



BROOKLYN  
ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT  
CORPORATION

# 2008-2009

## Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Report

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The Current State of Economic Opportunity in Brooklyn

Prepared for

The United States Economic Development Administration

By

The Brooklyn Economic Development Corporation,  
Official CEDS Convener for Kings County, New York

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# ABOUT THE COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDS)

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee convenes in Kings County (Brooklyn), New York, under the auspices of the Brooklyn Economic Development Corporation. A not-for-profit 501 (c)(3) organization, BEDC was founded in 1979 with funding from the U.S. Economic Development Administration for the purpose of creating and retaining jobs in the borough of Brooklyn.

BEDC is the designated Overall Economic Development Planning organization for Brooklyn and operates a U.S. EDA funded Revolving Loan Fund. As an organization, BEDC combines keen business skills with a broad knowledge of the geographic area it serves.

BEDC is a full-service business development organization whose scope of services includes community planning and revitalization, real estate development, entrepreneurship training, and technical assistance for new and established businesses.

Helping to remove institutional and operational barriers that keep communities from accessing knowledge, employment, capital and markets (and independence is at the core of our activities. The Brooklyn Economic Development Corporation firmly believes in forming collaborative partnerships with organizations that are pursuing goals similar to its own. In this way, resources are maximized and more people can be reached with quality services.

The members of the CEDS Committee, which is re-constituted every two years, represent government agencies, elected officials, educational and health institutions, business development organizations and other entities. Its racial composition is reflective of Brooklyn. The CEDS Committee generally meets two times per year or when there are prospective projects to review.

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## THE CEDS PROCESS IN BROOKLYN

The Brooklyn CEDS Committee meets on an as-needed basis, generally to review and prioritize projects that have been submitted for consideration for funding. The committee, which is diverse and strong precisely because it is not comprised solely of economic development professionals meets formally at least once a year. The range of backgrounds represented by the group brings skills and expertise that add value and depth to the committee's discussions.

In addition to formal meetings, committee members cross paths many times during the year. They are individuals whose public service is not limited to participation in this group, but who also serve on boards of organizations, as members of advisory and advocacy groups, of their local Community Boards or neighborhood associations, or as active participants in trade organizations. Committee members may even serve together on other projects. This web of relationships guides a holistic view of Brooklyn. Despite its geographic size and large population, Brooklyn is county that is highly networked. Members come to the CEDS Committee knowing how to work together.



*Looking southwest at the New Utrecht Reformed Church, New Utrecht, Brooklyn*

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

- Have an established background in the field of economic development;
- May represent key industries in Brooklyn
- May represent a particular constituency that either impacts or is impacted by changing economic paradigms (e.g. immigrants, low income residents, environmental justice advocates)
- Can bring a balanced view to discussions about issues related to economic development
- Understand workforce issues and how to bridge the connections between the populations that economic development typically targets and the industries that economic development seeks to attract and grow
- May represent academic institutions that are themselves large employers, but also bring research capacity to the CEDS process
- Are, or represent, local elected officials who have the capacity to help champion, fund and implement projects

### COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

- Employing unique networks to recruit eligible projects and organizations throughout the borough
- Reviewing the CEDS plan as it is being produced and approving of the final content
- Attending scheduled CEDS meetings and providing feedback and critiques of the projects presented
- Reviewing and approving funding requests submitted to USEDPA on behalf of Brooklyn projects to ensure their compatibility with the CEDS plan and their economic soundness
- Sharing their talents and expertise in helping to shape the policy positions and content of the CEDS report
- Sharing their resources and contacts with fellow committee members and BEDC staff to ensure that a truly comprehensive effort has been undertaken to gather input and information for inclusion in the CEDS plan.

# 1. BACKGROUND: BROOKLYN IN 2008

Brooklyn has seen many changes over the last year. Like the rest of the country, Kings County, coterminous with the New York City Borough of Brooklyn, has seen great and sudden changes in its economic and housing landscape, particularly over the last two quarters of 2008.

While we seek to cite official data as often as possible in the following pages, it must be kept in mind that by their very nature data offered by government agencies cannot accurately reflect the up to the minute demographic and economic changes sweeping the borough. This report will therefore also make use of newspaper and internet reporting, as well as empirical data gathered by members of this organization and our partners to accurately address the current socioeconomic situation in Brooklyn.

## 1.1 Current Economy

High-skill, high-wage jobs have taken a serious hit, particularly in the financial services sector. Many Brooklynites, whether they work in Manhattan, the newer downtown Brooklyn back-office banking clusters, or are independent financial consultants and professional service providers, have found the current recession particularly difficult. Layoffs in the traditional banking sector and slower business for small business service providers have contributed to an overall drop in wages and revenues. Also, investment in new, traditionally high revenue technology based ventures, such as website development, has slowed as credit markets have seized up.

Retail has in turn been effected throughout the borough. As of 2006, retail in Brooklyn represented a full 18% of all employees in the borough, though only 7.8% of the annual payroll. While those wages are proportionately low, they still represent livelihood for tens of thousands of Brooklynites meaning that any contraction in the sector is sure

to have a wide ranging impact.

In addition, the fallout from the mortgage crisis has been painfully tangible in some of the borough's lower income neighborhoods. While certain of the recent boom areas, such as Fort Greene/Clinton Hill and Carroll Gardens, have seen a leveling or slight drop in home prices, large swaths of central Brooklyn, such as Bedford Stuyvesant, Bushwick, Crown Heights and Flatbush have been seriously effected by foreclosures and falling real estate prices.

As a direct result of the housing and credit crises, construction at all levels is contracting. New home construction as well as

large scale development has slowed through the year.

All is not bleak, however. The health care cluster, Brooklyn's largest employer for some time, continues to be strong, as does the education sector. This again mirrors the national picture according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, which in December released national statistics showing that these two sectors were almost the only ones to withstand the 30-year record loss of over 500,000 jobs nationwide in November. The creative cluster (artists & artisans, writers & designers etc.) remains vibrant, drawing outsiders and capital into the borough. Some retail corridors are very healthy and have seen new establishments open their doors at a solid pace through the year. The retail entertainment sector in some areas remains very healthy too.

In short, Brooklyn faces the same challenging circumstances faced by the rest of the country and particularly New York State and City, and we are home to a number of particularly vulnerable populations (see the following pages). That said, Brooklyn's recent renaissance offers some glimmers of hope for the borough's core stability and recovery.

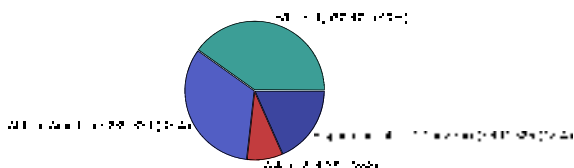


Montague Street; Photograph by Aude

## 1.2 Population; Demographics & Socioeconomic Conditions

Brooklyn has a population of 2.5 million. The racial and ethnic makeup remained essentially the same over the last year with whites and African Americans making up the majority of the population with

Brooklyn Residents by Race



37% and 34% each. Latinos make up 20% of the population, followed by Asians with 9% and Native Americans, Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders and people of more than one race (not represented on figure 1), who combine to make up 1.8% of Brooklyn residents.

Of its 2.5 million residents, almost 1 million are foreign born, over half of whom are naturalized U.S. citizens. Of the 950,000 foreign born residents, over 750,000 entered the United States before the year 2000. Latin America was the region of birth for just over half of the foreign born population (52%), followed by Asia and Europe with just over 200,000 each (22% and 21% respectively).

The 2.3 million residents who are five years of age and older are almost evenly split between individuals who speak only English and those who speak a language other than English (1.2 to 1 million respectively), and over half a million of the latter speak English less than "very well."

Brooklyn numbers some 872,000 households, of which 561,000, or 61%, are families. Of those families, 47% have children under 18 years of age and 11% are single mothers with children. There are 66,000 grandparents living with their own grandchildren under 18, 27% of whom are responsible for those children.

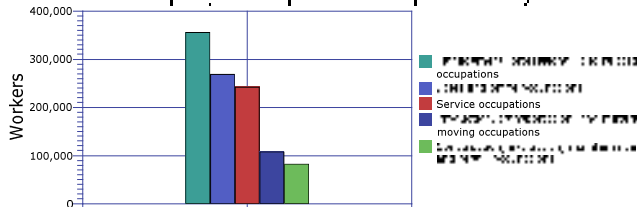
Of the population 25 and over, numbering 1.6 million, individuals with less than a ninth grade education account for 11.6%; those with more than ninth grade, 11%; those with a high school diploma, 30%; those with some college, 12%; those with an associates degree, 6%; those with a bachelor's degree, 17.8%; and those with a graduate or professional degree, 10%.

Brooklyn's unemployment rate remained a full percentage point higher than the national aver-

age at 7.4% in 2006. There are 1.93 million Brooklyn residents over the age of 16 of whom 1.14 million are in the labor force. Of the total population 16 and over, just over 1 million are women, but only 559,000 are in the labor force. Of those, 7% are unemployed.

Management, professional and related occupations employed the largest number of the 1.06 million Brooklyn residents with jobs in 2006 at 354,500, or 33.5%. This was followed by sales and office oc-

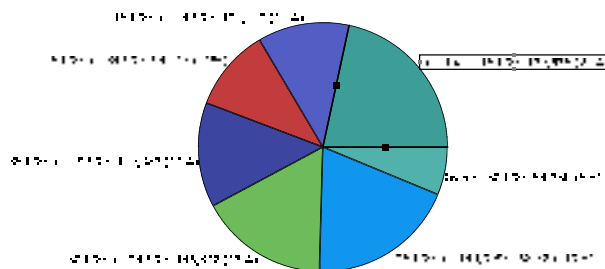
Employed Population by Industry



cupations at 265,500 or 25%, service occupations at 247,000 or 23%, production, transportation and material moving occupations at 105,942 or 10%, and construction, extraction, maintenance and repair occupations at 84,655 or 8%.

