





BACKGROUND	1			
THE ROCKAWAYS R/U	DAT	3		
GREEN INFRASTRUCT	URE & 0	OPEN SF	ACE	8
MOBILITY & CONNEC	TIVITY		30	
BEACH 116 LAND USE	PLAN		45	
ECONOMIC FEASIBILI	TY	62		
A ROCKAWAY "MAIN !	STREET'	7	78	
BUILDING COMMUNI	TY	92		
TEAM ROSTER	112			



THE DESIGN ASSISTANCE TEAM PROGRAM

The American Institute of Architects has a 45-year history of public service work. The AlA's Center for Communities by Design has conducted design assistance projects across the country. Through these public service programs, over 1,000 professionals from more than 30 disciplines have provided millions of dollars in professional pro bono services to more than 200 communities across the country, engaging thousands of participants in community driven planning processes. Its projects have led to some of the most recognizable places in America, such as San Francisco's Embarcadero, Portland's Pearl District, and the Santa Fe Railyard Park.

Regional and Urban Design Assistance Teams (R/UDAT)

Created in 1967, the AIA's R/UDAT program pioneered the modern charrette process by combining multi-disciplinary teams in dynamic, multi-day grassroots processes to produce community visions, action plans and recommendations.

Sustainable Design Assessment Teams (SDAT)

In 2005, as a response to growing interest and concern about local sustainability planning, the AIA launched a companion program to the R/UDAT that allowed it to make a major institutional investment in public service work to assist communities in developing policy frameworks and long-term sustainability plans. Since 2005, the SDAT program has worked with over 50 towns, cities and regions.









The Center's Design Assistance Team programs operate with three guiding principles:

- Enhanced Objectivity. The goal of the design assistance team program is to provide communities with a framework for action. Consequently, each project team is constructed with the goal of bringing an objective perspective to the community that can transcend and transform the normal politics or public dialogue. Team members are deliberately selected from geographic regions outside of the host community, and national AIA teams are typically representative of a wide range of community settings. Team members all agree to serve pro bono, and do not engage in business development activity in association with their service. They do not serve a particular client. The team's role is to provide an independent analysis and unencumbered technical advice that serves the public interest.
- Public Participation. The AIA has a four decade tradition of designing community-driven processes that incorporate substantial public input through a multi-faceted format that includes public workshops, small group sessions, stakeholder interviews, formal meetings and presentations. This approach allows the national team to build on the substantial local expertise already present and available within the community and leverage the best existing knowledge available in formulating its recommendations.
- Multi-disciplinary Expertise. Each project is designed as a customized approach to community assistance which incorporates local realities and the unique challenges and assets of each community. As a result, each design assistance team includes an interdisciplinary focus and a systems approach to assessment and recommendations, incorporating and examining cross-cutting topics and relationships between issues. In order to accomplish this task, the Center forms multi-disciplinary teams that combine a range of disciplines and professions in an integrated assessment and design process.











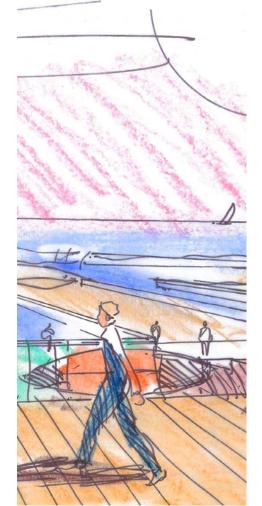








THE ROCKAWAYS R/UDAT



THE ROCKAWAYS R/UDAT PROCESS

In October 2012, Hurricane Sandy made landfall in New York, causing catastrophic damage. Hurricane Sandy was the largest Atlantic hurricane on record, and the second-costliest hurricane in United States history. Beyond the significant loss of life, the damage assessments estimated the storm's impact at \$53 billion. The storm severely damaged or destroyed an estimated 100,000 homes on Long Island with more than 2,000 homes deemed uninhabitable. Rockaway was flooded with a 15-foot storm surge. The storm caused fires that destroyed over 100 homes in Breezy Point, and an entire commercial block near Beach 116th street. The storm severely disrupted city infrastructure. Widespread power outages continued for weeks, drinking water was contaminated, and public transit was shut down for months.

The Rockaways R/UDAT project was conceived in March 2013, in collaboration with a host of local project partners and stakeholders. Led by New York City's Department of Small Business Services and the Beach 116th Street Merchants Association, a local steering committee put forth an official invitation and application to the R/UDAT program. The application was accepted in March. After selecting a project

team leader, an initial visit was conducted in April 2013 to meet with key project stakeholders, formalize the project scope, and conduct an initial assessment of the area. Based on this assessment, a multi-disciplinary team was recruited with specific expertise on the issues present in the Rockaways. In preparation for the community process, a database of existing plans was established and reviewed by team members and multiple conference calls were scheduled to discuss the project scope and approach, reach out to partnering organizations, and plan logistics for the process. The community process took place from June 7-10, 2013. The process was designed with a multi-faceted approach and included the following elements:

- A comprehensive tour of the Rockaways community, led by local partners, including a bus tour and walking tours.
- A series of key stakeholder interviews, small group meetings, and focus groups.
- A public workshop involving approximately over 100 residents, which collected input on community assets, identity, and a vision for the future.
- A two-day design studio with local professionals, planners and partner organizations.

The team members worked closely with local officials, community leaders, technical experts, and citizens to study the community and its concerns. The team's final report provides a narrative account and summary of recommendations presented to the community on June 10, 2013, at a community meeting.

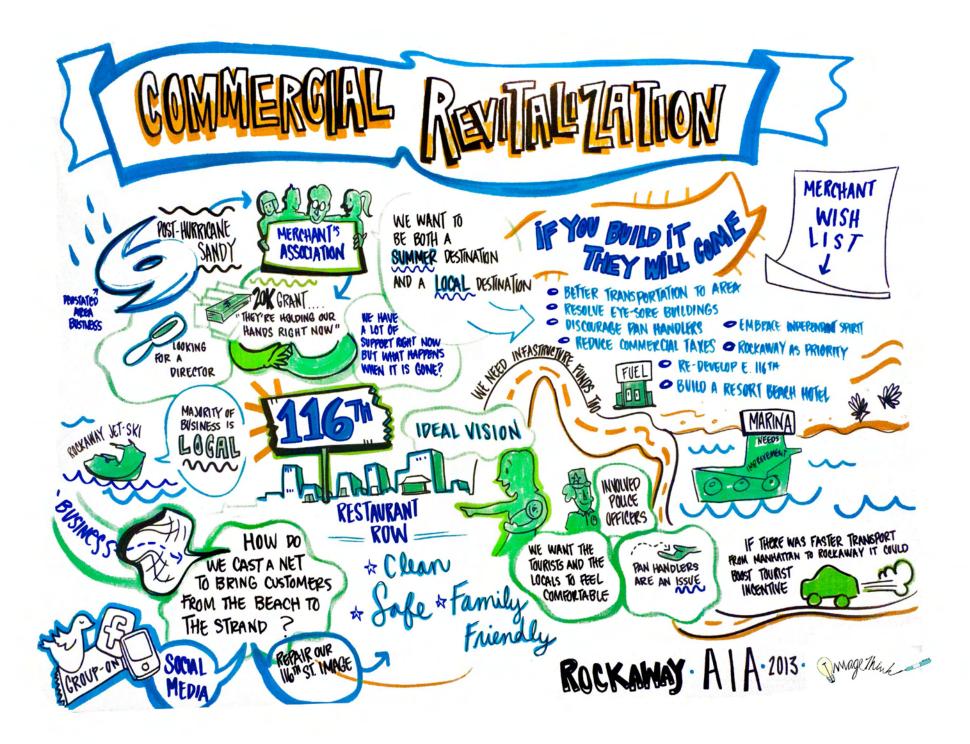


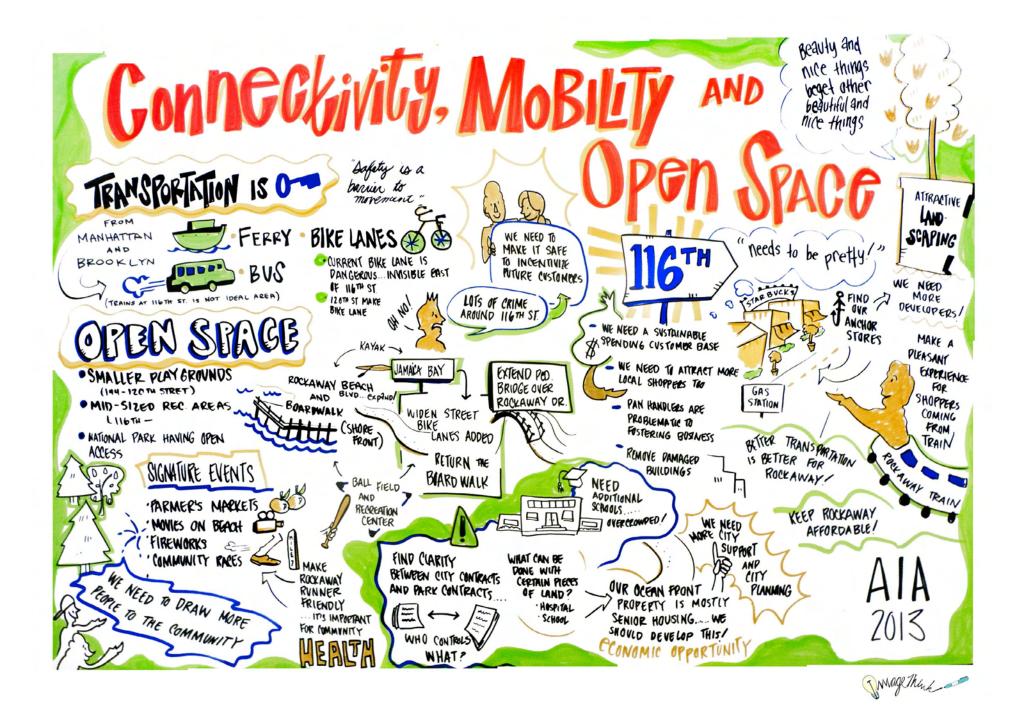


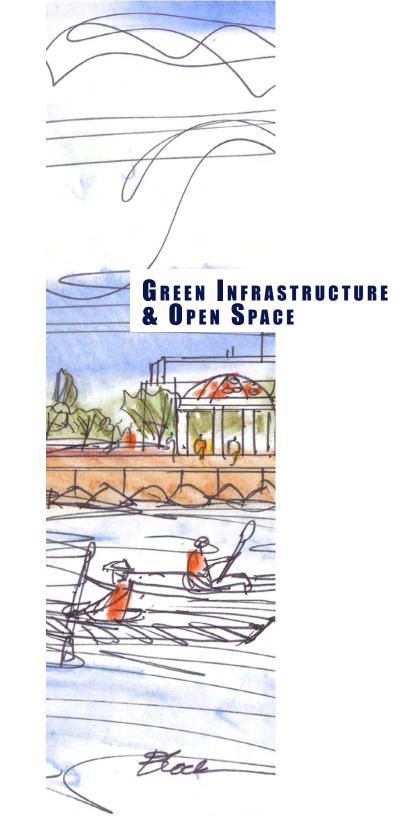




Graphic Recording from R/UDAT public workshop.







GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE & FLOOD CONTROL MANAGEMENT

Unlike single purpose stormwater infrastructure that disposes of water into a storm drain, green infrastructure takes a multimodal approach integrating stormwater management with multiple environmental and community benefits that supports sustainable communities. Integrating natural processes into the built environment, green infrastructure provides:

- Stormwater management
- Flood mitigation
- Air quality management
- Providing habitat (on land and in the ocean and the bay)
- Improve Quality of Life
- Increasing property values
- Lowering long term stormwater management costs
- Easing compliance with the City's federal Municipal Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) permitting requirements

In order to successfully integrate this approach to the Rockaways, it is imperative to work at multiple scales to ensure the greatest success during a storm surge. We recommend working at both the scale of the peninsula and at neighborhood and street scale.

The Rockaways are a narrow flat peninsula, with almost 30 miles of water front. We know that the occurrence of large storms, including catastrophic storms, will be increasing in the future. In this context it is not feasible to prevent all flooding, especially from large and catastrophic storms. It is also not reasonable to even consider

a goal of abandoning the Rockaways to the sea or of discouraging or preventing new buildings on the Rockaways.

DEFEND

At a peninsular scale, it is most appropriate to think about how to make the Rockaways more resilient, adapting to and reducing the damage from future storms, incorporating a system of built and natural form that partially keep the sea at bay, while simultaneously creating places that add to the experience of both the esplanade and the boardwalk. A key part of the strategy is to ensure that all new buildings and major building rehabilitations bring buildings into compliance with codes, and adjusting those codes to acknowledge that the current base flood elevation is higher than assumed prior to Superstorm Sandy, and that elevation is projected to rise with sea level rise and climate change related increasing storm frequency.

ADAPT

At a neighborhood scale it is important to utilize natural systems and green infrastructure (also known as low impact development) to reduce damage from large and small storms, increase the quality of stormwater runoff discharging into the bay and the ocean, and improve the quality of life.



GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

DEFENDING THE SHORE

Closer to 116th St. sits the transportation hub and trail head of the Rockaways and the center of economic development

Built Sea Walls ensure the protection of the shore and structures in areas where the built environment makes it impossible to develop sand dunes and where sea walls can block some of the energy of large storms, but avoid an expectation that they will prevent flooding behind the wall. Because sea walls are expensive and often deflect, as opposed to absorb, the energy of a storm, they should have only a very limited application.

Hybrid Sea Walls and Sand Dunes, with sand dune predominate and sea walls filling in gaps, can help absorb the energy of a storm and mimic the natural systems that built and maintained the Rockaways as a barrier beach for thousands of years. Sand dunes can be



Burnham on the Sea.



Rhone River Park

self-sustaining and largely self-repairing (over time) if there are few or no structures between the dunes and ocean to allow sand to naturally blow and collect.

Hybrid Concrete Jetties and Wade Pools can break up the current and absorb some of the impact and energy of the waves in front of the 116th, and provide a beach amenity. Jetties and structures should be limited to those adjacent to the high value commercial areas like 116th. These structures should not extend below the wet sand beach (i.e., low tide line) and should use a low vertical profile so that the structures have a minimal impact on the lateral drift that naturally moves sand along the beach by both ocean currents and by wind, allowing natural beach and dune replenishment.



Sea Wall and Boardwalk



Emergency Sea Wall

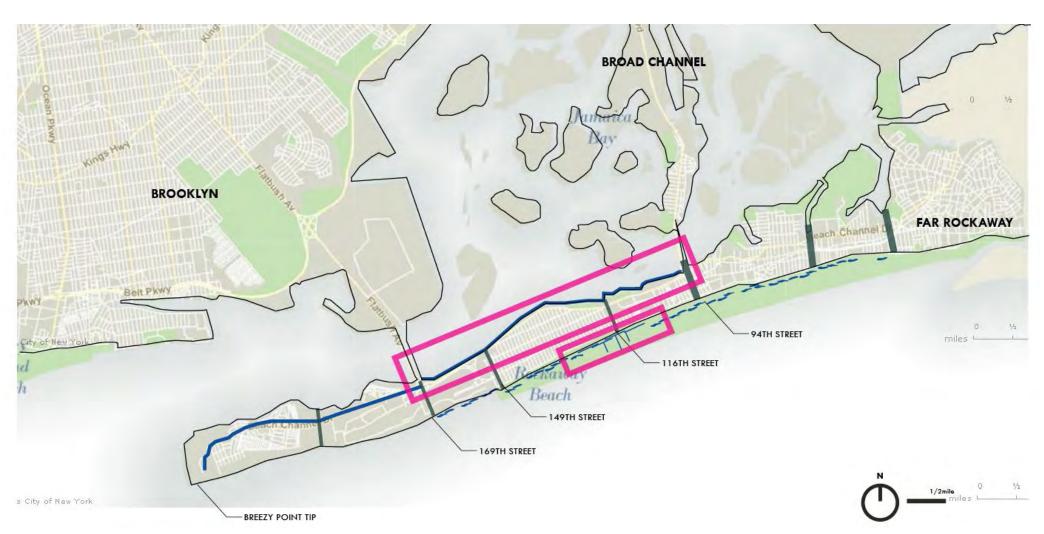


Wade pools

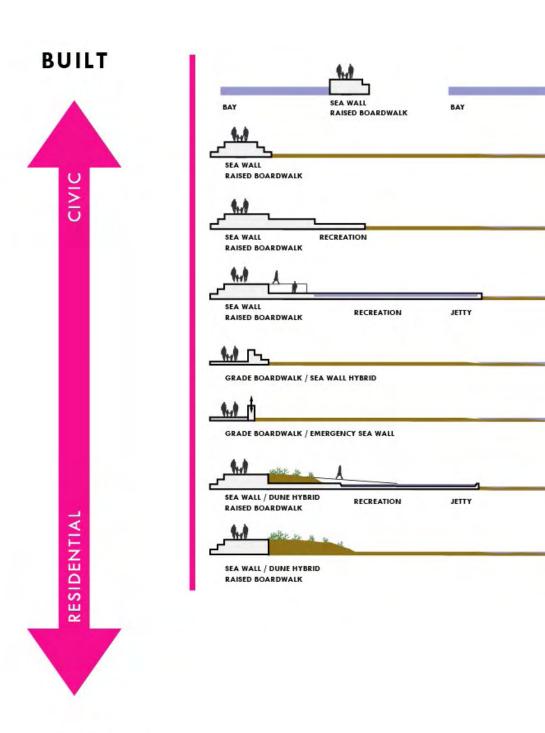


The Embarcadero Boardwalk and Sea Wall

Emergency sea walls are temporary flood barriers perfect for places at entry and egress points to the beach, the boardwalk and the esplanade. These can be stop log structures (installed into permanently installed slotted vertical columns) or adjustable floodgates that rise vertically to prevent a flood.



GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY- DEFENSE



NATURAL

SEA WALL

OCEAN

OCEAN

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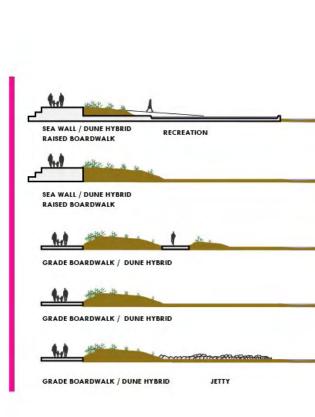
RAISED BOARDWALK

DEFENDING THE SHORE Moving into the residential environment using more natural materials

Sand Dunes are the natural system that helped build and maintain the Rockaways and other barrier beaches for thousands of years. Installing sand fences is the most effective and the lowest cost method of protecting the beach and the development behind it.

Rock Jetties have immediate benefits for abutting properties because they do capture and retain sand. In preventing lateral drift, however they can let to a net increase in beach erosion unless they are installed consistently over the entire waterfront. Rock jetties should be used very sparingly and only in area of extremely high risk and with low horizontal profile and not extending significantly below, or even necessarily to low tide lines.

BUILT ESIDENTIAL



OCEAN

OCEAN

OCEAN

OCEAN

OCEAN

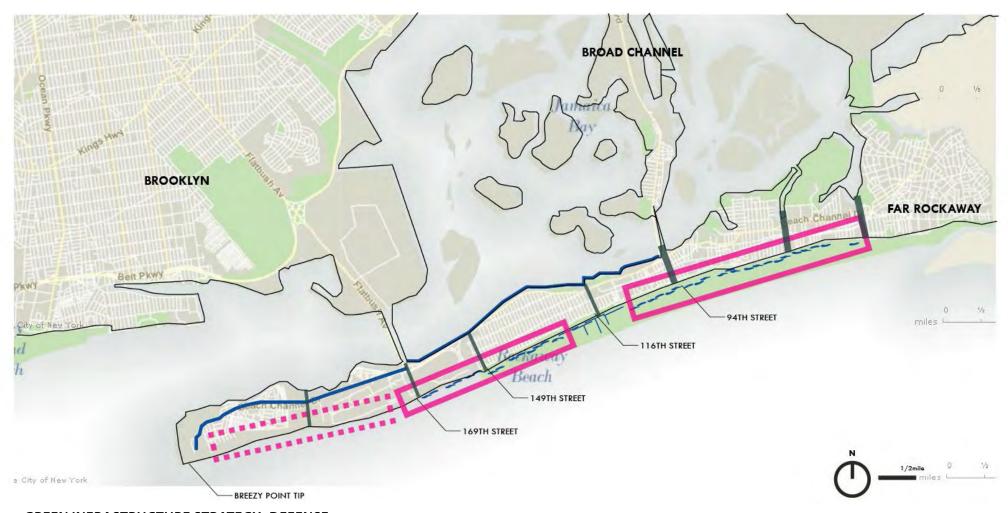
NATURAL







Sand Dunes Rock Jetty Traversable Rock Jetty



ADAPTING THE LAND

Constructed wetlands and swales for parks can provide dramatic benefits in terms of stormwater renovation and retaining stormwater that would otherwise prevent flooding. When constructed along the waterfront, constructed wetlands can also help absorb large amounts of storm energy.

