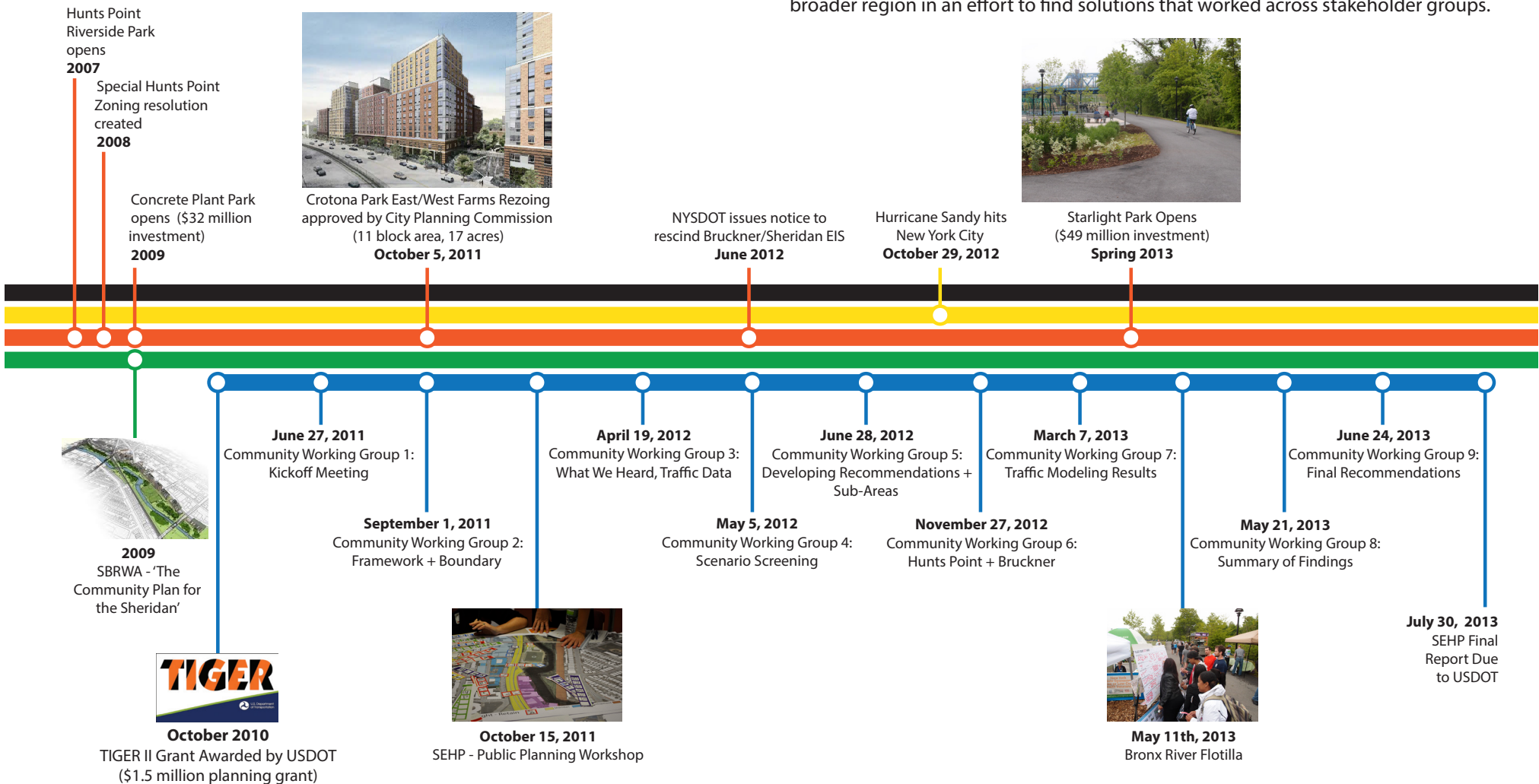


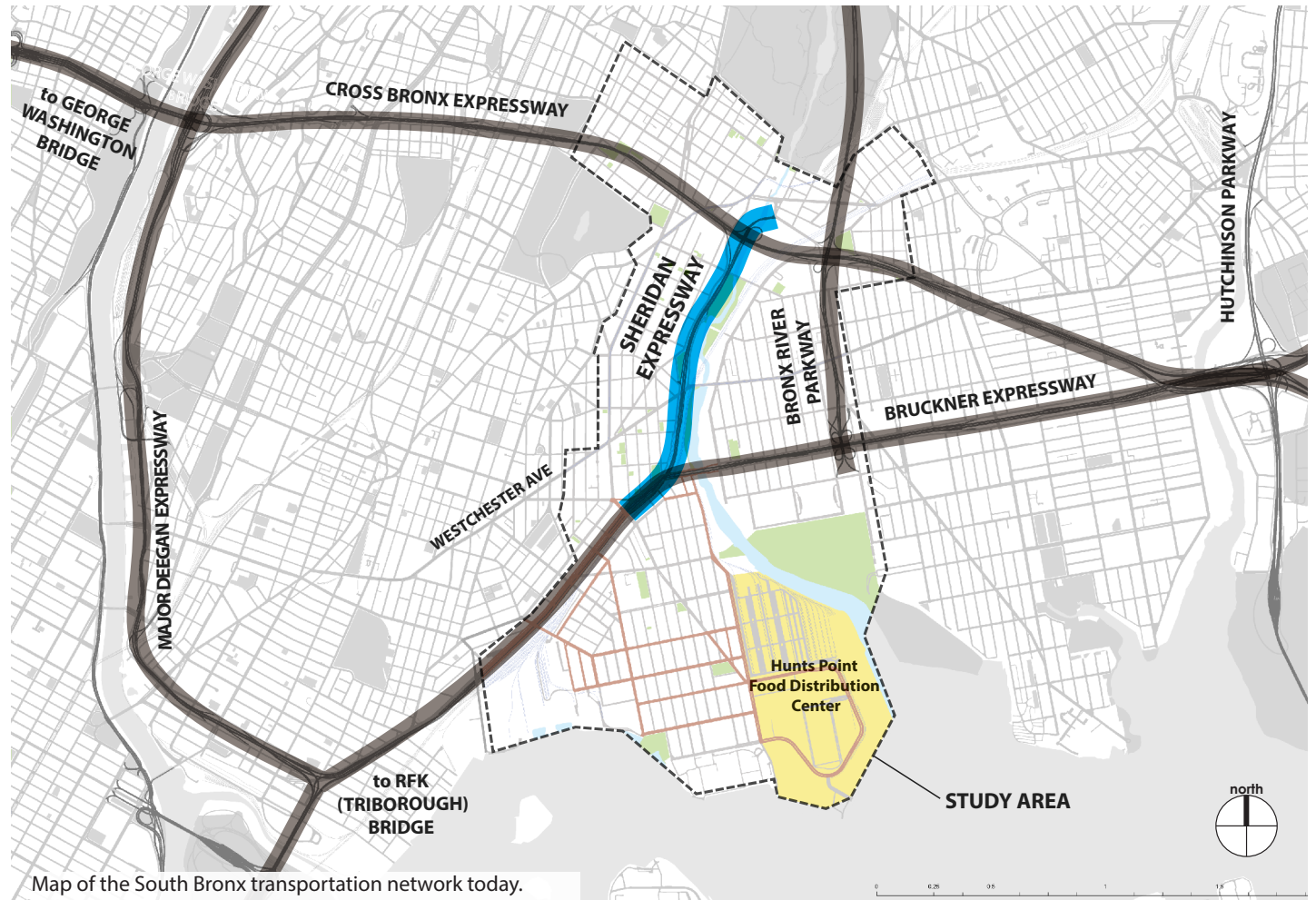
The City Study

The City study included an intensive interdisciplinary examination of the neighborhoods and infrastructure surrounding the Sheridan Expressway, along with the expressway itself. The future of the Bruckner and Sheridan Expressways has been the focus of debate and discussion at the local level for over a decade. The planning process led by the City Study team brought together the land use and transportation needs and priorities of the City, local residents, the business community and the broader region in an effort to find solutions that worked across stakeholder groups.



The Sheridan Expressway

The Sheridan Expressway (I-895) remains today as it was first constructed in 1963 and, along with the Bronx River Parkway, serves as a link between the Bruckner Expressway (I-278) to the south and the Cross Bronx Expressway (I-95) to the north. The Sheridan Expressway has one pair of on- and off-ramps that provide access to Westchester Avenue, a major commercial corridor in the area. Traffic on the expressway, which operates below 50 percent of capacity during peak rush hour, is relatively light in comparison to other roadways in the area.



Map of the South Bronx transportation network today.