Individuals residing in Brooklyn in 2006 had a median income of just over \$40,000. On the low end,

Employed Population by Earnings



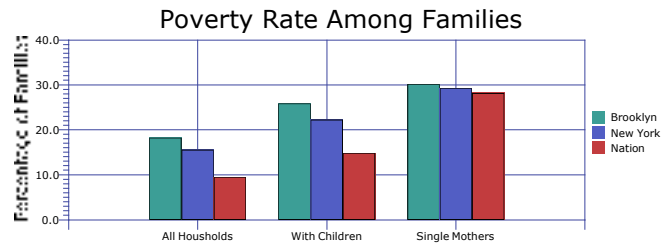
households making under \$15,000 make up almost a quarter of the homes in Brooklyn, while the next largest group is homes with between \$75,000 and \$150,000 at 19%. By contrast, the nation's median income is just over \$50,000, while households making under \$15,000 make up about 13.5% of the population and those making between \$75,000 and \$150,000 amount to 23.5%.

Eighteen point three percent of Brooklyn families fell below the poverty line in 2007, while the percentage with related children was 25.9% and sin-



## 1.2 Population; Demographics & Socioeconomic Conditions

gle mother families was 30.2%. The numbers for New York City were 15.6% of all families, 22.3% of families with children and 29.3% of single mothers with children under 18. The numbers for the nation as a whole were 9.5%, 14.9%, and 28.2% respectively (see chart right).



### BEDC's COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

The Brooklyn Economic Development Corporation administers the Community Economic Development Council (CEDC), a group of local development corporations, merchant associations, BID's advocacy groups and others. This Council is one of the key means by which BEDC disseminates technical assistance and best practices to the many communities and neighborhoods of Brooklyn, while keeping its finger on the pulse of the borough. Members include:

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 or 3 Gathered Together, Inc.</li> <li>Adoptive Parents Committee, Inc.</li> <li>Architect</li> <li>Assemblyman Darryl Towns District 54</li> <li>Assemblyman William Boyland District 55</li> <li>Astella Development Corporation</li> <li>Atlantic Avenue Association LDC</li> <li>Attorney</li> <li>Avenue L Merchants Association</li> <li>Bank of NY</li> <li>Bay Ridge/Bensonhurst Preservation Alliance</li> <li>Brooklyn Center for the Urban Environment</li> <li>Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corp.</li> <li>Below the Elevated Train (BELT) LDC</li> <li>Brooklyn Outreach Center (BOC)</li> <li>Bridge Street Development Corp.</li> <li>Brighton Beach BID</li> <li>Brooklyn Arts Council</li> <li>Brooklyn Borough President's Office</li> <li>Brooklyn Botanic Garden</li> <li>Brooklyn Bridge Park Coalition</li> <li>Brooklyn Community Boards 1-17</li> <li>Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>Brooklyn College</li> <li>Brooklyn Educational Opportunity Center</li> <li>Brooklyn Heights Association</li> <li>Brooklyn Navy Yard</li> <li>Brooklyn Public Business Library</li> <li>Brooklyn Union</li> <li>Brooklyn Workforce 1 Career Center</li> <li>Brooklyn (Kings County) Hispanic Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>Building Blocks LDC</li> <li>Building Blocks NYC</li> <li>Bushwick Arts Organization</li> <li>Bushwick Information, Coordinating &amp; Action Committee, Inc.</li> <li>Bushwick Worship and Community Center, Pastor Calabar Imports</li> <li>Carroll Garden Local Dev. Corp.</li> <li>CDP of Legal Aid Society</li> <li>Center for an Urban Future</li> <li>Central Baptist Church</li> <li>Child Services Nonprofit</li> <li>Church Avenue Merchants Block Association (CAMBA)</li> <li>CityTech SBDC</li> <li>Columbia University</li> <li>Community of Faith Family Worship Center</li> <li>Con Ed</li> <li>Coney Island Board of Trade</li> <li>Coney Island Merchants</li> <li>Continuum Services</li> <li>Councilman David Yassky's Office</li> <li>Councilwoman Christine Quinn's Office</li> <li>Councilwoman Letitia James' Office</li> <li>Court Street Merchants</li> <li>Court-Livingston-Schermerhorn BID</li> <li>CPC resources</li> <li>Crow Hill Community Association</li> <li>Crown Heights Jewish Community Council</li> <li>Cypress Hills LDC</li> <li>DB Partnership</li> <li>DeKalb Avenue Merchants</li> <li>Donovan Communications</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Downtown Alliance (Manhattan)</li> <li>Downtown Brooklyn Partnership</li> <li>DUMBO BID</li> <li>East Broadway BID-in-formation</li> <li>East Bushwick Community Coalition</li> <li>East New York Industrial Park BID</li> <li>Educators Children Youth and Families "ECYF"</li> <li>Emanuel Baptist Church, Minister for Communications</li> <li>Emanuel CEDC</li> <li>East New York Farms!</li> <li>Erasmus Neighborhood Federation</li> <li>East Williamsburg Valley Industrial Development Corporation (EWWIDCO)</li> <li>Flatbush Development Corporation</li> <li>Fifth Avenue Committee</li> <li>Flatbush Development Corporation</li> <li>Flatbush Youth Association, Inc.</li> <li>Flatbush-Eastern Parkway Merchants Association</li> <li>Flatbush-Nostrand Junction BID</li> <li>Fort Greene Association</li> <li>Fort Greene SNAP</li> <li>GoodWill Industries</li> <li>Gowanus Canal CDC</li> <li>Graham Ave BID</li> <li>Grand Street BID</li> <li>Great Sheepshead Bay Dev. Corp.</li> <li>Heart of Brooklyn</li> <li>Hebrew Free Loan Society</li> <li>Independence Union</li> <li>Industrial + Technology Assistance Corporation (ITAC)</li> <li>JP Morgan Chase</li> <li>Kentler Gallery</li> <li>King Borough Community College</li> <li>Kings Highway Beautification Association</li> <li>Kingston Avenue Merchants Association</li> <li>KIP Business Report</li> <li>KMPG</li> <li>Lawyers Alliance of New York (LANY)</li> <li>LDC of Crown Heights</li> <li>Lehman College SBDC</li> <li>Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)</li> <li>Major Owens, Consultant with</li> <li>Manhattan Borough President's Office, Community Affairs</li> <li>Manhattan Borough President's Office, Deputy Director of Policy and Research</li> <li>Mayor's Office of Comprehensive Neighborhood Development (CNED)</li> <li>Medgar Evers College</li> <li>Merchants of 3rd Avenue</li> <li>Metro Tech BID</li> <li>Midwood Dev corp</li> <li>Montague Street BID</li> <li>Myrtle Avenue Revitalization Project (MARP) LDC</li> <li>NAMA</li> <li>NE Brooklyn Housing Corp</li> <li>Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation</li> <li>Neighborhood Housing Services</li> <li>New Lots Merchants Association</li> <li>New York Blood Center</li> <li>New York City Council District 34</li> <li>New York City Council District 41</li> <li>New York City College of Technology (CityTech)</li> <li>New York City Department of Small Business Services</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(SBS)</li> <li>New York City Council District 35</li> <li>New York City Department of Consumer Affairs</li> <li>New York City Economic Development Corporation</li> <li>New York City Financial Network Action Consortium</li> <li>New York City Housing Authority</li> <li>NYCHHC</li> <li>Newday Services, Inc.</li> <li>Nonprofit Connection</li> <li>North Brooklyn Development Corporation</li> <li>Crown Heights Revitalization Movement</li> <li>North Crown Heights Nostrand Avenue Merchants Association</li> <li>North Flatbush BID</li> <li>Northside Merchants Association</li> <li>NY Grant Company</li> <li>New York Industrial Retention Network (NYIRN)</li> <li>NYS Assembly District 43</li> <li>Opportunities for a Better Tomorrow</li> <li>Opportunity Development Association (ODA)</li> <li>Park Slope 5th Avenue Committee</li> <li>Park Slope Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>People's Alliance Federal Credit Union</li> <li>Pilkin Avenue BID</li> <li>Prospect Lefferts United for Service (PLUS)</li> <li>PortSide New York</li> <li>Pratt Area Community Council (PACC)</li> <li>Pratt Center for Community Development</li> <li>Project Enterprise</li> <li>Queens EDC</li> <li>Recycle a Bicycle</li> <li>Renaissance Economic Dev. Corp.</li> <li>Ridgewood-Bushwick Senior Citizens Council</li> <li>US Small Business Administration</li> <li>South Brooklyn Outreach Center (SBOC)</li> <li>Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Development Corporation (SBIDC)</li> <li>Seedco</li> <li>Spectrum Personal Communications Corp.</li> <li>St. Joseph's College</li> <li>St. Mary's Community Services, Inc.</li> <li>St. Nicholas Neighborhood Preservation Corporation</li> <li>Startup Educational Support Business</li> <li>State Comptrollers Office</li> <li>State Senator Kevin Parker's Office</li> <li>Sunset Park BID</li> <li>Sunset Park Redevelopment</li> <li>SUNY Brooklyn Educational Opportunity Center</li> <li>SWBIDC</li> <li>The New Fort Green Committee</li> <li>Utica-Church Avenue Merchants Association</li> <li>Unique Passage Foundation</li> <li>United Jewish Residents of Williamsburg</li> <li>Uprose</li> <li>Utica Avenue/Eastern Parkway Merchants Association</li> <li>Vanguard Urban Improvement Association</li> <li>Vespa Properties Group</li> <li>Vulcan Society</li> <li>Washington Temple Church of God in Christ</li> <li>Weeksville Society</li> <li>Workshops in business Opportunities (WIBO)</li> <li>Women's Venture Fund</li> <li>York College SBDC</li> </ul> |
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## 2. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

As the previous section indicates, Brooklyn is confronted with many of the challenges evident in most urban centers in the United States. However, Brooklyn is not just any urban center. While being part of the city brings inherent difficulties during the current recession, fuelled largely as it is by the malaise on Wall Street, the City also continues to represent great opportunities. As discussed briefly above, Brooklyn's economy has changed over the last decade. On the one hand, part of that change has been due to the very financial and supporting sectors in which capital is now scarce. On the other, some of the diversification of the economy driven by that initial influx is likely here to stay. Building upon the foundation we now have is the key to greater prosperity moving forward.

