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July 2007



South Bronx's Hunts Point Station
An Urban Transit-Oriented Development Assessment

Acknowledgements

This report was made possible through the generous support of the Ford Foundation, the JM Kaplan Fund and the Urban Land Institute. We would like to thank the participant organizations of the Hunts Point Station Stakeholder Committee: Bronx Borough President's Office, Bronx Community Board 2, The Point CDC, Sustainable South Bronx, Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice and the Pratt Center for Community Development.

This project is part of Regional Plan Association's Community Links Initiative, which seeks to demonstrate the potential for urban transit-oriented development to benefit low income communities. We would also like to thank the members of the Community Links Advisory Committee: John Parkinson, Executive Director of the ULI New York District Council; Victoria Kahn, Member of the Executive Committee, ULI New York District Council; Candace Schafer, Chair, ULI Westchester/Fairfield District Council; Prof. Vicki L. Been, Elihu Root Professor of Law at New York University School of Law and Director of the Furman Center; and Samuel Goodman of the Bronx Borough President's Office.

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Introduction and Community Selection

This report documents the recent activities of RPA's Community Links, an initiative that applies RPA's experience with transit-oriented community development throughout the region to leverage benefits in low-income neighborhoods. This model was profiled in the Funders Network publication *Signs of Promise. Advancing Regional Equity and Smart Growth in Practice: Promising Philanthropic Initiatives*. That publication identifies one of RPA's projects, the East Harlem Community Link Initiative, as a benchmark for transit-oriented development planning in the field, and highlights the project as an example of current practice in connecting communities to regional opportunities.

Specifically, this program has strengthened the connections between transit, development and community participation and involvement in the New York Region's Urban Core. Building on the East Harlem experience over the last year, RPA has worked with community organizations in the South Bronx to create a framework for better utilizing transit assets in the changing neighborhood of Hunts Point/Longwood. We hope that this project will demonstrate the effectiveness of community-based regionalism by connecting transit investment and community revitalization in an area that has both existing subway service and the potential for new commuter rail service.

The lessons learned from this project can inform a broad range of opportunities throughout New York City and the Tri-State region. The region is poised for a generation of investment in new transit services, from the Second Avenue Subway and a new Trans-Hudson Tunnel to Long Island Rail Road service to Grand Central Terminal and Metro-North service to Penn Station. These areas are also the location of some of the region's low-income neighborhoods and the home of a large share of the new immigrants who are revitalizing the economy. This fact requires that we center growth on existing infrastructure to ensure the accessibility, sustainability and affordability of new development. To take advantage of the urban transit-oriented development (TOD) opportunities created by these projects, the

initiative developed both an inventory of locations where community development and TOD can be joined, and the insights gained from the Hunts Point/Longwood demonstration.

First, the initiative devised criteria to identify and map both bypassed communities and "new immigrant" neighborhoods that could capitalize on underutilized or new transit stations to create affordable housing and job opportunities. We identified potential locations for a demonstration project for transit-oriented development in the region's urban core. We established criteria, collected and analyzed data, and mapped disadvantaged communities with transit-oriented development potential in the five boroughs of New York City through the following steps:

- **Established criteria, including income levels, transit capacity and development capacity.**
- **Developed project and station inventories based on these criteria.**
- **Produced maps relating sites to transportation infrastructure and land use.**
- **Selected a potential site and study area.**

This first phase of work identified the site of a potential Metro-North station in Hunts Point/Longwood in Bronx County, NY and its surrounding neighborhoods as the most promising area for a demonstration project. RPA has worked with local stakeholders there to educate the community about its potential and help it visualize a development that capitalizes on these assets for the benefit of neighborhood residents. Former commuter rail stations such as Hunts Point on the Metro-North New Haven commuter rail line could provide catalysts for affordable housing and job opportunities that will be needed to accommodate the continued inflow of new residents who have fueled the labor force in the 1980s and 1990s, and will continue to do so in the coming decades.

The second phase developed an urban design and planning framework for the Hunts Point Station area by undertaking the following steps:

- **Established a community advisory group to guide the project.**

- **Synthesized all of the existing plans and analyzed them in terms of their relationship to the new train station.**
- **Analyzed development potential near the transit station, including analysis of zoning, land use, housing and commercial demand, local demographics and regional market opportunities.**
- **Analyzed existing and potential use of transit resources in the study area, including the ridership benefits of the new Metro-North service.**
- **Organized and led a community briefing workshop and illustrated urban design options that provide the basis for a feasibility analysis of the proposals.**

The results of this second phase of work describe the station's transit implications and development impacts, synthesize active community plans for the area around the station, identify soft sites for redevelopment and potential reverse-commute labor market opportunities, and define an urban design and planning framework as the foundation of further work in the community. A more detailed description of the project methodology can be found in Appendix I.

The project led to the identification of several potential demonstration communities and found Hunts Point/Longwood in Southeastern Bronx as the most suitable area in which to focus the demonstration project. Hunts Point has subway service with growing ridership and additional capacity, is being considered for a commuter rail station on the Metro-North New Haven line, and has vacant and industrial land uses that are likely to undergo increasing pressure for development. These conditions lend themselves to interim development as well as long-term community visioning and planning. Community support for the construction of the rail station has been identified by Metro-North Railroad and in community based plans for the area. Before selecting the Hunts Point/Longwood area, possible stations in New York City were selected using a range of demographic, transportation and development criteria.



Selected Projects and Corridor Characteristics

CONSTRUCTION/ SERVICE IMPACT	Project Name	Timeframe	Cost in Millions	Type of Investment	Completion	Low and Mod- erate Income Census Tracts	Percent Minority	Average Popu- lation per SqM	Residential Vacancy	Public Transit Work Trips Share
Bronx /Co-op City, Parkchester, Hunts Point	Penn Station Ac- cess; New Haven Line Extension with Potential Stops (PSAS)	0-10 Years, following completion of East Side Access	\$300	New Stations	2016	80%	92%	46,496	9%	58%
Manhattan- Queens/Network	LIRR East Side Access to Grand Central (ESA)	Projected completion in 2013	\$6,300	New Tunnel	2013	67%	81%	83,484	5%	46%
Manhattan/Lower Manhattan	Second Av- enue Subway (Proposed 4th Phase) (SAS)	10+ Years	\$16,800	New Line	2020	19%	72%	28,266	4%	49%

Selected Station and Socioeconomic Characteristics

(Sorted by public transit work trips share)

STATION	Related Transit Project	Average Tract Population per Sq Mile	Low and Moderate Income Census Tracts	Percent Minority	Residential Vacancy	Public Transit Work Trips Share
Woodside	ESA	49,796	43%	75.28%	3.86%	68.39%
Hunters Point	ESA	6,597	0%	51.33%	6.06%	68.25%
Long Island City	ESA	7,263	25%	52.07%	4.50%	66.21%
Forest Hills	ESA	45,605	0%	28.65%	3.16%	64.57%
Parkchester	PSAS	52,508	75%	86.10%	11.88%	61.84%
Jamaica	ESA	48,473	60%	90.87%	4.69%	61.55%
Shea Stadium	ESA	797	0%	61.19%	3.41%	57.59%
Hanover Square	SAS	22,828	0%	31.83%	10.13%	56.30%
Kew Gardens	ESA	29,823	0%	51.67%	4.99%	56.24%
Hunts Point	PSAS	49,476	100%	98.81%	7.51%	56.07%
Co-op City	PSAS	19,532	0%	87.05%	6.25%	53.86%
Hollis	ESA	20,401	0%	96.47%	9.61%	48.16%
Seaport	SAS	40,323	20%	60.09%	7.09%	47.08%
Flushing	ESA	47,789	80%	94.38%	2.28%	46.86%
Grand Street	SAS	113,205	100%	87.63%	4.04%	44.90%
St. Albans	ESA	14,179	0%	97.27%	5.99%	44.88%
Inwood	ESA	28,905	100%	76.89%	5.19%	44.85%
Far Rockaway	ESA	28,905	100%	76.89%	5.19%	44.85%
Locust Manor	ESA	23,681	0%	98.74%	3.14%	44.81%
Chatham Square	SAS	103,782	100%	92.85%	3.48%	40.79%
Laurelton	ESA	16,599	0%	97.75%	5.33%	40.24%
Queens Village	ESA	22,561	0%	89.41%	4.73%	39.52%
Belmont Park	ESA	16,014	0%	94.14%	4.64%	37.93%
Murray Hill	ESA	43,897	40%	77.90%	2.81%	37.56%
Little Neck	ESA	6,804	0%	31.08%	3.30%	35.79%
Douglaston	ESA	6,804	0%	31.08%	3.30%	35.79%
Rosedale	ESA	14,625	0%	82.20%	4.85%	33.15%
Auburndale	ESA	22,558	0%	44.29%	3.40%	31.42%
Bayside	ESA	18,199	0%	36.34%	2.39%	30.27
Broadway	ESA	22,911	25%	55.15%	3.27%	29.48%