Greenstreets' medians, Bioswales, Rain Gardens provide the same benefits as tree pits and streetside swales at a larger scale, with an especially strong focus on improving stormwater quality.

Porous pavement for roadways, parking lots, sidewalks allow water to seep into the ground, instead of running over the surface, reducing localized flooding, reducing stormwater pipe surcharges, and increasing treatment. They require higher maintenance to clean off sand and grit from blocking the pores and are most appropriate in low traffic areas (e.g., sidewalks and private parking lots).

Curbside extensions for roads shorten the crossing distance for pedestrians and make pedestrians more visible to vehicles. They are also better suited to porous pavement (see below) than roads because the pores are less likely to clog.

Tree pits and streetside swales absorb water from smaller storms and provide small reservoirs to store stormwater and reduce localized flooding and storm sewer surges, improve the quality of stormwater, improve air quality, and reduce the heat island effect of developed areas.



Park Swale, Feyssine Park



Park Swale, Vista Hermosa Flood Detention Basin



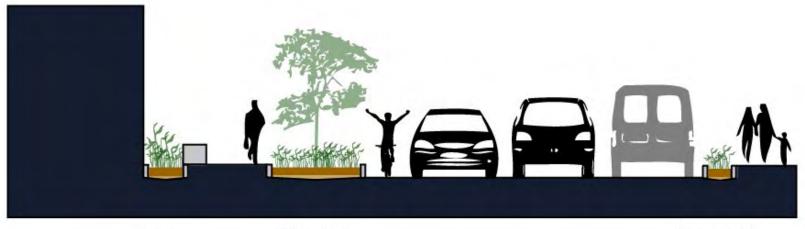
Park Swale, San Anselmo Memorial Park Flood Detention Basin



Bioswale, Campo de Los Inglese



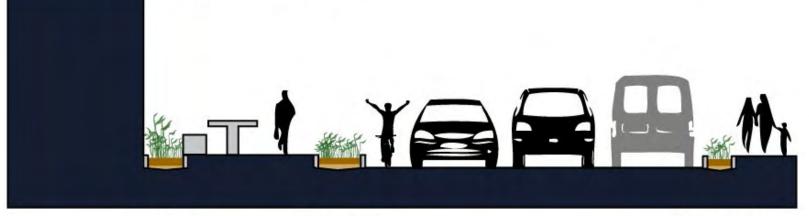
GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY- ADAPT



Planted Bioswale

Planted Bioswale

Streetside Swale



Planted Bioswale

Streetside Swale

Streetside Swale

Queens Library at Seaside

GREEN CORRIDOR

Open Space



Park Catchment and Flow Through Basin



Park Catchment and Flow Through Basin

Proposed 94th St. Park



New York City Streetside Swale



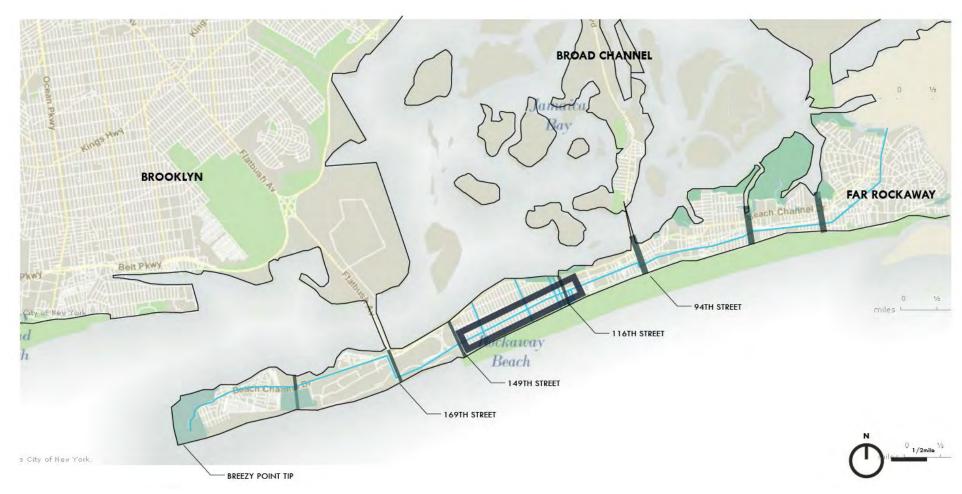
LA Zoo Median Bioswale



Streetside Swale



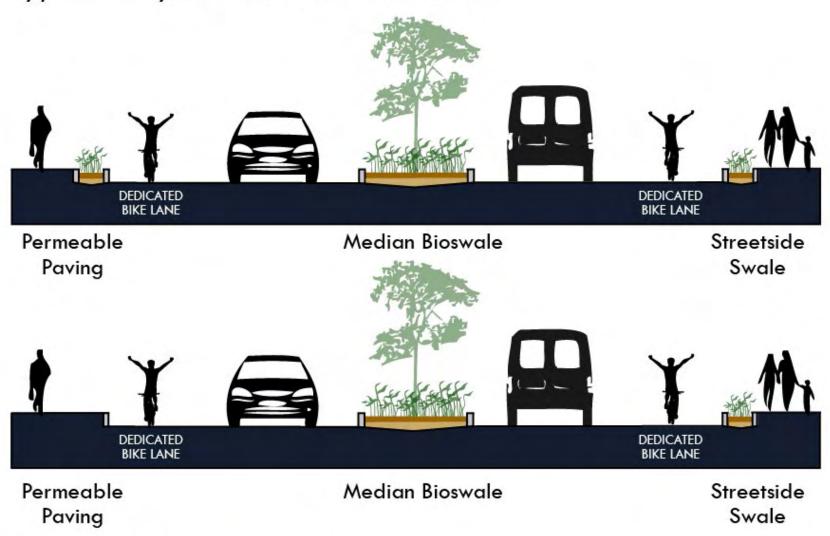
New York City Bioswale



GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY- ADAPT

GREEN CORRIDOR

Typical Bicycle Boulevard Treatment



126th-149th St.



Streetside Swale

Streetside Swale



Streetside Swale

Streetside Swale



Permeable Paving

Permeable Paving



Permeable Paving

Permeable Paving

118th-107th St.

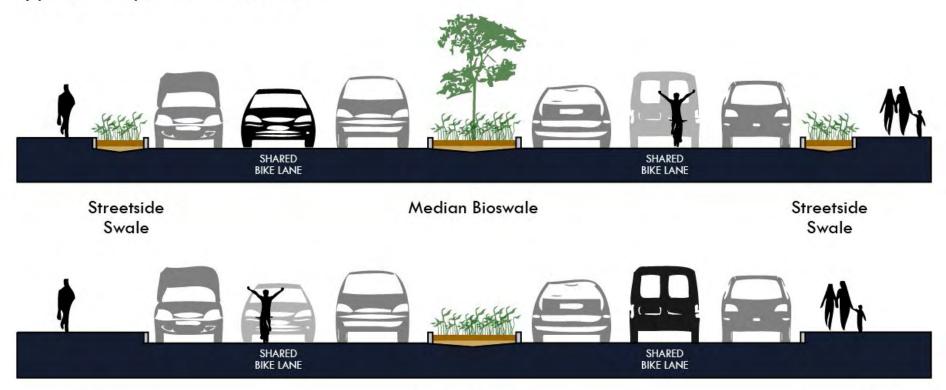
125th-118th St.



GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY- ADAPT

GREEN CORRIDOR

Typical Major Cross Street



Permeable Paving Median Bioswale Permeable Paving

116th St.

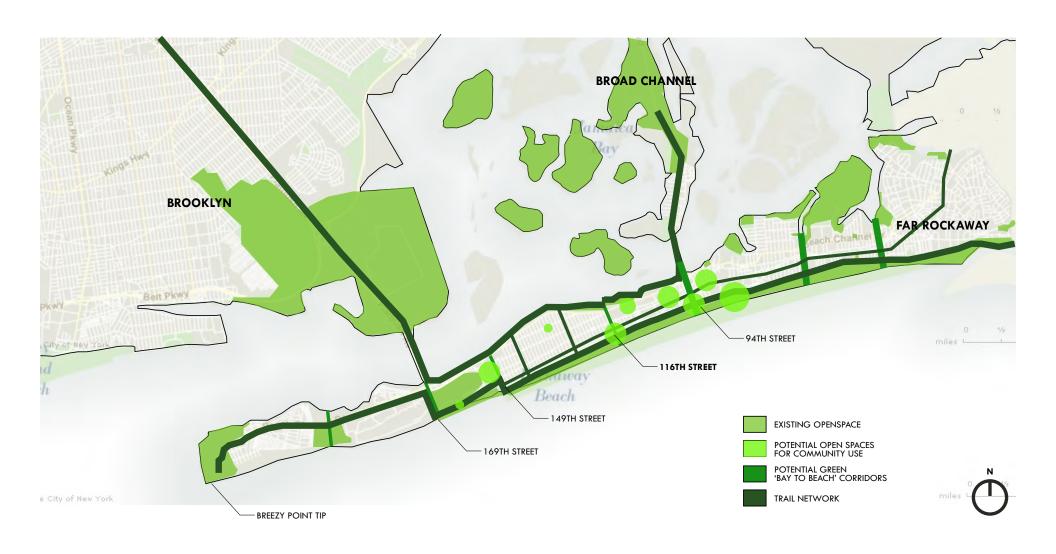
OPEN SPACE

Open space is a critical component of any community's quality of life; providing places for activity and engagement, for peace and enjoyment, and relief from the built environment. Open space collectively promotes environmental sustainability. Greenery provided in open space networks can reduce air pollution; and natural habitat provides sanctuary for wildlife. The trails and streets of an open space network can also aid in reducing greenhouse gases, by providing alternative transportation routes and promoting bicycling and walking.

For The Rockaways it could be a defining element of the community itself. Already known as the only public ocean access in New York City, the Rockaway Peninsula offers significant opportunity for visiting the beachfront, participating in outdoor recreational and community activities, and for enjoying the beauty of the Jamaica Bay. Open Space also provides the most dramatic flood mitigation with potential storm damage to open space areas less expensive and less catastrophic than developed areas.

A recommended open space strategy for the Rockaways is to extend open space on several scales from smaller scale trail extensions and parklets to larger scale parks and enhancements of the beach. Building on the Trust for Public Land's vision, 'Bay to Beach Corridors' will increase accessibility and encourage the use of both the beach and the bay. These corridors could incorporate a green infrastructure approach - serving multiple purposes that would include north-south connectivity, improvements that

would enliven and beautify the corridors, as well as flood mitigation strategies that allow for the passage of storm water through the peninsula la at several scales from street to larger parcel parks during storm events.



STREETS, TRAILS, BOARDWALKS & ESPLANADES

Open spaces, specifically streets, trails, boardwalks and esplanades provide tangible economic benefit. Studies have quantified the dollars that these areas bring to a community by making the area more attractive for investment, attracting and expanding local businesses, increasing tourism and enhancing property values.

With the restablishment of the beach boardwalk, the creation of a bayside esplanade, the and the extension of the bike boulevard to the East, the Rockaways will refine its openspace network. As a link to other peninsula destinations (as well as open spaces across the bay), this network will provide an opportunity to exercise, give access to sunshine and fresh air, and encourage people to walk or bike from place to place as opposed to using vehicular transportation, and promote healthy living.

This network can help revitalize the community and reinforce its identity through incorporating wayfinding graphics, bike lanes, and milemarkers on the ground plane as well as defining character through the advantageous location of seating, gathering and people watching places. This could encourage race events and outdoor parties.



Ciclovia de Lisboa



Green Bike Lane Project



Dahon Boardwalk



Ciclovia de Lisboa



City Repair Portland



Chicago Navy Pier Visualization



Downtown Stillwater



Rhone River Park



Elwood Foreshore

PARKLETS, PLAYGROUNDS, & IN BETWEEN SPACES

Parklets, playgrounds and the spaces in between can encourage recreational activities that improve physical and mental health. Public recreation opportunities provide easily accessible and low cost opportunities for the full diversity of our community, no matter what income level.

On the Rockaways, there are several opportunities for capitalizing on smaller slivers of unused land and left over spaces. Parklets could be located in front of the Queens Library Seaside facade, or in a widened region of the sidewalk on 116th St. Art fairs and skateparks could be located underneath the viaduct of the A train. And, in response to the communities need for a small scale park on the west side, a playground could be inserted into the residential area of Neponsit and/or Belle Harbor on a portion of an unused block.



Gary Table Bridge







Rhone River Park



Art Fair



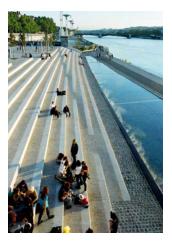
Art Fair

PLAZAS, PARKS & BEACH

Public open spaces, such as plazas, parks and the beach, can help build community by giving neighbors a realm in which to get to know each other, and giving children a safe place to play. The open space network could define The Rockaways in a cultural context – most notably with the beach and adjacent plaza areas.

The entrance to the beach at 116th provides significant opportunities for plazas including a plaza facing 116th from the beach allowing for informal gathering, people watching and spillout from the proposed theater and oceanside hotel. Another plaza-like opportunity could occur in tandem with the beach, as a mini-amphitheater with seating faced towards the beach for impromptu outdoor beach gatherings, productions, and movie screenings building on the very successful 'movie nights on the beach.' Beyond this beach plaza, a water park could be located at the terminus of 116th, taking advantage of the natural surroundings in the creation of a collection of sea baths providing a protective enclosure for sea bathing.

Not far from 116th, in between 94th and 96th, a park could be located that doubles as a flood corridor and medium size park that serves both east and west sides of the peninsula. Here, ball fields could be placed as well as a strolling mall, and bay to beach bike trail. Seasonal events from kite flying to museum endeavors like the MoMA dome could continue to occur here.







Park Swale, Vista Hermosa



FL Inter. basketball Court



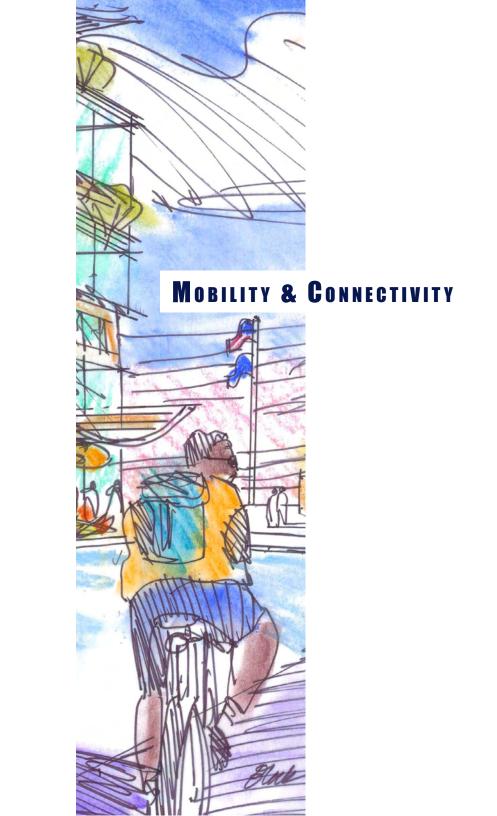
Avalon Beach Wade Pools



San Anselmo Flood Detention Basin



Water Play: Rhone River Park

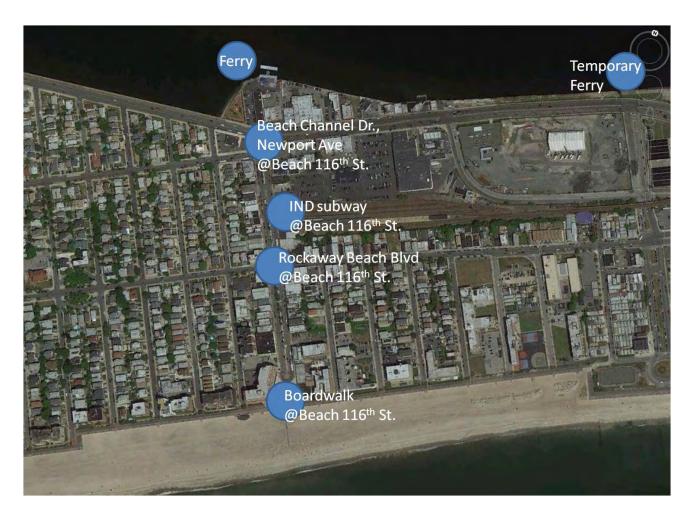


MOBILITY AND CONNECTIVITY

Transportation and mobility connects and defines communities, including the Rockaways. How do people move around, what are the barriers to travel, and how does transportation infrastructure define the sense of place?

The Rockaways, are an outer barrier beach far from New York City's population centers, its employment and commercial centers, and the bulk of its transportation infrastructure. Far from everything except that which matters most to many of its residents, access to the water and the community. As such, the Rockaways present unique mobility challenges found nowhere else in New York.

Beach 116th Street is the geographic center of the Rockaways and the "Main Street" for the peninsula west of Far Rockaway. Strengthening its connections strengthens the entire community.



TRANSPORTATION GATEWAYS TO BEACH 116TH STREET

Every access point to Beach 116th Street is a gateway to the community. Whether its visitors first-time visitors or long-term residents, a sense of arrival and a sense of place helps define how everyone feels about the community.

The access ways to Beach 116th Street can be inviting and bring in customers, or discouraging and serve as moats to keep customers away from the area. The four gateways provide some opportunities for improvement.

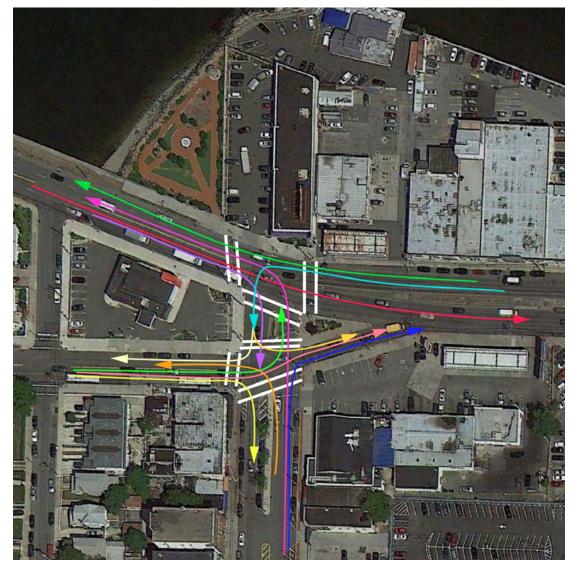
The first gateway, the compound Beach Channel Drive/Newport Avenue/Beach 116th Street is the front door for most motorists and many pedestrians. The intersection, however, poses a major challenge to Beach 116th Street. For motorists, transit users, bicyclists, and pedestrians alike the intersection presents a barrier that makes passage through or into the commercial area difficult, dangerous and undesirable. Even without this intersection, access to and along Jamaica Bay is limited. The intersection makes that challenge all the greater.

The traffic signal at Beach Channel Drive/Beach 116th Street intersection takes 90± seconds for a full signal length, 30± seconds longer than many typical urban signals. When combined with the adjacent Newport Avenue/Beach 116th Street signal, delays can be significant. For a pedestrian, waiting on signal delays crossing the compound intersection can take more time than walking an entire block, creating an major impediment to travel.



A traffic free-for-all.

Almost half of the residents in the Rockaway Park area drive to work (versus almost a quarter of residents citywide). Improvements to transit systems may decrease this in the future, but unless it is repaired, this intersection will continue to have congestion and unsafe conditions that threaten the lives of users, especially pedestrians and bicyclists. There are several options that could work for this intersection (see chart on following page).