### 2.1 Challenges

The previous section reviewed some of the shortcomings Brooklyn has regarding median income, poverty level (particularly among single mothers), and educational attainment.

The fact that Brooklyn still has nearly twice as many people without a high school diploma as with a college degree remains a major problem for securing high paying jobs for the borough's residents. GED and other programs are available but vary in quality, cost and availability.

The poverty rate, while not as huge or deep as some other urban centers, also poses a great challenge. Poverty in and of itself generally curtails an individual's ability to achieve greater educational attainment and economic and housing stability.

Brooklyn gained in recent years from high wage

earners "discovering" the borough for its own charms, good transportation infrastructure and generally lower housing prices than Manhattan. But that engine is exactly the same one which is hit hardest by the current Wall Street downturn.

Brooklyn also continues to suffer from a lack of class B office space and shared or "virtual" office space. Many of the professional services offered in Brooklyn's neighborhoods are aimed squarely at local residents, but without decent, affordable space to inhabit, small businesses face extra challenges in accessing their customers.

Manufacturing of all kinds, except specialty and ethnic food processing, continues to decline. Once safe jobs making clothing, accessories, and processed foods have followed other American

manufacturing enterprises overseas.

Another of Brooklyn's major employers which is feeling the effects of the recession is the social services sector. With corporations less likely to engage in any kind of philanthropy, government budget cuts and damage to foundation endowments in the markets, social service organizations are cutting back on expenditures and staff.

Also a victim of the current general downturn, retail is feeling the pinch. While retail is arguably not the single most important sector by employees or revenues, it is singularly important for the backbone of Brooklyn's identity; its neighborhoods. Retail keeps local resources circulating through the community and is greatly responsible for lending a sense of identity and stability to an area.

While these challenges are great, there are opportunities to match.



*Domino Sugar Factory; Photograph by Sherri Jackson*

## 2.2 Opportunities

Brooklyn has many opportunities for growth. Some of the specific projects discussed below offer some specific areas of growth for our economy, but general trends also indicate that Brooklyn has several more general areas in which economic expansion might be expected. Some of the trends addressed here will also be included in the sector analysis to follow, but a brief survey of economic conditions here is relevant.

Brooklyn's brand name, as it were, has increased greatly in value over the last few years. While beloved, though sometimes forsaken, by long-time residents, Brooklyn, like the other outer boroughs, was until recently often the object of scorn by those individuals who made up the high end of New York City's economy. That has changed with skyrocketing Manhattan real estate prices and the general acceptance of Brooklyn's transportation infrastructure, solid housing stock and interesting and attractive neighborhoods. As Brooklyn became an acceptable alternative to Manhattan for more affluent residents, goods and services, from specialty foods to clubs, bars and restaurants began cropping up at a much greater pace in the borough.

At the same time, aggressive initiatives sponsored by the city government and borough president resulted in new industries, such as film production—like Steiner Studios, above—locating in the Borough. Older industrial zones such as the Navy Yard, where Steiner is the anchor tenant, and DUMBO have shifted capital into the area.

Brooklyn's vibrant immigrant community follows a trend citywide, according to the Center for an Urban Future's study *A World of Opportunity*, in that they create new businesses at a very high rate. The borough remains a draw for people from around the world, and their entrepreneurial nature is a boon for the local economy through job creation and tax revenues, whether the business is an import/export company a tech consultancy or simply a neighborhood bodega.

The biotechnology sector in Brooklyn has also shown real signs of growth with commitment from the city and state governments. Projects like the BioBAT, discussed below, are poised to create and, just as important, retain high end scientific jobs in the borough. The effect of this trend can be self-sustaining if it helps fuel participation by local schools and universities.

The health care sector in Brooklyn is the borough's largest employer as is the case in many urban areas of the country. As a cluster which by its very nature cannot generally be outsourced, and one which often requires high levels of technology and education, it continues to offer high wage jobs.

As we will address below, there are great opportunities in areas of the cluster such as the allied health professions to move people from the fringes of the industry in to career ladders with much greater opportunity for advancement and higher wages.

Because of the technological and knowledge advances necessary for advancement in health care, many types of jobs are projected by agencies like the US Department of Labor to increase in demand and specialization over the next few years.

Finally, the projected stimulus spending by the incoming administration poses a great opportunity for the next few years. Transportation and infrastructure improvements offer real areas for expansion and employment, while the greening of the borough's building stock, particularly government owned building such as post offices, agency office buildings and schools, offer respite and even higher wages for construction companies and workers hit by the downturn in new building and renovation.

Brooklyn has a great network of community organizations and local development groups who are working diligently to hold on to the gains we have made and move forward in the months ahead. Challenges remain, but Brooklyn is generally healthy.



*Steiner Studios; Photograph by Charles Nguyen*

## 2.3 Past, Present & Future Economic Development Investments

Brooklyn has seen many major investments and initiatives over the past few years, some of which have been discussed in previous CEDS reports. The following provides an update on several of those projects along with information on some new ones.

### 2.3.1 Coney Island

The comprehensive plan to encourage new development on Coney Island created by the Department of City Planning in partnership with the New York City Economic Development Corporation (EDC), the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) and the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) discussed in last year's CEDS report remains pending but expected to be certified into the Uniform Land Use Review Process (ULURP) in 2009.

While the plan is still deemed promising by many, Coney Island still faces grave challenges. The Boardwalk and amusement park area saw the loss this year of its main tenant, Astroland, after its landlord refused to extend its lease. In addition, many of the shops along the Boardwalk itself were shuttered after their landlord also refused lease extensions.

That said, there is some hope for the amusement area. The city completed the purchase of a one acre site along the Boardwalk in October and has plans to purchase more in the coming year, finances permitting. The city has committed itself to renewing and reviving the area under its control as a year-round entertainment destination.

### 2.3.2 Atlantic Yards

The Atlantic Yards Project, a controversial major development proposed on the edge of Downtown Brooklyn atop the borough's largest transportation hub, has almost totally ground to a halt due to the floundering economy and an array of lawsuits brought by opponents.

At the writing of this report, the developer, Forest

City Ratner, is unsure whether the full number of office buildings will actually be built and when. There has also been speculation in the news media that the basketball arena, the centerpiece of the project, may at the very least lose the premier architect associated with it, Frank Gehry, and at most may not be built at all due both to the current economic conditions and to heavy lobbying by the mayor of Newark, NJ, to bring the Nets to that city.



Rendering of Stillwell Avenue by CIDC

### 2.3.3 Transportation

The largest issue brought up in area of transportation in 2008 was the possibility of large fare hikes and proposals of tolls on the East River bridges to enter Manhattan to offset those hikes as well as fund greater express bus penetration into the

borough. Currently many of Brooklyn's neighborhoods, particularly in the south and east, are drastically underserved by public transportation, leaving them with few options but to drive. For that reason, the tolls have caused controversy because, though the Metropolitan Transportation Authority maintains it can have more affordable public transportation penetration quickly with new busing.

The major projects discussed in the 2007 CEDS report, the Atlantic Terminal—which is home to 11 subway lines and a terminal of the Long Island Railroad—and the renovation of Jay Street/Borough Hall in Downtown Brooklyn, continue.

### 2.3.4 Cultural Areas

**BAM Cultural District:** The BAM Cultural District continues its solidification as a real destination for Brooklyn and greater New York residents, as well as visitors from outside the area and country. Preparation work has continued for the commencement of phase two of the district's development.

The second phase of the BAM Cultural District Plan will consist of the redevelopment of two



### 2.3 Past, Present & Future Economic Development Investments (cont.)

large sites (North and South) that will create a number of important arts and cultural resources for established and emerging artists. The district will also see a new streetscape and public space design by the famed landscape architect, Ken Smith.

The Brooklyn Arts Tower will be a mixed-use building consisting of arts, commercial, and residential spaces located on Fulton Street at Ashland Place. The building will contain 187 residential units, with over half targeted towards low and middle-income families, and 4,000 square feet of retail space on the ground floor. At its base will be a 39,000 square foot arts space called the Ashland Center, which will provide a new performance, rehearsal, and studio space for the [Danspace Project, Inc.](#) (Danspace), one of New York's premier contemporary dance presenters.

The Brooklyn Arts Tower is a result of a Request for Proposals issued by the NYC Housing Preservation and Development Agency in February 2007. This innovative building will be designed by StudioMDA with Behnisch Architects, and will maximize the use of natural light and boast state-of-the-art green technology. Construction will commence in 2009.

A triangular parking lot bounded by Flatbush Avenue, Lafayette Avenue and Ashland Place in Downtown Brooklyn will become a mixed-use facility developed by Two Trees Management and designed by Enrique Norten. This new building will



Rendering of the Brooklyn Arts Tower by DBP

contain a mix of housing, retail and a city-owned cultural space. Public open space will also be developed on the northern end of the triangular site. The cultural space is planned to include rehearsal studios, cinemas, visual arts space and possibly a library, all for use by Brooklyn-based organizations. The city is currently finalizing the development program and schedule.

*Heart of Brooklyn:* The Heart of Brooklyn is a partnership of the leading organizations near Grand Army Plaza in Brooklyn: the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, the Brooklyn Children's Museum, the Brooklyn Museum of Art, the Brooklyn Public Library, Prospect

Park, and the Prospect Park Zoo. The institutions see millions of visitors a year and Heart of Brooklyn was created to not only raise the individual members' profiles, but also to create and manage mechanisms by which the surrounding Brooklyn neighborhoods can reap some of the benefits of the cultural tourism.