Stations Surveyed in Sociodemographic Analysis



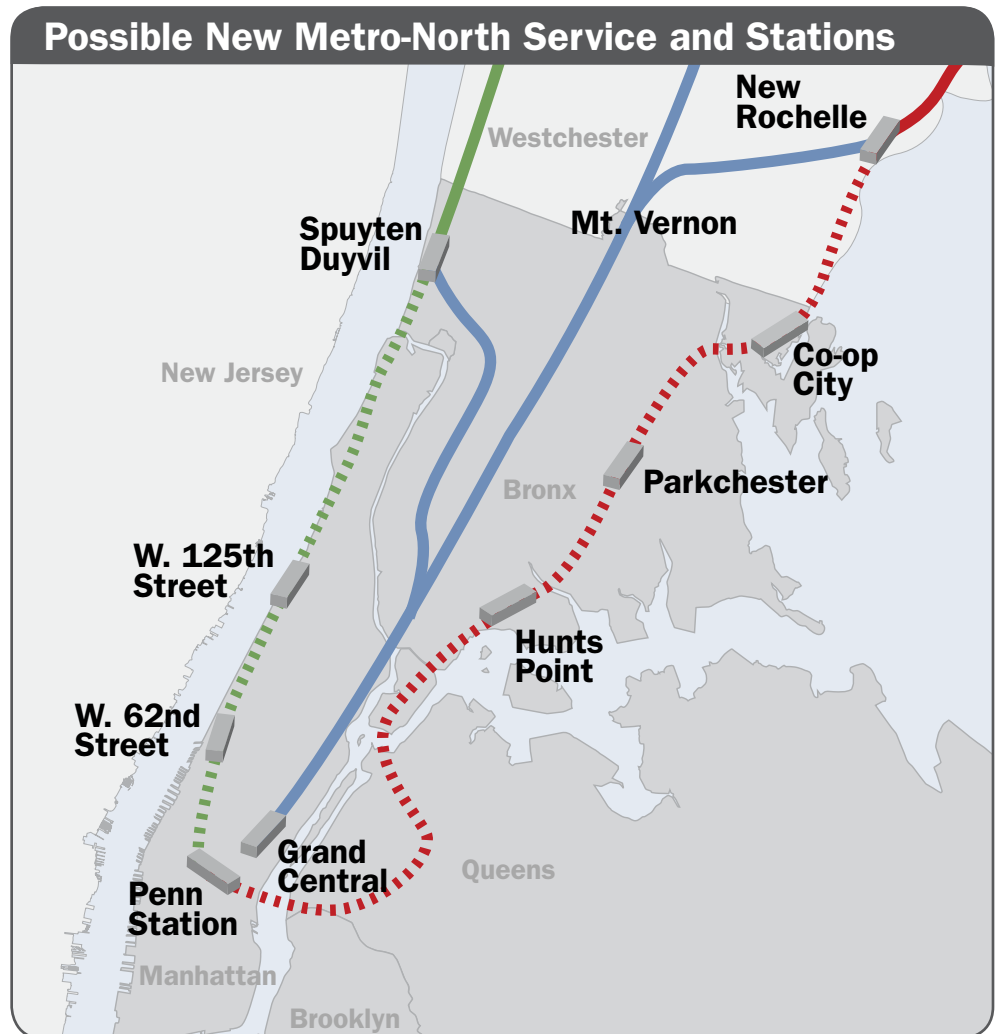
Potential for Expanded Employment Opportunities

A fundamental premise of urban transit-oriented development is that it expands the geographic area with accessible job opportunities, particularly for low-income residents without access to auto transportation. With existing subway and bus service, the communities of Hunts Point and Longwood are already connected to the East Side of Manhattan. Metro-North Service would add access to growing suburban labor markets with persistent shortages of low-medium skill workers. The following describes these transit services and the labor markets that new commuter rail service would access.

Transit in Hunts Point

Regional Plan Association's interest in the Hunts Point area stems in part from the consideration that Metro-North is giving to a possible commuter rail station on the Amtrak line at Hunts Point Avenue. Metro-North has for some time been looking at the possibility of rerouting some of its trains into Penn Station. Currently, all three of its rail lines that travel through the Bronx terminate at Grand Central Terminal on the east side of Midtown Manhattan. Many of its riders are destined to the west side, and as a result the possibility of bringing trains to the west side has been of interest. As shown in the figure on this page, the New Haven Line, which begins in New Haven, joins up with the Harlem Line in Mt. Vernon (both shown in blue). However, this line can be diverted to the Amtrak Line (shown in red), run over the Hell Gate Bridge in Queens and then under the East River to Penn Station. This rerouting makes it possible to consider new stations on the newly-served segment, including at Hunts Point Avenue. This is an appealing project since it does not require major new construction, although it would require new station facilities.

Metro-North's analysis of ten possible stations on the New Haven line concluded that the Hunts Point station would attract the most riders in the year of the projections, 2020. The majority of these riders would begin their trips in the Bronx and use the line to reach jobs at points north. This is not surprising given the success of other "reverse" commuter rail services, most notably at the



Fordham station where about 3,400 riders a day board to travel to stations to the north on both the Harlem and New Haven lines.

The Hunts Point commuter rail station is projected by the MTA to serve 2,200 riders in the morning peak period alone by the 2020 forecast year. This estimate exceeds the ridership at Parkchester (2,000) or Co-op City (1,500). Most of the Hunts Point riders will be residents of the Bronx and traveling to work outside the Hunts Point area. Of these, about 1,600 will head north to the northern Bronx, Westchester, and Connecticut, and 330 will head south into Manhattan. There will also be almost 500 riders who use the station to travel to work in the Hunts Point area, 330 from Manhattan

and 130 from points north. The 500 workers destined for the station in the morning compares to the 20,000 who work at the markets. The 1,600 morning outbound riders would approach the volume now achieved at Metro-North's Fordham Road Station in the Bronx, where about 2,000 board the northbound New Haven Line trains on weekday mornings in 2006. The higher number for Fordham Road is a likely result of higher residential densities in that part of the Bronx and good bus access to the station. However, the Fordham station is not near any subway line, while Hunts Point is in close proximity to the Hunts Point subway station and the Pelham Bay Line.

The sizable ridership that the three Bronx stations on the New Haven Line would enjoy can be expected to improve the cost effectiveness of the rerouting of the line to Penn Station. The use of these Bronx stations for reverse commuting is a growing phenomenon. Metro-North has been successful in attracting Bronx and Manhattan residents working in locations near train stations in the suburbs, particularly in places with a large concentration of jobs near the stations, such as Greenwich and Stamford on the New Haven Line and White Plains on the Harlem Line. By initially charging low fares, the railroad was able to fill seats that would otherwise go empty as trains reposition themselves for the heavy peak period commuter flows into and out of Manhattan. Many City residents who do not own an automobile find the rail option an attractive and affordable one. It also helps if they live in places accessible to the suburban rail lines. About 1 in 4 who live near a rail station and who commute to Connecticut use the railroad, but only about 1 in 6 who live further away from a Bronx rail station do. Among those commuting to Westchester, 1 in 5 use rail if they are near a station, but only 1 in 10 if they are not near one. Thus, if Hunts Point rail station were built, it can be expected that the share using rail will grow.

The construction of a new commuter rail station is not guaranteed, nor is it likely to happen soon. The rerouting of trains depends on having room at Penn Station, but the station is at capacity now. However, when the Long Island Rail is connected with Grand Central Terminal with the East Side Access (ESA) project, it will open up capacity in Penn Station for the Metro-North rerouting. ESA is planned to be opened in six years. Still, with the lead time required for development projects and the neighborhood transformation already underway, it is not too early to think about this station and the neighborhood around it.

