Community Board 5 Section 197-a Plan Phase 1 Summary Report

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Hastings-on-Hudson, New York 10706

June, 2002
### PHASE 1 SUMMARY REPORT TABLE OF CONTENTS

**CHAPTER I – SECTION 197-A SCOPE OF WORK**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Planning Background</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Building on the Present</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Data Collection and Analysis</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Community Vision</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Issues Confronting the CB5 Resident Population</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Harlem River Waterfront</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Commercial Revitalization and Development</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Gateways into the Community</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Transportation</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Community Board Boundaries</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Grand Concourse</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Environmental Objectives</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Fair Share</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Next Steps</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CHAPTER II – EXISTING CONDITIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. BACKGROUND</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. SOCIOECONOMIC BACKGROUND</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. LAND USE AND ZONING</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. TRANSPORTATION</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Social Services</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER III – NEEDS ASSESSMENT</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER IV – BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER V – BUDGET</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER VI – POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendices (Available at CB #5 office)

- APPENDIX A: SELECTED FACILITIES AND PROGRAM SITES IN NYC: THE BRONX
- APPENDIX B: BRONX CB #5 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE
- APPENDIX C: ZONING MAPS
- APPENDIX E: EXCERPTS FROM RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE IN NYC (PARKLAND / POPULATION RATIOS)
- APPENDIX F: EXCERPTS FROM THE BRONX GREENWAY PLAN FOR NYC (THE BRONX GREENWAYS)
- APPENDIX G: EXCERPT FROM PLACES FOR PEOPLE
CHAPTER I: SECTION 197-a SCOPE OF WORK

1. Planning Background

Community Board 5, in an ongoing effort to plan and implement its continued revitalization, is seeking corporate and financial partners. By partnering with corporations and financial institutions, there will be opportunities to achieve and expand upon the goals that have already been established in the CB5 2000 Development Plan. This plan, prepared by CB 5 and the Bronx office of the Department of City Planning, articulated the following goals:

- restoring the community’s housing stock which had been devastated by years of neglect and abandonment,
- revitalizing the community’s business districts, some of which had high vacancy rates and disinvestments,
- improving the existing neighborhood parks in the community,
- increasing the number of local recreational opportunities for youth and the elderly in a district which had long been underserved,
- addressing City investment in local streets and step-streets,
- making specific recommendations relative to the City-held parcels within the district for housing and open space,
- making specific recommendations relative to designating portions of the district as a historic resource,
- recommending development of an esplanade along the Harlem River.

Many of these goals have been met over the past 12 years. The community’s housing stock has been supplemented by thousands of new and rehabbed units, new stores are evident along the community’s commercial thoroughfares, and vacancy rates have been lowered, neighborhood parks have been improved, and a number of new ones have been constructed, and the City has created a task force specifically aimed at renovating and maintaining step streets.
In order to build on the successes of the past ten years, Community Board #5 is now preparing a section 197-a Plan. This Plan will update background information on Community District #5 as a setting for analyses and detailed recommendations relative to the community’s commercial areas, transportation, open space, recreation, community facilities and other infrastructure, and housing stock.

2. Building on the Present

A number of housing and other projects are moving forward within or immediately adjacent to CB #5 at this time. These include the following, which is currently being constructed:

- Redevelopment of the Caldor’s (former Alexander’s) site at the intersection of Fordham Road and the Grand Concourse with retail uses on the ground floor, and office and educational use above. Offices and educational facilities of Local 1199, the health workers’ union, will be housed here.

Projects for which funding has already been committed include:

- the University Woods environmental education center, for which $100,000 has already been earmarked by the Borough President’s office for design;
Bronx Community Board #5  Morris Heights / University Heights / South Fordham /Mount Hope

Section 197-a Plan Phase 1 Report

- the $7.2 million rehabilitation of the former Hebrew Institute at Rev. Martin L. King, Jr. Blvd. and Tremont Avenue as a recreation center sponsored by the Kips Bay Boy’s and Girl’s Club.