The organization is proposing the creation of a "wayfinding" system to draw in new visitors and improve the economic wellbeing of their surrounding neighborhoods. Heart of Brooklyn is expected to apply for EDA funding this year and the project is detailed further in Section 5.

*Recreational and artistic destinations are a boon for the local economy. When individuals can enjoy the benefits of these organizations, it often has a very positive impact on the local economy. The availability of these destinations creates commerce and neighborhood stability in that they make areas more appealing not only because of the increased services available, but also as employees seek housing near these services. In addition, Shops, restaurants and other businesses have a chance to grow because of the increased foot traffic in a neighborhood.*

## 2.4 Brooklyn Economic Sectors and Industry Clusters

The Brooklyn Economic Development Corporation, in conjunction with the Initiative for a Competitive Inner City and with funding from the US EDA, founded the Initiative for a Competitive Brooklyn in 2002 to study Brooklyn's industry clusters and create partnerships and programming to help them keep and gain momentum.

ICB focused on a number of areas in which Brooklyn is competitive. BEDC has begun a serious discussion with several entities in the borough about greening our small construction industry, highlighted the importance and vitality of our self-employed population, begun to tackle the shortages and employment potential in the allied health professions, and started forming a workforce development coalition.

### 2.4.1 Construction:

As noted above, construction remains an important industry in Brooklyn. Construction employed over 24,000 people in 2006, making it the sixth largest employer in the borough though it maintained an average wage of over \$46,000, the fourth largest source of wages for Brooklyn workers. Given the number of specific professions in the sector which do not require third level academic education, this makes construction a very important industry for the 30% of Brooklynites with a high school diploma.

Construction right now has been hit very hard by the recent downturn in financing for new housing and commercial and industrial buildings. Renovation work is something that has been on the rise in Brooklyn as the older housing stock has been upgraded by newer, more affluent arrivals. It also remains one of the unavoidable sub-sectors of the industry for existing homeowners and landlords who need to maintain their properties.

While it is uncertain so far what type of effect the next administration's stimulus activities might have on construction in the city, several things are clear. New construction and renovation of government buildings and area infrastructure, almost always higher-wage, union-built projects bid with an emphasis on minority and women owned businesses, seem to be an area of emphasis, which will certainly be a boon to the industry in the current downturn.

Also, the emphasis on "greener" buildings, demanded by government for its own projects

and through the newly money conscious market, offers an area for local construction companies to increase their market share. Some of the more specialized skills involved in installing these products and providing these services lead to higher wages. To this end, ICB focused in 2007 on helping smaller, predominantly MWBE companies gain new expertise in green building practices and products.

ICB and the Continuing Education Department of Kingsborough Community College (part of the City University of New York) and the Delaware Valley Green Building Council (from the Philadelphia region) partnered to offer a one day course and examination for small contractors to learn green building practices and receive a U. S. Green Building Council (USGBC)-recognized certification. While the pilot offerings were broadly successful, the cost of the Delaware Valley GBC program and the third party certification of examinations created a prohibitive increase in cost. ICB maintains that the USGBC, which created the industry standard LEED certification, was the most appropriate and marketable group to offer credentials in the field because they have an established brand. ICB continues to advocate for the GBC and Kingsborough to create a curriculum to be offered in house at Kingsborough and other CUNY institutions.

Other initiatives covered above, namely the Bedford Stuyvesant Greening & Retrofit Initiative and the efforts to be initiated by the Center for an Urban Environment to create green collar jobs are also exciting developments in the field. These programs are so important because they will focus on training workers predominantly for larger firms focused on commercial and industrial construction. While the average construction worker in Brooklyn made \$46,000 in 2006, workers in nonresidential building construction made an average of \$70,000.

### 2.4.2 Self-Employed Individuals

Brooklyn is home to almost 200,000 individuals who report income from self-employment. The Initiative for a Competitive Brooklyn has chosen to treat the self-employed partially as a cluster unto itself because of the particular circumstances shared by non-employers, as the Federal Government refers to them. These include challenges involving taxation, insurance and networking and

## 2.4 Brooklyn Economic Sectors and Industry Clusters

marketing goods and services as an individual.

**Health Care:** The largest industry represented in the self-employed community is, in keeping with Brooklyn's overall employment numbers, health care. There are over 27,500 self-employed individuals in the sector, representing 14% of the borough's non-employers. The average wage is only \$21,000 but it represents one of the important issues regarding both self-employed individuals and the health care industry in general.

Physicians, podiatrists and chiropractors made on average \$92,000, \$80,000 and \$60,000 respectively, while child care workers reported an average income of \$9,700 and make up over 50% of the self-employed health care workers in Brooklyn, while home health workers, the next largest group at 11%, make an average of \$13,000.

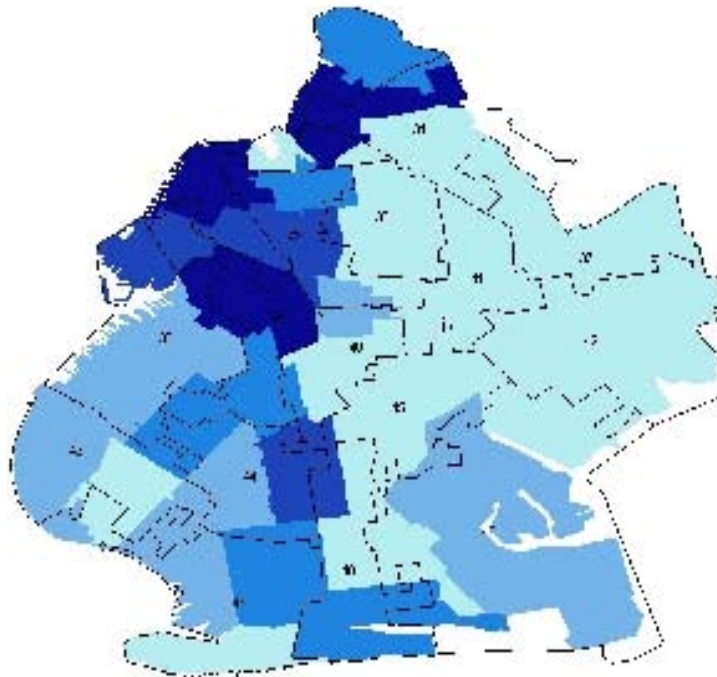
The lower end of this scale is part of the reason that ICB launched not only the Brooklyn Nursing Partnership (now an independent non-profit) some years ago, but the Allied Health Coalition in 2008. The Coalition will be discussed further in the health care section, but it is largely aimed at individuals already working in lower wage positions in health care who might be able to greatly improve their wages without attending an expensive and lengthy four year program.

**Professional Services:** Professional Services represents the next largest subsector of Brooklyn's self-employed community. This sector covers independent accountants, lawyers, financial advisers etc. and again demonstrates a range of income levels. ICB regards the sector as so important not only because of its numbers. While it gen-

erates receipts of over \$850 million for the Brooklyn economy, or over \$150 million more than independent health care professionals, but also because

represents local services for our residents. The group is widely and fairly evenly distributed throughout the borough reflecting the fact that the services are essential for modern life as well as functioning communities, making neighborhoods desirable to live in.

**The Creative Economy:** Another of the key factors contributing to Brooklyn's neighborhoods more desirable in recent years is the vibrant creative community that has taken up residence in the borough over the last decade



Brooklyn's "Creative Crescent"  
self-employed individuals in creative fields as mapped by BEDC



or more.

ICB and the Center for an Urban Future hosted a forum at the Brooklyn Public Library focusing on Brooklyn's Creative Economy in 2008. Our report an panel discussion addressed the \$500 million recorded as being generated by Brooklyn's creative economy.

A second area of focus was the somewhat paradoxical effect of artists and other individual in the creative fields (i.e. writers, graphic designers, advertising professionals, industrial designers etc.), moving to neighborhoods because of their charm and affordability and in turn drawing in even higher wage earners who may displace not only longer-term residents but also the very individuals who helped make the neighborhood "desirable."

While this type of ebb and flow is natural and organic in modern cities, the creative economy on balance has been a major part of Brooklyn's renaissance.

## 2.4 Brooklyn Economic Sectors and Industry Clusters (cont.)

### 2.4.3 Health Care

Health Care remains the largest employer in Brooklyn. The sector employs over 159,000 and records receipts of salaries and wages of over \$6 billion. Many of the tasks essential to a modern healthcare system cannot, by their very nature, be outsourced. As technology and personal longevity grow, it becomes a much more central part of the American economy.

Some aspects of the health care industry are discussed in the earlier section devoted to self-employed individuals, so only wage and salary workers will be considered here. Hospitals and ambulatory care facilities each employed about 50,000 people in 2006.

As mentioned above, one of ICB's main areas of focus in this sector is the allied health professions. ICB has drawn together a committee of allied health educators and employers to discuss possible areas of collaboration to streamline the process of getting new professionals through academic and residency programs. Many of the allied health professions are projected by the Department of Labor to witness double digit growth over the next several years while many health care institutions have large vacancy rates in their various allied health departments.

Given that these professions generally pay above median wage and may often be entered upon completion of certificate programs as opposed to lengthy and expensive four year and post-graduate programs, means that people can enter these fields relatively quickly and with more flexibility, making them ideal candidates for economic and workforce development programs.

Nursing continues to remain a valid focus of programming, though the increased expertise demanded by the field also pose greater challenges for channeling large numbers of workers into them. BEDC remains a staunch supporter of the Brooklyn Nursing Partnership which attempts to remove these barriers to greater enrollment and employment in the field through collaborative efforts between training programs and hospitals and other employers.

Another important fact about the health care industry is that much of the equipment and technology essential to the modern health care system is highly specialized. While the manufacture of this equipment is more likely than ever to take

place overseas, the operation and maintenance of it necessarily takes place in the vicinity of its use.