		Do Nothing	Adjust timing, widen lanes	Divert traffic	Roundabout	
Approach		Live with time delays and safety deficiencies	Optimize intersection for car throughput	Move some vehicles elsewhere (e.g., make Newport one way from 116th to 117th)		
Primarily serves		No one, but cars the least harmed	Motor vehicles	All modes in the intersection, but worsens traffic elsewhere	All modes	
Primary weakn	ess	Time delays and safety problems	Less pedestrian friendly	Moves problem elsewhere, could harm neighborhood	Small right-of-way taking, construction cost	
	Pedestrian Safety	NO	NO	YES	YES	
	Bicycle Safety	NO	NO	YES	YES	
	Vehicle Capacity	NO	ОК	ОК	YES	
les	Downtown Catalyst	NO	NO	NO	YES	
Issues	Right-of-way required	NO	YES	NO	YES- but should not end any business	
	Frees up land for development	NO	NO	NO	Yes- small area	
	Environmental Issues	NO	Unlikely	Unlikely	Unlikely	
	Long Term Cost	On-going signal	On-going signal	On-going signal	No signal costs	
Recommendation		NO	NO	NO	Recommended	

Roundabouts are small radius one-way traffic circles, with speed controlled by the radius of the circle and the entrance geometry. With slow speeds, small gaps in traffic allow vehicles to enter with simply a yield (no signals required) and pedestrians are given the right-of-way.

Roundabouts are increasingly common in many communities, although less common in large urban areas because of the land required for a roundabout and the slightly longer pedestrian route that is required. Given the nature of this intersection, however, most of the roundabout can be accommodated within the road right-of-way, and the safety and time benefits to pedestrians and bicyclists clearly outweigh a few extra feet of walking distance.

Roundabout reduce the wasted time between traffic movements, increasing the volume of traffic that can move smoothly through an intersection. Most importantly, roundabouts dramatically reduce crashes, especially those causing injuries and death. The numbers of possible crashes or conflict points in a roundabout are dramatically lower than in a signalized intersection, especially in a compound intersection.







A single oval shaped roundabout can be designed to accommodate all of the traffic at this site. Consolidating two intersections into one simplifies the intersection and dramatically reduces the risk and severity of collisions.

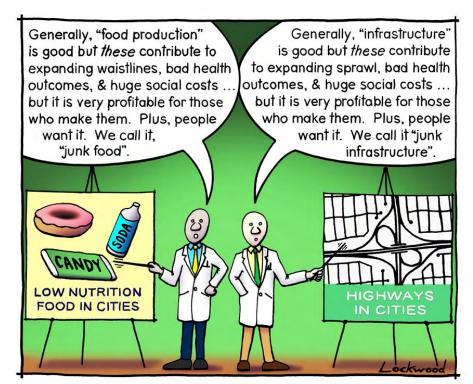
Beach Channel/Newport/Beach Traffic Counts

Location	Annual Average Daily Traffic
Beach Channel Dr. (east of B116th St.)	17,837
Beach Channel Dr. (west of B116th St.)	18,677
Newport Avenue	2,783
Beach 116th Street	Low volumes (<2,000)

Source: New York State DOT, 2010 data

Traffic volume is low enough (see table above) that a single lane roundabout should be sufficient, with the possibility that a second lane would be desirable for one or two legs of the roundabout. Given the need to balance vehicle movement with a pedestrian-friendly gateway that defines the community, our recommendation is to design a one-lane roundabout even if the improvements in the vehicle level of service are less dramatic.

The second major transportation gateway is Rockaway Beach Boulevard at Beach 116th Street. This relatively low volume road and intersection does not present the problems of the Beach Channel Drive intersection. Rockaway Beach Boulevard is, however, the front door to "downtown" for many residents. Given that some of those residents feel disconnected from Beach 116th Street," having a gateway that draws residents in is all the more important.



When Epidemiologists Study What People Want

Get rid of the junk infrastructure. Source: Ian Lockwood

Drawing residents in might involve four key steps:

- 1. Make the Rockaway Beach Boulevard streetscape more inviting, to make residents want to stroll and bicycle the street. Street trees, low impact development stormwater, and bicycle lane improvements can make it a more inviting landscape.
- 2. Celebrate the intersection of Rockaway Beach Boulevard and Beach 116th Street to give a sense of arrival downtown. This is the single most important place for streetscape improvements, interesting intersection and crosswalk markings, and

façade improvements. In some communities, guerrilla or neighborhood driven activities have included intersection pavement painting projects.

3. The library just west of Beach 116th Street provides a unique opportunity to extend what should be downtown street life into the neighborhoods. Landscaping the plaza, proving benches, shielding the least attractive views, and, if funding was every available, providing a formal outdoor library-related café and meeting space, will all help invite the public in.



Create a sense of arrival.

The third gateway to Beach 116th Street is the Boardwalk. The beaches are what define the Rockaways, for residents and visitors alike, yet a visitor strolling along the boardwalk isn't necessarily drawn to Beach 116th Street. A few challenges and opportunities are apparent:

- 1. Create investment opportunities in the buildings and uses at this intersection can strengthen both the boardwalk and Beach 116th Street, and more importantly better connect them.
- 2. Add transparency at the end of Beach 116th to the beach consistent with respecting the Flight 587 Memorial can enhance the memorial and while providing a better visual connection to the ocean and increasing the volume of back and forth travel.
- 3. Install gateway signage to better connect a restored boardwalk with Beach 116th Street and the Rockaway Beach Boulevard bicycle lanes/bicycle boulevard. The restored boardwalk will once again allow bicycles, and well as pedestrians, to travel along the ocean.

The final transportation gateway is the A train subway terminus at Beach 116th Street. Prior to Superstorm Sandy, $18\pm\%$ of Rockaway Park works used the subway for their journey to work, the vast majority ($82\pm\%$) walked to the subway stop. $13\pm\%$ of area workers arrived by subway. (Source: Subway Sidewalk Improvement Project, 2000.)

The subway stop shares a home with the New York City Police. This adds a welcome police presence in a neighborhood where many residents have identified a perception of safety and personal space and one of their main concerns about Beach 116th Street. Unfortunately, the police use many of the on-street parking spaces, the most valuable parking spaces in any community.



On-street parking spaces adjacent to local businesses are the most valuable spaces to serve those businesses. According to at least one study, each parking space may bring as much as \$300,000 annually in business to an adjacent retail business or restaurant in high volume business areas. Although the number is probably less on Beach 116th Street, the reality is that parked police department vehicles on the street reduce business opportunities on the street. Because the building has no sally port, one space for vehicles transporting suspects may be appropriate, but all other parking should be on the north and east side of the building.

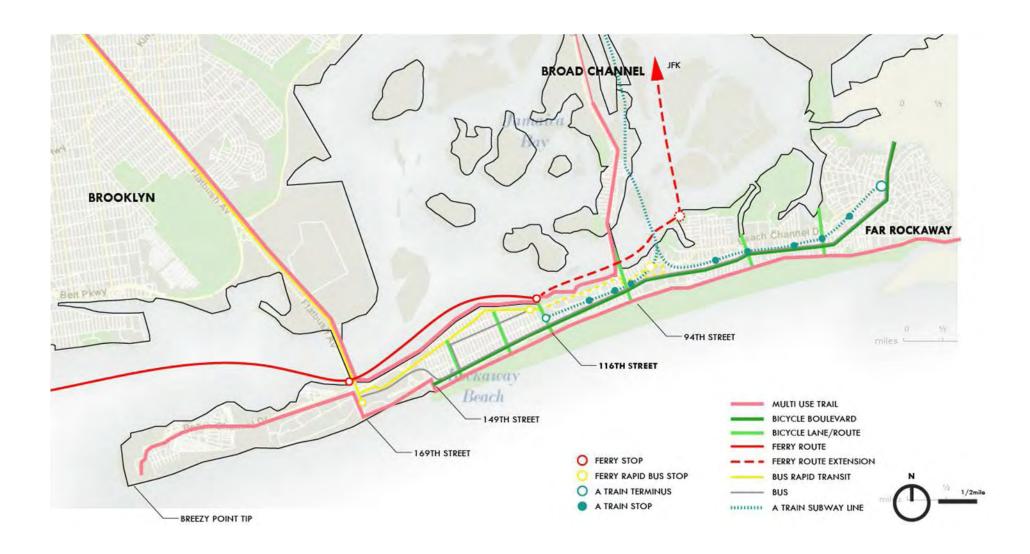
TRANSIT (BUS, SUBWAY AND FERRY) SERVICE

Transit service is far more environmentally sound and supportive of the local economy than private automobile trips. The isolation of the Rockaways as a barrier beach peninsula jutting into ocean (also one of its most desirable features), relatively low population and population density, and relatively high car ownership rates make transit improvements difficult, especially on the western portions of the Rockaways.

Although the Rockaways have a relatively lower transit volume and transit mode share, they also have some of the longest transit trips. This supports an equity argument that transit improvements should be based not only transit volume but also on average trip length.

The most effective way to increase traditional transit (bus and subway) is to focus on express bus service or ideally at last some of the components of a bus rapid transit (BRT) service focused on commuter trips. Given the traffic volumes, a dedicated busway is not necessary, but a few BRT steps would be very effective. Given the strong focus on private vehicles for journeys (almost 50% of commuter trips and a much higher percentage for non-commuter trips) in the Rockaways Beach area, improvements in transit has the potential to provide significant reductions in vehicle trips and the resulting congestion.

- 1. Install Transit Signal Priority (TSP) on all Beach Channel Drive traffic signal controllers and all Beach Channel Drive buses. TSP provides extended green time when bus approaches the signal to allow the buses to have fewer red lights. New York City is already beginning on phasing in TSP in high volume bus corridors but apparently not yet in the Rockaways.
- 2. Dedicate one lane in each direction on Beach Channel Drive to buses and high-occupancy vehicles (HOV). The volume of the road does not warrant a four lane road (maximum 18,000 average daily trips) and the volume of bus traffic allows the HOV use without significantly effecting bus service.



- 3. Provide commuter express buses from the population centers to mainland Queens, with a stop at any ferry stops. Express bus should extend from the redeveloped current brownfields site at Beach 108th Street and Beach Channel Drive, or from the Hammels, an area not especially well served by subway if there is significant ridership, to the Marine Parkway Bridge to Flatbush Avenue, connecting with express and BRT routes there.
- 4. Identify high volume stops where payment should be made off-bus (on the platform) to allow faster bus loading.
- 5. Consider a full BRT system as a long term solution, especially if a ferry service is not permanently adopted in the Rockaways.

Permanent and improved ferry service is the most effective commuter option to Manhattan. The post Superstorm Sandy commuter ferry to the Rockaways has proven to be extremely popular. Even with the restoration of subway service, there is overwhelmingly strong community support to permanently maintain a publicly-subsidized commuter ferry. The ferry has a shorter travel time, does not add to traffic congestion, and provides a more desirable experience than existing subway and bus service. Pedestrian ferry service is often seen as one of the most desirable commuting options in areas where it is available.





Future Riis Ferry Landing.

Although the existing amount of the subsidy may need to be adjusted, maintaining, if not enhancing, ferry service further ties New York City together, strengthens the Rockaways, and provide easier access to recreation for New Yorkers.

Although multiple ferry stops can add significantly to ferry travel time and headway (the time between ferries), the best service to the Rockaways might be two stops, one at or near Riis Landing serving a park-and-ride lot and providing the shortest travel time to Manhattan, and one at Beach 116th Street serving the commercial center, population center, and the beaches.

While Riis Landing can provide efficient service to Manhattan, a ferry landing there will do nothing to building community. A ferry landing at Beach 116th Street, however, will have a synergistic benefit on the developing the Beach 116th Street commercial corridor and creating a "there there" in the geographic center of the Rockaways. Given that 82% of commuters entering the Beach 116th Street subway in the morning (pre-Superstorm Sandy) walked to the subway, many heading to Manhattan, there is clear evidence of a healthy nucleus of commuters who would walk or bicycle to at B 116th Street ferry stop.

If service is ever extended to JFK Airport, ideally with additional Port Authority funding, an additional stop could be added further east.

Ferry service has helped strengthen waterfront development in New York and New Jersey in recent years, whether it is a short hop across the East River or the longer the "IKEA" ferry from Lower Manhattan to Red Hook. Ferry customers have consistently been willing to pay more for ferry service than alternative travel means, although that does not replace the need to subsidize ferry service, as with most urban transit systems.

Experiences in other communities have been similar to New York's; ferry service can help strengthen a commercial center (such as Beach 116th Street) but it usually doesn't create a commercial center where none exists. The San Francisco bay service to Jack London Square in Oakland on the Oakland Estuary, for example, has helped bring that redevelopment alive. The service to an isolated dock in Alameda directly across the same estuary only services a park-and-ride lot and has no place making benefits.

(For an analysis of costs and environmental issues related to ferries, see Kamen, P. and C. Barry. 2006. "Urban Passenger-Only Ferry Systems: Issues, Opportunities and Technologies." SNAME Proceedings.)

		Beach Channel/Beach 108th Street	Beach Channel/Beach 116th Street	Beach Channel/Riis Landing	Beach 72nd or 84th St.
Current Status		Temporary ferry	No current ferry	Weekend ferry (unsubsidized)	No Current ferry
Primarily Serves		Rockaway commuters to Manhattan		Day visitors to Jacob Riis Park beaches	
Potential		Commuters and all visitors	Commuters and all visitors	Commuters and day visitors	Commuters
Primary Weaknesses		Isolated, until adjacent area is developed	Limited parking opportunities	Farthest distance to population center	Isolated, limited parking
Strengths & Issues	People within 1/4 mile	NO	YES	NO	NO
	People within 0.4 miles	YES	YES	NO	YES
	Bus access	YES	YES	NO	ОК
	Subway access	ОК	YES	NO	NO
	Park-and-ride	ОК	NO without structured parking	YES	Potential
	Downtown catalyst	NO	YES	NO	NO
	Visitors	NO	YES	NO	NO
	Time on ferry to NY	ОК	ОК	Shortest	Longest
	Serve environmental justice	ОК	ОК	NO	YES
	Ownership Issues	Parking site not permanent	Site needs to be acquired	US Park Service controls site	Pier needs to be acquired
	Environmental issues	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Summary		Isolated compromise site	Best synergistic site	Best park-and-ride site	Lowest ridership, serve EJ population
Recommendation		NO	Recommended both sites be used		Possible future

VEHICULAR, BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN TRIPS

Improving bicycle and pedestrian travel is the most cost-effective way to move people for relatively short distances (1/4 mile to 1 mile, depending on health and travel mode). These forms of travel promote healthy lifestyles, improve the sense of community, and reduce traffic congestion.

Several key steps to improve bicycle and pedestrian travel were discussed above:

- 1. Improving express transit services, specifically ferry and express bus service, which will encourage people to walk or bicycle further to those services.
- 2. Improving the gateway and connections between the rebuilt boardwalk and Rockaway Beach Boulevard.
- 3. Improving the Beach Channel/Newport/Beach 116th Street intersection, shortening bicycle and pedestrian travel distances and making those trips dramatically safer.

There four primary efforts to support bicycle use, most of which are at least partially underway:

- 1. Full restoration of the boardwalk as a multi-use trail. One complete, it will again serve bicyclists, providing both recreation and destination-oriented travel.
- 2. Development of the planned Jamaica Bay "Circle the Bay" or "Bayside Greenway" bike path/ multi-use trail. This will also serve recreation and destination-oriented travel. Like the boardwalk, it should be wide enough to accommodate all users.
- 3. Expanding and improving the existing Rockaway Beach Boulevard. This is already a bicycle boulevard, generally providing bicycle access on bicycle lanes and shared-use

bicycle sharrow pavement markings. As a low volume road with fairly good bicycle facilities the street west of Beach 125th Street can be considered a bicycle boulevard. Improvements can make the trail more attractive and better connected to neighborhoods and casual users, fill gaps in the boardwalk and the future Jamaica Bay Bike Path, and provide a route for serious road riders who don't want to slow to yield to other users on multi-use trails. The bicycle lane network should be extended:

- Increase the visibility of the bicycle route, colorizing the entire bicycle lane
 and adding wayfinding signs, would increase the visibility of this route. NYC
 has totally endorsed such treatment and has been a major contributor to the
 NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guideline which identifies such treatment (see
 graphic). They have clearly not yet prioritized Rockaway Beach Boulevard for
 this treatment even though it is a fairly high volume bicycle route.
- Extend the trail west (to and through the Jacob Riis Park to Breezy Point and the Marine Parkway Bridge)
- Extend the trail east (to Far Rockaway)
- Extend the trail north and south to provide through lanes and sharrows,
 especially up Beach 116th Street, to connect to the boardwalk and Jamaica Bay.
- Drop on-street parking from Beach 118th Street to Beach 125th Street, allowing
 a full bicycle lane on one side of the street.
- 4. A citibike station (NYC Bike Share) should be located on Beach 116th Street midway between the future ferry station and the subway stop. Although the density of bicycle ridership may not support a full citibike network until networks are built out elsewhere in the City, this would allow riders to connect to Brooklyn and Queens and allow roundtrip uses to the same station by residents and visitors alike.



Source: NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guidance, 2012

Private vehicles will continue to serve a majority of vehicle trips for the foreseeable future. The road system in the area is already robust and sufficient, especially if our recommended roundabout is installed.

It is highly unlikely that visitors to the Rockaways are discouraged by toll bridges. Tolls are relatively modest for an occasional visitor. Reducing tolls on the Rockaways bridges could potentially exacerbate two problems. First, lower or no tolls would make it easier for residents to leave the Rockaways for shopping, furthering the leakage of Rockaway dollars to Queens and Long Island. Second, it makes it easier for residents to avoid using public transit, reducing that critical mass. A better political argument might be that a significant portion of the tolls should go towards transit, especially

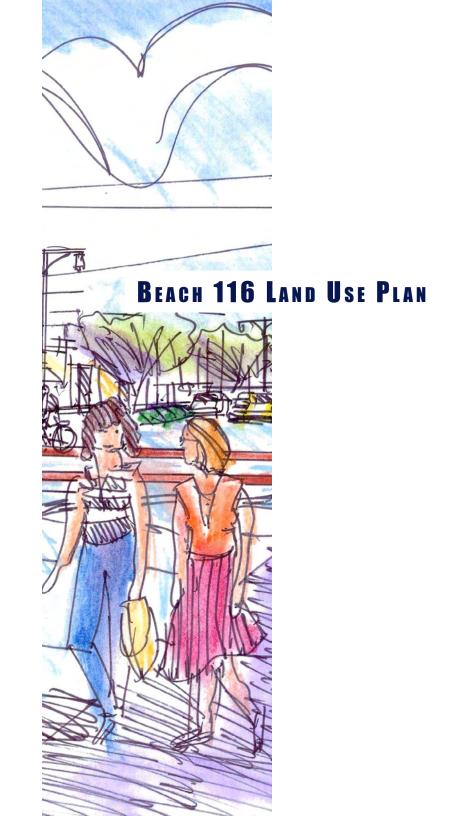
ferry and bus service, since that will reduce wear and tear on the bridges and provides more environmentally sound ways to travel.

IMPLEMENTATION

The table on the next page summarizes the implementation time schedule for projects. Two critical rules:

- 1. Long term projects may take a long term, but the work still has to start today otherwise long term becomes never.
- 2. Although various partner agencies are mentioned as being the lead agencies, especially in transportation where there is little that can be done without their consent and funding, most of the projects will not go anywhere without strong local advocacy and action at every step of the way.

Project	Time Frame	Comments
Beach Channel Dr/ Newport Ave/Beach 116th St intersection	Long term	NYC Transportation needs to hear the local story and local activism is critical. Every step is critical (e.g., who is selected as designer will determine what kind of project advances).
Rockaway Beach Blvd at B116th	Short to medium	Merchants' Association in the lead for intersection repair painting. Street work requires NYC Transportation, where local advocacy is critical. Other partners (e.g., library and streetscape) could be part of Sandy relief funding.
Boardwalk	Short to long	Wayfinding can be a partnership with Parks. Redevelopment is long term, although Sandy relief funding could help.
Beach 116th Street Parking by Police	Short to medium	Requires assent or at least not active opposition of Police.
Ferry	Short to long	Decisions about the ferry will be made in the political realm. Advocacy for the best options is critical.
Bus Service, TSP, BRT, dedicated bus/HOV lane	Medium to long	Partnership with both the MTA and NYC Transportation. Dedicated bus and HOV lanes on Beach Channel Dr. is fairly inexpensive but requires political consensus.
Boardwalk	Medium	Restoration underway.
Bayside Greenway Circle the Bay	Long	NY Parks in the lead.
Rockaway Beach Blvd bicycle improvements	Medium	Work with NYC Transportation
Citibike	Medium to long	Easier if the ferry is developed at B116th



BEACH 116

Beach 116th Street is the Rockaway's downtown, the front door to half of the residents of the Rockaways. It is the center of the Rockaways' beach life. In many ways, the health of the Rockaways, or at least the Rockaways west of Far Rockaway, is integrally tied to the health of Beach 116th.