Even before Metro-North service is implemented, it is possible to take further advantage of existing transit service. The area is served by the Pelham Bay Line, with the Hunts Point station a mere 400 feet away from the proposed commuter rail station. Ridership at this subway station has been growing rapidly, undoubtedly a result of the growing importance of the Hunts Point market area. The influence of the market is obvious when you compare the rebound in subway ridership at Hunts Point with the entire Pelham Bay and White Plains Road lines, and with individual stations in the Hunts Point/Longwood neighborhoods. Ridership at most stations has not completely recovered to the record level of the early sixties, before the catastrophic decline of much of the

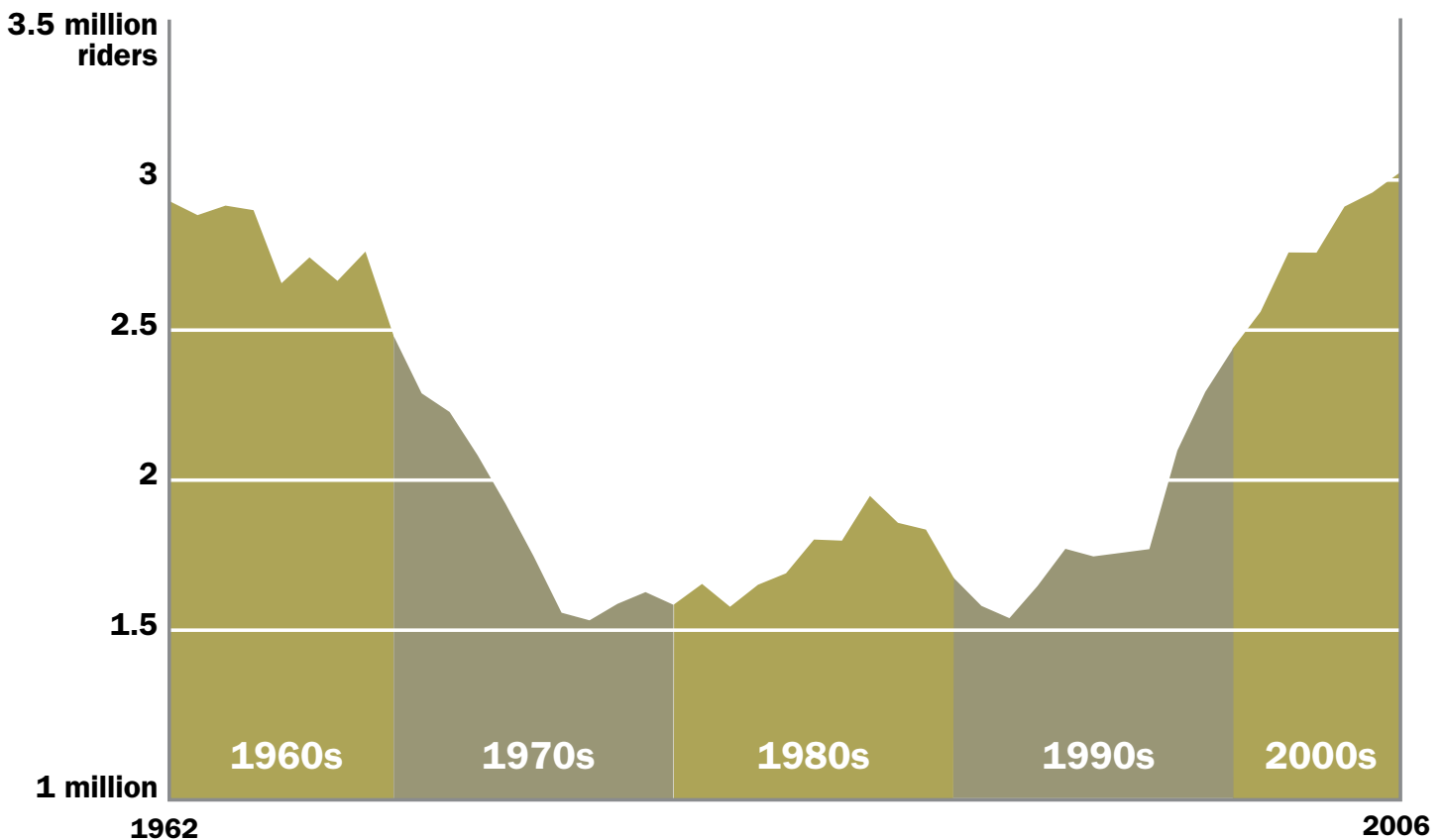
Bronx. But the Hunts Point station ridership now exceeds the levels of 1962. In fact, since ridership bottomed out in the 1976 to 1992 period, it has doubled. This pattern of ridership change is shown in the figure on this page.

These ridership trends are reinforced by residential development patterns. Development favoring proximity near existing subway stations has been manifesting itself in the Hunts Point/Longwood area. As is shown on page 14, much of the recent construction has been within a short distance of subway stations.

The continued rebirth of the Hunts Point/Longwood neighborhoods will likely lead to ridership growth on the subway, and if the commuter rail station is built, on it as well. By examining the patterns of work travel in the Bronx, it is possible to relate ridership growth to housing expansion. RPA has concluded that for every 1,000 added units in the neighborhood, 432 transit trips can be expected, subway trips accounting for three out of four of them.

The impact on subway and bus trips is much more significant than it is for commuter rail travel. This is to be expected, since the Bronx and Manhattan will remain the predominant locations for job opportunities for residents of this area. However,

Annual Subway Ridership, Hunts Point Station, 1962-2006



the marginal increase in ridership from new housing is only one small piece of the station's value. As shown in the following analysis, it provides a link to new labor markets that can be exploited for both existing and new residents. Its potential for improving housing and other development opportunities, as well as the physical character of the neighborhood, is explored further in this report.

Corridor Labor Market Demand

One of the most important benefits of the proposed new commuter station is the potential reverse commute of current and future residents of the area to labor markets in the Metro-North Corridor. The existing unemployment rate for the Bronx (the smallest unit of geography for which unemployment rates are available) and the markets served by the Metro-North New Haven Line show that the Bronx has a persistently higher share of its population unemployed, compared to Westchester and the labor market areas of Stamford and New Haven in Connecticut.

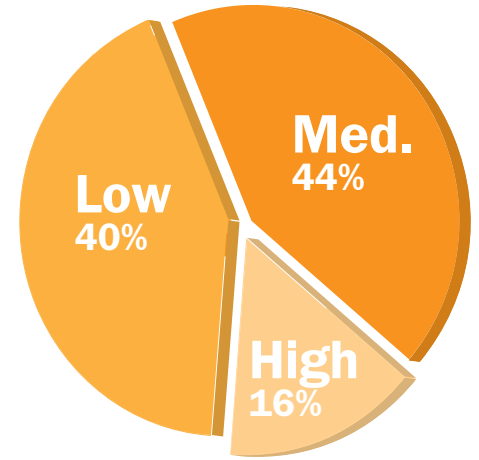
While unemployment rates fluctuated between 7%-12% in the Bronx over the last decade, the range in Westchester and Connecticut was between 2%-6%. This points to a mismatch between the location of jobs and workers, a gap that can be partially filled with new commuter rail service.

The skill requirements of job openings in the corridor reinforce the promise of workforce development strategies linked to new transit service. Most of the residents around a reactivated Hunts Point station work in medium skill (i.e. office, production, construction) and low skill (i.e. sales, transportation, health care support) occupations. Only 16% work in high skill occupations, reflecting the relatively low levels of educational attainment in the area.

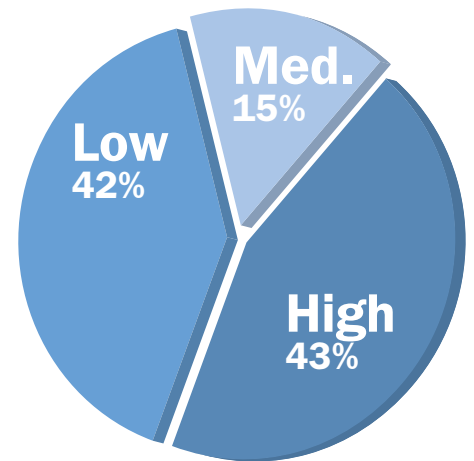
By contrast, the occupational forecast for Southwestern Connecticut and the Lower Hudson Valley by the Departments of Labor of New York and Connecticut show a job market bi-furcated between low skill and high skill occupations. Nearly equal numbers of openings are in low and high skill jobs, with only a small portion of medium skill opportunities.

The 66,000 annual job openings in low skill jobs, many of them clustered near stations along the New Haven Line, will be increasingly difficult to fill with residents from Westchester and Connecticut. With housing affordable to low wage workers increasingly scarce in these largely high-income suburbs, jobs ranging from health care aides to construction workers will be increasingly difficult to fill. Just as Metro-North service has drawn city workers to these jobs in other parts of the Bronx, service in Hunts Point would fill a similar need. Other policy initiatives, from reduced off-peak fares to employment programs that make use of this connection, could expand reverse commutes even more.

