79
- 80 y más

20. Género
- Masculino
- Femenino
- Prefiero no contestar
- Otro ______________________
21. Etnia
- Blanco
- Negro o Afroamericano
- Hispanos o Latino
- Indio Americano o Nativo de Alaska
- Asiático
- Nativo de Hawái o Islas del Pacífico
- Otro ______________

22. Idioma principal que se habla en casa
- Ingles
- Español
- Otro ______________

23. Cuánto tiempo ha vivido en Hunts Point?
- Yo no vivo en Hunts Point
- 0-5 año
- 5-10 año
- 10-20 año
- 20+ año
- “Todo mi vida.”

Seguimiento

24. Nos gustaría compartir los resultados de esta encuesta con usted?
- Sí
- NO

Si es así, por favor proporcione su email:

____________________________________________

Gracias por su participación!