

JEROME AVENUE NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

Process & Planning

- The Department of City Planning (DCP) is working closely with sister agencies & offices:
 - Department of Housing, Preservation & Development (HPD)
 - Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR)
 - Department of Transportation (DOT)
 - Department of Small Business Services (SBS)
 - Department of Health (DOH)
 - Mayor's Office of Environmental Remediation
 - Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs
 - Mayor's Office of Workforce Development, among others

- DCP began robust public outreach in the fall of 2014. This included:
 - Small group meetings and roundtables
 - Open houses
 - Data gathering / analysis
 - Issues and opportunities identification
 - Consensus building and goal-setting workshops
 - Visioning sessions
 - Summer 2016 outreach and prioritization exercises
 - Summer 2017 outreach: draft strategies and recommendation

- Through the process, DCP, along with community and stakeholder input, identified goals for the following themes:
 - **Land Use and Zoning**
 - Create zoning districts conducive to fulfilling the vision of the Jerome Avenue Corridor
 - Focus distinct nodes of density in appropriate locations (residential and commercial)
 - Leave strategic areas zoned for current uses
 - **Housing**
 - Provide sustainable, high-quality, affordable housing with a range of options for residents at all income levels
 - Protect tenants and improve housing quality
 - **Jobs and Businesses**
 - Create greater retail diversity to meet current and growing retail and service needs
 - Help Jerome Avenue residents prepare for jobs and career growth with appropriate training and skills development

- Support auto-related businesses and workers
- Promote small businesses and support entrepreneurship throughout the corridor
- **Community Resources**
 - Meet the educational, health and service needs of the community, especially youth and seniors
 - Improve quality of life and health of the neighborhood
- **Parks, Open Space, and Transportation**
 - Guarantee every neighborhood has green streetscapes, quality parks and diverse recreation spaces
 - Ensure that residents are within a ten-minute walk to a park
 - Promote a safe, walkable Jerome Avenue underneath the elevated train
 - Make sure the streets are safe and attractive for everyone
- Through the goal-setting and visioning, recommendations on strategies to achieve those goals were drafted:
 - Increase opportunities for affordable housing development at major intersections of wide streets and along prominent corridors
 - Map Mandatory inclusionary Housing (MIH), ensuring a portion of all development remain permanently affordable
 - Buildings along the elevated line will range from 11 stories to 16 stories, and allow up to 19 stories in limited, strategic locations
 - Added height will result in more desirable 1st and 2nd story uses, encouraging a mix of commercial businesses and community facilities to locate along the corridor in mixed-use buildings
 - Investments in affordable housing preservation and development
 - Increased tenant support and protection
 - Workforce development and skills training
 - Map a full commercial district at Burnside and Tremont Avenues, providing opportunities for commercial and mixed-use development
 - Nearly \$1 million in grants to local organizations WHEDco and the Davidson Community Center to implement recommendations of the Jerome Avenue Commercial District Needs Assessment
 - Comprehensive streetscape improvements underneath the elevated rail
 - Enhancements to promote pedestrian safety as well as streetscape and open space improvements at the Jerome Avenue and Cross Bronx Expressway interchange
 - Improvements to the Grand Concourse underpasses and step streets throughout the corridor

- Improvements to, and the expansion and creation of, parkland throughout the study area

Affordable Housing/Preservation

- Recently, the Dept. of Housing, Preservation and Development (HPD) revised its [Extremely Low & Low-Income Affordability program](#), increasing the number of units going to the lower-income population. Now, 45% of units through ELLA will reach those making 50% of the Area Median Income or below, including 10% dedicated to formerly homeless households.
- Since 2014, HPD has financed the preservation of more than 4,500 affordable units, as well as the construction of 1,500 new affordable units, in Community Districts 4 and 5.
- The City will continue to provide free legal representation to tenants and use the Tenant Harassment Prevention Task Force to protect tenants in these neighborhoods.
- HPD will soon be launching its Landlord Ambassadors Program, in which local groups like Northwest Bronx Community Clergy Coalition connect building owners with preservation programs.