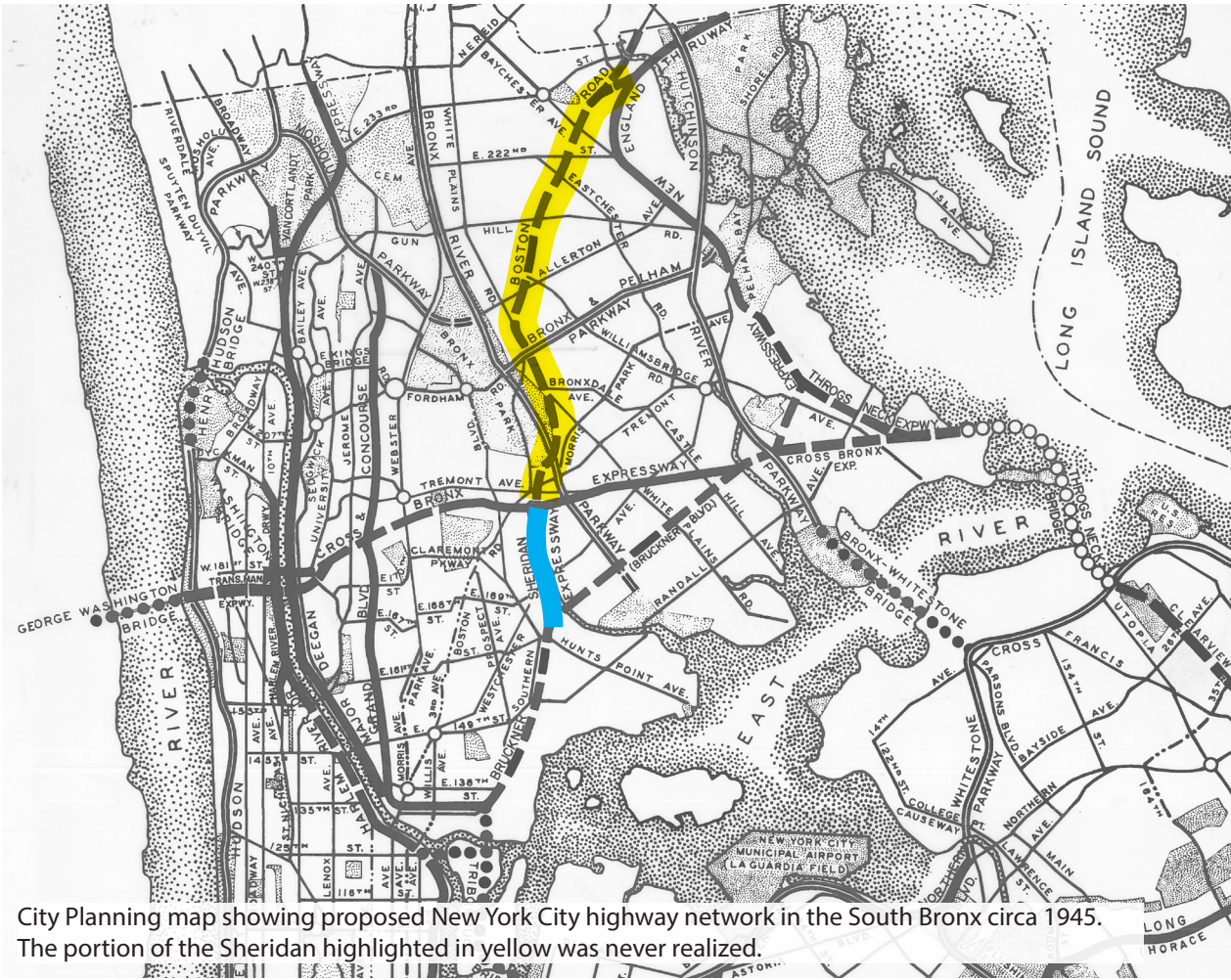


View of the Sheridan Expressway looking north. The southern entrance to Starlight Park is to the right.

History

In the 1940s, when Robert Moses first planned the Sheridan Expressway, it was intended to extend from the Bruckner Expressway northward past the Bronx Zoo and into Westchester County, creating a direct connection between the Triborough/Robert F. Kennedy Bridge and the New England Thruway. However, strong community opposition prevented the completion of the original plan. When the expressway finally opened in 1963, it was only 1.25 miles long and terminated at the Cross Bronx Expressway.

During the original construction in the early 1960s, thousands of residents and several local businesses were displaced as the Bronx River was moved to make way for a more linear roadway. The South Bronx entered a vicious cycle of decay, due in part to the completion of the highway network that crisscrosses the area and acts as a barrier to the Bronx River waterfront. During the 1960s, as housing stock began to decline, long time residents began to move out of the Bronx, a process that increased into the 1970s. With the population in decline, neglect and arson decimated large areas of the South Bronx. In Crotona Park East alone, 15,000 housing units were lost to fires and the neighborhood population dropped by 75 percent.



City Planning map showing proposed New York City highway network in the South Bronx circa 1945. The portion of the Sheridan highlighted in yellow was never realized.



Trucks heading south on Whitlock Avenue must weave around the elevated subway rail.