Beach 116th Street runs one-third of a mile from Jamaica Bay to the ocean beach, a bay to beach journey. The middle of that journey should be as exciting as the ends, drawing people to make this journey over and over again.

Battered by Superstorm Sandy, and with many very real challenges even before Sandy, Beach 116th Street nonetheless remains surprisingly vibrant and has the bones to be a great village center. It is a human-scale street, within walking distance of healthy intact and diverse neighborhoods. It has a strong entrepreneurial spirit and a resilient community spirit. Long term entrepreneurs, newer immigrant business owners, "hipsters," and abutting beach-front and neighborhood residents already provide a certain level of vibrancy. Crime rates, especially for violent crime, are some of the lowest in New York City.

Nonetheless, the challenges are great. "The Rockaways' Skid Row," says Ray LeMoine, Huffington Post 2/6/2013. Residents report Single Room Occupancy hotels and other social facilities are not well managed to serve clients and respect the community and are often viewed as a dumping ground. Their perceptions of a lack of safety, at least

on quality of life issues, discourage visits to Beach 116th, especially at night and for people with young children. Residents consistently reported feeling that 116th Street is not serving their commercial needs.

The opportunities, fortunately, are greater than the challenges. As one community member said at the R/UDAT Town Hall meeting, "Community is like a garden. The more good things you have the fewer weeds that grow." There are many things that the community can plant to reach that critical self-sustaining mass.

The greatest challenges to the Beach 116th Street also provide the greatest transformative opportunities:

- 1. The boardwalk connection at Beach 116th Street is underutilized even though its beach has among the highest concentrations of users of any of the Rockaways beaches. There is transformative development potential on the southeast corner, including both sites damaged by Superstorm Sandy and sites with significant disinvestment even before Sandy.
- 2. The concentration of poorly managed SROs and other social services is problematic. The problem is not primarily the client and resident base but the physical condition of the facilities, the limited management of the facilities, and the virtually non-existent social services extended to residents. There are, however, other sites available in the area (e.g., Superstorm Sandy related fire ravaged sites on Rockaway Beach Boulevard) that could host these facilities as they should be hosted.

- 3. The visual and physical connections to Jamaica Bay at Beach 116th street is broken by development that, for the most part, has its back to the water. The redevelopment potential in this area is staggering.
- 4. There are no hotels in the Rockaways, much less in the Beach 116th area. This limits the appeal for visitors and residents own special events needs, and deprives the area of the synergistic benefits of a hotel. There is probably demand, however, that could be met as part of the right development package.
- 5. The access from Jamaica Bay to the commercial heart of Beach 116th is across an inefficient and unsafe compound intersection. Design solutions are available.
- 6. Local neighborhood commercial needs are often not met. Revitalizing the area will make the street more attractive for customers, providing the critical mass necessary for more retail, service and hospitality offerings.
- 7. You can't get anywhere else from here. Improved public transit can be accommodated in the corridor.
- 8. As Superstorm Sandy demonstrated, resiliency is critical in design. Sandy will certainly not be the last super storm. With climate change, there will be both sea level rise and increased severity of storm events. New construction can take advantage of

new ways to adapt to such storms in a way that older buildings were never designed for.

For all the challenges, most aspects of the street should be retained, including:

- A human scale of street
- Narrow buildings that add to visual diversity and can support a wide variety of shops and commercial offerings.
- A near continuous façade of buildings built to the sidewalk line and framing the street into a living room
- Investment opportunities that have attracted local investors and more recent new immigrant business owners.
- Local service offerings on the street, providing room for stores that serve every
 local need from ice cream to bait. Funkiness and diversity are a virtue. There
 should be as much room for The Wharf restaurant (or equivalent) as for a new
 hotel.
- Retain and enhance necessary services (e.g., Duane Reade, Waldbaums), even though in some cases the locations might change.

In addition to retaining the best of the existing street design (above), all new designs should incorporate the following design principles to make sure that every single project contributes to the vibrancy, vitality, and resiliency of Beach 116th Street:

- Widen the visual access from Beach 116th Street of Jamaica Bay and Manhattan,
 building on the existing limited view over the Rockaway 9/11 Tribute Park.
- Expand physical community access to the entire Jamaica Bay waterfront, growing from the Tribute Park and moving east.
- Provide a pier opposite Beach 116th Street for ferry service and Bay access.

- Create two strong visual and economic anchors to bookend the street, with one
 at each end of Beach 116th Street (Jamaica Bay and the ocean beach). First floor
 tenants in anchor buildings should help focus and support the public use of the
 bay and the boardwalk.
- Provide a place for arts and community events, a place for community, as one of the anchors to support the commercial core and the community and improve the community focus on Beach 116th Street.
- Create at least one hotel to serve summer tourists and year-round visitors, create
 meeting space, provide local residents' special events needs, stimulate the local
 economy, and provide local jobs. Downtown hotels provide a large economic
 multiplier (i.e., guests eat out, jobs tend to stay local, and much of the money
 spent in hotels re-circulates in the community).
- New facades should generally be narrower, in keeping with the street's village
 character and to add to street vibrancy. Where a large use precludes narrower
 buildings, such as a hotel, having multiple first floor tenants focused on
 activating street life is critical.
- Ensure that no road is ever allowed to be a significant barrier to traversing the one-third mile from Bay to Beach.
- Re-establish traditional street grids when possible to break up mega-blocks.
- Bury overhead utilities on Beach 116th street. Overhead lines are not appropriate in an urban commercial core.
- All development should have an extremely strong pedestrian orientation.
 Building facades should frame the sidewalks and be inviting to the public, and minimizing breaks in building facades and avoiding any dead areas in the urban fabric.
- Simplify and freshen signs and awnings, which can make the street more attractive and make signs pop more than when the street is overly cluttered.

- Focus façade improvements on restore hidden historic features, freshen up buildings, and add corner entrances at street intersections. Collectively these actions will make the street more attractive, send a message of vibrancy, and make buildings and uses pop out as unique.
- Street signage, facades, and uses should not be overlay tamed, however, since the street remains a vibrant always evolving resource.
- Beach 116th must be designed to remain the heart of the community, bringing in residents from the nearby neighborhoods.
- Structured parking (parking decks and garages) should be created when necessary to accommodate uses with major parking needs (hotels, residents, employees). Structured parking will generally require public (city)/private (e.g., hotel) partnerships to make them feasible and allow most efficient allocation of spaces to serve changing needs from different partners over through daily and seasonal use fluctuations. Parking should be provided only as a tool for economic development and not as away to avoid difficult parking management actions such as raising parking rates when necessary.
- Save street parking for customers and visitors.
- Use first floor parking away from the road (behind retail uses) to meet parking needs, reduce finished floor space in the flood zone, and keep employee and tenant parking off the street.
- Access to the water should be for all users, so that people feel as comfortable fishing in Jamaica Bay as sipping their lattes.
- Accommodate all transit, from bus and bus rapid transit stops to citibike bicycle sharing.
- Minimize perception of the street as an unsafe street by adding vibrancy and life to the street, not be eliminating legitimate uses.

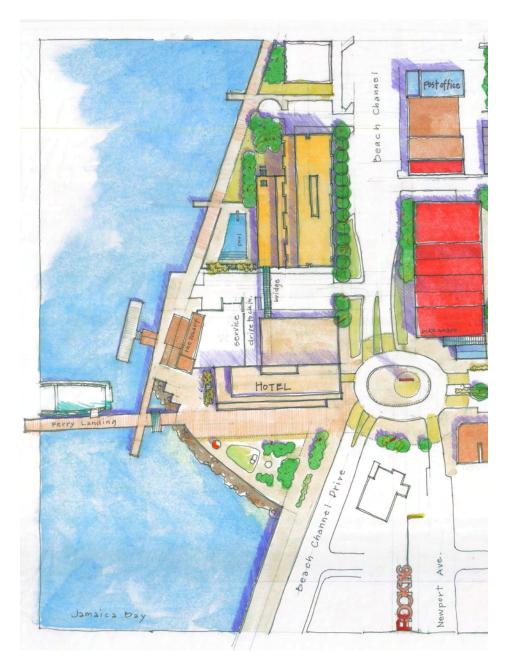
- Public projects displacing SROs and other social services should help facilitate
 replacement facilities for those services. At the same time, working to ensure
 that SROs and other social services are well managed will ensure that such uses
 contribute to urban form and vitality and serve tenants in a way to meet their
 needs and minimize community disruptions.
- Prohibit new curb cuts on Beach 116th Street and reduce curb cuts on Beach
 Channel Drive to maintain pedestrian orientation and reduce crashes.
- Encourage chain stores only when a home grown store cannot provide the same service. Chains serve a critical role, with unique access to capital, expertise, national support engines, specialized distribution networks and the ability to purchase in bulk. Local businesses, however, can celebrate Rockaway's uniqueness, generally spend more of their money locally, and usually have an especially strong locational loyalty.

The plan that follows is an illustrative plan of one way to achieve the above design principles. There are certainly other ways to achieve these critical design principles. Hiring the right designer, whether it is for buildings, streetscapes, or an intersection, is critical. The different between great design and adequate design is the difference between success and failure in the revitalization of Beach 116th Street.

Some aspects of the design principles (above) could and should be expanded and codified into regulations. Most of the recommendations, however, are designed to serve as an operating manual for public investments, policies and actions and can be revised to help guide policy decisions.







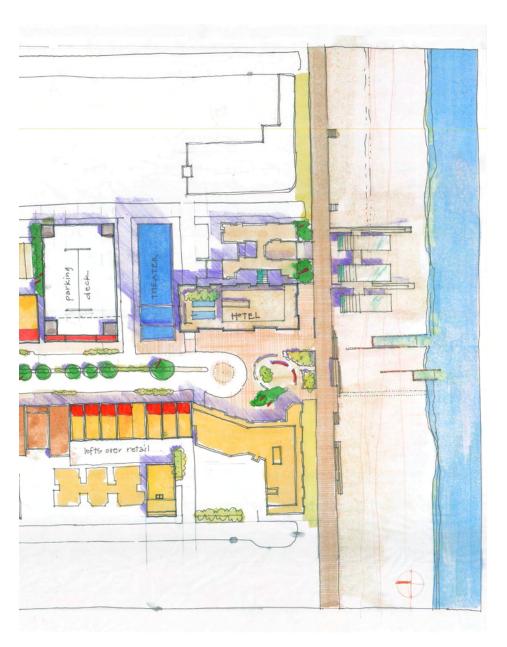






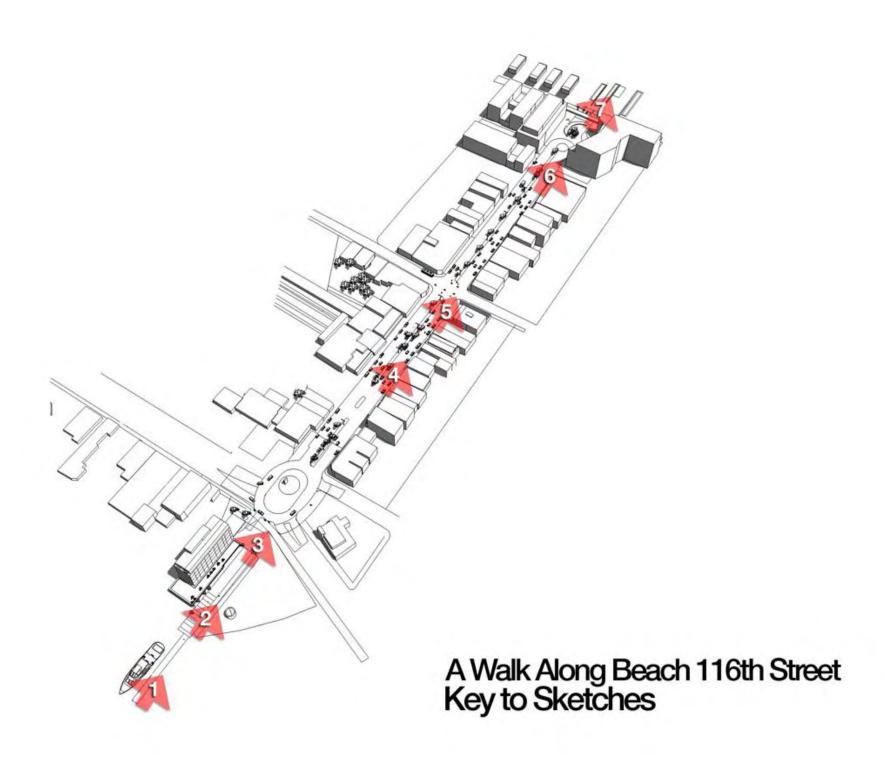
















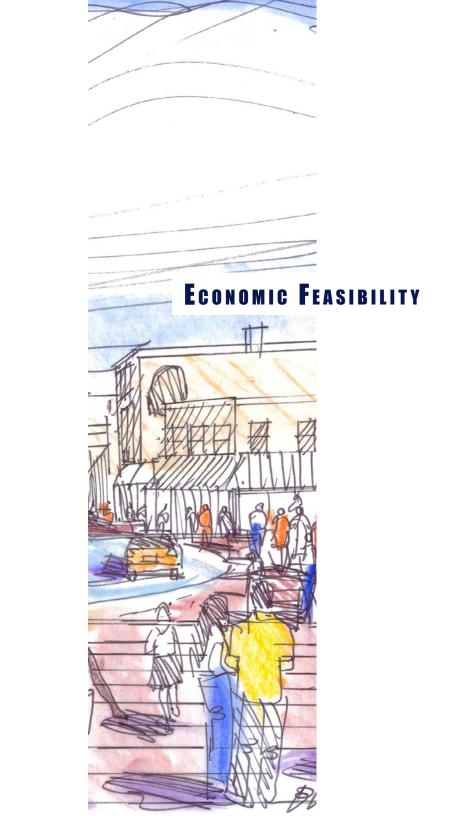












BACKGROUND

To borrow from and tweak Bobby Kennedy, "Some communities look at things the way they are and say why. Other communities dream of things that never were and say why not."

After hearing from a cross section of community residents, merchants, property owners, public sector staff and others about the Rockaway's history, its many assets (e.g., beaches, a range of housing types and prices, views, parks, existing mass transit, a diverse population, an enduring commercial area that caters to locals as well as visitors, recent successes in public private development partnerships to improve the community) and more than a few challenges (e.g., a disproportionate number of households below the poverty line and people who need a host of social and medical services, insufficient protection against storms and flooding, inadequate variety of commercial uses from hotels to retail/restaurants that would better serve residents and visitors), it seems to us that this is an exceptional time to craft some dream revitalization scenarios with suggested ways to phase them into realities over time.

Getting agreement on a vision for the area's future is not a simple undertaking. It will require that a range of interests have the willingness to compromise and reach common ground. Finding ways to bring that vision into reality will require still more creativity, collaboration and commitments between the community, property owners, businesses, developers and public agencies. But, this is something that Rockaway

has done before – witness the recent conversion of formerly vacant public land that's been converted into the mixed use Arverne By the Sea community.

The AIA R/UDAT team been asked to consider the environmental, economic, social conditions, challenges and attributes of the Rockaway Beach area and suggest revitalization aspirations that could enhance the vitality and resilience of 116th Street area, and to find ways to realize these aspirations through partnerships between the public and private sectors.

Earlier in this report we presented concepts for redevelopment of the 116th St. area that have the potential to better serve local residents as well as draw more visitors into the community. These concepts were designed to provide a broader range of better quality places for locals and visitors to work in, live in and enjoy during for leisure activities on a more frequent basis.

Now we need to drill down into these suggestive concepts to figure ways to make them economically viable. This won't be easy, but it is possible. Similar efforts have succeeded in other communities across the city, state and country as well as in Rockaway.

REDEVELOPMENT REALITIES

While quality redevelopment projects bring multiple benefits to a community they do come with costs which need to be assessed in relation to the benefits. These cost will include the public need to finance infrastructure and construction of various projects. It can also include the challenges of relocating businesses and housing.

This section of our report addresses the preliminary costs of constructing a few of the catalytic, momentum building projects proposed for 116th Street. These are not inexpensive efforts and they are more challenging because they require 1) land acquisition (preferably via a fair market value exchange) and 2) in some cases the relocation of a few existing business operations and housing facilities. They will also require a concerted effort by the community to pursue and secure various public funding tools that will help to leverage significant private investment needed to realize these development aspirations. The outcomes, however would be to bring more jobs to the community, provide better quality living facilities to many people who need them, return stronger fiscal benefits to the various taxing jurisdictions over time, and make 116th Street a more vital and resilient environment.

A few rules about revitalization efforts: 1) they take time and don't happen overnight (Rome and New York, we're built overnight and thy won't change that quickly either);

2) revitalization happens at multiple levels – small scale improvements to building facades, providing clean up, marketing and safety programs, and filling gaps in the mix of retail tenants and services that the community wants and/or needs are as

important as the larger scale, catalytic projects that tend to get more media play; 3) getting community agreement on the kinds of larger scale development projects that can help achieve multiple objectives and stimulate further improvements is necessary to enable redevelopment to move forward more cost effectively and expeditiously, and 4) early revitalization efforts tend to require more public investment to overcome market challenges like addressing the costs of providing structured parking or offering public dollars to leverage more private investment.

Our AIA team explored several redevelopment concepts but drilled down more deeply into three of these. While the concepts have been depicted above, it's worth saying more about the sites before getting into development costs and the partnerships that will likely be required to bring about changes to them.

There are several factors that need to be considered and addressed: 1) In all cases site acquisition will be required. Though it would be wonderful if owners were willing to make donations of all or some of these properties, that is not a likely reality. Our next preference would be that these land acquisitions could be negotiated between the current owner and the City so that both sides reach agreement of a fair, viable price. In strategic cases where the City and current owner cannot reach reasonable agreement, we believe the redevelopment scenarios presented here offer the community a strongly preferred set of benefits to existing conditions, and that, if absolutely necessary, the community should use eminent domain to acquire the properties;

we've factored in this situation and have identified at least one possible location that we believe is superior to the current location for many of these uses. We realize that in certain circumstance relocation assistance may be provided. 3) Given current market conditions, all of these redevelopment efforts would require strong public private partnerships that likely would use some bundling of the resources identified in this report and may require other tools that the City or other agencies have that we haven't discussed here. 4) Each of these redevelopment scenarios is complex and the community, in the end, will need to select which if any of these should be first.

We do have an opinion here. The most transformational redevelopment project for 116th street would be a game changing mixed use redevelopment tentative called the Transformer. If this redevelopment effort can be made to succeed many subsequent redevelopments in the area will be easier, happen sooner, and a number of smaller improvements will emerge on their own.

As of this writing we were not able to sufficient investigation of land values for each site and we relied on more general information provided by local real estate professionals. We assume \$50 per buildable square foot for all projects (realizing that some sites will be more and others less). This means that a 20,000 SF site would be \$1 million. For construction costs, which will also vary by many factors including building type, height, and soil conditions, we relied on using RS Means construction estimates for similar projects in the New York City area, as well as informal discussions with real estate professionals and our own redevelopment experience.

THE THREE CATALYTIC PROJECTS

Duane Reade Pharmacy Site

Even though the pharmacy building is relatively new this site was selected for redevelopment because it's a pivotal entry point into the 116th Street area, it commands impressive views of the Manhattan skyline, and is an underutilized waterfront parcel. The pharmacy, we believe can be relocated to another site in the area where it should do very well.

Our suggestion is to replace the one story pharmacy with a five story mixed used project that would include an 80 room boutique hotel and ground floor restaurants. For now we've labeled this redevelopment, The Skyline. We've estimated construction cost to be about \$225/SF and assumed \$1 million for the approximately 20,000 SF parcel for the entire project which brings it to \$22,600,000. We exclude land costs and instead would suggest offering the pharmacy a swap to a new location as the ground floor occupant of a new public-private parking structure on the western portion of the Wallbaum's lot (this project will be discussed below).

Currently, we know of no quality hotels in Rockaway and have not had access to any market studies about demand for hotel rooms in the city. However, we have worked in many beach communities and given what we've learned about visitors and local residents in conjunction with the views offered by a hotel at this locations in addition to a proposed ferry stop and improvements recommended to the street system, we think this development, if financed effectively and managed well, would be successful.



Three catalytic projects.

A project like this will also increase taxes that might go into a TIF district, should one be created, that would then be used to help pay for a range of other improvements to the area before going into the general funds of taxing jurisdictions.