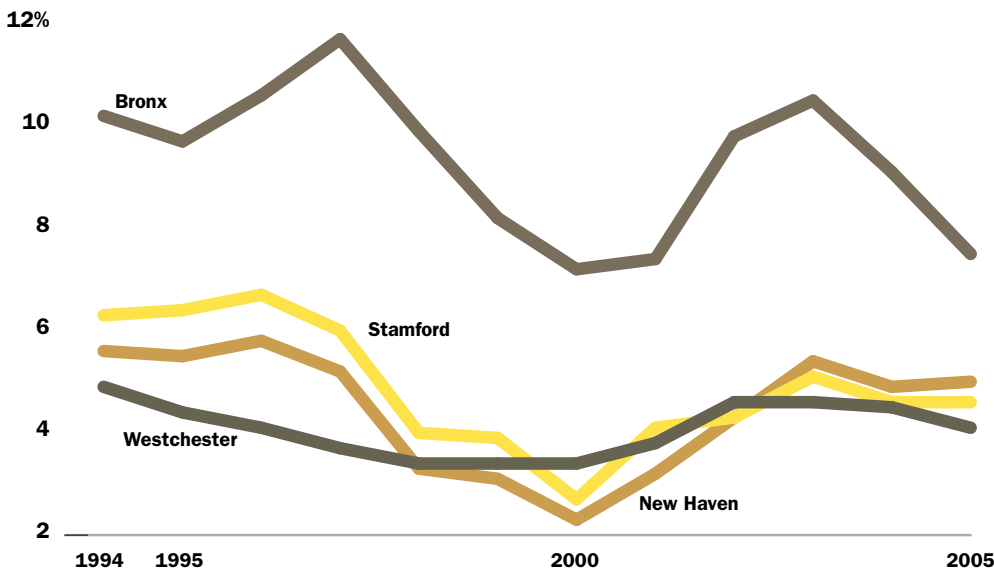
Total Employed Hunts Point Residents, 2000
(by skill level)

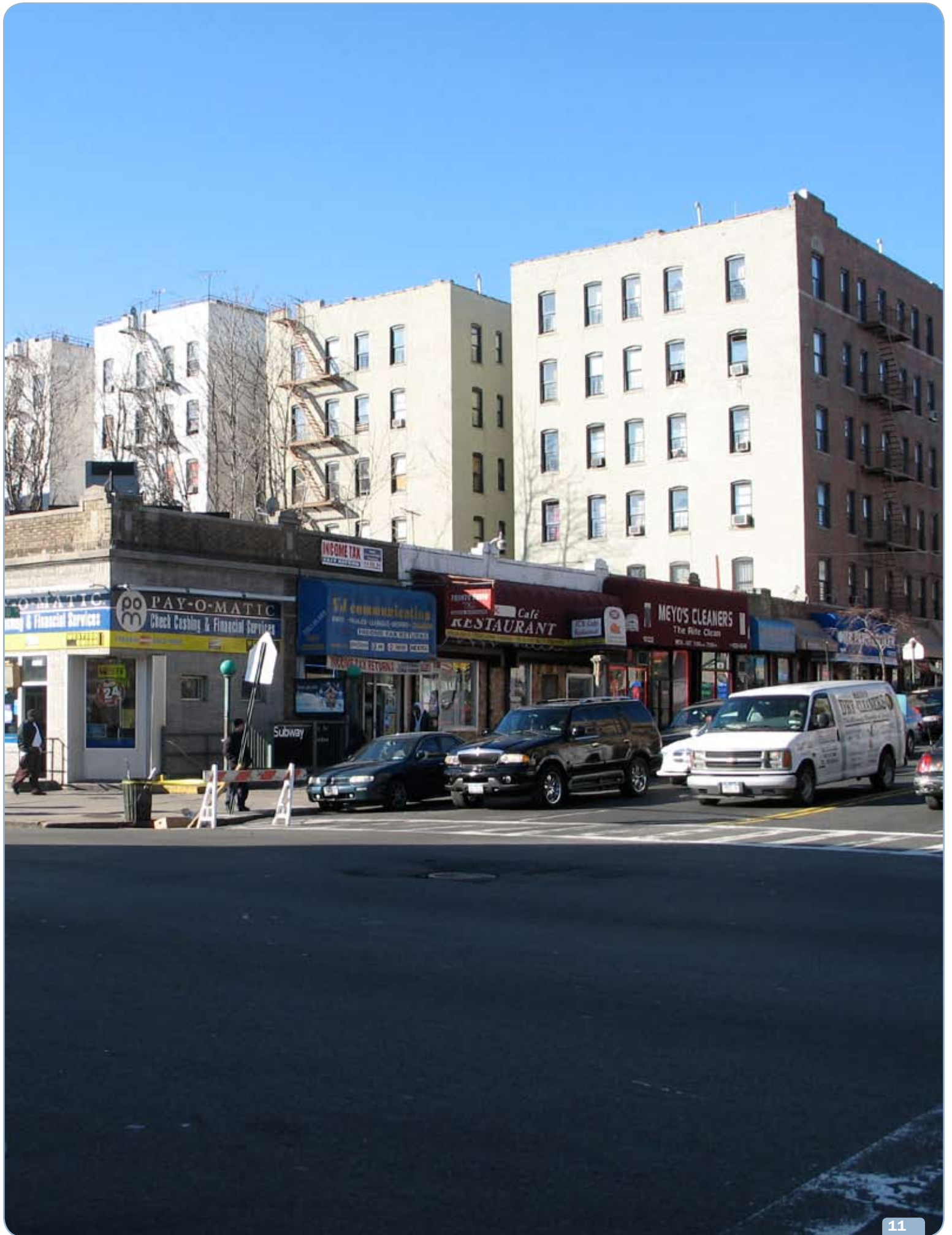


Annual Job Openings in the New Haven Line Corridor, 10-Year Forecast
(by skill level)



Unemployment Rate Comparison





Transit-Oriented Development Potential

Study area definition

Rather than being defined by external boundaries, the study area is determined by access to both the proposed location of a reactivated Metro-North station and the existing Hunts Point subway station. With these assets at the center, the area within walking distance of the stations roughly corresponds to the residential core in Bronx Community Board 2 and is divided by the Bruckner Boulevard and Expressway. The section west of this division, known as the Longwood neighborhood, follows the boundary of Community Board 2 on Prospect Avenue, East 169th Street and East 167th Street. The section east of the Bruckner Blvd contains the residential area of Hunts Point and the easternmost section of the Soundview neighborhoods. This portion of the study area also contains a portion of the Bronx River. These areas are shown by the concentric circles on the map on page 13 that represent ¼ and ½ miles radii from the proposed site of the reactivated station and existing Hunts Point subway station.

Redevelopment pressure points

A survey of the streets and buildings within the study area showed that a large number of new buildings, largely residential, have been built or are being built in this section of the Bronx. These are noted in blue on page 14.

As part of the survey, RPA inventoried buildings that were underused residential structures, vacant property or abandoned buildings, and marginal single story edifices. These were identified as either “Potential Development Sites” or “Soft Sites,” reflecting their difficulty or likelihood for redevelopment, as reflected on page 15.

Using these sites identified through the field survey, two development scenarios were constructed to determine the development capacity in these parcels. Taking both the Maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) under existing zoning and the Maximum FAR with zoning changes that might be expected gives the following results:

Under existing zoning, about 2,400 residential units can be built in the study

area, whereas the estimate rises to 3,200 with rezoning of some parcels. This rezoning would take into account designating current industrial sites as residential sites with the density of adjacent and existing zoning districts.

Summary of existing plans

As an initial research task, RPA collected and summarized currently active plans in the community. By analyzing these plans, several consistent themes emerged that shape the current vision and ideas of a wide range of constituencies in the community. Nineteen plans were identified through conversation with different stakeholders in the community and form the core of planning for the neighborhoods of Longwood, Hunts Point and Soundview. These cross thematic ideas are the following:

- **Waterfront greenway & access.**
- **Greening of streets and neighborhoods.**
- **Safe, walkable and bikable streets.**
- **Rationalize truck traffic.**
- **Reinforce industrial uses.**
- **Protect and reinforce residential core**

The plans are listed in the following table and are presented in summary form as Appendix II to this report, which identifies the planning areas they cover, ranging from their identification of the future Metro-North station and other transit improvements, other transportation issues such as how they treat the Bruckner Boulevard truck or pedestrian crossings, housing development, community facilities, economic development, brownfield redevelopment, streetscaping and open spaces and waterfront access.

Redevelopment Pressure Points Capacity Scenarios

	Max FAR under existing zoning	Max FAR with rezoning
Soft Sites	1,169,081	1,586,636
Potential Sites	1,942,062	2,531,123
Total Square Feet	3,111,143	4,117,759
Dwelling Units	2,489	3,294

List of Plans Studied

South Bronx Environmental Health Policy Study. Congressman Jose Serrano, New York University.
Bronx Waterfront Plan. Borough President Adolfo Carrion, Jr.
Greening Hunts Point. New York City Department of Parks & Recreation.
Sheridan Land Use Planning Study. Pratt University.
Hunts Point Cultural Quarter. Outline Strategy for a Community Future. The Point CDC, ERA.
Principles for the Redevelopment of the Sheridan. Southern Bronx River Watershed Alliance.
Community Plan. Sheridan Alternative Plan. Southern Bronx River Watershed Alliance.
Longwood Urban Renewal Project. The City of New York. HPD.
Bruckner Sheridan Interchange and Commercial Access to Hunts Point Peninsula. NYS DOT.
South Bronx Waterfront Brownfields Opportunity Area. Pratt University.
Statement of Community District Needs FY 2008. Bronx Community Board 2.
Reclaiming Cass Gilbert's Westchester Avenue Station. Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice.
A New Home in the Bronx River Neighborhood. Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice.
Active and Proposed Projects, May 2006. Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice.
Young Adults' Residence and Travelers Hostel. Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice.
Hunts Point Vision Plan. Hunts Point Task Force, City of New York.
South Bronx Greenway Master Plan, New York City Economic Development Corporation.
Bronx River Greenway Plan. Bronx River Alliance.
Draft 197-A Plan. Sustainable South Bronx/The Point CDC.