### 2.4.4 Tourism & Hospitality

The tourism and hospitality industries have been addressed at length in previous CEDS reports. It is worth note here, however, that not only do the efforts to enhance this sector continue, but that they may in fact be paradoxically more important during a recession.

Brooklyn's efforts have long focused not only on foreign and extra-regional visitors with an idea of Brooklyn gleaned from popular culture, but on regional visitors with tangible ties to the borough or simply relatively limited spending money and time but a healthy level of curiosity. These latter visitors are the people who will help sustain the industry through the current difficulties. It holds that New Yorkers who might put off a vacation elsewhere will still wish to leave their apartments and experience something new. With the buzz around Brooklyn recently, we believe ourselves well placed to avail of the so called "staycation."

To this end ICB launched an initiative with the Borough President's office in 2006 to create the destination marketing organization called Brooklyn Tourism (BT) based in Borough Hall. The project continues to provide materials, information and exhibits to thousands of visitors a year as well as an interactive website, [visitbrooklyn.com](http://visitbrooklyn.com).

Projects like the Weeksville Center and the heart of Brooklyn Wayfinding System feed directly into these efforts.

### 2.4.5 Specialty & Ethnic Food Processing

The food processing sector, while small, was the only subsector of manufacturing which grew in recent years. There are a number reasons BEDC believes that this is an important sector with real potential.

First, local food manufacturers not only serve the very diverse population of Brooklyn and New York City, but they increase the appeal of neighborhoods discussed above. One of the reasons, in fact, that we believe the numbers are so low for the sector is that many retail establishments, such as restaurants and cafes, produce only small quantities of their particular products for a very local population.

Some of the barriers they face to expansion

## 2.4 Brooklyn Economic Sectors and Industry Clusters (cont.)

include lack of familiarity with the terrain of larger scale production and regulatory the scarcity of public refrigeration and freezer facilities which come into play when production and distribution grow above certain levels.

While not all of these small producers are able or interested in expanding production, we believe that specialty and ethnic foods are important as they can create local jobs and increase revenues at local retail establishments and create destination shopping in neighborhoods. In order to support these small businesses, CEDS believes there is need for greater simplicity and codification in the regulatory landscape as well as shared, temporary or "for-hire" facilities and equipment.

### 2.4.6 Retail and Commercial Concerns

*Retail:* While retail does not employ the greatest number of Brooklyn residents, it remains the backbone of healthy neighborhoods which in turn have a great impact on the social and economic vitality of the borough. At first glance, wages from the retail sector seem depressed at roughly \$23,000 borough-wide. It must be kept in mind, however, that while many retail workers do in fact depend on these wages to support their families, many also have second and third jobs, perhaps in a less traditional work and wage setting. Also, the owners of retail establishments, small business men and women, realize a greater annual compensation much more inline with, or above, area median income. These individuals also play an absolutely vital role in civic and cultural events and activities in their neighborhoods.

The Brooklyn Economic Development Corporation was founded in the wake of the 1977 New York City blackout in large part to support the revitalization of small businesses and commercial corridors which had been damaged during the civil disturbances that followed the power outage. Our fundamental principal has been from that time that the free and equitable exercise of commerce is a central part of community life and builds healthy, sustainable communities.

Currently retail is suffering greatly, especially the local small businesses which give the corners of Brooklyn their particular character. CEDS believes that any serious and comprehensive plan to revitalize economic activity must feature the health of retail prominently. Like the rest of the country and

New York City in this current economic downturn, Brooklyn has seen the retail sector shed jobs at a particularly alarming rate. Every business that closes has an immediate effect not only on that business owner and his or her family, but on the commercial strip which must endure one more vacancy, to the former employees of the establishment and to neighborhood homeowners who face not only a decrease in services but also a loss in their property values because of the new gap in retail presence.

*Commercial Property:* Brooklyn has a shortage of affordable office space. In particular, there is a dearth of virtual and temporary office space in the borough. This is important because many of the small entrepreneurs, particularly individuals offering professional and business services, do not require a full time office lease but rather a place to meet clients, receive mail and enjoy some of the other standard services afforded by an office space.

With the general economic shift underway in the borough, demand for this type of temporary or virtual office space is only increasing and more important for our recovery. As has been noted in several other places in this report and reported upon extensively elsewhere, Brooklyn has seen a real boom in economic activity in recent years. New businesses require business services, self-employed people may directly require virtual offices services or the services of the accountant, lawyer or designer in one of these spaces.

Technological advances, higher energy costs, the desire for more flexible hours and frugality in staffing and other expenses make the demand for these types of spaces and arrangement all the more prevalent in our current economy.

BEDC views virtual and shared office space as a key element in fostering the foundation and growth of new small businesses in the borough and calls for support and incentives to help foster this budding industry.

### 3. GOALS & OBJECTIVES

One of the primary goals for Brooklyn in 2009 is not to slide back from the economic gains made by the borough in the past few years. With so much economic turmoil in evidence, Brooklyn and New York City as a whole should focus on retaining our new businesses, making existing businesses more competitive and investing strategically in education and whole industries to gain leverage for the recovery.

Retail has taken a major hit in Brooklyn and must be stabilized. Programs like the Heart of Brooklyn's wayfinding system and Weeksville's new Education & Arts Center will have a real effect on their neighborhoods' retail establishments, as will ongoing city programs like the Avenue NYC program funded by the City's department of Small Business Services.

Investment in technology and new industry is essential not only for the fact that it increases the number of high wage jobs available to New Yorkers, but because it adds an element of diversification to our local economy. It is no secret that New York City's reliance on Wall Street as an economic driver has made it particularly susceptible to the current downturn which has its roots in the financial sector. Because of the large investments required to grow a scientific and technological base in an area, those industries, given the right attention and upkeep, are often less mobile than some others. Because these sectors provide good jobs not only for those working in them directly but also for the myriad others engaged in supplying and maintaining them, the initial cost has inherent benefits. This is the reason the CEDS committee is so enthusiastic about the BioBAT, SUNY Downstate Biotechnology Incubator and Federal Building #2 projects included later in this report. Brooklyn has the chance now to position itself as a leader in Biotechnology and the resurgence of American light manufacturing.

The continuation of collaborative efforts among the key players in Brooklyn's major industry clusters is also essential to this borough's health. The Initiative for a Competitive Brooklyn (ICB), a division of BEDC, remains dedicated to linking policy makers,

academics, practitioners, employers and other stakeholders to increase the efficiency of job creating and retention programs. Through the active coordination of green training programs in construction, we believe smaller companies can survive during the recession and be better prepared to build or renovate the housing and commercial building stock of the future. Likewise, we are confident an open dialogue between allied health educators, large employers such as hospitals, and health care regulators will prove effective at streamlining the route from school application to gainful employment. As noted above, while this is of course an issue that will effect the quality of Brooklyn's local health care system, it is also an economic development opportunity because of the vast numbers involved, the relatively cost and time-efficient training and the solid, living wages offered in these fields.

Tourism and hospitality remains an important area for Brooklyn, too. The sector has seen great investments of effort and capital in recent years and while the industry is currently witnessing a slump, it may find a lifeline in offering the newly familiar vibrant Brooklyn as a more economically appealing opportunity for visitors. In addition, many of Brooklyn's entertainment and cultural destinations can stress their appeal to regional markets as people restrict their expenditures on travel and tourism in destinations further afield.

Many of these projects include a focus on enriching and enhancing education on some level. The connection between greater attainment of quality education and economic prosperity is a fact which in and of itself need not be argued here. Each time a project such as Pratt's Myrtle Avenue development, BioBAT or the allied health initiative is successful, a major investment has been made in our economy. Pratt's project, for instance, will serve not only to provide jobs and renewal for a major commercial corridor, but also play a role in educating the institute's students, 80% of whom remain in Brooklyn feeding into our important creative economy.



## 4. COMMUNITY & PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION

Brooklyn has a solid history of public-private partnership. Some of the larger projects underway, the BioBAT biotechnology center at the Brooklyn Army Terminal and the Sunset Marketplace at Federal Building #2 in Sunset Park, are discussed elsewhere in this report. Below are some of the other exciting projects planned or underway.

**Albee Square:** The mall demolition and redevelopment at Albee Square in Downtown Brooklyn has proceeded since the 2007 CEDS Report. In November 2008, officials from the Economic Development Corporation and Department of Transportation unveiled a \$12.5-million design that would more than double the size of the neglected plaza at the triangular intersection of Fulton Mall, DeKalb Avenue and Bond Street — an area they hope will someday be the heart of a revived residential and commercial district that includes a Target megastore and CityPoint, a 65-story residential and retail tower that will be the tallest building in the borough.

**Avenue NYC:** The Department of Small Business Services is continuing its Avenue NYC program moving into the new year. The program in this borough is administered by ReNew Brooklyn division of BEDC. It is focused on the revitalization of commercial corridors through streetscape improvements and storefront improvements. ReNew Brooklyn has worked with the design programs at local colleges and universities and helped numerous community groups gain technical expertise, manage legal challenges and expand community involvement.

**Gowanus Green:** The New York City Department of housing Preservation & Development has selected a team to design and construct a mixed-use development consisting of community, commercial and residential spaces along the formerly industrial and polluted Gowanus Canal. The Development

team, the Gowanus Green Partnership, is a consortium comprised of the Hudson Companies, Inc., The Bluestone Organization, the Fifth Avenue Committee and Jonathan Rose Companies.

The development, which is designed to meet the guidelines set out by the Mayor's PlaNYC green city initiative, will result in 774 units of mixed income housing. 541 apartments will be affordable to low and middle income families, including 120 units of low income senior housing. The mixed use development will feature over 25,000 square feet of cultural space, 38,000 square feet of ground floor retail, and nearly 100,000 square feet

of public open space along the canal. The canal-side park, in addition to landscaped waterfront space for recreation activities, will feature arts and educational programming and significant recreational opportunities for the surrounding community. The overall development is part of the Mayor's "New Housing Marketplace Plan," a \$7.5 billion commitment to create or preserve 165,000

units of affordable housing throughout New York City. Seventy thousand units have already been financed.