The following projects are currently in planning:

- A 1,000-unit rehabilitation of existing housing units in southern portions of the district. Known as University Consolidated, the first phase of this project will involve the rehabilitation of 200 units of housing along University Avenue / Rev. Martin L. King, Jr. Blvd. and Macomb’s Road at a total cost of between $23 and $26 million. Rehabilitation of these units will be likely to be overseen by the City Department of Housing Preservation and Development, which will allow a portion to be offered for sale as cooperatives, and others rented to households with moderate and middle incomes. The second phase of this project will involve rehabilitation, by the NYC Housing Authority, of 800 existing rental housing units in projects administered by the Housing Authority in this same area. The rehabilitation of currently vacant units will increase the number of households in the district, thereby increasing the level of disposable income available to area businesses.

- A 250,000 retail project bordered by 225th Street, Broadway, the Major Deegan Expressway, and the Harlem River with CB #7 to the north. This mall is expected to include a Target discount variety store.

Based on the experience of other community districts, the Plan is expected to take between one and three years to complete. Funds will be needed for data collection and analyses, commercial streetscape and waterfront studies, organization of interviews and public forums, evaluation of the potential for a light rail facility along Fordham Road to ease congestion, and to provide an attractive connection between Fordham Landing (where waterborne transportation may be considered) and area destinations/ attractions, and the development of other economic development strategies.
The Community Board has already committed $15,000 to begin planning activities, and to establish a foundation for the Plan. The Board views this initial contribution to the effort as a means of leveraging funding sources.
Specific Activities

3. Data Collection and Analysis

As part of the section 197-a Plan effort, information will be gathered on existing physical, geographic, institutional, business and human resources within CB #5. Demographic information relative to CB #5’s population and households will be presented, along with information relative to existing employment and poverty rates, and social service utilization. Health statistics will also be presented as appropriate.

To the extent analyses and/or support from the NYC Department of City Planning’s central office (i.e., Population, and/or Economic Development divisions), and the Bronx borough office can be provided, these will be utilized. Support will also be solicited at State and Federal levels. To the extent information and/or support can be provided from other City agencies, such as the Department of Aging, or the Bronx Borough President’s office, these will be utilized.

Information will be gathered relative to commercial and industrial establishments within CB#5. As appropriate, business establishments outside of the district will also be discussed. Significant sources of employment and activity in the public and not-for-profit sector will be identified.

The overall health and condition of the Community Board’s commercial nodes and strips will be analyzed and evaluated. Information will be garnered from interviews with Community Board members and personnel, local business leaders, and a survey of the community’s commercial activity areas. Data on sales revenues, commercial vacancy rates, and leasing trends will be gathered.

As a starting point, commercial areas within Community Board #5 will be visited and conditions in each reviewed.

Each of these areas will be surveyed, and information collected on existing retailers. Individual stores in these centers will be identified. In addition to noting the location, type and target niche (quality) of a retailer, the function, if any, of the retailer in the center will be noted, as will other attributes of the commercial area. These features include vacancy and appearance; evidence of recent investment; evidence of disinvestment, deferred maintenance, under-utilization of retail spaces; proximate land uses; constraints on existing commercial activity or growth; proximity of similar retailing opportunities; the nature of the commercial area (i.e., primarily the sale of convenience goods and personal services; or comparison goods, apparel and related, discount merchandise, food and drink / entertainment, etc.); the presence of large department or variety stores, or other anchors; and proximity to transportation options.
Data relative to the pool of existing jobs within CB#5 will be provided including discussion of the types of jobs available, wages / salaries and employment / industry trends. If available, information from the 2002 Census of Business will be included.

4. Community Vision

A Community Visioning process will be facilitated beginning with a targeted questionnaire, and proceeding with follow-up interviews. Public forums will be organized as key topics are identified. Business leaders, elected officials, social service and education providers, City agencies, community leaders and clergy, block and building association leadership, and property owners and residents will be invited to provide input.

This process will seek to involve as much of the community in the planning process as possible. Issues confronting the population in CB #5 will be identified and prioritized. The need for additional community facilities, such as schools, or facilities for the youth population, will be gauged. Vacant sites will be inventoried, and input will be invited as to their use and re-use. The waterfront and the community’s commercial districts would be a primary focus of the planning effort. Public input will be crucial to the planning of these areas.