Study Area Boundaries



New Construction in the Study Area



Redevelopment Pressure Points



- Soft sites development
- Potential sites capacity

Urban Design and Planning Framework for Hunts Point

Introduction

The suggested Planning and Urban Design Framework is organized around three areas of interest:

- **Access and Mobility**
- **Open Space and Cultural Resources**
- **Land Use**

This preliminary framework is created by distilling the essential “mapable” recommendations from each of the nineteen plans analyzed: that is, those recommendations that are not pure policy statements, such as a proposal for workforce training or cleaner vehicles, but those which have some manifestation in the built environment, for example, a new building or streetscape improvement.

The fundamental idea underlying this exercise is that by consolidating all of the recommendations from the many plans into one series of drawings, it would be possible to answer several strategic questions. Where do the plans conflict with one another? What are the reinforcing, synergistic ideas which all of the plans share? How do the plans and the proposed new Metro-North station support each other?

The ultimate goal of this exercise is to help a diverse community advocate collectively for a shared agenda.

Graphic synthesis of the existing plans

Access and Mobility

Overview and Graphic Plan Summary: A synthesis of the existing plans reveals the extent to which the community wants to be connected to the many resources that surround the study area. It also highlights a widely recognized conflict between truck access to the industrial areas and the other forms of pedestrian and bicycle mobility. The elements of the access and mobility include the following:

- **Greenways and Boulevards:** Collectively the plans create a comprehensive network of bike routes and a linear connection

along the waterfront.

- **New Lateral Access:** The proposal to build housing in the footprint of a de-commissioned Sheridan Expressway calls for extending the street and block pattern east to the edge of the Bronx River and Greenway.
- **Street Pedestrianization:** New linkages are created by making several important neighborhood roads more pedestrian-friendly. In addition, Hunts Point Avenue is treated as a tree-lined, multi-modal boulevard.
- **Gateways and Intersection Improvements:** Several gateways are identified. A key “residential gateway” is identified at the Hunts Point Avenue/Southern Boulevard/E 163rd Street nexus. Several other “Industrial Gateways” are suggested at the boundary between the residential core and the industrial area, and notably at several key connecting streets at Bruckner Boulevard including Leggett Avenue and Longwood Avenue. Finally, several intersections within the district are targeted for design improvements.
- **Truck Access Alternatives:** There is widespread agreement that truck access needs to be rationalized, as this is the major obstacle to improved neighborhood quality of life. There are two major urban design components to truck access. First, there is the identification (and enforcement) of truck routes that rationalize truck movements through the district and minimize interference with pedestrian circulation. The second major component is truck access to Hunts Point from the Bruckner Expressway and issues related to the potential decommissioning of the Sheridan Expressway. But as discussed below, these three alternatives have very different implications for community development. While there are multiple alternatives still being evaluated in the EIS, these are largely variations on three big ideas: new ramps off of the Bruckner Expressway northbound onto Leggett Avenue, new ramps off of the Sheridan Expressway southbound onto Edgewater Road, and new elevated access to the Bruckner Expressway in the area of the Bronx River drawbridge.

Observations: Overlaying all of these plans suggests several things. First, the various recommendations are almost entirely complementary, although there are several places where the recommendations are redundant. There are, for example, two bike routes proposed along the eastern edge of the district. One of the two should be selected. Also, several of the bike routes are coincident with the truck routes. Bike routes can be accommodated on high traffic volume roads, but it may yet be worth studying ways to minimize the overlap of truck and bike/pedestrian movements.

Taken together, the studies propose a walkable district with extensive connections throughout. The idea of a well-connected pedestrian environment is the centerpiece of all TOD planning and so in this regard the recommendations of the neighborhood plans and the new station initiative are mutually supportive (as shown on the facing page).

Finally, the drawing highlights the extent to which the various mobility circulation elements collide at the Bruckner Boulevard/Edgewater Road/Whitlock Avenue intersection. This is the junction of the greenway; the pedestrian links between Bronx Arts and the north side of the Bruckner/Sheridan; and the local truck routes. While this study does not investigate the details of freight mobility and how the Bruckner/Sheridan reconstruction would affect it, it would seem that the addition of new truck ramps in this location will exacerbate the conflicts at this pinch point. The Leggett Avenue ramps seem to channel the truck traffic through an area that is already industrial and where there are the fewest land use and mobility conflicts.

Access and Circulation

1. Waterfront Greenway
2. New Access
3. Highway Truck Access
4. Residential Gateway
5. Industrial Gateway
6. Bike Routes
7. Truck Routes
8. Pedestrian Way
9. Intersection Fix
10. Boulevard

- Potential Problems:
11. Mobility Conflict
 12. Priority Streets
 13. Redundant Bikeways
 14. Truck/Bike conflict



Open space and cultural resources

Overview and Graphic Plan Summary: As with the mobility access analysis, a synthesis of the existing plans shows that these recommendations are complementary and add up to a comprehensive open space armature. The principal elements of this armature are as follows:

- **The Bronx River Greenway:** Obviously this is the single most important open space resource as it connects this community, land-locked by industrial uses, to the premier resource that surrounds it: the water. Unfortunately, several well-established industrial blocks will continue to prevent the residential and mixed use core from growing out to the water's edge. Still, it will be a great resource and another linkage from the station area to the larger context.
- **The Hunts Point Riverside Park:** This is the local greenway destination point for this neighborhood. Two neighborhood boulevards --Hunts Point Avenue and Lafayette Street-- are designed not just as important segments of the larger access and mobility framework, but also as true public spaces. They are boulevards meant to incorporate landscaping treatments, signature lighting, streetscaping, and signature intersection designs. These boulevards help link several parks in the district including the Manida Ball fields and Drake Park.
- **Bruckner Boulevard:** Although it is in the shadow of the Expressway, the open space armature includes the redesign of this road as a true boulevard not only with streetscape improvements similar to those described above, but with a landscaped median. In the Bronx River Greenway Plan, the boulevard design is part of the longer Lafayette Street boulevard connection to Hunts Point Riverside Park and the rest of the waterfront greenway system. For this reason the redesign is shown only extending south and west from the intersection with Lafayette Boulevard. It is not shown extending along the "seam" between the Hunts Point residential core and the Longwood neighborhood.
- **New Parks at Sheridan Expressway:** As part of the redevelopment of the land below a decommissioned Sheridan Expressway, new parks and open spaces are proposed around the new buildings that would be integrated with the Greenway.

Cultural Resources: There is a substantial

array of existing and proposed cultural resources (see the Land Use discussion below). As shown on the opposite page, existing resources include the many activities associated with the Bank Note Building, Sustainable South Bronx and The Point, Bright Temple Church and Bronx Arts High School. There are also several interesting proposals for new resources including the renovation and adaptive reuse of the old Cass Gilbert train station at Westchester Avenue (the Historic Hunts Point Station would be renovated and reused as well, although a new station will have to be built for Metro-North service). Several new facilities are planned for the portion of the Bronx River Greenway north of the Bruckner Expressway including a new youth hostel and a new home for the Youth Ministries.

Observations: Collectively, all of these resources create a strong base for a public realm strategy. However, as with the access and mobility recommendations, the existing reports focus on the area south of the Bruckner and have little to say about how this armature extends north of the Bruckner into Longwood.

Land Use

Overview and Graphic Plan Summary: Collectively, the land use recommendations of the various plans describe a vibrant mixed-use neighborhood, but also reflect the tension between this vision and the desire to reinforce and build on the industrial base. The major land use recommendations include the following:

- **Residential Core & Industrial District:** Although there are some blocks with both industrial and residential uses, the objective is to minimize conflicts overall by keeping the two district types clearly defined. This is accomplished through zoning which consolidates uses on a block-by-block basis and by the creation of "industrial gateways" which demarcate the point of entry into the industrial precinct. (See Access and Mobility recommendations).
- **Retail Potential of Wholesale Industrial Uses:** As with other districts that are dominated by an industry type (such as the Flower District or the Diamond District), there is interest in exploring the identity of the food market and the relocated fish market to create a retail destination.
- **New Cultural Uses:** As part of the redevelopment of land in the footprint of a decommissioned Sheridan Expressway, several new community facilities and cultural uses are proposed, including a new youth hostel, a new home for the Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice and the adaptive reuse of the old

Cass Gilbert train station.