Critical Issues in the City Study

The City study focused on critical issues in the study area, as defined through community input and prior planning studies.

Access to Parks and the Bronx River

The limited-access expressway, as built, prevents east-west connections for local businesses and residents, divides local communities from each other and blocks access to the newly constructed Starlight Park along the Bronx River.

At the same time, the lack of an exit to Hunts Point further south forces many trucks using the roadway to exit the Sheridan Expressway after the first half-mile and utilize local streets to reach the major industrial area located in the Hunts Point peninsula. Members of the community have been calling for changes to this arrangement for many years, and past efforts to make improvements to the adjacent expressways in the study area were hampered by divisions among stakeholders over the future of the expressway.



View from the Bronx River near Starlight Park.



View of Sheridan Expressway traffic from the Starlight Park waterfront.



The path to the southern entrance to Starlight Park along Edgewater Road (Sheridan service drive).

Pedestrian Safety and Traffic Congestion



A primary concern for the community is the need to increase pedestrian safety at major intersections on the Sheridan and reduce traffic congestion. Improved connectivity includes regional vehicular access to the Hunts Point Food Distribution Center; safe access to the new Starlight and Concrete Plant Parks along the Bronx River and to public transit, and local vehicular access to food-related businesses in the Hunts Point peninsula.

Housing



Residents identified as an issue a continual shortage of affordable housing in the South Bronx, especially near transit and existing retail corridors. The need for increased diversity in housing type, programs that encourage home ownership and programs that seek to address the high percentage of residents who pay more than 50% of their income on rent was also identified by stakeholders.

Public Safety



The community expressed concerns about safety, particularly when walking at night, because of lack of activity, poor lighting, and low visibility around highway infrastructure. Improved lighting and improved sidewalk design are crucial to increasing mobility and activity in the area.

New Industry / More Jobs



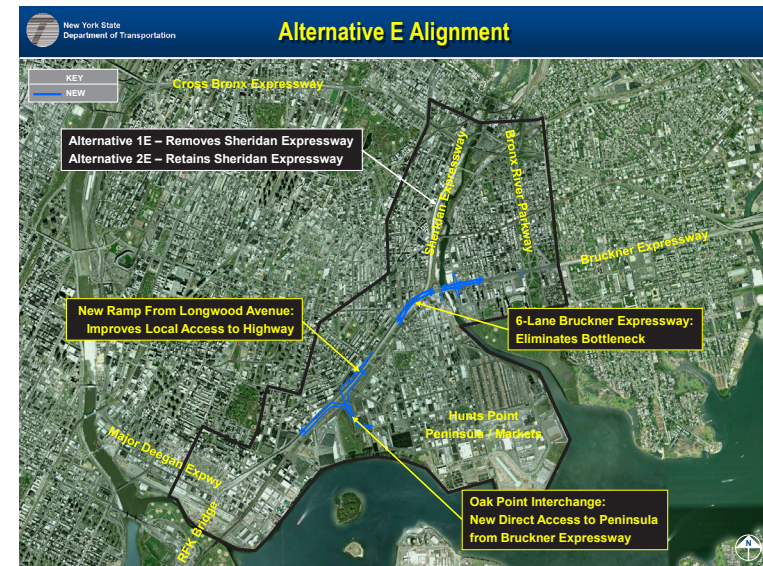
Supporting industry and existing job centers, specifically the Hunts Point Food Distribution Center, is a shared goal across stakeholder groups. Any changes to the traffic network must improve conditions and not harm the ability of Hunts Point businesses to function and grow. It was also noted that if existing industrial areas or manufacturing areas are considered for rezoning, the potential impact on job creation must be examined.