5. Issues Confronting the CB 5 Resident Population

While 2000 Census data relative to income has yet to be released, it is expected that data will show that CB #5 is home to an increasingly Hispanic, low to moderate income population. Issues are expected to include literacy and education, English as a Second language, the availability of unskilled, and semi-
skilled jobs within the district and in its proximity, as well as maintaining access to affordable, quality housing and health care. Other long-standing issues such as the availability of and access to transportation and recreation resources within the district are expected to remain.
skilled jobs within the district and in its proximity, as well as maintaining access to affordable, quality housing and heath care. Other long-standing issues such as the availability of and access to transportation and recreation resources within the district are expected to remain.

The 197-a Plan will inventory the existing demographic and socioeconomic attributes of the district’s resident population, and will make recommendations as appropriate.

6. Harlem River Waterfront

a. Conditions along the Harlem River shoreline will be inventoried. This will include land use, and shoreline condition. As applicable, existing hazardous / toxic conditions will be documented based on a review of existing Federal and State agency information.

b. Large tracts will be evaluated for appropriate use.

c. Specific recommendations will be made relative to Roberto Clemente State Park, River Park Towers, and to implement Community Board #5’s existing Harlem River Esplanade recommendations.

d. Waterborne transportation options will be identified and related to other Plan proposals.

e. Plans for waterfront sites in the abutting Bronx community district (4, 7 and 8) and Manhattan community district 12 will be identified and related to CB#5 conditions and Plan recommendations.
f. The Community Board will work with the Borough President’s office in order to facilitate implementation of the Borough President’s Regatta Park proposal as soon as possible within the district.

7. Commercial Revitalization and Development

a. Specific issues confronting each of the District’s neighborhood commercial areas (as listed earlier) will be identified.

As identified at this time, these areas will include the following:

- Grand Concourse/ Fordham Road
- Webster Avenue
- Jerome Avenue
- Burnside Avenue
- Featherbed Lane
- East 183rd Street
- Rev. Martin L. King Jr. Blvd./ East 176th Street/ West Tremont Avenue

b. Commercial vacancies and gaps in community commercial services will be identified.

c. Commercial organization / structure will be evaluated for each commercial area as appropriate (i.e., merchants’ associations, Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), Local Development Corporations (LDCs), etc.). Specific attention will be given to strategies used in neighboring areas, other sections of NYC, and in other urban areas. The resources of the Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation, the NYC Department of Business
Services, the Mayor’s office and the Borough President’s office will be reviewed for opportunities appropriate to each commercial area. Each organization/agency will be invited to participate as planning for each area proceeds.

Auto Use on Jerome Avenue

d. Specific attention will be directed to the Fordham Road commercial area and its existing anchors, pedestrian experience, traffic congestion, parking and loading, appearance, target market and variety of goods and services, etc. Fordham Road continues to be a regional commercial attraction.

Typical Conditions along Fordham Road
The development of a formal commercial organization of businesses along Fordham Road and its tributary commercial strips is already considered an important objective of the Plan.

Revitalization of the Loew’s Paradise Theater as a cultural / entertainment center is considered instrumental in increasing nighttime activity in this area, and reintroducing the Fordham Road area as an entertainment destination. As part of the Plan, efforts will be made to engage the owners of the Loew’s site and hasten the resolution of matters delaying implementation of the plans for this site, which have already been partially implemented.

Loew’s Paradise Theatre: Grand Concourse South of Fordham Road

e. The potential for a light rail facility connecting the Fordham Landing waterfront to area attractions/ destinations in nearby portions of Manhattan and the Bronx will be evaluated.
University Heights Bridge near Fordham Landing

Attractions in the immediate vicinity in the Bronx include the Bronx Zoo and the Botanic Gardens, Fordham University, Bronx Community College (formerly NYU’s uptown campus) with its Hall of Fame, the Belmont neighborhood (restaurants, ethnic foods, festivals, etc.), the Kingsbridge Veteran’s Administration Hospital, Poe Cottage, Orchard Beach and City Island. Attractions in nearby parts of Manhattan include the Cloisters, Fort Tryon and Inwood Hill Parks, Yeshiva University, the Dyckman House, and Columbia University’s Baker Field.
Hall of Fame of Great Americans at Bronx Community College

The Harlem River waterfront is expected to become a greater attraction over the next several years as water conditions continue to improve and the river once again becomes a major area recreational resource.