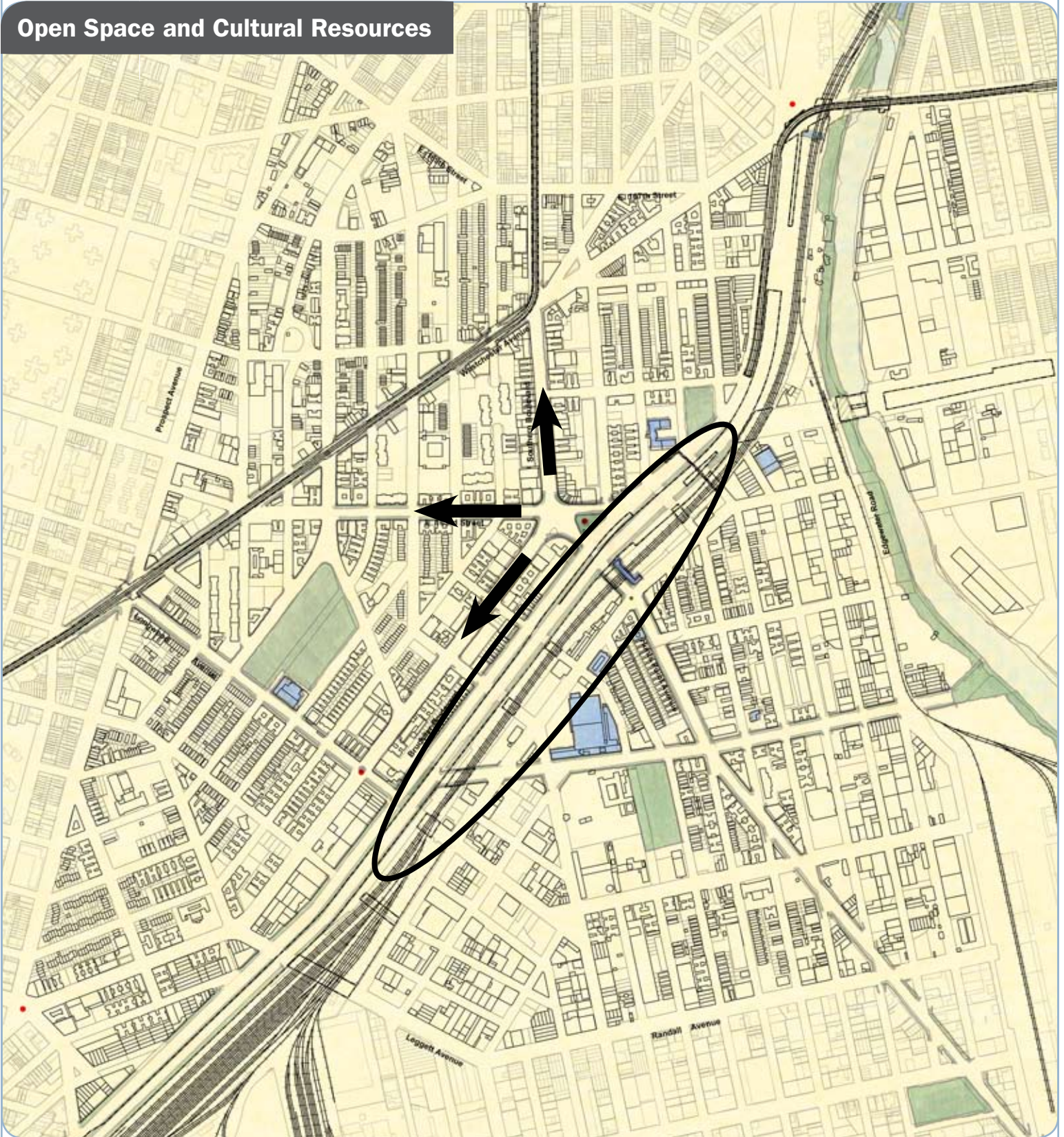
- **New Residential and Retail Uses:** New residential buildings are proposed for the land that would become available if the Sheridan were decommissioned. These are towers that range in height between six and fourteen stories. A total of about one thousand units is suggested. The ground floor of some of the buildings will be retail.
- **Longwood Neighborhood Redevelopment:** As described above, there is a lot of new infill development taking place within the larger station study area and a significant number of "soft sites" that will be pressure points for future redevelopment. At the edge of the study area but still within a half-mile walking distance of the future station is a cluster of industrialized abandoned and otherwise marginal properties. This area needs to be better connected to both the existing and proposed transit resources to leverage the potential increase in investment.
- **The Hunts Point Cultural Quarter Study Cultural District:** The proposed Cultural district plan describes a way of linking the comprehensive strategy for the cultural resources in the residential core. In particular, it describes three hubs and the both physical and programmatic connections between them: an Arts Hub anchored by the Bank Note Building; an Environmental Hub anchored by the Bronx High School for the Arts; and a Healthy Living Center anchored by the Bright Temple Church.

Observations: The community plans, for a good reason, stress the importance of linking the many resources that are in the study area. The cultural district plan invokes the concept that "the whole can be greater than the sum of the parts." The cultural district plan in particular capitalizes on this idea.

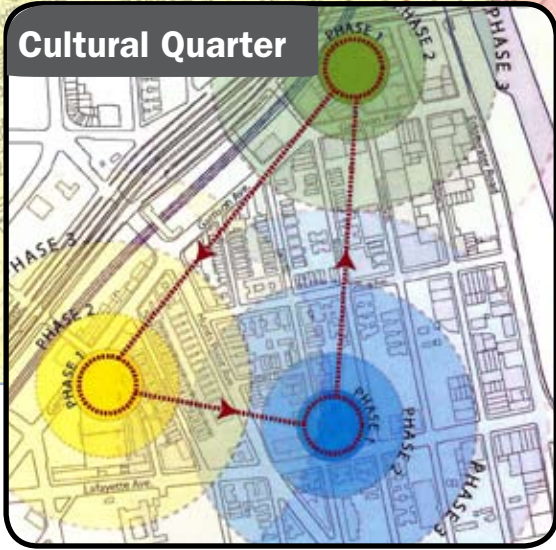
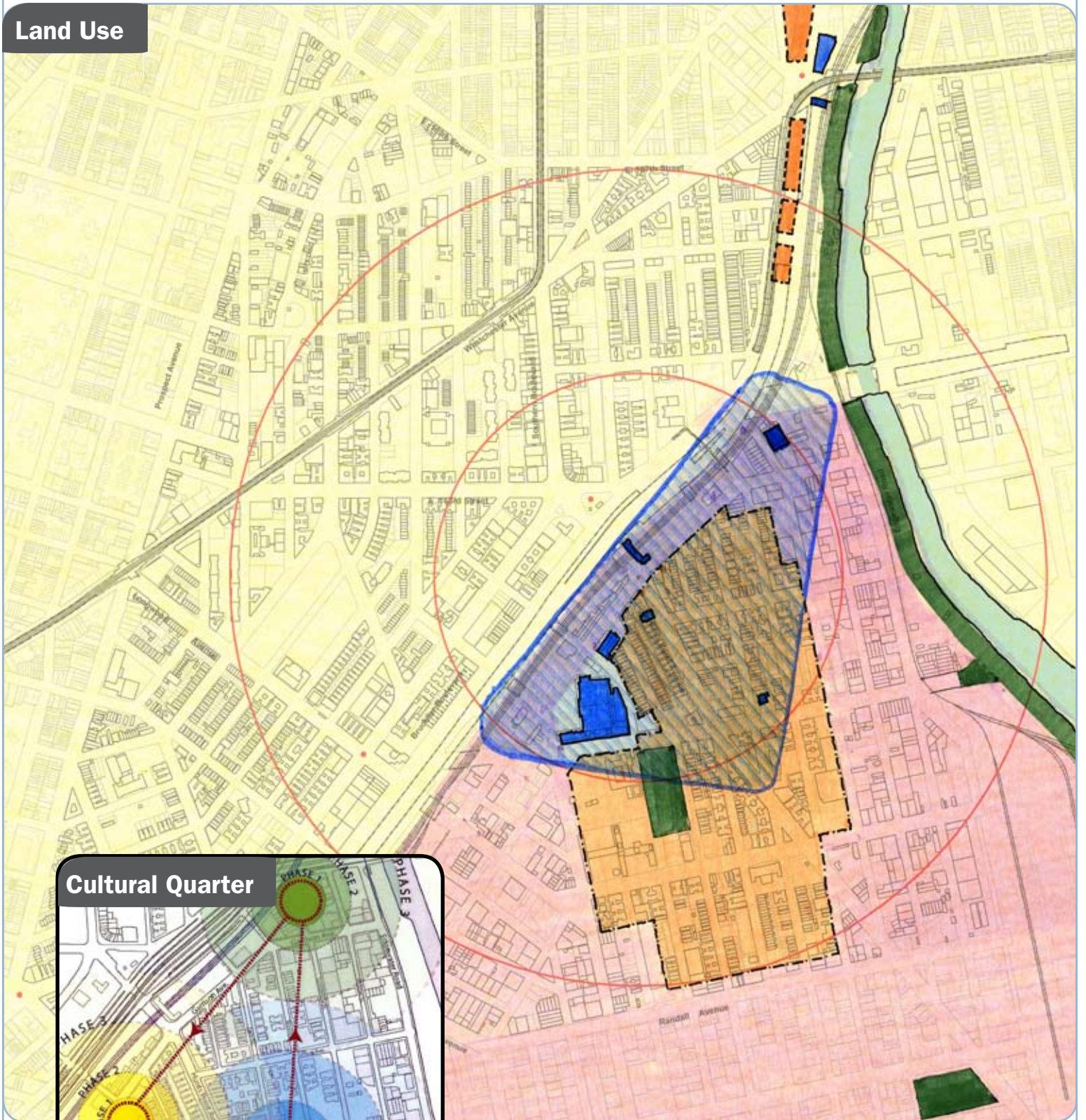
The difficulty is that the connections to the Environmental Hub at the Bronx High School for the Arts are impeded by the existing land use patterns. The Bronx High School for the Arts is surrounded by industrial uses and pedestrian-unfriendly streets. The Garrison Avenue corridor that could link the Environmental Hub to the Arts Hub, with the future station at the center, is lined with the same marginal and vacant properties that reinforce the divide between Hunts Point and Longwood.