**Other Open Space Initiatives:** The future 85-acre Brooklyn Bridge Park will stretch 1.3 miles along the East River from north of the Manhattan Bridge to Atlantic Avenue. The Park includes Piers 1 - 6, each approximately the size of Bryant Park, and their uplands. Brooklyn Bridge Park will transform this underused and inaccessible stretch into a magnificent public space filled with lawns, recreation, beaches, coves, restored habitats, playgrounds and beautifully landscaped areas. Park construction has begun, with part of Pier 1 scheduled to open in winter 2009.



Plan of the Gowanus Green Development

## 5. STRATEGIC PROJECTS, PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES

Listed below are some of the most dynamic initiatives taking place in Brooklyn over the next year. Not all of them feature direct capital investments and some have a focus more overtly on retail and community building than high wage job development.

We have included them in this report because we believe that they serve the greater goal of economic development explicitly. As we have

noted in a number of places in this year's CEDS report, Brooklyn must retain and solidify the growth of retail and community development for the continued health of our neighborhoods and for the city as a whole.

These large scale projects have to potential to revive the borough in any number of ways and therefore tie directly in to Brooklyn's economic recovery.

### 5.1 Suggested Proposals

#### 5.1.1 PRATT INSTITUTE at 524 MYRTLE AVENUE

Pratt Institute has broken ground at 524 Myrtle Avenue in the Clinton Hill—Wallabout neighborhoods near its main Brooklyn Campus. This project was included in the 2007 CEDS Report and some substantial progress has been made.

The laying of 534 Myrtle's foundation helps bridge a substantial gap in the new Myrtle Avenue. This building will help boost the ongoing revitalization of the commercial corridor and serve as Pratt's front door and most public face, providing a visual link to Pratt's neighboring communities, Clinton Hill and Bedford Stuyvesant.

Programmatically, 524 Myrtle will provide space for: student services, the Pratt Center for Community Development, a Digital Arts Lab, Digital Arts Department, and graduate art studios.

The Myrtle Avenue project will be a 120,000 square foot mixed-use building on an urban, commercial street that is undergoing revitalization. It will further extend Pratt Institute's footprint on Myrtle Avenue, rising beside the existing Pratt Store, which is open to the public. Designed by Brooklyn-based architectural firm Studio A - WASA, the building will incorporate a number of "green" features; Pratt aims to meet LEED Gold Standard, or, with sufficient funding, LEED Platinum. In July of

2007, Pratt received a Kresge Foundation Green Planning Grant to fund research during the schematic design process to create optimally efficient building systems. Pratt is also the recipient of a

\$424,974 US Department of Education grant from their Fund for the Improvement of Secondary Education (FIPSE), which supports innovative educational reform projects that can serve as national models for improving postsecondary education.

The present owner of the site will participate in the project, and the ground

floor, which he will control, will have retail spaces open to the public.

Pratt institute enrolls 4,700 students in four schools. Its 27 acre campus was established in the late 1800's and its campus was enclosed about 60 years ago – this new building will reestablish Pratt's link to the public street grid.

The project will create 150 construction jobs; and create 25 new Pratt jobs in addition to the 500+ Pratt jobs that already exist in the community. It will also house the many activities of the Pratt Center, a renowned urban planning and policy center focused on social justice issues within planning, and can serve as the launch pad for the new Redefining Education for Sustainable Cities and Urban Environments project (RESCUE).



Rendering of 524 Myrtle Avenue



## 5.1 Suggested Proposals (cont.)

RESCUE's three objectives are to give Brooklyn based educators and community leaders practical tools to improve their understanding of environmental issues in an urban context, to empower these educational leaders with actionable plans to educate their communities and to build on Pratt's existing open-source resources to further its reach into the educational community. The project promises to take what is learned inside the confines of academia and effectively spread it through the community, creating a new knowledge base and a fresh entrepreneurial class focused on greening Brooklyn. Partnerships with dozens of educational institutions will ensure dissemination through the various class and age groups in the community, fostering traits and skills essential to compete in the new, technology-based economic landscape.

Meanwhile, the Digital Arts Lab will expand the horizons not only of Pratt students, but, through the inclusion of neighborhood teens, will continue and expand the efforts of RESCUE to reach a younger, external demographic, equipping Brooklyn youth to utilize fully the latest in information technology innovations.

An average of 70% of Pratt graduates (the enrollment is international) choose to stay in Brooklyn after graduation and many of them work in the arts and media industries in NYC. Through these programs, these students not only become a boon to the local economy, but become instruments in creating an inclusive, community oriented workforce development apparatus, beginning to bridge the digital divide and spread economic feasibility.

This public-private project will further the revitalization of the Myrtle Avenue corridor, while growing the employment base of one of Brooklyn's larger institutional employers, Pratt Institute. While adding much needed commercial and aca-

demie space, the project also embodies and employs the latest technologies in "green" building development and information and design technology, which will serve as a model for other institutions. The commendable and deliberate inclusion of community residents and institutions also increases the impact of the project to encompass needy communities as part of the Institute's educational process.

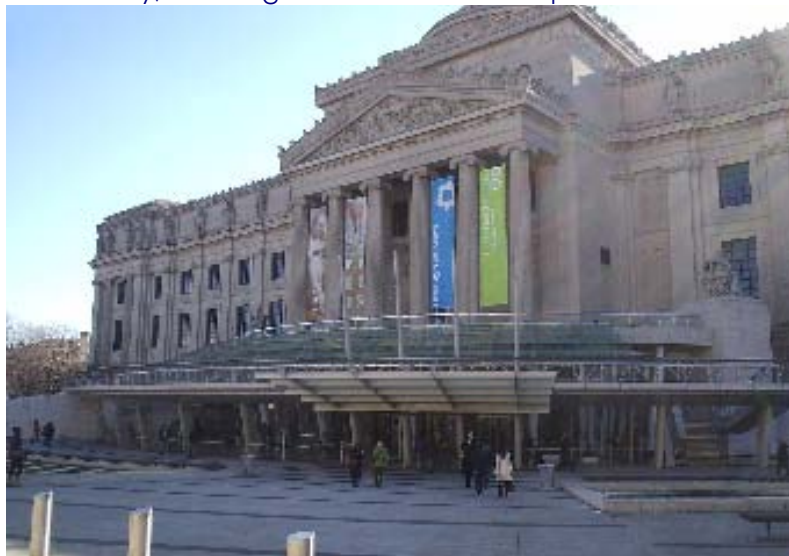
### 5.1.2 HEART OF BROOKLYN WAYFINDING SYSTEM

In cooperation with community partners, local merchants and other borough stakeholders, Heart of Brooklyn plans to design, implement and maintain a comprehensive pedestrian and vehicular wayfinding system for central Brooklyn.

Heart of Brooklyn (HOB) is a partnership of the leading organizations near Grand Army Plaza in Brooklyn: Brooklyn Botanic Garden, Brooklyn Children's Museum, Brooklyn

Museum, Brooklyn Public Library, Prospect Park, Prospect Park Zoo. The institutions see millions of visitors a year and Heart of Brooklyn was created to not only raise the individual members' profiles, but also to create and manage mechanisms by which the surrounding Brooklyn neighborhoods can reap some of the benefits of the cultural tourism.

The new wayfinding system will be designed to increase access to HOB's world-class institutions, guide visitors and residents to area commercial corridors, and strengthen the re-branding of Brooklyn as a prime destination for tourists in New York. As outlined below, HOB's extensive research and programmatic experience in the community have clearly indicated the need and the many benefits a wayfinding system would provide for central Brooklyn. Drawing upon the collective power of its member institutions and its own reputation as a model for innovative projects and collaborative initiatives, Heart of Brooklyn is well-



*The Brooklyn Museum, Part of the Heart of Brooklyn*

## 5.1 Suggested Proposals (cont.)

poised to create a dynamic, user-friendly urban wayfinding system that will appeal and respond to the needs of both residents and visitors to its unique cultural campus.

### 5.1.4 CENTER FOR AN URBAN ENVIRONMENT:

The Center for the Urban Environment (CUE) is dedicated to educating individuals and businesses about the built and natural urban environment. With a LEED-certified community center as our headquarters and programs in all five boroughs, CUE serves as a natural commons for the unique environmental issues facing the nation's largest city. For 30 years CUE has built stronger communities by increasing public understanding of the ecological and economic building blocks of cities and coordinating networks and resources that can help shape sustainable community development.

As a leader in the field of environmental education, the Center has built lasting relationships with city schools, community organizations and government agencies. The Center's involvement in New Century High School Initiative—a joint initiative of New Visions for Public Schools and New York City Department of Education—represents a salient example of our successful partnerships. As the lead community partner for three Brooklyn high schools whose missions and thematic focus is on experiential learning, the Center has created an academic culture that is ripe for hands-on programming and the challenges of preparing leadership for the green collar sector.

#### *Green Collar Workforce Program*

Green collar jobs tend to be local jobs and the renewable economy is labor-intensive. Therefore, green collar jobs represent a promising new category of workforce opportunities because they are relatively high quality jobs, with low barriers to entry. Moreover, they represent a range of businesses from large and small for-profit businesses to non-profit organizations, social enterprises, and public sector institutions.

After helping pilot a sustainable business internship program at our Green High School in 2008, CUE will launch a comprehensive urban green workforce initiative in the fall of 2009. This initiative



*The Center for an Urban Environment new Headquarters*

builds in a curricular and internship component in order to pilot an expanded workforce initiative at our Academy of Urban Planning High School (AUP).