We assume that restaurant rents would run between \$30 to 35/SF for this prime space and that the average daily room rates would, upon stabilization, need to be in excess of \$180/night.

To succeed this development would require a blending of public and private resources. If it relied entirely on private funding it very likely would not be financeable. Hotels currently require large amounts of expensive equity when privately financed. We proposed using a blend of EB5 funding, TIF and HUD section 108 to help reduce the debt and debt servicing on the hotel until it stabilizes (e.g., reaches approximately 70% annual occupancy).

A blend of these publicly sanctioned resources should bring between \$8 and \$12 million in a low cost financing.

Parking Lot Sites (Municipal and Western Wallbaum's)

and one that brings a pharmacy into better market proximity, we suggest that the The current municipal parking lot off of 116th Street is about 48,000 SF and is adjacent company lease the ground to the city for \$1/year. to the western portion of the Wallbaum's grocery parking lot which is about 36,000 SF.

We believe that by combining these sites and adding two new streets to serve the larger land configuration, a redevelopment project composed of structured parking facility with ground floor retail and a mixed use project of market rate apartments with ground floor retail would be possible. Such a project would offer a range of benefits: 1) a parking facility that supports not only the existing grocery but also much of the current commercial use in the area as well as many of possible higher density future uses; 2) more market rate housing units that offer alternatives to residents wanting a somewhat more urban experience in a smaller community, and more "eyes on the street" 24 hours a day; 3) a stronger retailing site for the pharmacy which would now be located closer to a grocer so that these would play off each other, and the pharmacy would have access to considerably more parking; and 4) more tax revenue to the TIF district if were created and eventually to other taxing jurisdictions once TIF bonds were retired.

We've estimated that a new parking garage on the Wallbaum's site would run about \$25,000 per space (which would include buildout of a 10,000 SF pharmacy on the ground floor). A garage with four levels would provide about 470 space and total construction costs would be about \$11.8 Million excluding the land. Since Wallbaum's will benefit substantially from having a large public parking structure on its site,

The garage would be financed with a combination of tax exempt revenue bonds that could be issued by the City and/or the TIF district. Part of the debt service would be borne by income from the garage which would come from long term parking arrangements associated with the adjacent apartment units as well as valet service for the Skyline hotel described above. There may be various occupancy options for the pharmacy in the garage. If the Wallbaum's structure a \$1/year long term lease with the City, then the City might offer the pharmacy a condo swap for it's waterfront site. Another option would have the pharmacy either purchasing its space as a condo unit or prepaying a long term lease in the garage by using proceeds from selling it's beachfront site to the City.

The municipal lot would be redeveloped as a mixed use project with 80 units of market rate housing over a floor of retail. Most of the units would be studios and one bedrooms with an average size of about 750 SF. Construction would be wood frame over concrete and the development would have about 30 surface level parking spaces on site, with the remainder of parking provided through leases in the new parking garage. Retail parking would rely on spaces along the new street and the parking garage.

We're assuming that the city would discount the land to enable this project to happen and would put whatever it got for the site into area improvements.

It is also a site with multiple ownerships making acquisition more complicated and challenging.

Total construction costs are estimated to be about \$170 SF for the 75,000 SF project bringing it to about \$12.8 million. Market rents would be about \$2.00 SF for the housing about \$30 SF triple net for the retail.

However, taken together these properties offer the community its greatest opportunity to transform 116th Street into an asset that increases the economic and social vitality of the area, stimulates significant additional development and business opportunities for a range of tenants and jobs for residents, and provides the City and other taxing jurisdictions with fiscal benefits.

This project may require some public funding from TIF. Another option that may help it become viable would the property tax reductions available through the city for this type of development. We realize that property tax abatement works against TIF collection in the short run, but that the project requires closer scrutiny to determine which of these tools would be more effective based on timing and market conditions.

We believe that the site can be redeveloped with a mix of uses that include a new hotel on the 40,000 SF block that now has the Park Inn and vacant adjacent structure on it. The hotel would be a combination of new construction and adaptive re-use of the Park Inn as a hotel with smaller rooms but housing some of the central facilities needed by the entire complex. The new hotel would have approximately 120 rooms while the converted Park Inn would offer 30 rooms in addition to a range of hotel services. The building would also provide about 11,000 SF of retail and restaurant space on multiple levels.

116th Street Eastside Beachfront Site

The theatre building would be returned to a theatre use. This likely would enable it to house community events as well as serving as a movie theatre.

This Eastside site which runs along more than 500 lineal feet (over half a block) of 116th Street and 200 lineal feet along the beachfront is arguably the most significant of all the properties examined by the AIA team. It includes the Park Inn that currently provides housing for people with special needs, the vacant adjacent one story building the west, the vacant theatre building, and three wood frame structures whose most recent uses have been as SRO. It is a site where people with fragile conditions are housing in buildings that are not well suited to help them. These structures are neither designed nor equipped with amenities needed to help residents improve their conditions.

The three story buildings that have housed homeless people or served as SROs would be demolished and replaced by a public parking facility with small retail shops facing



Proposed new development at 116th St.

116th and a new 9,000 SF building with ground floor retail and two floors of loft housing providing 8 new market rate units.

income coming from the existing properties until these are ready for redevelopment.

At that time the City or a related entity, would complete the sale transaction.

Residents from the SRO's and the Park Inn would be relocated to new, sustainable well designed and managed new units that would be constructed on the parcels located along Beach Blvd between 115th and 114th streets. These units could be managed by a seasoned capable non profits that know how to better help their residents and provide them with more supportive services to improve the quality of their lives.

The option approach also gives the community to set up a TIF district, assuming this is viable and if it chooses to do so, and to work on a solicitation process to secure one or more developers for the overall project. These may be a combination of for and non-profit developers, but in either case, they need to be developers experienced with public private partnerships.

These new units would be three and four story wood frame buildings with ground floor uses that include clinical services, indoor recreation and small scale retail that may be able to employ some of the residents

During this period the community also needs to prepare its application to the City for a \$20 million "game changer" grant that is being made available to projects that are able to transform economically challenged areas, create jobs and bring renewed vitality through real projects. Our understanding is that \$100 million will be available to the entire City of New York and that maximum amounts of \$20 million will be awarded to winning up to five proposers. These funds would be critical to the success of the bold and beneficial redevelopment concepts laid out here.

LAND ACQUISITION

Key to achieving this game changing redevelopment vision is securing the sites. Ideally, if one or more of the property owners were in a position to make a land donation that would greatly help to advance a redevelopment concept that will still face financing challenges.

At this time we are not able to project land costs for this project. We can, however, suggest possible construction costs and identify other funding sources that might be used to help reduce the overall financing burden.

Short of a donation but a more realistic approach would be to have the City, or a partner agency, purchase these properties for a fair price agreed to by both parties. In this situation the City could explore securing an option agreement so that the property owners might derive some initial income from the City while holding on to

CONSTRUCTION ESTIMATES AND REVENUE POTENTIAL

HOTEL: Development of a new hotel and adaptive re-use of what we think may be a historic building (Park Inn) could run in excess of \$225 SF. The 40,000 SF site we valued at \$3 million due to it's waterfront exposure (realizing that the site has an income producing property on it but that the building is likely in dire need of significant improvements) This would put the overall 130,000 SF new and old building project cost at about \$33,000,000. On site structured parking for the site is not recommended as it adds considerable costs. We opt instead to valet park hotel guests at the nearby new public garage.

Ground floor restaurant and retail space should lease for between \$30 - \$35/ SF, and room rates, at stabilization should average about \$200/night.

PARKING GARAGE: The public garage would be on a 24,000 SF site and house 328 spaces on three levels in addition to 4800 SF of small retail shops along 116th Street.

We again would estimate costs of about \$25,000/space given that it's a relatively efficient garage. With land at about \$1.5 million the project total would be about \$9.7 Million.

Street front retail spaces should bring at about \$30 - 35/SF and some of the longer term parking space arrangements with the hotel and apartment tenants will bring revenues to help with operations and debt service.

SMALL MIXED USE: The northern most 3,000 SF SRO building site would also be redeveloped as a small mixed use building with ground floor retail and housing above. Construction costs are estimated at \$180/SF and land at \$150,000 for a total of about \$1.8 Million. Parking would be street front and the new garage.

Ground floor retail spaces should exceed \$30/SF and apartments should go for close to \$2.00/SF.

NEW SRO AND SPECIAL NEEDS UNITS: The SRO and Park Inn replacement housing built on Beach Blvd would be on a site that melds smaller existing parcels and totals about 44,000 SF. The buildings would be three and four stories. They would provide about 12,000 SF of space for support services and small retail and 87,000 SF of living space for about 170 new units. Because these building have features such as clinic spaces, and special needs amenities we're estimating construction costs of \$200 SF. Even though this site is a couple of blocks off of 116th Street we've assumed a land value of \$2.2 million for a total of \$22,000,000.

Residential rents would be set under HUD guidelines.

THEATRE: New theatre construction can run anywhere between \$200 and \$700 SF depending on materials, fixtures, amenities, equipment type and quality in addition to other factors. This theatre building is assumed to be historic and therefore constrained from some changes that would be highly desirable such as improved loading areas

for performances. Still, at this point we're assuming rehab costs at \$300/SF given all the unknowns. At 16000 SF on an approximately 20,000 SF site it could cost about \$5.8 Million (and that may be low).

funds would also be used to reduce the carrying cost of the hotel, particularly in its early years of operation.

The theatre would have lease rates for various events – concerts, live theatre performances, lectures, graduations, weddings and celebratory occasions. Ideally, these rates would cover operating costs.

PARKING GARAGE: As a public garage financing could come from TIF bonds, or other tax exempt revenue bonds that could include increasing meter fees to help provide debt service payments. Lease payments from the private businesses such as the hotel could also be applied to servicing debt.

FINANCING

Each of these redevelopment project components will likely require distinctive financing packages, though some projects may be bundled. The pivot for bringing the entire redevelopment to fruition, however, rests with two factors: 1) being able to secure the sites at reasonable costs, and 2) reeling in the \$20 million "game changer" grant, whose dollars can be strategically used to close gaps in financing various project components.

SMALL SCALE MIXED USE: This project may require some assistance from TIF or CDBG if it's geared toward workforce housing, but given the other improvements that would immediately precede it, should be largely financeable with private equity and loans.

At this time we'll take each redevelopment project separately for illustrative purposes.

SRO/SPECIAL NEEDS HOUSING: This project will require a blend of resources. It will likely be easier to finance if it's owned and operated by a non-profit but at this time it's too early to exclude private ownership. Likely funding sources would include LIHTCs, CDBG funds, TIF and other grant funds for which such as project might be eligible. Securing 9% LIHTCs, which are competitive, could provide about half the equity in the project thereby significant reducing debt service for the project.

HOTEL: The new and old buildings that compose the hotel will need significant assistance. Utilizing EB5, since this is an excellent hotel funding resource, would be critical to the projects success. Hotels generate significant operating jobs which is key to procuring EB5 funds. The project would also employ historic tax credits that will reduce the rehab burden of the Park Inn component. HUD Section 108 loans and TIF

also benefit from fund raising from private parties and foundations in addition to TIF and CDBG funds. If it has non-profit status it could add non profit tax exempt revenue bonds that would carry low interest rates but require debt service. Our experience

THEATRE: Assuming that the theatre is historic, it could benefit from HTCs. It would

suggests that most community theatres need to be as free of debt service as possible to survive.

POTENTIAL PUBLIC TOOL KIT TO HELP ACHIEVE REDEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

The intriguing advantage of being a community that has various economic challenges is that these open a window to public resources that can help achieve redevelopment aspirations. Below are a few of the redevelopment tools that we think can be available to Rockaway for both providing infrastructure improvement and achieving various types of redevelopment projects.

Tax Increment Financing Districts (TIF District)

New York is among the 48 states that allow cities to create TIF Districts. These districts are locally identified areas that have economic conditions that make it difficult to attract private investment for redevelopment. TIF Districts enable the normal property taxes collected from new private redevelopment within a TIF district to stay within that area. The taxes received by taxing jurisdictions such as the city and county prior to creating the TIF district will continue throughout the life of the district. These new, incremental taxes, however are then used to pay off revenue bonds, the proceeds of which can be used for a variety or redevelopment efforts.

This is a bit like taking a mortgage out for a house you want to buy and improve. You make a down payment, but you also make payments over time to pay off the house and its improvements.

of any projects, however it can, through loans and grants, pick up portions of the overall costs. Projects eligible for TIF often include: helping to pay for infrastructure improvements like parks, parking garages, streetscapes, undergrounding utilities, etc.; loans/grants for mixed use developments, housing rehab, workforce housing, and educational facilities, etc.; façade and tenant improvements. TIF must be used for capital improvements and cannot be used to pay for operating expenses related to these projects.

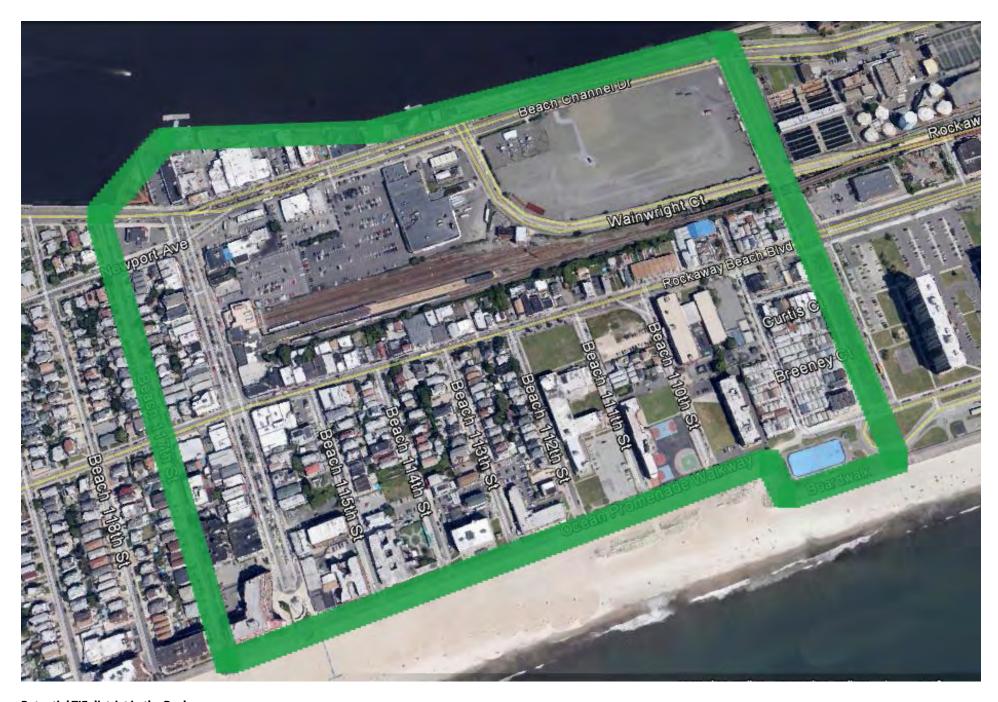


TIF project in Oregon.



TIF project in Chicago.

To be effective TIF Districts need to be of a size where they can capture sufficient property taxes from a variety of projects. TIF districts can last for time periods generally ranging from ten to forty years. Cities such as Chicago, Minneapolis, San Francisco, Portland, and Washington, DC have been very successful in using TIF for a variety of projects. On the following page, we offer a starting point for a potential TIF district boundary that the community can consider and, if you move forward, will likely refine based in additional data and community inputs.



Potential TIF district in the Rockaways.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT

Cities with populations over 50,000 people receive federal community development block grant (CDBG) dollars from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. These funds can be used for a variety of projects in areas that meet HUD income or economic condition guidelines. CDBG funds have been allocated to various projects as grants and loans. These have included: infrastructure improvements such as parks, sidewalks, and utilities; housing rehab; affordable housing construction; and commercial building improvements. New York City receives about \$200M/year in CDBG.

HUD SECTION 108 LOANS

The federal Department of Housing and Urban Development allows cities receiving CDBG funds to borrow against future allocations and use these funds to provide low interest economic development loans to eligible projects. These loans, which can run for 15 or 20 years, can be made for commercial redevelopment and rehabilitation projects, mixed use development, and multifamily housing rehab among others. Cities can borrow up to five times their annual CDBG allocation. NYC's allocation of



Project financed through Section 108 Loans.

about \$200 million enables it to offer a significant loan fund.

Cities such as Dallas, TX and Seattle,
WA have used 108 extensively, often
blending it with other funding

sources for mixed income housing developments, hotel projects and parking garages that have ground floor commercial spaces.

TAX EXEMPT FACILITIES BONDS

Many states and cities, New York included, enable the issuance of tax exempt revenue bonds for public facilities. The bonds are helpful in that they can provide financing for up to 100% of a project at tax exempt rates. They can be used for publicly owned structure parking facilities. It is possible for these parking garages to have some commercial uses associated with them. And various cities have been able to uses these kinds of garages to help reduce the parking cost burden for developments that include: hotels, retail, office buildings and apartments.



Underground public parking garage with housing and retail.

The Employment Based visa number five, or EB5, is a program administered by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) and provides foreigners wanting to become US citizens with a way to do so by investing in eligible economic development projects that create jobs for US citizens.

For an investment in an eligible project of \$500,000, a qualified foreign family can move to any place in the US and receive a green card, which if other goals are met, can be converted to US citizenship after five years.

their gains by receiving income tax credits over time. HCTs, like many of the other resources identified here, can be blended with other fund sources to expand their project impact.

These other goals include investing those funds in eligible businesses or development projects that will create at least 10 jobs for each \$500k.

Entities called Regional Centers (of which there are a number in New York City) work to secure groups of foreign investors to raise funds for projects such as new hotels, industrial development projects and helping to turn around qualified struggling businesses. The foreign investors funds are at risk, meaning these investors know they may not get them back, and they are often used to replace much more expensive equity that's required for many projects. Investor funds are paid back in about five years most often by refinancing the project or selling it.

HISTORIC TAX CREDITS

Federal Historic Tax Credits (HTCs), administered by the US Parks Services, have provided for profit and non-profit historic rehabilitation projects with financing that helped preserve and activate scores of historic buildings throughout the country.



Historic armory project in Oregon.

HTCs effectively provide up to 20% of the financing for qualified rehabilitation of historic structures. These funds are not paid back, as the investors secure

LOW INCOME HOUSING TAX CREDITS

Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTCs) can be very effective in financing rental units for affordable or mixed income developments. Like HTCs, these funds come from private investors who are willing to receive income tax credit over time for investments in eligible developments, in this case, affordable housing units. LIHTCs have been effectively used to create new units and rehab existing units for well designed and managed units affordable to households at 60% of area median income (median in Rockaway is about \$59,000/year) in cities across the country.





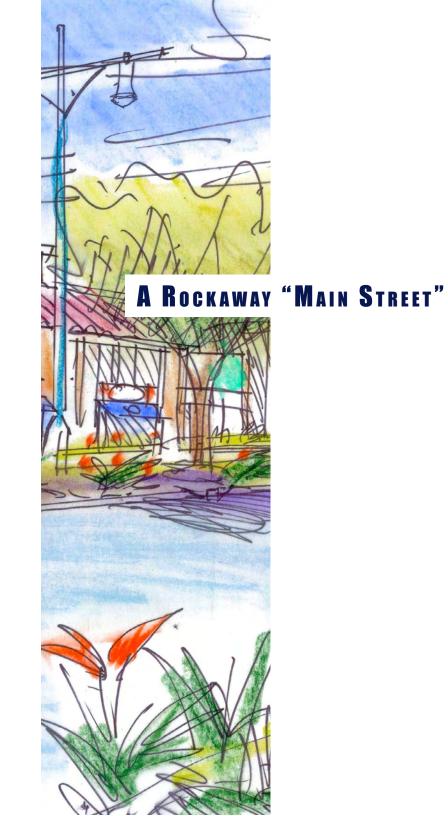
Low income housing developments.

GAME CHANGER GRANT

The City has allocated \$100 million from enhanced CDBG funding for game changer grants to redevelopment projects that would significantly transform areas and bring jobs into the community. The maximum per grant appears to be \$20 Million.

The Rockaway community should immediately begin to assess this report and others to assist it in how to most effectively partner with other public entities and private and/or nonprofit partners to pursue and win this grant opportunity. While the game changer funding will not address all the challenges posed by redevelopment of the 116th street area, it would go a long way toward leveraging other public and private investment interests.

The City offers a broad range of other financing tools that should be examined. Some of these are time limited as they associated with rehab and resiliency funds allocated in response to hurricane Sandy.