Of course new housing is the single most transit-supportive land use. The several thousand new dwelling units at the Sheridan location will increase ridership at the proposed Hunts Point station.

Open Space and Cultural Resources



Land Use



Summary and Conclusion: Towards a Planning Framework

As suggested above, the analysis of the existing plans reveals the extent to which a new train station would leverage community revitalization goals. In particular, a new level of connectivity between Hunts Point and Longwood centered around a new Metro-North Hunts Point station, combined with new residential development in the larger study area, has the potential to create a pedestrian-friendly district comprising both Hunts Point and Longwood.

But in current drawings and plans, this relationship is rarely described. Almost without exception, the geographic limit of the existing studies is the northern boundary of Hunts Point defined by the two major physical barriers – the Bruckner Expressway and the Amtrak rail cut. Of course, to varying degrees, the studies describe the importance of bridging this divide – of creating better pedestrian connections across the Bruckner, particularly at Hunts Point Avenue. This amounts to a tacit acknowledgement that the mixed use core can be strengthened by capitalizing on the strengths of the Longwood neighborhood on the north side of the divide – the several heavily-used existing transit resources (6 subway stations), the vibrant street life and the new residential development.

This exercise shifts the geographic frame for the various community-based plans in a way that makes the new Metro-North station and the existing Hunts Point subway station the centers of gravity. In many ways this is the most significant way in which the new station can be leveraged to support community development goals: by shifting the geographic frame to an area centered around the stations, it is possible to reinforce the many recommendations for tying these two neighborhoods together. This is why the definition of the study area is not a trivial exercise but a fundamental decision that impacts the content and implementation of TOD in this location.

A TOD Perspective: Linking the District

Interestingly, in the existing plans, there are two overlapping and, ultimately, mutually supportive approaches to pedestrianizing the roads. One is to identify strategic corridors that extend for long distances through and beyond the district – Hunts Point Avenue is the obvious example here. But TOD planning is concerned not only with the corridors linking destinations to the station, although

these are important. The more comprehensive approach is to make the entire district, on both sides of the Bruckner, a pedestrian-friendly environment, enabling full and unfettered mobility and maximizing on-street community interaction. This is actually the approach that begins to emerge as more and more of the pedestrianway recommendations from the different studies are assembled. It is also the approach that best comports with the concept of a TOD “node” – a walkable district centered on the train station and straddling both sides of the Bruckner divide – Hunts Point and Longwood. This again is the value of shifting the frame to a “station area.” The problem at the moment is that for the most part the plans do not show how the connections link the entire district on both sides of the Bruckner.

This suggests one of the great opportunities for TOD planning in this location, regardless of when the station comes on line: planning for the station and the redevelopment of the properties adjacent to it can become the foundation for a new level of connectivity both within Hunts Point and between Hunts Point and Longwood. What are these connections?

First is the primary connection at Hunts Point Avenue and Bruckner Boulevard. The new service will require a new station facility (platforms, elevators) and new infrastructure, a new station building, perhaps implemented by refurbishing the historic station. In any case, the investment in the new station should include improvements to the Hunts Point/Bruckner Boulevard connection. This is strategic both in terms of intermodal connections to bus and especially subways in Longwood, but also because of the need to connect the station to the existing and emerging residential populations in Longwood. The most ambitious idea would be to build a concourse below the Bruckner that linked the new station to the #6 subway concourse, creating an alternative way for pedestrians to cross the Bruckner and creating a new level of intermodal connectivity between Metro-North and the subway system.

Next, the station area can leverage the redevelopment of the marginal blocks between Garrison Avenue and the railroad cut. For the most part, these blocks are marginally used: some are vacant, some contain auto-related businesses. One of the largest parcels is occupied by a school bus yard. This is not an efficient use of land as it is both pedestrian-unfriendly and transit-unfriendly and could be located elsewhere in the industrial district where there are other outdoor storage and staging activities. The redevelopment of these blocks could be done in a way that creates several other cross connections between the neighborhoods. In this way, over time, the “great divide” along the Bruckner and the railroad cut can become the seam between Hunts Point and Longwood to

the mutual benefit of both.

Third, the redevelopment of this edge will enable the connection which the Cultural District plan calls for between the Environmental Hub and the Arts Hub. Garrison Avenue can become a lively mixed-use corridor, with the new station at the strategic midway point of the new Hunts Point Avenue, and bringing the edge of the residential core into the overall Cultural District.

It is important to note that at community presentation of preliminary findings, a question was raised as to whether anything is likely to be built along the Garrison Avenue blocks as long as the future of the Bruckner/Sheridan reconstruction is unresolved because of potential environmental impacts, both during construction and as a result of the space requirements of the final design.

Finally, the station area planning would involve extending the network of connecting corridors into Longwood. These corridors would link the new station not only to the several other important subway stations in the area, but to the troubled cluster of blocks at the perimeter of the study area.

Conclusion

The analysis presented above suggests that in the immediate term, the potential impact of the new service is not significant in terms of absolute numbers of riders from Hunts Point. Does this mean that the station is unimportant? Not at all. First, ridership from other parts of the Bronx is substantially larger. Second, even at the margin, the ridership here will contribute both to local congestion relief and to the overall viability of the new service on the line in aggregate with the several other proposed stations.

But the immediate real value of planning a comprehensive transit-ready district lies in the near-perfect synergy between the larger goals of the community plans and best practice TOD planning. As it happens, each of the essential elements of the community-based plans are also the essential strategies for a TOD district: rationalization of truck traffic, new residential development, creation of greenway connections and connecting corridors, redevelopment of marginal and vacant properties, creation of a cultural and mixed-use destination to give the station area a unique identity; and, perhaps most relevant, the overall pedestrianization of a district, centered around the 100% Corner of Hunts Point Avenue and Bruckner Boulevard, a district that leverages a new mutually-reinforcing relationship between Hunts Point and Longwood and that can heal a scar in the urban landscape that has isolated Hunts Point for too long.

Planning Framework



Methodology

Identified significant transit investment projects:

After evaluating the projects included as part of the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council's Regional

Step 1

Transportation Plan for 2005-2030, three projects in New York City were identified as significant investments that would result in improved transit capacity with either new tunnels or new stations: East Side Access for the Long Island Railroad (LIRR ESA), Second Avenue Subway and Metro-North New Haven Line Penn Access.

Identified potential revitalization areas:

The new stations and existing stations that will be impacted by the projects identified in (1) were analyzed with a Geographic Information System (GIS) methodology determining the

Census tracts that lie within a 1,320 feet or ¼-mile radius - deemed a walkable distance - from the station. Census tracts are the smallest units of analysis for real estate, demographic, and community development analysis and portray neighborhood-based characteristics and trends as they relate to broad market forces and conditions. 30 station areas were identified.

Step 2

Consolidated demographic data for the potential areas:

Disadvantaged communities were identified after analysis of the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act database (HMDA), the

Step 3

most relevant and current income determination tool used by the private and government sectors for reinvestment in disadvantaged communities. The areas determined in (2) were surveyed with HMDA data, other Census 2000 information on

transit use and housing vacancy, and RPA-calculated density to characterize the 30 potential demonstration project areas.