*Program Overview:* A year long training program that utilizes both training in the classroom and on-the-job training will provide participants with the following direct services: (1) assessment; (2) life skills and soft skills training; (3) financial management skills; (4) an environmental educational component; (5) basic vocational skills relevant to green collar work force opportunities; and (6) an Internship component that utilizes employers in

SBNYC to identify green collar placement opportunities for job ready clients in green businesses.

Piloting the program in the Bushwick community at AUP will allow the Center to reach participants in the 11th grade class. Starting in the fall of 2009, the fall semester will focus primarily on life skills, soft skills and financial management training. Beginning in the winter semester of 2010, the program will explore the basic vocational skills needed for green collar jobs. The final component of the program will include a summer internship with a participating green business.

*Potential Green Workforce Jobs:* Some of the potential green collar jobs the Center is exploring with the roll out of our innovative new initiative include:

*Energy:* Services include energy retrofits, solar installation and water conservation. Potential entry level jobs include: customer service, installation, construction, maintenance and repair;

*Non-toxic cleaning:* Services include residential and commercial cleaning. Potential entry level jobs include: cleaning and customer service;

*Waste Stream Diversion:* Services include materials recycling and materials re-use. Entry level jobs include: collection, sorting, driving, loading, salvaging, packaging and composting;

*Green Building:* Services include construction, demolition and removal. Potential entry level jobs include: construction, carpentry, maintenance and repair; and

*Food:* Services include urban agriculture, farmers' markets, specialty foods production and bak-

## 5.1 Suggested Proposals (cont.)

ing. Entry level jobs include: growing, packaging, delivery, selling, cleaning and baking.

*Case Management and Follow Up:* Each client will have access to case management and follow up services during the period in which they work as interns and for up to 6 months after they start their first employment opportunity in a green business. These case management and follow up services are designed to help both the participants and the employer.

*Collaborative Resources:* The proposed Green Collar Workforce Program would offer the Center a unique opportunity to extend our commitment to youth by building on long term strategic collaborations and utilizing our connections through SBNYC—a network of locally owned and operated businesses with a commitment to community investment. Guided by the belief that a sustainable city must have a healthy local economy, SBNYC works to connect, educate, and



Rendering of Weeksville's new Education & Cultural Arts Building

promote sustainability by making investments in the community that are focused on creating green collar jobs, strengthening the city's aging infrastructure and making both local markets and the global economy more efficient over the long term. SBNYC members know and understand that sustainability means providing real jobs for real people and that the health of New York City's workforce is intimately tied to the well being of local communities.

### 5.1.5 WEEKSVILLE EDUCATION & CULTURAL ARTS BUILDING

The Weeksville Heritage Center has long been dedicated to the improvement of central Brooklyn through education, training and cultural exchange. Weeksville's new Education & Cultural Arts Center is a 19,000 square foot "green" facility which will transform the Weeksville site into a vibrant cultural campus, a symbol of the history—and the future—of African American life in Central Brooklyn.

With the new building comes unique opportunities for expanded research, education, and programming. Campaign for Weeksville will rally support, locally and nationally, to realize the vision of a lively community cultural resource that will: preserve the story of historic Weeksville and tell it to all visitors, near and far; enrich the local community with cultural programming of the highest caliber, rooted in the values of entrepreneurship, engagement, and dedication to community evident in historic Weeksville; develop curricula and train educators to transform how American schoolchildren learn African American history; conduct and host research and documentation efforts, deepening the understanding of historic Weeksville, supporting scholarly work on African American history, and modeling how local history can inspire, enrich and empower a community.

In addition to the obvious economic benefits of greater outreach, and educational and cultural programming for the immediately surrounding community, the new Weeksville Center has the potential to draw far greater numbers tourists to the area than current levels. The Weeksville Green currently consists of the Hunterfly Houses and green only, making it less desirable to visit in the winter than the summer. The new events the center will offer year-round have the potential to bring much needed business to the surrounding areas.

### 5.1.6 CITY TECH

The New York City College of Technology has several programs rolling out through 2009.

*LDC Planning Partnership:* City Tech and BEDC are currently engaged in a joint planning program called the LDC Planning Partnership in which City Tech architecture students conduct streetscape design studies for Brooklyn community organizations, providing them with concrete plans and renderings which can be used to secure funding or direct improvements. The goal of these and other BEDC programs in to empower

## 5.1 Suggested Proposals (cont.)

local actors with the tools and skills necessary to improve their communities from the grassroots up.

*Friending Water & Work*: The City Tech Friending program is a learning and community development social network supported by a digital media collaborative environment. Essentially, Water & Work allows users to create a visual representation of the economic, demographic and zoning changes in a neighborhood, from the past to the present as well as proposed planning projects. Therefore its use of formalized concept maps and interactive digital media albums have the potential for important uses in the planning process as government and stakeholders consider zoning, public works projects and other issues. The digital media album interface and concept mapping tools will be embedded in a social network site made available to neighborhood residents, businesses and activists working through the Brooklyn Economic Development Corporation.

### 5.1.7 ITAC CROSS-BOROUGH TECHNOLOGY-BASED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

In its fall 2007 report, *Buried Treasure: New York City's Hidden Technology Sector*, ITAC uncovered a viable, yet largely unrecognized, high-technology corridor operating within the five boroughs of New York City. New York City's strength lies in the application of technologies throughout our economy which enables our businesses to compete in the global economy. In order to maximize the economic opportunities which can be derived from technologies, we need to create a public/private partnership to provide the leadership to drive investment in advanced technology, to create early stage capital funding mechanisms, and to support manufacturing and technology firms to grow their businesses. We believe that these focused investments in regional infrastructure will spur this cluster's development into a connected, vibrant, and visible local ecosystem, capable of driving robust job creation.

In order to build a public/private consensus on the importance of nurturing our technology sector, ITAC proposes the creation of a mechanism which brings together the stakeholders to develop and co-ordinate programs. The Collaborative will also work to educate policymakers and community stakeholders in the principles of technology-based economic development (TBED), will co-ordinate resources around key initiatives and will develop

long term funding streams to support Collaborative Programs. The Collaborative is loosely patterned after Innovation Philadelphia.

In the *Buried Treasure* report, ITAC found that small and mid-sized technology firms cited "access to capital" as a top concern, with 56% of firms surveyed citing access to capital as one of their major needs. It seek to provide access to pre-seed funding for NYC technology companies to attract and keep promising innovators in the City. In early 2008, the New York State Foundation for Science, Technology & Innovation (NYSTAR) invited State-funded Regional Technology Development Centers, such as ITAC, to submit proposals to establish a \$1 million seed fund to be matched by NYSTAR to an amount of \$250,000. Two partners have already committed up to \$2 million to kick off the fund.

At any one time in NYC, companies are starting, growing, and dying. The technology entrepreneur faces some unique challenges as they seek to complete their R&D phase, develop new products, seek funding, develop management teams, adopt new technologies and reach new markets. All this in a City whose scale and complexity presents unique challenges to the entrepreneur.

The research highlights opportunities for an unusually high degree of R&D collaboration between businesses and their customers or supply chains in New York City. A supportive mechanism would help companies that need innovative technology to find firms that either have or can develop the technology to assist them. Increasing these synergies would be advantageous for partnered firms, for the growth and success of the technology sector and for the City of New York.

Early stage companies, whether independent or university-based, have new intellectual property to commercialize, but generally need support identifying applications and markets. These smaller firms generally require additional help with the business aspects of firm development: business and financial planning, management skills, and financial planning. Finally, they often need assistance to develop strategic alliances with potential resources and partners. Mature firms have the management and production capacity to grow but need help identifying technology-based opportunities.

## 5.1 Suggested Proposals (cont.)

Many organizations provide economic development assistance at little or no cost but are not fully prepared to work in any depth with technology firms. Help in NYC is often spread out across so many providers that it is very difficult to find and confusing to access. The Technology Col-

laborative of New York City would cross-market 'one-stop' access to resources for early stage technology firms. This center would link existing resources and encourage collaboration among service providers.

## 5.2 Vital Proposals

### 5.2.1 SUNSET MARKETPLACE @ THE FEDERAL BUILDING #2

As reported in the 2007 CEDS Report, the New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) has selected the joint venture of Time Equities Incorporated (TEI) and the Brooklyn Economic Development Corporation (BEDC) to redevelop the building known as Federal Building #2 into one of the City's first mixed-use light manufacturing and retail complexes. The 1.1 million-square-foot building occupies a 314,000-square-foot parcel of land bounded by Second and Third Avenues and 30<sup>th</sup> and 32<sup>nd</sup> Streets in the Sunset Park section of Brooklyn. The proposal calls for renovating the ex-



*Rendering of the Sunset Marketplace @ Federal Building #2*

isting eight-story warehouse building for use by light manufacturers on the upper floors and retail and showroom space on the lower floors. The developers also plan to construct a new retail center with accessory parking on the adjacent 100,000-square-foot parking lot. The total cost of the project is estimated to be \$205 million. It will create approximately 1,285 full time jobs and almost 2,000 construction jobs, and generate about \$44 million in real estate and other taxes over 25 years.

Congressman Jerrold L. Nadler and Congresswoman Nydia M. Velazquez worked with Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz to acquire the building from the Federal Government. City Council Member Sara M. Gonzalez took an active part in the project to ensure responsible development for the community.

In order to move forward with renovation and

marketing of the building, BEDC and Time Equities are required to complete the Universal Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP). BEDC and Time expect to achieve ULURP certification, a major milestone, for Federal Building #2 in February, 2009.

The new manufacturing center will contain both rental and condominium units. In addition, significant economic incentives are available to businesses that relocate to the site, which is in a state Empire Zone. As an amenity to the project's businesses and employees, the developers have agreed to make 10,000 square feet of space available rent-free to an affordable daycare center. Other amenities include a full service fitness center, Wi-Fi Internet access and various food service options.