Economic Opportunities

- Zoning changes are expected to generate approximately 72,200 square feet of increased community facility space and 35,600 square feet of new commercial/retail space. It would promote a wider range of commercial uses along Jerome Avenue, 167th Street, 170th Street, Mt. Eden Avenue, Burnside Avenue, 183rd Street and Edward L. Grant Highway.
- All new developments in commercial districts will be required to provide active uses on the ground floor. The areas of Burnside and Tremont Avenues that are included in the proposal will be permitted to build slightly larger buildings with a wider range of uses to serve the surrounding neighborhoods.
- Local non-profit organizations will be utilizing nearly \$1 million in grants over three years from the Department of Small Business Services (SBS) to strengthen local commercial corridors by cleaning sidewalks, increasing foot traffic and safety, reducing storefront vacancies and creating activated public spaces.
- SBS's Neighborhood 360° initiative awarded funds to the Davidson Community Center and to the Women's Housing and Economic Development Corporation, complementing the City's focus on Jerome Avenue.

- The City has established support centers on Fordham Road through which local small businesses and jobseekers can seek assistance as needed. SBS' NYC Business Solutions Center offers free business courses in multiple languages, access to financing assistance and incentives, recruitment services, employee training and more. Since 2015, the NYC Business Solutions Center based in Fordham has served 3,438 unique customers.
- SBS' Workforce1 Career Centers connect qualified candidates to job opportunities and offer services including career advisement, resume and interview workshops, in-demand occupational training, and recruitment events for available positions. In 2016 alone, SBS' Workforce1 Career Centers connected 4,200 Bronx residents to jobs.
- To successfully connect local small businesses and jobseekers to the services they need to succeed, SBS has worked alongside community partners to hold information sessions and recruitment events on the Jerome Avenue corridor for citywide job opportunities. Credit building education programs, pro-bono legal assistance, financial counseling and facilitating access to capital has also all been made possible through community partnerships.

Infrastructure Investments:

- DOT is improving safety underneath the elevated train by building out bus stops under-the-EI at a number of intersections along Jerome Avenue. Passengers will now have a refuge to wait for bus arrivals and deboard safely and securely.
- DOT has an upcoming pedestrian improvement project at Jerome Avenue and the Cross Bronx Expressway interchange. New, high visibility crosswalks, additional pedestrian crossing signals and expanded pedestrian islands will all go a long way to enhancing safety.
- North of the Cross Bronx Expressway, Community Board 5 recently approved a DOT pilot program at the intersection of Jerome Avenue and Burnside Avenue to build out pedestrian refuges at the corners, allowing for more programmable pedestrian space and shorter crossings.
- DOT will pilot the much anticipated and highly innovative "CityEI." The CityEI provides lighting and seating underneath the city's elevated infrastructure, increasing pedestrian safety and comfort, while beautifying the corridor. DOT is targeting Fall 2017 for implementation of pedestrian improvements at Burnside and Jerome Avenues and the CityEI will be installed shortly thereafter.
- Along with the Department of Design and Construction (DDC), DOT is currently completely rehabilitating the Clifford Place Step Street with new and refurbished lighting, new retaining walls and refurbished granite steps.

- DOT has also implemented safety improvements such as Safe Routes to Schools near PS 306, PS 279 and St Margaret Mary School, and a new sidewalk on Mount Eden Ave between Jerome and Macombs Road.
- Through LinkNYC, the City will bring free, high-speed wireless Internet to the area.

Open Space:

- Sitting between the recently opened High Bridge and Edward L. Grant highway, a potential open space asset at the corner of 170th and Nelson Avenue has long been fenced-off from the community and vacant. The Plan will demap Corporal Fischer Place and be combined with the adjacent parcel to be mapped as new parkland to serve the community.
- Located at 181st St. and Grand Avenue, Grand Avenue Playground reopened to the public in July, after a \$2.6 million transformation with multigenerational elements including splash pads, playground equipment and a basketball court. The renovation was funded by Council Member Fernando Cabrera.
- Cedar Playground's play equipment and basketball court area was completed in August 2016. The project cost \$2.4M and was funded by Council Member Vanessa Gibson, the Borough President and the Mayor's office.
- A collaborative effort between DOT and DPR has added a much desired plaza to the corner of MLK Blvd, just a few blocks west of Grand Playground. This key intersection has been revamped as MLK Plaza to give more space to people, reduce vehicle speed, improve pedestrian access and shorten crossings. The plaza's completion is expected in December 2017.
- Ogden-Plimpton Playground has recently undergone a robust community visioning process as part of the City's Community Parks Initiative. Expected procurement of the \$1.753 million project to be complete in January 2018.
- Near the study area, the \$1.7 million Estella Diggs Park reconstruction was completed in June 2017. Similarly, work on the Jackson-Forest Community Garden wrapped up this past April.