CONSIDER THE MAIN STREET™ APPROACH

We know what downtown is, but do we know why it matters? In The Rockaways, "downtown" is Beach 116, a neighborhood commercial strip that runs from the bay to the beach. It is the economic engine, the big stage, the core of Rockaways community. Every visit to The Rockaways starts and ends at 116. This commercial district tells us who we are and who we were, and how the past has shaped us.

Beach 116 is a place where people can come together, to be a part of their city—to feel connected to it. Historically, it was not only the center of the community's commercial life, it was also an important part of its social life; people thronged the streets to meet friends, see a movie and window-shop. In The Rockaways, that often included a trip to the beach. The commercial center is still the place of shared memory that can bind neighbors closer together and strengthen them individually and as a community.

Downtowns and neighborhood commercial districts have evolved over the years. Our world broadened and we sought social and commercial experiences outside the neighborhood or the local business district. Some of that evolution has been positive; we now have access to goods and services worldwide. But the social component, downtown as a community gathering place, has suffered.

To recapture the spirit of a neighborhood gathering place, over 2,000 communities nationwide have adopted the Main Street Four-Point Approach™ to revive the heart of the their community. The success of the Main Street™ approach is based on its

comprehensive nature. By carefully integrating four points into a practical downtown management strategy, a local Main Street™ program will produce fundamental changes in a community's economic base:

Organization involves building a Main Street[™] framework well represented by business and property owners, bankers, citizens, public officials, chambers of commerce, and other local economic development organizations. Everyone must work together to renew downtown. A strong organization provides the stability to build and maintain a long-term effort.

Promotion creates excitement downtown. Street festivals, parades, retail events, and image development campaigns are some ways Main Street™ encourages customer traffic. Promotion involves marketing an enticing image to shoppers, investors, and visitors.

Design enhances the attractiveness of the business district. Historic building rehabilitation, street and alley clean-up, colorful banners, landscaping, and lighting all improve the physical image of the downtown as a quality place to shop, work, walk, invest in, and live. Design improvements result in an investment of public and private dollars to downtown.

Economic Restructuring involves analyzing current market forces to develop long-term solutions. Recruiting new businesses, creatively converting unused

space for new uses, and sharpening the competitiveness of Main Street's traditional merchants are examples of economic restructuring activities.

CREATE A STRONG ORGANIZATION

Regardless of how you organize your activities and mission, use this checklist to ensure you follow all the steps to create your organization. Remember, some actions are required by law and both the City and the State of New York may have additional requirements not outlined here. Check with the Department of Small Business Services for more information.

_____Identify possible board members and supporters. Create an interim board of directors (5-9 people).

Once formed, the interim board should choose a name for the organization. Pick something that is simple, straight forward, and businesslike.

_____Determine your organization's boundaries/primary focus area. Remember it's not an "in or out" issue -- it's a "where should we concentrate our efforts for maximum success".

- a traditional central business district and center for socioeconomic interaction.
- characterized by a cohesive core of historic and/or older commercial and mixed-use buildings representing the community's architectural heritage with compatible in-fill development.

- typically arranged with most buildings side-by-side and fronting the sidewalk along a main street with intersecting side streets.
- compact, easily walkable, and pedestrian-oriented.

Draft Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation.
File as a New York Nonprofit Corporation with the Secretary of State (One
File as a New York Nonprofit Corporation with the Secretary of State (Once filed, you will get a Certificate of Incorporation.)
med, you will get a certificate of medipolation,
Once incorporated, prepare an agenda and hold an "official" first meeting

adopt bylaws,

to:

- 2. elect officers: president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer,
- 3. decide on a fiscal year,
- 4. select a bank and discuss financial arrangements,
- 5. authorize preparation and filing of IRS forms,
- 6. identify an address or post office box for mail, and
- 7. other necessary business.

Make sure the new secretary takes minutes.

_____File form SS-4 with the Internal Revenue Service to get a Federal Employee Identification Number (www.irs.gov). Download a501(c)3 or (c)6 nonprofit designation application packet.

Check with the City to see if you need to file anything locally.
Reserve an Internet domain name for your organization
The board should talk with local insurance agents and purchase
appropriate insurance coverage for your organization when possible. Minimally,
the board should consider general liability, board and officer liability, worker's
compensation, and special events policies.
Once the organizational paperwork has been done, hold a goal setting
session with board members to create a 12-18 month work plan. Determine a mission
statement, goals, and objectives. Put together committees. Have each committee
hold an activity brainstorming session to come up with a list of activities to meet their
list of objectives (in the beginning, think "quality, effective, low-cost, and doable"). Be
realistic in what you can accomplish, but also don't think too "small".
Create a draft first-year budget, and then seek funds from supporters.

FUNDING YOUR ORGANIZATION

While City Government is a potential partner in funding your local efforts, many times their contributions may be in-kind, in services or restricted: limited to a project or activity. A key to a successful non-profit funding is diversification. Below are some potential funding sources; the first group lists sources appropriate to a

start-up nonprofit. The second group you might consider once you have grown your organization and are established.

Basic Funding Strategies

Memberships: Fees paid for membership to an organization can be a source of funding for most all aspects of community revitalization. For membership dues to be a strong source of funding for a program, a well-thought-out strategy and campaign must be administered. This form of fundraising is ongoing and *can only succeed with a good chair* to spur the board on. Follow-through is essential to a good membership campaign.

Corporate donations: Corporate donations may be distinguished from membership dues primarily by the size of contribution. Many corporations have actively supported commercial revitalization efforts through donations of money, services, and equipment. And, most look upon donations to social and economic development causes as investments in the community. Their willingness to give will be directly proportional to their existing or future corporate presence in the community. A corporation will typically evaluate a donation for return on investment (usually in terms of dollars, publicity, human betterment, or economic growth).

Fundraising events: Fundraising events are a good source of revenue for downtown management, promotions, public improvements, and public facilities. They differ from special events in that they are conceived and run like a business, and they are

regarded as a business venture by the sponsoring organization. The whole purpose of putting on a fundraiser is to make money, therefore it is critical that goals, plans, and budget are thoroughly worked out, or the fundraiser may end up being much less than profitable

Sponsorships: Sponsorships are a good source of funding for special events and promotions. Suppliers of many of the products used in special events and media are willing to donate a portion of their product to be listed as a sponsor of the event. Like corporate donations, potential sponsors evaluate such contributions for return on investment. Businesses seldom sponsor anything from a totally philanthropic viewpoint.

Volunteers: Volunteers are an often overlooked means of funding many commercial revitalization projects. Volunteers can provide many services which might otherwise require cash resources well beyond the means of the organization. Volunteers might sell spots in a coordinated advertising campaign; they might provide part-time office help or clerical support; volunteers might help solicit donations and memberships; they might help paint a building or sweep a sidewalk, prepare a financial statement or submit a tax return, design a logo or print the newsletter. Given correct motivation and correct management, volunteers can do almost anything.

Advanced Funding Strategies

Product Sales: A budget can be subsidized by selling products related to the organization, community, or promotion. Some examples of these are t-shirts and sweatshirts, posters, specialized game boards, and bricks for streetscape projects. Product variety is only as limited as the imagination. Before going into special product sales, there must be a well-thought-out plan in place for selling the items. Product sales are only *an enhancement to your regular funding sources*. Don't depend on product sales to make ends meet.

Retail Fees: Retail or "In" fees are paid by the primary beneficiaries of a particular promotion or group of promotions. Usually the promotion is thought of, a budget is developed, and then a fee is determined by dividing the total budget by the projected number of participants. For example, we do an annual home tour in Oklahoma City. Property owners pay to be part of the tour. It funds both the event and raises money for our organization.

Service Fees: Service fees are a common source of funds for many nonprofit organizations, depending on the expertise of your staff or volunteers. Service fees might be generated for professional services such as commercial building design assistance, parking management or enforcement, property management, real estate negotiation or packaging, retail promotion packaging, advertising, or business recruitment. In Oklahoma City, we produce events for other organizations, for a fee

of course! Since these services can sap resources, this is a methodology best used by mature financially stable and staffed organizations.

Subsidy from Profitable Business: A number of very entrepreneurial nonprofit organizations have started for-profit arms to make money and subsidize their basic programs. Examples related to a commercial revitalization effort might include a real estate development company subsidizing a commercial district management nonprofit, or a nonprofit leasing its real estate to for-profit businesses to generate income to support the nonprofit's activities. Subsidies from profitable businesses can be another source of ongoing and dependable operating support, but should be viewed with similar cautions to income service fees.

Foundation donations: Foundation donations are grants given by foundations to aid social, educational, charitable, religious, and other activities which serve the common welfare. Foundations are non-governmental, nonprofit organizations which, primarily through investment of their assets, have produced income awarded as grants. Foundations have restrictions concerning what they will support. To qualify for a foundation grant you must be a tax-exempt organization recognized by the IRS, typically a 501(c)(3). Since this designation is getting more problematic for business based revitalization organizations, you may need a partner for to utilize this type of funding. Foundation grants can fund public improvements, public facilities, technical assistance, promotions, and downtown management depending on the purpose, activities, and area of interest of the foundation.

GET IT RIGHT - EVERY DAY

Building an organization is hard work. It does not end once the staff is hired; it requires attention every day. Your merchant's organization will be stronger if you incorporate the following principles on your strategic planning and daily actions.

- **1. Comprehensive.** A single project cannot revitalize a commercial neighborhood. Ongoing initiatives are vital to build community support and create lasting progress.
- **2. Incremental.** Small projects make a big difference. They demonstrate that "things are happening" and hone the skills and confidence the program will need to tackle more complex projects.
- **3. Self-Help.** Government can provide valuable direction and technical assistance, but only local leadership can breed long-term success by fostering and demonstrating community involvement and commitment to the revitalization effort.
- **4. Public/Private Partnership.** Every local merchant's organization needs the support and expertise of both the public and private sectors. For an effective partnership, each must recognize the strengths and weaknesses of the other.
- **5. Identifying and Capitalizing on Existing Assets.** Unique offerings and local assets provide the solid foundation for a successful initiative.

6. Quality. From storefront design to promotional campaigns to special events, quality must be instilled in the organization.

maximize your potential to improve the quality of you neighborhood and meet your diverse needs.

7. Change. Changing community attitudes and habits is essential to bring about a commercial district renaissance. A carefully planned revitalization program will help shift public perceptions and practices to support and sustain the revitalization process.

The team recommends strongly that you revisit the possibility for a BID for the Beach 116 area. They are the perfect vehicle to address the issues in your neighborhood: sanitation, security and physical improvements. Again, the Department of the SBS can help you draw boundaries that can increase your chances of successful petitioning and assist drafting the petition and the budget required for the public process.

8. Action Oriented. Frequent visible changes in the look and activities of the commercial district will reinforce the perception of positive change. Small, but dramatic, improvements early in the process will remind the community that the revitalization effort is underway.

More than dollars, more than staff, more than improvements to the physical environment, BIDs provide a very important benefit: political leverage. If you are assessing yourselves to provide amenities for your neighborhood beyond the baseline services from the city – elected officials will take note. They are more likely to respect – and look favorably upon – requests from that district. It may not be the right thing for Beach 116 –but you must give it another chance - particularly in light of storm recovery.

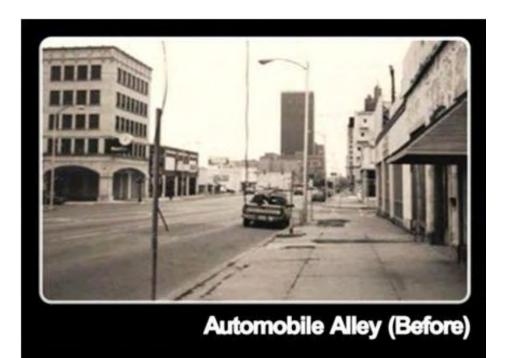
CONSIDER THE BID – AGAIN

Use the grants you are seeking – and receiving – to seed the start of BID. You must use the funds available because of Hurricane Sandy to take the first step toward a revitalized commercial district. The BID can then be the vehicle to maintain the improvements. (http://www.nyc.gov/html/sbs/html/neighborhood/neighborhood_

There is a reason there are 67 Business Improvement Districts in the City of New York City. They work. They make a difference. They transform a place. They build community. However, smaller BIDs in New York City rarely generate the dollars that big office districts do, and therefore are vulnerable to administrative costs exceeding the cost of the service benefit.

Fortunately, the Department of Small Business Services provides excellent resources and support as you navigate the process. They can help you find flexible solutions to

forming bid overview.shtml)





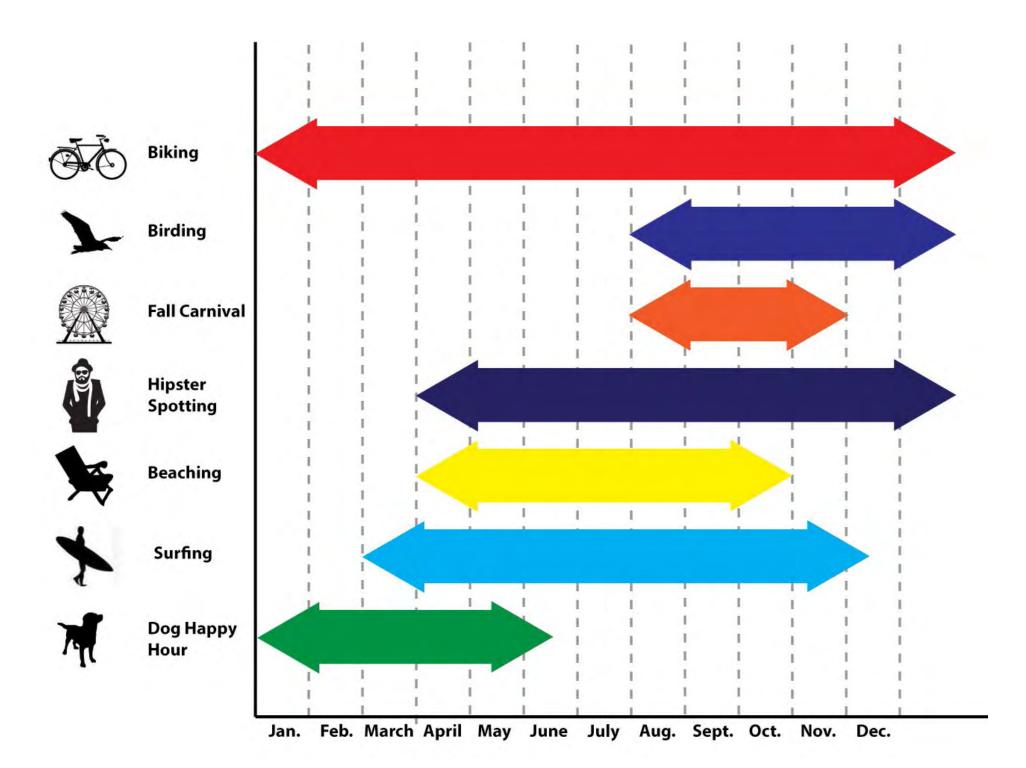
MORE THAN A SEASONAL DISTRICT

Many communities blessed with a happy accident of geography (mountains, beach etc.) struggle with the same issue: quality of life for the locals vs. economic impacts of tourism. The Rockaways is no exception. There are twelve months in the year – but it seems that The Rockaways focuses only on the three between Memorial Day and Labor Day. Like the importance of a 24 hour downtown, The Rockaways must think of themselves as a twelve month neighborhood.

Celebrate community by planning events and activities year round. You see yourself as a strong community, but you don't seem to rally around common activities except for summer and the beach. Different than the strategic reasoning needed to develop an event calendar for the merchant's association, this seasonal calendar should be fun and inclusive – allowing opportunities for everyone to celebrate The Rockaways. Seasonal ideas include:

- **Bird Watching season.** The community could take pictures of various birds at the Preserve or just the gulls in the yard. Don't make it too hard to take it too seriously; have fun!
- **Bicycle season:** Turn the Rockaways into THE place to bicycle.
- **Dog Happy Hour:** Plan dog gatherings on the beach during the winter months.
- **Hipster-watching season:** Just make it up. Have fun.

Be creative and create your own seasons for celebrations in the community.



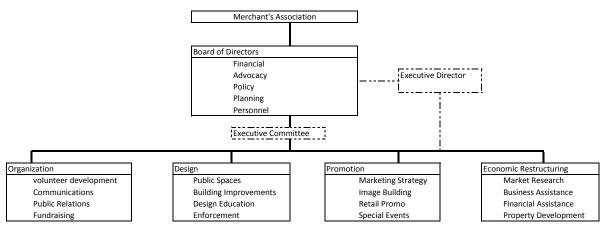
Aside from creating seasons and celebrations just for the community, you need to embrace the idea you can be (are) a resort. The beachfront is as lovely as any along the east coast and the surf is better than the southern beaches. You need a resort hotel property to create that buzz and give visitors a chance to experience more than a day at Rockaway Beach. It would also provide a community gathering place – a living room, if you will, for weddings, birthdays and other special events. The Rockaways may be a resort to the visitors, but to you it will always be home. As Jane Jacobs said in 1958:

"The remarkable intricacy and liveliness of downtown can never be created by the abstract logic of a few men. Downtown has had the capability of providing something for everybody only because it has been created by everybody. So it should be in the future; planners and architects have a vital contribution to make, but the citizen has a more vital one. It is his city, after all; his job is not merely to sell plans made by others, it is to get into the thick of the planning job himself."

Maybe what the citizens of The Rockaways really want, perhaps most of all, is to feel connected to the people around you and the place you inhabit—to walk down the street and say to yourselves: "These are my people. This is my home."

RECOMMENDATIONS (TO BE COMPLETED BEFORE DECEMBER 2013)

- Review the "Steps to Create a Strong Organization" checklist in this document and assess your progress. Complete everything on that list. Focus on:
 - Volunteer recruitment and development (do not depend on the executive director to do everything.)
 - o Creation of an action plan for the next 12-18 months. (see suggestions below)
- Determine a membership dues structure that will support your action plan; appoint a membership chairman and sell memberships.
- Research and review the Main Street Approach™ and determine if it is a good fit for your organization.
 If not, create another committee structure that will allow you to accomplish your work efficiently. If so.....
- Create committees to plan and implement each of the four points.



Sample Organizational Chart

- Hire and train an Executive Director.
- Locate and set up an office (preferably donated space.)
- Research and determine the viability of a BID.

Suggested Activities for Your 2013 Action Plan

- Activate and populate your webpage. Make sure there is a plan for daily updates to site.
- Develop a social media strategy. Implement it. Daily.
- Plan an exciting fundraiser to celebrate your accomplishments and provide implementation money for your action plan. (This is the summer/fall event you have already discussed.)
 - o Make sure to schedule an evaluation of the event. Did it meet your goals?
- Organize a clean-up day or days. The district needs a good scrubbing on a regular basis.
- Develop sign guidelines for Beach 116. Current sign environment is cluttered and difficult to read a detriment rather than an asset to the businesses.









 Leverage your disaster relief dollars. You will not have this opportunity again! (Hopefully!)





- Develop a property inventory and work with businesses to improve the appearance of their storefronts.
- Launch a "support local business" campaign for your area.
- Determine a seasonal plan and activity for after Labor
 Day 2013. Remember you are not just a beach town!
- Collect the following information as a baseline so that you can document future growth:

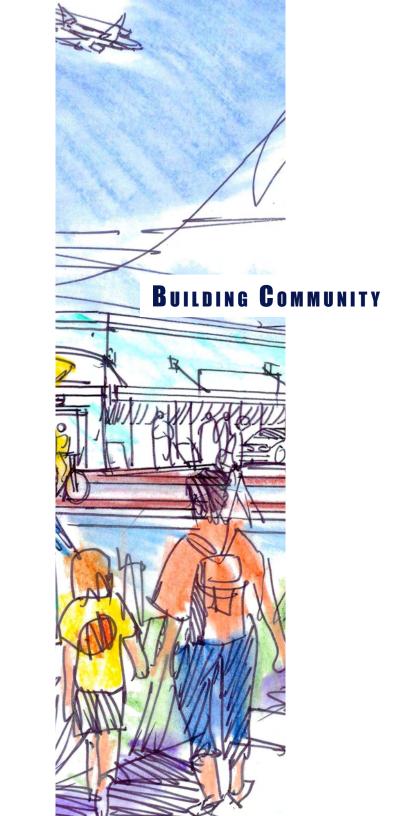
- o Number of jobs in the district
- o Number of businesses in the district
- o Property values
- o Current property ownership
- o Current public investment

RECOMMENDATIONS (FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2014)

- Develop a comprehensive marketing strategy and identify funding methodologies to implement your plan.
- As a part of your marketing strategy, develop a one page promotional sheet for the real estate brokers to
 "sell" the area. Work with local brokers to identify potential businesses for vacancies
- Secure a location and launch an outdoor market. If this market is not on Beach 116, make sure you brand the event effectively so customers will know it is your project.
- With assistance from the SBS, use surveys and other demographic data to determine the most valuable
 target markets for the district. "Valuable markets" are the category of customers contributing to the
 economy of the area, such as empty nesters, families etc.
- Develop an event calendar and create an event matrix like the one in the appendix. Determine the
 purpose or objective for each event and the demographic you are trying to reach. Ideally, the
 demographic should be a determined valuable one for the district (see next page for an example matrix).
- Using the baseline you created in 2013, monitor changes and document progress quantitatively
 if possible. Include storefront rehabilitation projects location and projected cost as well as new
 businesses coming to the district. The objective is to show the properties and businesses in the area are
 increasing in value.
- Have fun, enjoy your community and welcome your visitors!