Prior Studies on the Sheridan Expressway

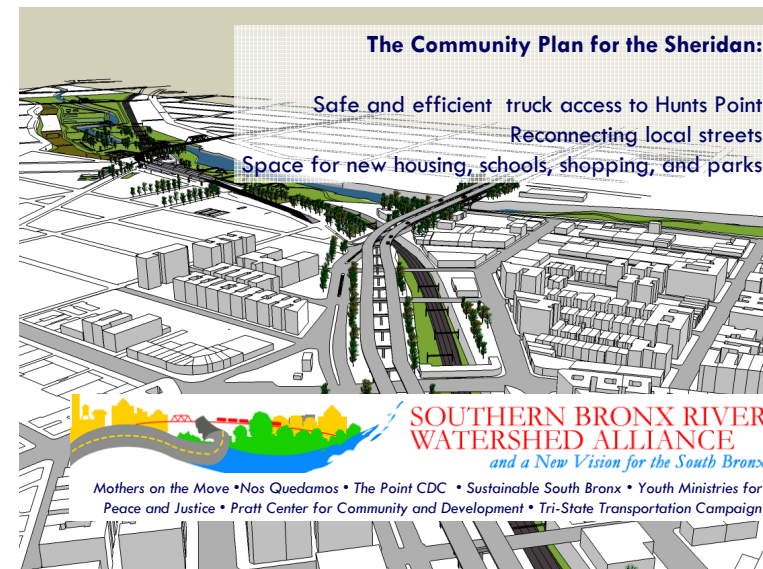
As early as 1980, the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) flagged the need for improvements to safety and traffic flow on the Bruckner Expressway at the interchange with the Sheridan Expressway. In 2001, NYSDOT began a formal study as part of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the redesign of the Bruckner-Sheridan interchange and related transportation improvements. NYSDOT's long-term plan was to upgrade the Bruckner-Sheridan Interchange. Two additional additional major changes were also considered: one to improve access to the Hunts Point peninsula, located just south of the interchange, and one to remove the Sheridan.

The State resolved the issue regarding access to Hunts Point by selecting a set of flyover ramps to Oak Point in its EIS process. These ramps were generally supported by local stakeholders. However, NYSDOT was unable to come to a final decision about removal of the Sheridan. In part this was because they were unable to evaluate the land use changes that might be associated with removal. The State requested information from the City regarding land use plans for the area, but no comprehensive plan existed nor was there consensus among the four community boards bordering the Sheridan.

Meanwhile, in response to a NYSDOT recommendation to extend the Sheridan Expressway to ease truck traffic into Hunts Point, a coalition of Bronx community groups formed the Southern Bronx River Watershed Alliance (SBRWA). The SBRWA initiated a planning effort in 1996 to formalize their vision for the removal of the Sheridan and alternative truck access to the Hunts Point Market. In 2006, the SBRWA began work on a formal plan to remove the Sheridan and in its footprint, build a significant housing and mixed-use development that would take advantage of subway access at Westchester Avenue, as well as proximity to the Bronx River and new parks being constructed along the waterfront. The plan was submitted to NYCDOP in August 2009 for review.



NYSDOT looked at multiple options for the Sheridan and Bruckner Interchange with access to the Peninsula via ramps at Oak Point.



In addition to increasing access to the Hunts Point peninsula, SBRWA study envisioned new housing and increased open space through the removal of the Sheridan Expressway.

Why a New Study?

SHERIDAN EXPRESSWAY CORRIDOR

TIGER II

APPLICANT/SPONSOR: New York City Department Transportation

TOTAL PROJECT COST: \$2,021,418

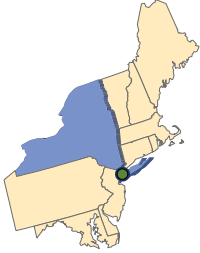
TIGER II GRANT: \$1,510,171

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project will create a neighborhood development plan for the Sheridan Expressway and Hunts Point area. Through a City-led, multi-agency, holistic planning process the plan will identify the needs and goals of the business and residential communities in the area. Technical analysis will examine alternatives to improve access to the Hunts Point Food Distribution Center allowing the area to come to an informed position about how possible solutions will affect the community. Alternatives under consideration include removing the Sheridan, rebuilding the interchange of the Sheridan and the Bruckner, or creating a new interchange for Hunts Point at Oak Point Avenue.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- » Addresses a critical need for changes to transportation and housing provision in a high traffic area
- » Features strong and varied partnerships and a significant opportunity to build community capacity for planning efforts