The project will target companies requiring less than 10,000 square feet of space. The project plans include a number of sustainable design elements such as a green roof, solar power and high performance windows. An existing power plant building on the adjacent lot will be renovated for use as a co-generation facility. The developers will design and implement local hiring and Minority and Woman-owned Enterprise plans.

Designated as the Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Business Zone, Sunset Park's industrial waterfront is an enclave of light manufacturers and other industrial businesses. Across from Federal Building #2 is the South Brooklyn Marine Terminal, which will be reactivated as a maritime port and will include a maritime automobile receiving and processing facility and the Hugo Neu metal and plastics recycling facilities, as well as various general cargo

## 5.2 Vital Proposals (cont.)

handling operations.

Time Equities Incorporated is a full-service real estate company which is based in Greenwich Village and has been in business for over 35 years. It has a portfolio of more than 20 million square feet of commercial, industrial and residential properties in 23 states. TEI's current projects include the Hoyt Schermerhorn mixed-use development and the State Street Houses in Downtown Brooklyn. The

company's CEO has a long history of successfully redeveloping blighted property in New York City.

The Brooklyn Economic Development Corporation is a 28-year-old not-for-profit organization that creates and ex-

pands economic opportunity throughout Brooklyn by implementing business and neighborhood development programs.

### 2.3.3 SUNY BIOTECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE

*SUNY Downstate Incubator:* The State University of New York (SUNY) Downstate Biotechnology Initiative consists of the Downstate Biotechnology Incubator and the Commercial Synthetic Chemistry Facility, both at the SUNY Downstate Campus, and BioBAT at the Brooklyn Army Terminal.

The Incubator has been under construction, in a three phase plan, for several years. It has currently completed phases I & II and has a substantial roster of tenants, including the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI), BioMolecular, Inc., Cytira and others engaged in exciting enterprises including cancer research, life sciences, neuroscience, vaccine development and nanoscale optoelectronic devices.

The project is now requesting an additional \$2 million from the United States Economic Development Administration as part of an additional \$5 million push to complete Phase III to complete the final 26,000 square feet of the space.

*BioBAT:* BioBAT is a 460,000 square foot facility

that US EDA funded for redevelopment in the 1980's and which is becoming a full service biotechnology center at the Brooklyn Army Terminal.

Since 2006, when the New York City Economic Development Corporation and SUNY Downstate began developing the Brooklyn Army Terminal site, New York State and New York City committed \$50 million and \$12 million, respectively for the first two phases of the project.



Rendering of the SUNY Downstate Biotechnology Incubator

BioBAT is now recruiting tenants focusing partially on the Incubator's solid roster of tenants, including The International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI), which is currently preparing to move to BioBAT directly from the Downstate Incubator, and

others.

Given the wage levels represented by the biotechnology sector, and the demand for appropriate space in New York City, the CEDS committee recommends full support of BioBAT.

### 2.3.2 BEDFORD-STUYVESANT RESTORATION CORPORATION GREEN JOBS CENTER

The Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation (BSRC) has embarked upon a major renovation of its headquarters at Restoration Plaza in the heart of Bed-Stuy. The renovated plaza will not only improve the existing commercial hub for the neighborhood, but provide expanded and enhanced facilities and space for BSRC's important programming. Currently, Restoration's wide range of programs includes everything from foreclosure prevention and financial literacy, commercial corridor revitalization, cultural events and weatherization for low-income neighborhood home and multifamily buildingowners. BSRC is considering the use of solar energy as part of the renovation to bring attention to environmental concerns and to reduce BSRC's operating costs.

One of the most exciting programs to be hosted in the newly renovated plaza will be the Retrofit



## 5.2 Vital Proposals

Bedford Stuyvesant, block by block greening & retrofit initiative. BSRC, in partnership with the Pratt Center for Community Development and the BSRC-founded Coalition for the Improvement of Bedford Stuyvesant (CIBS), is launching this ambitious initiative to make Bedford Stuyvesant a model for reducing energy use in urban neighborhoods. A comprehensive effort, the program seeks to address employment issues, community education, energy efficiency and streetscape improvements.

**Business Growth & Job Training:** Unemployed and underemployed neighborhood residents, beginning with youth enrolled in the New York City Justice Corps, will be trained to administer energy audits and use and

install products designed to improve the energy efficiency of buildings. These specialized skills often come with proportionally higher wages when compared to standard work in renovation. Demand for audits and improved energy efficiency is increasing as building owners seek to benefit from reduced operating costs, increased durability, improved comfort and health and environmental benefits.

The job training aspect of the program is focused at young people who have little access to of the workforce development staples of the past such as union affiliated apprenticeship programs. The Justice Corps program is funded by the NYC Center for Economic Opportunity and designed by the John Jay College of Criminal Justice to reduce poverty and recidivism among youth with experience in the criminal justice system through service residencies.

**Green Block:** A centerpiece of the initiative is to create a model Green Block to demonstrate and quantify the benefits of energy upgrades and to test methods of marketing, programming and financing retrofits that work in this urban neighborhood. BSRC and the Pratt Center conceived the idea of developing model green city blocks where energy upgrades are

provided to all the houses on a single block, thereby taking advantage of the typical New York City attached row house style and resulting economies of scale. BSRC and Pratt are now working together with the Coalition for the Improvement of Bedford Stuyvesant (CIBS) as well as other neighborhood block and civic associations. This project recently received one of three US Environmental Protection Agency Smart Growth technical assistance awards in the United States.



*Rendering of the proposed renovation of Restoration Plaza*

**Community Education:** The initiative will conduct a community education campaign relying on Bedford Stuyvesant's strong network of block and neighborhood associations, churches, merchants and civic organizations. Workshops and information sessions will often be held at the renovated facilities in the Plaza as it is

a well established and centrally located venue in the neighborhood.

**Documentation:** BSRC and Pratt will document the outcomes of the initiative by developing a web page that tracks metrics such as electric and gas use, emissions, asthma rates and other related neighborhood indicators. Once compiled, the information will be presented in a report aimed at laying out the economic and environmental results of the initiative with the goal of demonstrating challenges and benefits for other urban centers interested in implementing similar programs.

With a newly revitalized Plaza, Restoration will be able to increase its capacity as an economic engine in Bedford Stuyvesant. Along with providing retail and commercial space to anchor one of the busiest commercial strips in central Brooklyn, including one of mid-Fulton Street's only sit down restaurant, BSRC can enhance its offerings for neighborhood residents and its economic development programs, chief among them the collaborative Central Brooklyn Greening & Retrofit Initiative.

## 6. Vision for Brooklyn

Brooklyn is a storied place which can boast world famous locations, a history of nation-changing events and legendary, outsized personalities. But Brooklyn is not a city of the past. As has been noted throughout this report, BEDC believes that the changes witnessed in and by Brooklyn over the past decades are fundamental and largely sustainable, creating a bedrock in which future prosperity can be firmly rooted.

Whether it is the solidification of cultural institutions like BAM and the members of the Heart of Brooklyn, the plethora of relative newcomers like the Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Arts (MoCADA), the influx of galleries which now populate not only Williamsburg and DUMBO but also Bed-Stuy and Sunset Park or the pending transformation of Coney Island into a modern entertainment district designed to attract large and diverse crowds, Brooklyn is a destination now more than ever.

The enthusiastic embrace of new industries in green technologies and products positions Brooklyn as a leader in the region. Cutting edge scientific services and research will change the face of our health care, academic, retail and service sectors.

The growth in self-employed individuals provides Brooklyn with a well-trained and flexible workforce, while new open space initiatives make the borough an ever more attractive place for these new professionals to work, live and conduct business, both as providers and consumers.

In short Brooklyn has a bright future. But any vision for Brooklyn laid out at the dawn of 2009 must focus first on retaining the gains we have made so far. If real advances are to be made in these areas, real work must be done on several fronts.

What makes Brooklyn great is its diversity and the promise of opportunity. People with all levels of skill and education must have the ability to achieve their promise and live here securely if we are to achieve our potential as a truly great urban center.

Education and housing are the pillars of this effort. From public schools and state and city universities to community colleges and specialized private institutions of higher education, the

quality and availability of training for our residents is essential for our growth and prosperity.

Housing, too, remains a major issue facing Brooklyn today. The recent influx of wealth and capital, soaring housing prices and predatory loans have all made it abundantly clear that fair access to affordable housing is crucial to our success as a borough, city and nation. In our modern economy, we cannot remain economically viable if service workers cannot live in the areas they serve. Likewise, bad lending and unregulated markets sow the seeds for collapse as we have been forced so bluntly to acknowledge in recent months. Management of the mortgage crisis, so clearly a national issue is crucial here. Characteristic of urban centers, inclusive zoning and building laws are essential to keeping rents at a manageable level for average, working families.

A down-payment by the public sector is also absolutely crucial to Brooklyn's continued growth. Government investment in major projects, which effect the lives of millions of Brooklynites and New Yorkers, is essential in this time of limited access to private capital. Many of the initiatives outlined here have the potential to shape Brooklyn's economy for years to come.

Government is in a position now to advance or maintain crucial developments in the areas of commercial space, public-private endeavors, housing, quality infrastructure, cultural institutions and small business. These are the components which make urban centers vibrant, sustainable and economically successful. As we face a recession of dire proportions, it is the public sector which can prevent us from falling backwards and propel us into a bright future.

Brooklyn stands ready to lead the way in urban revitalization efforts, not least because we have so much to build upon. With strategic, well-managed and smartly regulated investment, we can not only weather the current economic downturn but come out poised for great gains on the other side.



**SOURCES**

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 Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce/Brooklyn Progress  
 The New York Industrial Retention Network  
 Fillmore Real Estate  
 Massey Knakel Real Estate  
 Kingsborough Community College  
 Brooklyn Educational Opportunity Center

**BEDC FUNDERS**

New York City Department of Health & Mental Hygiene  
 New York City Department of Small Business Services (SBS)  
 United States Economic Development Administration (EDA)  
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 Independence Community Foundation  
 New York City Council

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