DBI Event Matrix	Community	Ambiance	Fund Raising	Traffic Generating	Promotes Retail	Restaurant	Boundary Extension	Demo Reached
Tulip Celebration	х							3
President's Day Sale					Х			1-2
ArtFair	Х		Х	Х		X	х	1-2
Friday Noon Tunes		Х						
Bands on the Bricks	Х	Х	X			Χ		1-2-3
Sidewalk Sales					Х			1-2
Fall Festival	Х		X	X		X		1-2-3
Munchkin Masquarade	Х				Х			3
Switch on the Holidays/	Х	Х						3
St. Nicks								
Lights Parade	Х					Χ	X	1-2-3

Primary Demographic Groups as identified by the marketing committee: 1) Empty Nester 2) Couples without children 3) Families



THE ROCKAWAYS COMMUNITY - WHAT THE TEAM HEARD

The R/UDAT team learned a lot about the Rockaways community during the public process. The community narrative is both heartbreaking and inspirational, given some of the tragedies that have occurred in the recent past. The shared experience of recovery from Hurricane Sandy is only part of the community story here, another layer of the collective reality residents have experienced. Community members expressed a strong attachment to place, and identified the Rockaways "small town feel" as a key characteristic of its attractiveness. They described the family-friendly atmosphere and multi-generational civic life as true assets to the area. The community is viewed as a microcosm of the city, and home to great ethnic diversity. The Rockaways beach was unanimously viewed as a central public space and iconic feature, providing a dramatic landscape for important events in the life of the community. Residents also

NATURAL SKY
CLOUDS
BEAUTY
BEAUTY

SMALL

TOWN

FEEL

COMMUNITY

SECRET JEWEL

PIVERSE GREAT SCHOOL

W

described a new dynamic emerging from the shared experience of Hurricane Sandy, an opportunity to realize a greater sense of community and partnership than has existed in the past. Many participants felt that the Rockaways is a "diamond in the rough" that has great potential to become a uniquely significant place in the broader landscape of New York City.

CIVIC SCHIZOPHRENIA AND AN IDENTITY CRISIS

The Rockaways community was also described as "tough to define," even for local residents. The area was labeled the "peninsula of discrepancies" by one participant. It was characterized as a "series of neighborhoods" as opposed to a cohesive community. Many people spoke about a local identity crisis. Some pointed to the dynamic created by being a bedroom community that has few amenities relative to other New York communities. Others found it challenging that the area has absentee property owners. The geographic isolation created by the Rockaways natural surroundings was found to be a significant barrier to residents. Participants referred to a seasonal flow of community life defined by the beach and the vibrance that outside visitors bring to the area. Winter in the Rockaways was described as a bleak experience, with little community activity.

BALKANIZED NEIGHBORHOODS

The team found that the Rockaways community has real challenges regarding the balkanization of its neighborhoods. The differences across neighborhoods can be dramatic. While the community is diverse as a whole, many of its neighborhoods



represent very specific and homogenous enclaves, and as a result relationships across neighborhoods can sometimes be characterized by conflict based on competing needs. There are extreme disparities in wealth and income from one neighborhood to another. One participant characterized the community as having both "the richest of the rich," and the "poorest of the poor." Neighborhoods with significant public housing were seen as a challenge for the community at large, and some participants expressed resentment toward city leaders for "dumping the projects in the Rockaways." There was also a broader sense of disenfranchisement expressed by some residents regarding past engagement and leadership from the public sector.

THE COMMUNITY CHALLENGE

The R/UDAT team found that the Rockaways faces real hurdles to building a cohesive community-wide identity. Given the range of neighborhood identities, citizens felt that the broader community "doesn't know what it wants to be." However, the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy has provided a unique 'civic moment' for residents to cross boundaries, collaborate, and build a collective sense of identity that is representative of all its inhabitants. Therefore, the team believes that the Rockaways has a civic opportunity to redefine itself as more than a collection of neighborhoods, which will be critically important to the success of any recovery effort.

THE COMMUNITY GOAL

"The goal is not to achieve wholeness by suppressing diversity, nor to make wholeness impossible by enthroning diversity, but to preserve both. Each element in the diversity must be respected, but each element must ask itself sincerely what it can contribute to the whole. I don't think it is venturing beyond the truth to say that 'wholeness incorporating diversity' defines the transcendent task for our generation."

-John W. Gardner

CIVIC INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION

The team was impressed by the range of civic activity occurring across the community.

The Rockaways exhibits tremendous potential capacity to address its needs and realize community aspirations. There are an impressive range of organizations engaged in a variety of creative community activities, including hack-a-thons, crowdfunding

projects, online recovery gaming initiatives, public service work, volunteerism, relief work and other activities. Many of these initiatives have represented organic community responses to the aftermath of Sandy, and demonstrate significant initiative and the ability to organize for specific interests. However, the community has an extraordinary opportunity to leverage these disparate efforts by organizing in a broader fashion.

BUILD A COMMUNITY-WIDE COLLABORATIVE STRUCTURE FOR REVITALIZATION

The R/UDAT Team recommends that the Rockaways community take a simple, but transformative, step forward by organizing a community-wide umbrella structure for revitalization. This structure should be designed with the following best practice principles in mind:

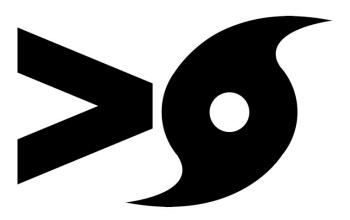
-The revitalization effort should employ an integrative approach to current efforts, seeking to build an umbrella in which the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Inclusive community representation should be sought as a specific goal, and leadership should be broadly shared.











-This structure should place an emphasis on civic, rather than political leadership. Public sector representatives might be included within the structure, or identified as a key partner, but leadership for this effort should be placed squarely upon representatives of the Rockaways civic sector. The goal should be to transcend traditional community roles and reliance on the public sector, empowering the community to take ownership of the effort and responsibility for its leadership.

-The organizational structure for this initiative should be defined by a focus on collaborative and participatory operations. The emphasis should be placed not only on what get's done, but more importantly, how it gets done. Every action taken by this entity should seek to broadly engage and involve the entire community to the extent possible.



DEVELOPING TRANSFORMATIONAL CAPACITY

This enterprise will be labor intensive to organize, but the benefits to the community and each individual partner organization will be transformational. By forming this structure, the Rockaways will achieve the following:

- Instead of a wide number of individual organizations and groups working to make positive impacts in the community in a disparate manner, the Rockaways will have formed an umbrella of groups that collaborate across initiatives and opportunities. This will allow each group to align its activities with the community's mission and attach each individual activity or initiative to complementary actions of other groups, catalyzing exponentially greater impact, gaining significant efficiencies regarding resources, and building all-important momentum for the collective direction of the Rockaways community. It will allow the community to work from a position of collective strength.
- Rather than a disparate group of organizations working to recruit, coordinate, and manage different networks of volunteers, this umbrella structure will allow every organization to integrate its efforts, and the community will suddenly have an army of volunteers to leverage across all activities and initiatives.
- Similarly, by integrating resources and activities, the Rockaways community will instantly transform its condition from a wide array of resources dispersed across the community to an integrated pool of resources that demonstrate significant value and can have impact at an exponentially larger scale. This repositioning allows the Rockaways to gain the advantage of making much larger, more strategic investments that can be effective catalysts for revitalization.
- Organizing under a single framework and umbrella of civic leadership will allow
 the Rockaways to reposition the cacophony of community messages from each
 activity into a single, profoundly powerful 'civic megaphone' broadcasting one
 unified message about the community.

THE POWER OF COMMUNITY

In most post-disaster contexts, heavy emphasis is put on public sector leadership for recovery. This is misguided thinking. The local government burden post-disaster is enormous, and public resources (whether federal or local) will always be insufficient alone. Like the civic sector, the public sector is looking to match resources, integrate efforts, and build strong partnerships. By organizing effectively at the community level, the Rockaways will not only gain tremendous collective capacity, it will position the community for significant partnership with the public sector. Most communities are facing tight public budgets, but the power inherent in the civic sector is a tremendous force for change if it is captured in an organized manner. For instance, consider the following national statistics:

- Volunteerism last year was estimated to be valued at \$171 billion (with only 64 million people taking part).
- Total Charitable Giving was estimated at \$298.42 billion.
- Non-profit organizations made contributions valued at \$300 billion in investment into local communities
- Over half of all states have enacted legislation to enable privatesector participation in infrastructure projects, where there is an estimated \$180 billion to be leveraged.
- Crowdfunding for real estate projects alone was valued at \$1.5 billion in 2011.

Taken together, these resources amount to almost a trillion dollars in opportunity.

UTILIZE A PROVEN ORGANIZATIONAL MODEL

There are three basic organizational approaches the Rockaways could pursue to build an integrated framework of civic infrastructure. Based upon the team's knowledge of existing civic activity in the Rockaways, the team believes that a coalition/partnership strategy may be most appropriate, but each approach represents a potentially valid direction to pursue.

- Form a New Organization to serve as the umbrella.
- Utilize an Existing Organization for this purpose.
- Formalize a Community Coalition/Partnership instead of an organization.

Success begins with community organization.

FORMING A NEW ORGANIZATION: THE REDISCOVER EAST! MODEL

In 1998, East Nashville was devastated by a tornado. A year later, the civic frustration with the pace of recovery was clear. As one local newspaper described the situation at the time, "today





many in East Nashville feel that the tornado recovery is stalled. "The long term recovery hasn't been as fast or as much as we'd hoped," says Lindsay Fairbanks, an East Nashville resident and real estate agent. "Blue tarps still flap in the wind. Recalcitrant insurance companies and inadequate insurance coverage frustrate the efforts of many to rebuild. East Nashville legend has it that some absentee landlords pocketed their payoffs and left for Europe, or at least to Destin. As a result, their damaged buildings were left behind to molder in the rain." In response, the city organized a R/ UDAT process much like the one that the Rockaways has conducted this week. One of the process outcomes was the recommendation to form a new organization whose mission would be the revitalization of the neighborhood. As a result, Rediscover East! was created. As the organization's website explains, "Before the plan could be implemented, East Nashville needed an organization that would represent the collective voice of the community, reflecting its concerns and desires: Rediscover East! was born." During the last 15 years, the neighborhood has experienced a renaissance, led by the efforts of this organization. The public sector was an important partner in the effort, as Rediscover East! was the beneficiary of significant federal monies through the process. However, many actions took place in the community, led by the civic sector, under the umbrella of this organizational framework. Rediscover East! still exists today, and describes its mission as follows:

"Today, hundreds of dedicated Rediscover East! volunteers, representing all of East Nashville's neighborhood associations and numerous other stakeholder groups, are working to rebuild and beautify East Nashville's public spaces, encourage economic growth, enhance neighborhood safety and accessibility, develop public art and cultural offerings, support our children and youth, and much more."

Within the organizational framework, Rediscover East! has 14 individual committees that involve different sectors of the community in core priorities:

- Arts & Cultural Development
- Citizen organization
- Codes & Zoning
- Crime & Safety
- Economic Development
- Education, Children, & Youth
- Fundraising
- Housing -Neighborhoods
- Parks & Greenways
- Public & Media Relations
- Religious Organizations
- Streetscapes, Transportation, & Parking
- Urban Design

In 2011, Architect Magazine profiled the community's success, and described the change that has taken place:

"There is no evidence of that devastation today. Instead, new growth knits together this eclectic string of communities. There are historic mansions, humble bungalows, hip restaurants, and a smorgasbord of small businesses. Musicians rub shoulders with physicians, and trendy boutiques share streets with not-so-mainstream bars.

There are attractive housing options for people with low and average incomes. It wasn't always that way."

UTILIZING AN EXISTING ORGANIZATION: THE BROADMOOR MODEL

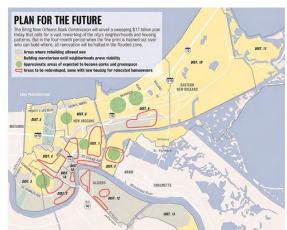
Five months after Hurricane Katrina, the Broadmoor Neighborhood Improvement Association (BIA) rallied residents to join a community-wide revitalization crusade. The urgency in their message was tangible and salient for residents:

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, the time for action is now. It is imperative that we unite as one to rebuild a stronger Broadmoor; not one of us can do it alone. Being faced with the challenges of crafting a vision for the future of our community, BIA needs your presence and voices every step of the way. So lets pull together, join the Broadmoor Improvement Association and put a better Broadmoor in the center of the map of New Orleans. The BIA exists for every resident of Broadmoor. Our neighborhood has a sense of awareness, unity, and pride.

The initial impetus for this effort was a suggestion by urban planners that their neighborhood not be redeveloped after the storm, but be turned into green space instead. An infamous planning map







with a green dot on the Broadmoor neighborhood outraged residents and catalyzed a sustained organizational effort under the existing association structure. As a result, they implemented a multi-faceted campaign that used the BIA umbrella and created additional organizations within it. The elements of this effort included the following:

Worked with national partners and the community to craft a neighborhood recovery master
plan that outlined the values of the neighborhood and the goals for recovery, with the vision to
be "Better than Before."

- Became known as a "grassroots powerhouse" by leveraging 13,000 volunteers and over 300,000 hours in service.
- Formed their own Community Development Corporation, which rehabilitates
 owner-occupied properties, renovates and sells vacant properties, builds new
 homes, and works to stabilize vacant lots. Work is coordinated with the BIA to
 ensure that efforts are community-driven.
- Made themselves an attractive partner for investment. As the Executive Director stated, "We knew there was money available. We said, 'We're ready, we'll take your money, and we'll show you results."
- Leveraged over \$40M in resources to restore the neighborhood's historic housing stock, the Andrew H. Wilson Charter School, and the Rosa F. Keller Library and Community Center—and created a holistic set of programs for all ages to strengthen the community.
- The improvement district was created in order to continue promoting the Broadmoor Improvement Association's (BIA) quality-of-life programs and projects. These initiatives cater to Broadmoor residents and encourage the beautification and overall benefit of the neighborhood as established by the Broadmoor Redevelopment Plan.
- Successfully advocated to the Louisiana legislature for a bill to designate Broadmoor as a "Neighborhood Improvement District." Broadmoor voters approved funding the improvement district through an annual \$100 parcel-fee.

Some of the interim successes included a renovated school, which in turn spurred more residential return. They also developed a library and an arts and wellness center. These investments tipped the scales and made the neighborhood an attractive place, and drew new residents. Over the first seven years, the effort led to the recovery of

85% of all Broadmoor residential properties – in an area where 100% of properties suffered between 6 and 10 feet of flooding following Hurricane Katrina. The contrast with comparative city neighborhoods that did not organize was palpable. Those neighborhoods are still waiting on government, and are expressing extreme frustration. As one resident of a suffering neighborhood stated, "We have reinvested in our homes and communities. We're waiting for the government to catch up with that same type of commitment." An article about the lessons learned from post-disaster experiences summarized as follows: "Successful neighborhoods have rebuilt through strong grass-roots leadership and often in spite of government help."

BUILDING A BROAD COALITION OR PARTNERSHIP: THE BIRMINGHAM, AL MODEL

In 2011, Birmingham, Alabama was struck by a devastating tornado, leveling much of the city's historic Pratt City neighborhood. In response to the storm, city officials invited the American Institute of Architects to form a R/UDAT team to work with federal disaster officials and the community to build a sustainable recovery strategy. Over 450 residents participated in the public process.

Like the Rockaways, Birmingham has faced historic challenges building diverse collaborations that cross race and class in the past. However, in the first year following the R/UDAT, the City made transformational progress, building a community wide collaboration focused on revitalization. This partnership allowed the community to position itself as an attractive partner with federal agencies and other funding







partners. Within the first two months of implementation, the city was able to leverage over \$8 million in federal disaster funding to begin rebuilding important public facilities and support new neighborhood housing. Six months later, Birmingham was awarded a \$10 million TIGER grant from the Department of Transportation to focus on repairing street networks, and adding pedestrian and bicycle facilities in the Pratt Community. A federal official was quoted as saying, "The coalition of communities and organizations that have come together behind this grant is incredibly impressive. I think we all know we are working in an environment of finite resources, so from a federal standpoint it is always extraordinarily helpful to see a large commitment from the local community, the private and public sector and the region as a whole behind one project." As the Birmingham News reported, "The compilation of the grant application was spearheaded by the Freshwater Land Trust, the non-profit land conservation organization. The Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham and a constellation of donors large and small pledged local match money to the project. UAB and the School of Medicine pledged money. The Jefferson County Health Department, which already had supported the development of a master plan for greenways in Jefferson County as part of its campaign to reduce obesity, also pledged \$1 million. CSX railroad offered to sell abandoned railroad right-of-way that could be used to develop a greenway at a \$250,000 discount in recognition of its employees living in the Pratt City area. Big business and environmental groups wrote letters of support.""This is really a celebration of our collaborative effort," said a local official. The community also qualified for a \$17 million CDBG grant for recovery.

Recently, the Pratt Community celebrated the two-year anniversary of the storm with an article in the local paper that announced, "Birmingham's Pratt City Community Methodically Rebounding Two Years After Tornado Devastation."

UTILIZE COMMUNITY MODELS WITHIN THE REVITALIZATION FRAMEWORK

The goal of this community-driven revitalization effort should be to make inclusive community involvement endemic to all public action and decision making. Therefore, the Rockaways should seek to employ community models where appropriate to leverage the entire area's resources for greatest effect. The team believes that the following models may be high priority areas to investigate further:

• Communities in Schools model. The team heard significant public comment about struggling local schools. In order to make itself an attractive place for residential growth and private investment, the Rockaways should investigate a community-based approach to improving education outcomes. One of the best national models is the Communities in Schools program, which works within the public school system to determine student needs and establish relationships with local businesses, social service agencies, health care providers, and parent and volunteer organizations to provide needed resources. This model is also sometimes used in combination with co-location of local social service and non-profit organizations in school facilities, providing a central community resource for both adults and children.

Community Advisory Board model. The team also heard significant comment
about perceived and real challenges with the concentration of public housing
in some neighborhoods. The team recommends considering a community
advisory board model or similar approach to bring diverse residents from across
neighborhoods together to build relationships, discuss issues of common
concern, and collaborate on public projects of interest.

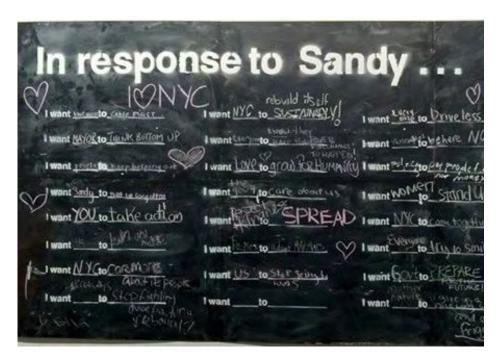
COLLECTIVE COMMUNITY ACTION: CREATING A CIVIC TIDAL WAVE

Once an organizational framework is in place, collective action on a host of implementation priorities can leverage the full community's resources and talents. During the public process, the team heard a number of community project ideas from residents and stakeholders. Many of these initiatives can be taken on with no public sector support, and can be implemented in small steps, using phased and temporary approaches to build momentum for larger investments. While much of the media coverage has focused on public sector activity post-Sandy, communities are actually the most important implementing mechanism. The goal of all activity should be to build community momentum and civic spirit, and create the conditions that make the Rockaways an attractive place for private investment and a well-positioned community for partnership. Some of the key actions the Rockaways can focus on include the following:

WHAT CAN COMMUNITY DO?