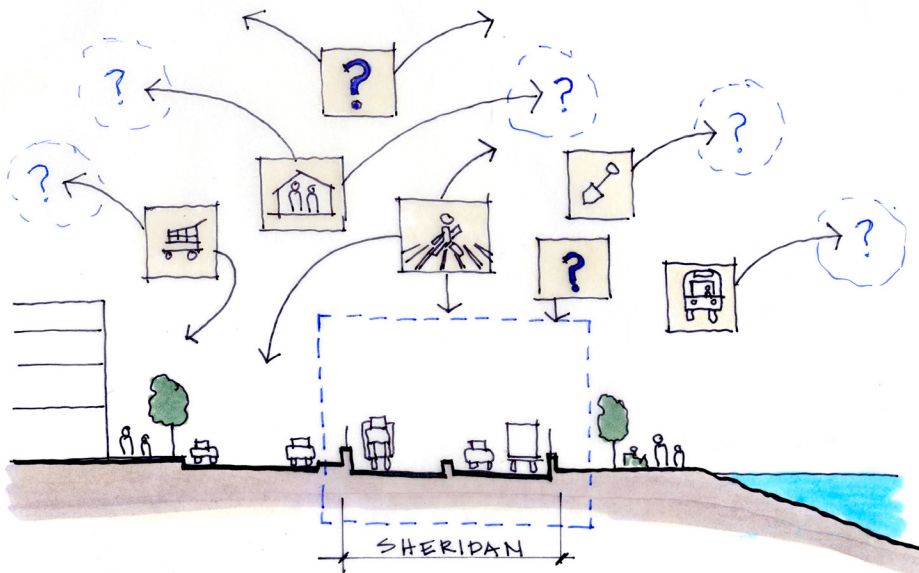
NORTHEAST

The State, City and communities in the vicinity of the Sheridan Expressway all recognize the importance of coming to consensus on future plans for the expressway and surrounding neighborhoods. With the receipt of a \$1.5 million TIGER II grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation in 2010, the City built an interdisciplinary team to address the multitude of issues and concerns, undertake an extensive data collection and analysis effort and lead a robust community engagement process. The primary goal of the City Study was to facilitate comprehensive fact-gathering and collaboration among parties to make sound policy decisions.

The broad objective of the City Study was to balance transportation needs with community concerns over land use, waterfront access, transportation and economic development, and to take advantage of opportunities for new housing and retail. Understanding and addressing the priorities of both businesses and residents was central to identifying the option that would create the most value over the long term for all of the stakeholders. The City Study team sought to create an actionable plan, build consensus locally, and develop a set of recommendations focused on area neighborhoods that would leverage infrastructure investments to address existing issues and further City policy goals.

City Study goals, identified early in the planning process through public meetings and direct stakeholder outreach were to:

- Increase the efficiency of transportation networks and access to Hunts Point
- Improve options and access to transit
- Increase access to new and existing open space and the waterfront
- Improve neighborhood air and water quality
- Provide safer streets
- Provide community services and successful schools
- Provide affordable housing
- Invest in improving health via food options and improved public realm