Harlem Riverfront, including Roberto Clemente State Park
8. Gateways into the Community

Specific attention will be given to improving the appearance of major gateways into the community, and to economic development at nodes such as the Jerome Avenue exit from the Cross Bronx Expressway (and entrances to the Expressway at other locations). These nodes are critical to first impressions upon arrival to the community.

9. Transportation

In addition to specific gateways, the current function and service levels of existing transportation resources in CB #5 will also be addressed. This will include a review and discussion of existing conditions along area roadways, including the Major Deegan Expressway, the Cross Bronx Expressway, Martin L. King, Jr. Blvd. (University Avenue), the Grand Concourse, Fordham Road, as well as other relevant area roadways that will be identified.
Other transportation resources will also be reviewed, including service levels at the Metro-North Hudson Line Commuter railroad station stops (Morris Heights, and University Heights) and the Metro-North Harlem Line Commuter railroad station stops (Fordham Road, Tremont Avenue), as well as conditions and service levels at existing NYCTA subway (B & D lines) and bus routes that serve the district.

10. Community Board Boundaries

The Plan will explore the possibility of extending the CB #5 boundaries to include the entirety of University Heights (i.e., East and West Fordham Road will form the entire northern boundary of the district).

11. Grand Concourse

Historically, the Grand Concourse Corridor has not provided large amounts of retail frontage except near the major retail destinations of 149th street and Fordham Road. In recent years however, retail uses have become more prominent in ground floor locations elsewhere along the Concourse, particularly at locations within Community Board #5.

Commercial conditions along the Grand Concourse will be evaluated with respect to non-conforming/non-complying uses and signage, which have become a problem in recent years in CB #5.
In addition to evaluating conditions in designated commercial districts along the Concourse near Fordham Road (i.e., south of Fordham to 183rd Street), commercial uses along the Grand Concourse will be evaluated in the context of existing supply and demand for retail and ground floor office space in the district, and uses traditionally allowed along the Concourse such as professional offices.

As appropriate, strategies will be considered to eliminate non-conforming / non-complying uses and to return existing commercial spaces to professional office or similar space, or housing; or to eliminate, reduce or regulate the aspects of the commercial uses considered to be most noxious to the character of the Concourse.
A recent report commissioned by Bronx Borough President’s Office to formulate design principles to guide refurbishment of the Grand Concourse. This report draws on boulevard design from around the world, as well as the original intentions of the designers of the Grand Concourse. Design principles outlined in this report will be incorporated into CB #5’s section 197a’s planning efforts.

12. Environmental Objectives

There are several environmental objectives associated with the proposed planning activities as well. These include determining whether or not existing vacant properties within CB #5 are listed as hazardous waste sites by Federal and State agencies. All vacant properties will also be visited to visually ascertain current conditions on each parcel.

Much of the City’s sanitary sewer infrastructure is combined with drainage infrastructure. Thus, during heavy storm events, when flows in the sewers increase several fold, flows are diverted to nearby rivers, in order to reduce the volume of water being sent to sanitary treatment plants. A problem is that sanitary sewage, which is mixed with the drainage, ends up being diverted as well. The sewers designed to allow these overflows to nearby rivers, are called “combined” sewers, and these overflows are called “combined sewer overflows”. A second environmental objective to be accomplished as part of the 197-a planning effort is to identify any combined sewer overflows (CSOs) along the Harlem River riverfront, and to identify and/or secure funding to correct these situations.
13. Fair Share

Low and moderate-income communities, and/or communities with relatively little political leverage often become the areas in which unpopular community facilities are sited. Such unpopular facilities include roadways serving regional traffic, alcoholism / substance abuse and mental health facilities, juvenile detention centers, and group homes and other residential facilities for adults and youth.

The 197-a planning effort will gauge the need for such facilities in CB #5 and adjacent community districts, and assess whether or not the number of facilities appears to be higher than will be expected through a fair share formula.

14. Next Steps

While the 197-a plan will take a comprehensive look at all aspects of the community, it will also define implementation strategies and a roadmap for achieving the community’s goals. In concert with a planning consultant, Community Board #5 has developed this first phase of the section 197-a Plan. A detailed schedule for the preparation of the plan is provided in chapter V herein; potential funding sources are discussed in chapter VI.