• Community can articulate a collective vision. Some of the most important community projects are visual, symbolic initiatives that express and reinforce sense of place. They can also serve as aspirational projects, communicating a community vision or desire for the future. In New Orleans, artist Candy Chang created simple stickers that allowed residents to tag derelict buildings with "I wish this building was _____." The participatory nature of the project allowed for diverse community expression and created dialogue about the future of properties. In Seattle, neighbors engaged in a visioning process about their desires for a vacant block, and then hired an artist to paint a block-long mural depicting the vision. The art created enormous dialogue and excitement, and led a developer to view it as an attractive investment and make their dreams come true.







Mobilize volunteers to create and strengthen community space. During the recovery process, temporary installations can serve an important purpose to activate space and fill empty or vacant spaces. During the public process, there was significant interest in a future amphitheater in the community. In Houston, artists reclaimed lumber from abandoned and derelict buildings to create the Fifth Ward Community Jam, which is now the central place in the community and draws outsiders as well. In Christchurch, New Zealand, community volunteers worked for 6 weeks to design and build the Palette Pavilion, a temporary architectural installment meant to create more community space and bring dynamism to a destroyed area. In Seattle, residents painted a dynamic mural onto the street, transforming the street into a lively public space for people. In similar fashion, Rockaways citizens expressed interest in additional amenities, particularly 'third places' that build community, such as coffee shops, book stores, artists space, beer gardens and pubs. The community can seek to experiment with temporary pop-installations in vacant buildings and areas as an interim means to bring back dynamism to the neighborhood and spark interest in long-term investment.







- Leverage community to crowdsource and crowdfund projects, both small and large. In San Angelo, Texas, residents funded the Celebration Bridge project, an iconic pedestrian bridge that helped spur downtown investment. They also started their own foundation, which now has millions of dollars in assets and is a leading catalyst and investment-attraction vehicle for major projects across the city. Several crowdfunding real estate firms have also sprung up in the past few years, providing a community opportunity for collective investment in the built environment. In DC, FundRise has provided a real estate investment platform for residents to invest in the revitalization of their own neighborhood. In New York, Urban Muse and Prodigy Networks are leading crowdfunding organizations.
- Transform challenged sites into assets. Candy Chang's 'Before I Die' project, which has now been implemented around the world, transformed a derelict building into a participatory community hot spot. In Seattle, residents in the Fremont neighborhood came together to turn an eyesore overpass into a community asset by building the quirky Fremont Troll. The site is now famous, an attracts people from all over the world, bringing a host of benefits to the area.





LEVERAGE SMALL ACTIONS TO BUILD MOMENTUM FOR LARGE ACTIONS

Throughout the public process, the team witnessed and observed an incredible array of organizations and individuals who are doing great things for the Rockaways community. Once organized, the Rockaways has the resources in place to design a series of projects and actions that are small in scale but have transformational impact. The goal should be to link each activity, leveraging small actions for exponentially larger collective impact by aligning them and building community momentum.

In 2009, Newport, Vermont brought a Regional and Urban Design Assistance Team (R/UDAT) to town to help build a revitalization strategy. Patricia Sears, the Executive Director of the Newport Renaissance Corporation, described the town's dilemma a few years ago: "We were the last city in Vermont to achieve downtown designation from the state. We had some of the highest unemployment in the state. We decided we were done being last. We decided, 'we are going to be first." Newport hosted the first R/UDAT in state history. Hundreds of residents and stakeholders participated





in the process. As Mayor Paul Monette said, "it wasn't the usual political process.

Everyone was heard during the R/UDAT."

Within two years of the project, the R/UDAT had built so much momentum that the town had over \$250 million in new and pending investment, including 2,000 new jobs in a town of just 5,000 – an incredible achievement in the midst of a severe national recession. Newport was able to achieve success through broad partnership and involvement. It also leveraged small actions to build momentum for larger investments.



For example, the R/UDAT team included a recommendation to create community gardens. Newport created a community garden with over 32 organizational partners. They took advantage of existing capacity - a downtown parking lot that was donated - and not only created a garden, but programmed it to have a transformational impact. Out of the community garden, the "Grow a Neighborhood" program was created, teaching neighborhood residents about urban agriculture, providing space for family plots, and engaging local restaurants in a farm to table initiative. Six new restaurants opened in the downtown during the first two years of implementation. Newport also took advantage of widespread community participation in the R/UDAT to engage citizens in code changes, designing a participatory process to create the first form-based code in the state. New investments included boutique hotels, a tasting center featuring regional agriculture, and a waterfront resort. The city also created the state's first foreign trade zone, attracting domestic and foreign biotechnology firms and other businesses.

The City has undergone a fundamental shift in its thinking since the R/UDAT process. In 2009, the public dialogue was dominated by nostalgia about the city's past. As one resident exclaimed, "I've seen Newport come, and I've seen it go." Two years later, the R/UDAT team conducted a follow up visit to assess progress in the community. As

the Mayor stated, "I attribute our success to the successful R/UDAT in 2009 followed by the great public/private partnerships which have developed." The sense of change reaches all levels of the community. A citizen described the civic "attitude adjustment" that had occurred: "When you have people working together, things can happen and do happen. That's the most important change that has occurred – a change in attitude. All of a sudden, nothing is impossible." Today, communities across New England are visiting Newport to learn the 'secrets' of its success.

Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody -- Jane Jacobs

INVOLVE THE WHOLE COMMUNITY IN THE EFFORT BY LEVERAGING VOLUNTEERISM

The Rockaways should seek to involve the whole community in the revitalization process by creating a series of volunteer-powered activities and projects. This process will help create the civic momentum and excitement desired to build civic pride internally and alter perceptions externally ---eventually creating an attractive environment for significant private investment.

Port Angeles, Washington provides an example of how to inspire pride in change by creating a truly public revitalization process. Their success has been built around involving everyone in the process. In 2009, Port Angeles hosted an SDAT to focus on downtown revitalization and waterfront development. Port Angeles had suffered declining fortunes as the result of mill closures and reduced productivity from natural resource industries. The three-day charrette process created enormous



civic energy to pursue a vision for the city's future. "Just two weeks after the SDAT presented more than 30 recommendations, the Port Angeles Forward committee unanimously agreed to recommend 10 of those items for immediate action," said Nathan West, the City's Director of Community and Economic Development. "Public investment and commitment inspired private investment, and, less than a month later, the community joined together in an effort to revamp the entire downtown, starting with a physical face-lift. Community members donated paint and equipment, and residents picked up their paintbrushes to start the transformation."

During the first summer of implementation, over 43 buildings in the downtown received substantial upgrades, including new paint and other improvements. This effort led to a formal façade improvement program that extended the initiative exponentially. The city dedicated \$118,000 in community development block grants (CDBG) for the effort, which catalyzed over \$265,000 in private investment. The city

also moved forward with substantial public investment in its waterfront, which had a dramatic impact in inspiring new partnerships and private investment. Three years later, the city had over \$75 million in planned and completed investments and had turned the corner by producing huge civic momentum across the community. In June 2012, Port Angeles was recognized with a state design award for its waterfront master plan, designed by LMN Architects. The city broke ground on its new waterfront late last year.

ENGAGE IN COHESIVE CIVIC AND PLACE BRANDING

Throughout the revitalization process, the Rockaways community should seek to engage in more cohesive civic branding. Currently, there are a cacophony of messages in the community, and while there is a lot of great work happening, the message is being lost. Organizing under one unified structure will allow the community to create an authentic brand message that can be reinforced with every single community project and event, building a tremendous amount of energy for implementation and new investment. For illustrative purposes, the team has suggested a simple but powerful example of how a brand message might work.

'THE ROCK'

Our theme was inspired by the profound community narrative we heard in the Rockaways during the public process. The Rockaways community has been challenged by both circumstance (isolation, stark community disparities) and experience (the events of 9/11, the Flight 587 tragedy, and Hurricane Sandy).

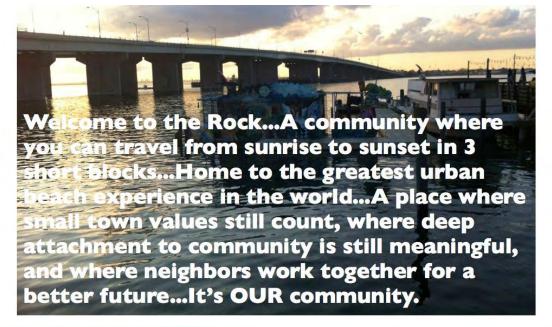
In fact, the team was affected in no small measure by the experience of one block, in which residents lost love ones in the 9/11 tragedy, lost lives and homes in the Flight 587 crash, and then lost businesses and homes in Hurricane Sandy's fires. The Rockaways is an extraordinarily resilient community - a place where community has deep meaning and attachment. We wanted to capture that strength and resilience in a suggested brand, and the choice was obvious: The Rock. The Rock suggests that this community is not only stronger than a devastating man-made or natural disaster, but is capable of achieving any dream its residents aspire to together. The brand had the added value of being able to serve dual roles, in branding both place as well as providing a civic brand for the process that the community has begun to engage in together.

While traditional place branding is focused on communicating the desirability of a given place to external markets, the team believes that a successful brand for the Rockaways should serve the residents first, as a community building tool and a method to reinforce identity and purpose. Ideally, it also should lend itself to a community revitalization campaign. Using The Rock as a branding platform could infuse community action with a new association and create interest in local placemaking activities.

A brief narrative description might read as follows:

Welcome to The Rock...a community where you can travel from sunrise to sunset in 3 short blocks... home to the greatest urban beach experience in the world...A place where small town values still count, where deep attachment to community is still meaningful, and where neighbors work together for a better future...It's our community.

The team came up with a brief illustrative messaging strategy as well.



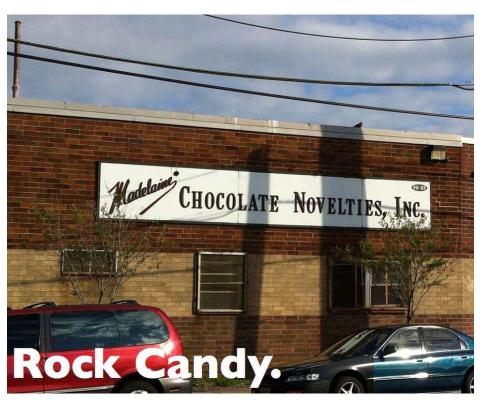
















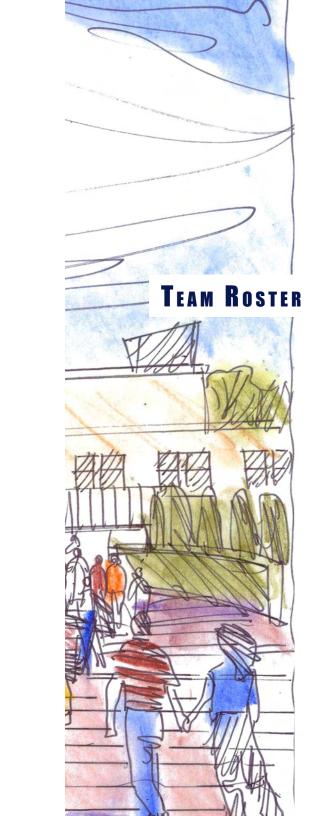
THE ROCKAWAYS CIVIC MOMENT

During the public process, residents made it clear that the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy has created a new community dynamic in The Rock. As one participant told the team, "now things are different. We are united now." This can be a brief moment in time, or it can be the beginning of a sustained and enduring community process that transforms the physical, social and civic landscape of the Rockaways. Take ownership of this opportunity. Don't let it pass you by.

"We are all faced with a series of historic opportunities, brilliantly disguised as insoluble problems."-John W. Gardner

We are all faced with a series of historic opportunities, brilliantly disguised as insoluble problems.

-- John W. Gardner



The Rockaways Regional & Urban Design Assistance Team Members



CHERYL MORGAN, AIA – R/UDAT TEAM LEADER

Cheryl Morgan is an architect and the Gresham Professor of Architecture at Auburn University. In over 23 years of teaching she has worked with architectural programs at Georgia Institute of Technology, Oklahoma State and California College of Arts and Crafts. She is currently the

director of Auburn's Urban Studio in Birmingham. Morgan practiced architecture and urban design in the San Francisco Bay area for more than eight years. She worked with a number of firms including Environmental Planning and Research, Gensler, and the Gruzen Partnership. Before coming to Auburn in 1992 she was an associate with the Berkeley firm of ELS/Elbasani and Logan. Her last project at ELS was the design of new and adaptive reuse buildings along the Singapore River in five blocks of Singapore's Clarke Quay Historic District. Morgan's professional practice now focuses on urban design, community planning and graphic design.

Morgan holds a Bachelor of Architecture and a Bachelor of Arts (Sociology) from Auburn University. Her Master of Architecture degree is from the University of Illinois, Champaign/Urbana. She is certified by the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards and is a member of the City of Birmingham's Design Review Board. She is also working with the Railroad Reservation Park project in downtown Birmingham; the Red Mountain State Park; is a founding board member of the citizen leadership program – YourTownAlabama; and sits on the boards of Space One Eleven

and Operation New Birmingham's Magic City Art Connection. The Urban Studio's Small Town Design Initiative Program – a significant component of Auburn's outreach agenda – has worked with more than 40 small towns and neighborhoods in Alabama under Morgan's direction. Morgan has also been instrumental in bringing the AIA R/UDAT program to Birmingham following massive tornado damage in 2011, and served on an AIA design assistance team in South Hadley, Massachusetts in 2012.



JANE JENKINS – MAIN STREET REVITALIZATION

Jane Jenkins is the President and CEO of Downtown Oklahoma City, Incorporated. Previously, Jane was Executive Director of the Downtown Boulder Business Improvement District in Boulder, CO. With over 25 years of experience in downtown revitalization and management,

Jane is an internationally recognized speaker and expert on urban issues. She is a former Chairman for the International Downtown Association Board of Directors and is also active in the International Economic Development Council, Urban Land Institute, the American Institute of Architects and Rotary Club 29 in Oklahoma City. She was recently honored by the Oklahoma Journal-Record as one of "50 Making a Difference". A former high school educator, Jane was named Teacher of the Year at Union High School in Tulsa, Oklahoma. She holds a Master of Public Administration from the University of North Texas in Denton.



ABE FARKAS – MARKET ANALYSIS/ DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

Abe Farkas is the development services director with ECONorthwest. Farkas has nearly three decades of experience in structuring successful public-private partnerships that have improved urban neighborhoods, business districts, and university environments. Farkas

is the former Development Director for the Portland Development Commission; Planning and Development Director for the City of Eugene, OR; Economic Development Manager for the City of Seattle; Director of Community Development and Planning for the City of Fort Wayne, IN; and Assistant Professor of Housing and Public Policy at the University of Tennessee. Most recently Farkas was President of the Farkas Group, a development services company in Portland, OR. Several mixed-use, public-private partnerships projects, which Farkas helped structure, have been transit-oriented developments, achieved LEED certification (silver to platinum) for sustainability, and were recipients of regional or national awards.



WILLIAM BLOCK – URBAN DESIGN/ ILLUSTRATION

William Block is an architect, illustrator and animator living just north of Los Angeles. He specializes in developing concepts of place and the story telling that describes them. These include urban concepts, community

planning, mixed use projects and work for the entertainment industry. He develops plans responding to client, city needs that always keep in mind the pedestrian

interaction and experience through space. He is also working on children's books and animations describing place and its evolution as a means to connect children to each other and to their community.

As an illustrator, he creates character illustrations that are used to convey the scale, context and feeling of a project. The illustrations are used in presentations to the community, to city council members and to the general public. He is involved in urban work, TOD projects, new communities with live, work, learn and recreational components. His concepts for the Entertainment Industry include theme park design, and the resort themed areas that are adjacent to the parks. His process is to develop a storyline, a plan, and then build models in 3D that are used to investigate the massing of built forms, then an architectural vocabulary. These models are also used as the basis for creating the character sketches that communicate the unique story for each place or project.



WAYNE FEIDEN, FAICP, HON. WMAIA – LAND USE/MOBILITY

Wayne Feiden is Northampton's Director of Planning and Sustainability for Northampton, MA. He led that city to earn the highest "Commonwealth Capital" score, the former Massachusetts scoring of municipal sustainability efforts, and "Bicycle-Friendly," "Pedestrian-Friendly", and

"Great Streets" designations. His focus includes downtown revitalization, sustainability, transportation, open space preservation, and streamlined regulatory efforts.

Wayne has served on 18 AIA design assessment teams. He also maintains a small planning consulting practice serving municipal and NGO clients. His more recent publication was Assessing Sustainability: A Guide for Local Governments (American Planning Association). In addition, Wayne serves as adjunct faculty at the University of Massachusetts and Westfield State University. Wayne's Eisenhower Fellowship to Hungary, and Fulbrights to South Africa and New Zealand all focused on sustainability.



MARGOT JACOBS – OPEN SPACE & CONNECTIVITY

Margot Jacobs, Associate and Strategic Project Development Lead and at Mia Lehrer + Associates, has worked on a wide range of projects with a focus of urban regeneration including schools, public parks, urban plazas, waterways, mixed use developments and green

infrastructure systems in the US, Europe, Central and South America. Current projects include the Piggybackyard Feasibility Study in Los Angeles, CA and the master planning efforts for the Tiete River in Sao Paolo, Brazil. Drawing on her background in systems and product design and design research, Margot's approach to placemaking combines innovative design strategies, community engagement, and sustainable practices to enhance environments and create meaningful connections. Throughout her career, she has been committed to work that responsibly improves the quality of life. Ms. Jacobs earned her Masters of Landscape Architecture from the University of California at Berkeley.



VIRGINIA LEE MONTGOMERY – GRAPHIC RECORDING

Virginia Lee Montgomery is a graphic facilitator and recorder with ImageThink, based in Brooklyn, New York.

Virginia hails from Houston, but has lived in New York for the last 5 years working as a sculptor, and in the world of innovation consulting. ImageThink is New York City's only

graphic recording firm. ImageThink turns complex verbal information into instant visuals. Graphic facilitation and recording enhance understanding and retention, increase participant engagement and create concise and beautiful summaries of information.

JOEL MILLS- DIRECTOR, AIA CENTER FOR COMMUNITIES BY DESIGN

Joel Mills is Director of the American Institute for Architects' Center for Communities by Design. The Center is a leading provider of pro bono technical assistance and participatory planning for community sustainability. Its processes have been modeled successfully in the United States and across Europe. In 2010, the Center was named Organization of the Year by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) for its impact on communities and contributions to the field.

Joel's 20-year career has been focused on strengthening civic capacity and civic institutions around the world. This work has helped millions of people participate in democratic processes, visioning efforts, and community planning initiatives. In the United States, Joel has worked with over 100 communities, leading participatory

initiatives and collaborative processes that have facilitated community-generated strategies on a host of issues. During the past five years, this work has catalyzed over \$1 billion in new investment. His past work has been featured in over 1,000 media stories, including ABC World News Tonight, Nightline, CNN, The Next American City, Smart City Radio, The National Civic Review, Ecostructure Magazine, The Washington Post, and dozens of other sources. He has served on numerous expert working groups, boards, juries, and panels focused on civic discourse and participation, sustainability, and design. He has also spoken at dozens of national and international conferences and events, including the World Eco-City Summit, the Global Democracy Conference, the National Conference on Citizenship, and many others.

ERIN SIMMONS- DIRECTOR, AIA DESIGN ASSISTANCE

Erin Simmons is the Director of Design Assistance at the Center for Communities by Design at the American Institute of Architects in Washington, DC. Her primary role at the AIA is to provide process expertise, facilitation and support for the Center's Sustainable Design Assistance Team (SDAT) and Regional and Urban Design Assistance Team (R/UDAT) programs. In this capacity, she works with AIA components, members, partner organizations and community members to provide technical design assistance to communities across the country. Through its design assistance programs, the AIA has worked in 200 communities across 47 states. In 2010, the Center was named Organization of the Year by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) for its impact on communities and contributions to the field.

Erin is a leading practitioner of the design assistance process. Her portfolio includes work in over 60 communities across the United States. A frequent lecturer on the subject of creating livable communities and sustainability, Erin contributed to the recent publication Assessing Sustainability: A guide for Local Governments. Prior to joining the AIA, Erin worked as historic preservationist and architectural historian for an environmental and engineering firm in Georgia, where she practiced preservation planning, created historic district design guidelines and zoning ordinances, conducted historic resource surveys, and wrote property nominations for the National Register of Historic Places. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in History from Florida State University and a Master's degree in Historic Preservation from the University of Georgia.