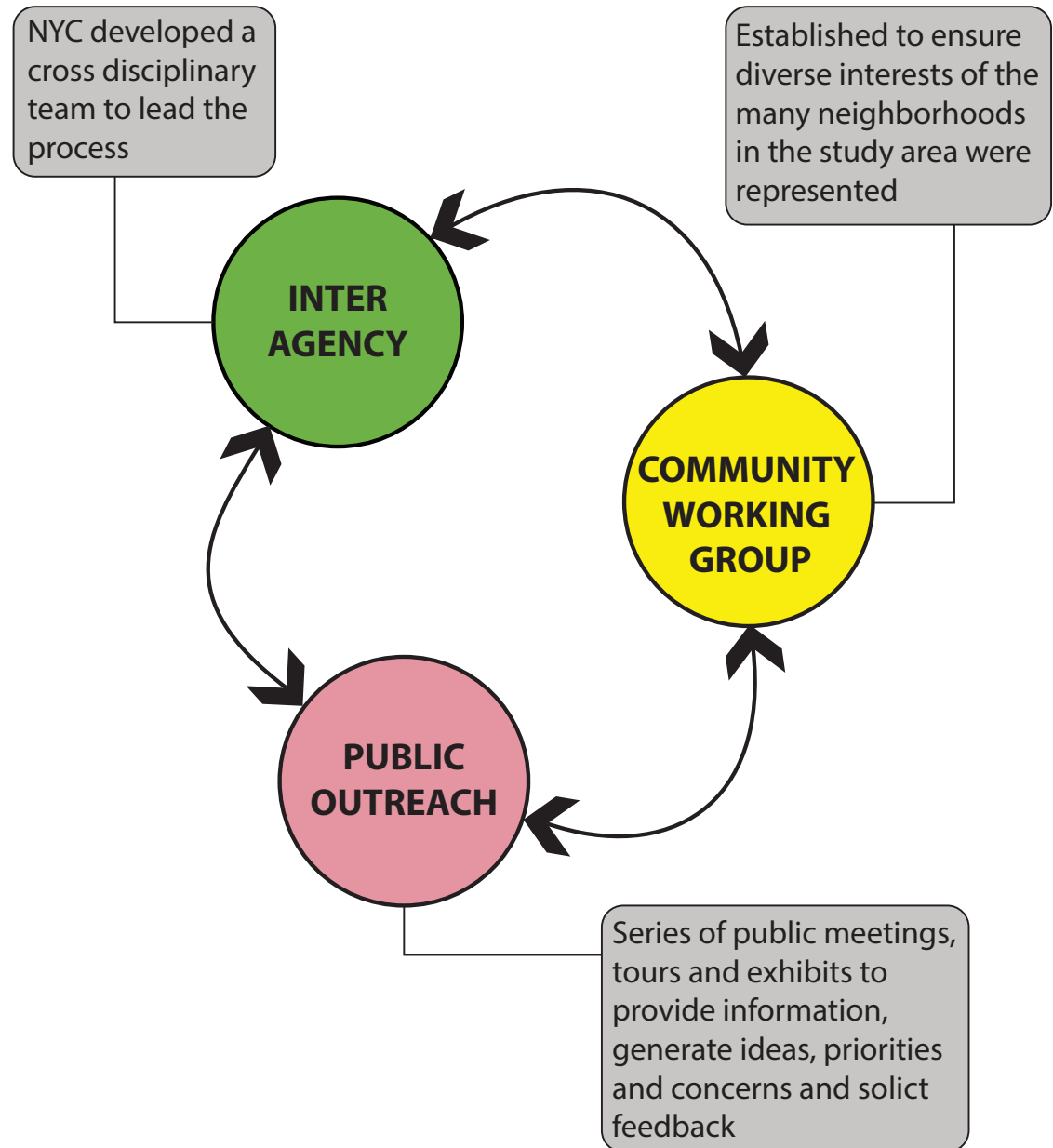


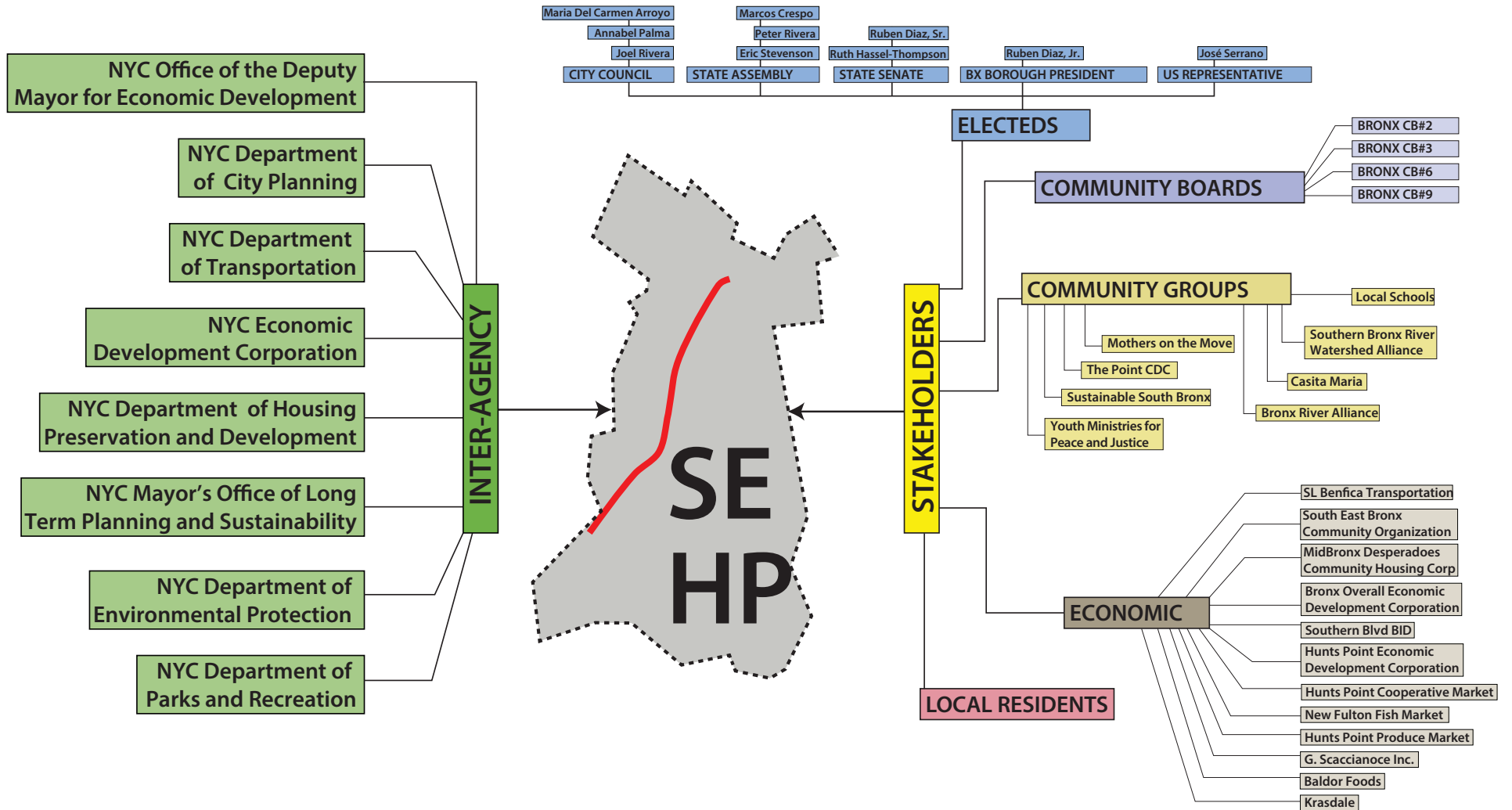
A 2010 TIGER II Planning Grant was awarded to the City of New York to facilitate a consensus among all parties on the future of the Sheridan Expressway and surrounding neighborhoods.