Identified preferred community revitalization area:

Tabulation of demographic characteristics defined in (3) and examination of the land use and development capacity led to the identification of the area of Hunts Point/Longwood in the South Bronx as the preferred community revitalization area and demonstration site. The real estate

Step 4

characteristics of the area and its potential for revitalization are demonstrated by the presence of industrial uses, vacant parcels and parking facilities suitable for community revitalization efforts. Two other sites - Flushing and Far Rockaway both in Queens - were considered, but their location, demographics and development potential were ranked less highly than Hunts Point's. Other potential areas, such as Jamaica, Chinatown or Long Island City, would be suitable but seemed less ideal for a variety of reasons, such as scope and complexity, in the case of Long Island City, lack of development capacity in Chinatown and existing TOD projects in the case of Jamaica.

Potential partner screening and community will:

The Hunts Point area in the Bronx has been identified by preliminary studies conducted by Metro-North as a community whose residents favor economic development. This attitude was important in the selection of the community for a potential transit stop in the commuter rail network. A community stakeholder committee of area organizations has advised the project goals and process over the last year.

Step 5

Organizations partnering with this committee include The Point CDC, Sustainable South Bronx, Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice, and Pratt Center for Community Development. This coalition has developed a set of draft recommendations for community development. This document states

as a recommendation to "renovate the Hunts Point Station and improve public transportation for workforce." Other sustainable economic development projects along the waterfront and next steps to build political support for these proposals and secure their funding have been identified. In addition, the Bronx Borough President was consulted for guidance and support.

Advisory group: Members of the advisory committee included John Parkinson, Coordinator, ULI NY District Council; Candace Schafer, Chair, ULI Westchester/Fairfield District Council; Vicky Been, Director, Furman Center for Real Estate and Urban Policy, New York University; Victoria Kahn,

Step 6

Member of the Executive Committee, ULI New York District Council; and Samuel Goodman, Bronx Borough President's Office. The Advisory Group's commentary was instrumental in defining the approach taken for the work in the selected community and in unifying the goal of leveraging existing transit to facilitate redevelopment and economic development for affordable housing and public realm improvements.

Analyzed station transit impacts:

Existing and potential use of transit resources on the study area, including the ridership benefits of the new Metro-North service, were determined. According to Metro-North, the potential peak period routing into Penn Station and construction of new stations require completion of an ongoing Environmental Impact Statement, selection of a preferred alternative, funding and completion of LIRR ESA construction. Hunts Point performs as well or better than most other proposed stations with about 1,600 riders forecasted riding from Hunts Point Station north - i.e. individuals who live in the Bronx and work in Westchester

Step 7

or Connecticut. Existing subway ridership in the Hunts Point station strongly supports a redevelopment strategy based on transit. This station has recovered to 103% of its former peak use in the 1960s, pointing to latent potential for transit-oriented development in the region's urban core. This point is important as subway transit assets can be leveraged for TOD as well as those related to the Metro-North Station.

Analyzed labor market demand:

Using historical data of Bronx, Westchester, Stamford and New Haven counties, we identified a traditionally higher unemployment rate for the Bronx compared to the rest of Metro-North New Haven Line corridor market area. This suggests that potential accessibility to those markets will connect job seekers in the Bronx with job openings in the Metro-North New Haven Corridor. We determined that the occupational profile of most workers in Hunts Point/Longwood is Medium Skill (5,300 workers) or Low Skill (4,800 workers). The forecast for the labor market areas in the alignment

of the Metro-North New Haven Line Corridor market for the next decade pointed to new openings of about 23,200 in Medium Skill occupations and about 65,600 for Low Skill occupations, with the remaining 65,800 for openings in High Skill occupations. This means that most job opportunities for occupations currently held by residents of the study area will be in the Low Skill jobs such as sales, transportation and health care and less in the Medium Skill occupations such as office, production and construction.



Defined study area and analyzed development capacity:

Potential development near the transit station was evaluated by conducting a building survey that identified new construction and potential development sites. This included analysis of zoning and land use scenarios from which to determine the potential capacity for new development in a circle of a radius of a ½-mile from the proposed Metro-North Station location. The two scenarios, one under current zoning, and the other with zoning changes from industrial to residential uses of soft sites, established that about 2,400 housing units could be built in the area around the station under current zoning, and 3,200 housing units with zoning changes in the same area.



Summarized all of the existing plans:

Analyzed currently active plans that have physical components in terms of their relationship to the new train station. This was done by interviewing several community leaders and reviewing an inventory of existing plans. A summary of these documents ranges across several issues, from the proposal for a reactivated Metro-North Station to waterfront access and streetscaping, housing and economic development, and trucks and brownfields. A longer report with excerpts from each plan was provided to community leaders and organizations. The two documents serve as a snapshot of the current plans in the community and contribute to consolidate the CBOs capacity and sharing of goals and objectives.



Organized and led a community briefing workshop:

Established neighborhood priorities, and illustrated urban design options that provide the basis for an urban design and planning framework. This framework is organized around three areas of interest: access and mobility, open space and cultural resources, and land use. This preliminary framework was created by distilling from each of the nineteen plans those essential recommendations in each of these three categories that are “mapable” – that is, those proposals which have some manifestation in the built environment. The access and mobility synthesis of the existing plans reveals the extent to which the community wants to be connected to the many resources that surround the study area. It also highlights a widely recognized conflict between truck access to the industrial areas and other forms of pedestrian and bicycle mobility. As with the mobility access analysis, a synthesis of the existing plans shows that these recommendations are synergistic. Collectively, the land-use recommendations of the various plans describe a vibrant mixed-use neighborhood, but also reflect the tension between this vision and the desire to reinforce and build on the industrial base.



Active Plans Matrix

2006 Hunts Point/Longwood Neighborhoods

PLAN	PLANNED IMPROVEMENT									
	TRANSIT		BRUCKNER BLVD		DEVELOPMENT			OPEN SPACE		
	Future Metro-North Station	Subway/Bus Improvements	Truck Freight Access & Truck Routes	Boulevard Crossings	Housing	Community Facility/Economic Development	Brownfield Redevelopment	Streetscaping, Tree Planting and New Streets	New Enhanced Open Spaces	Waterfront Access & Greenway
South Bronx Environmental Health Policy Study. Jose Serrano, New York University.								•		
Bronx Waterfront Plan. Borough President Adolfo Carrion, Jr.						•				•
Greening Hunts Point. New York City Department of Parks & Recreation.								•		
Sheridan Land Use Planning Study. Pratt University.	•									
Hunts Point Cultural Quarter. Outline Strategy for a Community Future. The Point CDC. ERA.		•		•		•		•	•	
Principles for the Redevelopment of the Sheridan. Southern Bronx River Watershed Alliance.		•			•	•		•		
Community Plan, Sheridan Alternative Plan. Southern Bronx River Watershed Alliance.			•							
Longwood Urban Renewal Project. The City of New York, HPD.					•			•		
Bruckner Sheridan Interchange and Commercial Access to Hunts Point Peninsula. NYS DOT.			•	•						
South Bronx Waterfront Brownfields Opportunity Area. Pratt University.							•			
Statement of Community District Needs FY 2006. Bronx Community Board 2.	•		•		•	•			•	•

PLAN	PLANNED IMPROVEMENT									
	TRANSIT		BRUCKNER BLVD		DEVELOPMENT			OPEN SPACE		
	Future Metro-North Station	Subway/Bus Improvements	Truck Freight Access & Truck Routes	Boulevard Crossings	Housing	Community Facility/Economic Development	Brownfield Redevelopment	Streetscaping, Tree Planting and New Streets	New Enhanced Open Spaces	Waterfront Access & Greenway
Reclaiming Cass Gilbert's Westchester Avenue Station. Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice.						●				
A New Home in the Bronx River Neighborhood. Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice.						●				
Active and Proposed Projects, May 2006. Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice.			●			●	●		●	
Young Adults' Residence and Travelers Hostel. Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice.						●				
Hunts Point Vision Plan. Hunts Point Task Force, City of New York.		●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●
South Bronx Greenway Master Plan. New York City Economic Development Corporation.				●				●	●	●
Bronx River Greenway Plan. Bronx River Alliance.				●					●	
Draft 197 - A Plan. Sustainable South Bronx/The Point CDC.	●								●	●

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Regional Plan Association (RPA) is an independent regional planning organization that improves the quality of life and the economic competitiveness of the 31-county, New York-New Jersey-Connecticut region through research, planning, and advocacy. Since 1922, RPA has been shaping transportation systems, protecting open spaces, and promoting better community design for the region's continued growth. We anticipate the challenges the region will face in the years to come, and we mobilize the region's civic, business, and government sectors to take action.

RPA's current work is aimed largely at implementing the ideas put forth in the Third Regional Plan, with efforts focused in five project areas: community design, open space, transportation, workforce and the economy, and housing. For more information about Regional Plan Association, please visit our website, www.rpa.org.

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Hunts Point Avenue Station

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