As we define specific goals and strategies, we look forward to working with financial institutions, corporations and government agencies to establish strategic public/private partnerships in order to maximize our effectiveness and success.
CHAPTER II: SNAPSHOT OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

1. Background

As shown below, the district's boundaries include the Harlem River on the west, Cross Bronx Expressway on the south, Webster Avenue on the east, and Hall of Fame Terrace, West 183rd Street and Fordham Road on the north.

Bronx CB #7 (Norwood, Belmont Park and Kingsbridge) abuts the district to the north, Bronx CB #6 (Belmont, East Tremont and West Farms) abuts the district on the east; Bronx CB #4 (Mount Eden, High Bridge, and the Concourse) abuts the district on the
south, and Manhattan CB #12 (Inwood, Washington Heights) lies opposite the district on the west side of the Harlem River.

2. Socioeconomic Background

Bronx County Population Change

After a steep drop in population between 1970 and 1980, the population of the Bronx has rebounded over the past 20 years, although overall population levels are still approximately 100,000 below the 1970 peak, as shown in the graph below.

![BRONX POPULATION CHANGE 1960-2000](image)

Source: Discovering the Bronx. Lehman College of the City University of New York

Population in the Bronx is projected to continue to increase over the next 10 to 20 years, as additional housing projects are contemplated, and additional apartments in the borough are rehabilitated.

Community Board #5 Population Change

As shown in Table 1 below, between 1980 and 2000, Bronx Community Board #5’s population mirrored that of the Bronx as a whole.
The population of Community Board 5 (CB #5) as a whole has increased over the past 20 years. In 1980, population in the district, after several years of abandonment and disinvestment, had reached a low of 107,997, as compared to 121,807 in 1970. Between 1980 and 2000, Community Board 5’s population increased by 18.8 percent to 128,313, and now represents approximately 9.7 percent of Bronx County’s total population.

The population in the neighboring community boards (CB 7, 6 and 4 in the Bronx, and 12 in Manhattan) also increased significantly during the 1980-2000 period.

As in the Bronx as a whole, population in the district is projected to increase over the next 10 to 20 years, as some additional housing projects are contemplated, and additional apartments are rehabilitated.

### Changes in Racial Composition 1990 to 2000

The following maps showing the racial and ethnic concentrations of Bronx blocks in 1990 and 2000 were prepared by Lehman College’s Bronx Data Center. The most significant changes with regard to Bronx CB #5 is the increase in the number of blocks where Hispanics comprised 75 percent or more of the population.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Bronx Community Board #5: Population Growth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>POPULATION</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source: NYC Department of City Planning</td>
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</table>

The following maps showing the racial and ethnic concentrations of Bronx blocks in 1990 and 2000 were prepared by Lehman College’s Bronx Data Center. The most significant changes with regard to Bronx CB #5 is the increase in the number of blocks where Hispanics comprised 75 percent or more of the population.
Racial-Ethnic Concentration
Bronx Blocks

Blocks with Population
of 10 or More

- N.H. Whites 75% +
- N.H. Whites 50-75%
- N.H. Blacks 75% +
- N.H. Blacks 50-75%
- Hispanics 75% +
- Hispanics 50-75%
- No Absolute Majority

Source: US Census

March, 2001
Lehman College – Bronx Data Center
Table 2 on the following page provides the numerical and percent change between 1990 and 2000 for total population, racial and ethnic populations, population under 18 and over 18, and the total number of housing units within Bronx Community District #5 in 1990 and 2000.

As shown in Table 2, the population in Bronx CB #5 increased by just under 10,000 persons between 1990 and 2000. The entire increase and more was composed of increases in the Hispanic population residing in CB #5. The Hispanic population in CB #5 increased by 11,736 persons between 1990 and 2000, increasing from 56.8 percent of the total population to 61.6 percent of the total. The majority of the remaining 38.4 percent are Black/African American Nonhispanic. While decreasing slightly between 1990 and 2000, this group continues to represent just under one third of CB #5’s population.
## Total Population by Mutually Exclusive Race and Hispanic Origin and Total Housing Units