Community Engagement

The City Study process was grounded in the understanding that interagency cooperation and an engaged, diverse group of stakeholders were crucial to consensus building; the central goal of the process.

A Community Working Group (CWG) was established to ensure that the diverse interests of the many neighborhoods in the large study area were represented in the process. The City also held a series of public meetings to provide information and solicit feedback on ideas, priorities and concerns. In addition to the public meetings, the City met frequently with representatives of Community Boards 2, 3, 6 and 9, hosted tours in the area, held open houses and hosted several other events including displays at The Point CDC and the Bronx River Arts Center. Announcements and information were transmitted via email and via the DCP website.

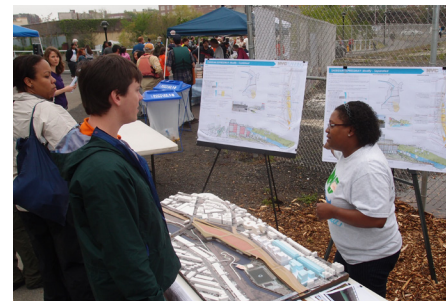
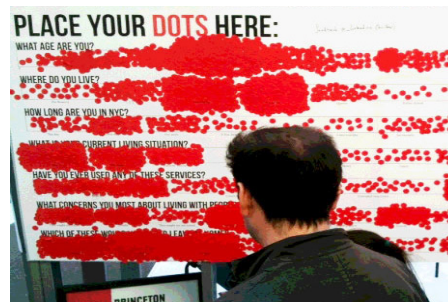




Community Engagement

The input of the CWG was invaluable throughout the planning process. From the gathering of data to identifying priorities, the CWG provided the City Study a local perspective. During early stages of the process, conversations about existing conditions, issues and opportunities led to an articulation of community needs and goals. These needs and goals focused on local and regional transportation and land use opportunities and after being prioritized became the framework for decision-making. The planning framework helped create a common vocabulary for the planning process and ensured that local priorities were accurately captured and understood.

Through one-on-one and group discussions and a public design charrette, several options for land use and transportation improvements in the study area were developed. Defining and synthesizing a vision was a critical precursor to identifying the specific types of economic, sustainability, and transportation analyses needed. The last step in the process was to use the data and information gathered to develop and evaluate the final land use and transportation scenarios and to select the scenario that provided the greatest long term benefit.



Developing the Planning Framework

What is the Planning Framework?

The Planning Framework establishes the needs, policies, and goals to be addressed through the planning process.



Community goals enter the planning framework via personal participation and planning statements. As part of the SEHP study, a Community Working Group of local stakeholders was convened to help guide the planning and analysis process. Varied opportunities for community input were key to developing a clear understanding of community goals and needs.

These opportunities included:

- Public Workshops
- Open Houses
- Community Working Group (CWG)
- Walking tours of the area
- Personal briefings
- On-line comments
- Existing community plans and needs statements

City goals and policies entered the planning framework via policy statements, agency strategic plans, comprehensive planning efforts, and city participation including:

- PlaNYC
- Comprehensive Waterfront Plan
- New Housing Marketplace Plan
- Sustainable Streets Plan
- Hunts Point Vision Plan
- Active Living By Design
- A Stronger, More Resilient New York
- Bronx River Greenway Plan
- Green Infrastructure Plan

The shared goals expressed by the CWG and information gathered from the field were used to develop a framework that will guide decision making as scenarios are developed.

Connectivity and Mobility:

We want to be better connected and have access to our neighborhood, our region.

Land Use and Community Infrastructure:

We want to live in an affordable neighborhood with a full range of amenities and services.

Waterfront and Open Space:

We want green spaces and nature that contribute to our relaxation and health.

Economic Development:

We want good jobs and thriving businesses that support local residents and the region. We want the Hunts Point markets to prosper.

Sustainability:

We want to grow and develop in responsible ways that will support our wellbeing and our future.