### Bronx Community District #5, 1990 and 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>Change</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bronx Community District 5</strong></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Number</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Population</strong></td>
<td>118,435</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>128,313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonhispanic of Single Race:</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Nonhispanic</td>
<td>2,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black/African American Nonhispanic</td>
<td>45,379</td>
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<td>Asian or Pacific Islander Nonhispanic</td>
<td>2,172</td>
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<tr>
<td>American Indian and Alaska Native Nonhispanic</td>
<td>444</td>
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<tr>
<td>Some Other Race Nonhispanic</td>
<td>628</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hispanic Origin</td>
<td>67,312</td>
<td>56.8</td>
<td>79,048</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Population Under 18 Years</strong></td>
<td>42,380</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>45,912</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nonhispanic of Single Race:</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Nonhispanic</td>
<td>560</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>637</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black/African American Nonhispanic</td>
<td>15,633</td>
<td>36.9</td>
<td>14,254</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asian or Pacific Islander Nonhispanic</td>
<td>589</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>561</td>
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<td>American Indian and Alaska Native Nonhispanic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Some Other Race Nonhispanic</td>
<td>320</td>
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<td>Hispanic Origin</td>
<td>25,108</td>
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<td><strong>Population 18 Years and Over</strong></td>
<td>76,055</td>
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<td>82,401</td>
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<td>Nonhispanic of Single Race:</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>White Nonhispanic</td>
<td>1,940</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black/African American Nonhispanic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asian or Pacific Islander Nonhispanic</td>
<td>1,583</td>
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<td>American Indian and Alaska Native Nonhispanic</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>210</td>
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<tr>
<td>Some Other Race Nonhispanic</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>615</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hispanic Origin</td>
<td>42,204</td>
<td>55.5</td>
<td>49,859</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Population</strong></td>
<td>118,435</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>128,313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 18 Years</td>
<td>42,380</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>45,912</td>
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<tr>
<td>18 Years and Over</td>
<td>76,055</td>
<td>64.2</td>
<td>82,401</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Housing Units</strong></td>
<td>39,082</td>
<td>42,691</td>
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**Source:** US Census Bureau
A Demographic Profile of Bronx CB #5 from the 2000 Census is provided in Appendix B.

**Post Enumeration Adjustments**

It is important to remember that communities such as Bronx CB #5 have been notoriously undercounted during recent Census enumerations.

As noted in the report *Discovering the Bronx* prepared by Lehman College of the City University of New York, “after the official 1990 census results were in place, a Post Enumeration Survey was conducted to include people missed in the original count. In the Bronx, an additional 62,000 people were ‘found,’ a gain of over five percent. Adjusted figures showed an undercount of over six percent for Blacks and Hispanics, while the non-Hispanic White population was actually overcounted.” It was determined during the 1990 Post Enumeration Survey that areas within Bronx CB #5 were undercounted by between five and 8.65 percent.

While Census coverage was expected to improve during the 2000 Census, it is still likely that some of the Bronx CB #5 population was missed. As additional data is released, it will become clear whether an undercount was likely.

**Vital Statistics**

During the 1990s, the absolute number of births along with the birth rate, and the number of deaths and death rate declined substantially in Community Board #5. Perhaps most striking, as seen in Table 3 below, is the 72 percent drop in the infant mortality rate. Total infant deaths in 1999 were less than half the number in 1990, even with an increase in the district population.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vital Statistics Comparison</th>
<th>Bx CB #5</th>
<th>Bronx</th>
<th>NYC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1990</strong></td>
<td><strong>1999</strong></td>
<td><strong>1990</strong></td>
<td><strong>1999</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Births (Number)</td>
<td>3,650</td>
<td>2,658</td>
<td>26,281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Births (Per 1,000)</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>21.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deaths (Number)</td>
<td>766</td>
<td>583</td>
<td>11,983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deaths (Per 1,000)</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant Mortality (Number)</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant Mortality (Per 1,000)</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: NYC Department of Health

**Public Assistance**

As shown in Table 4 on the following page, levels of public assistance to households within Bronx CB #5 generally declined between 1994 and 2000. A substantial increase was recorded in Medicaid recipients, with a less substantial increase recorded in Supplemental Security Income recipients. However, sharp declines were recorded for those receiving public assistance such as Aid to Families with Dependent Children, and Home Relief. Overall, the percentage of
the population receiving public assistance within Bronx CB #5 declined by 25 percent between 1994 and 2000.

Table 4: 
Bronx Community District #5 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INCOME SUPPORT</th>
<th>1994</th>
<th>2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Assistance (AFDC, Home Relief)</td>
<td>49,917</td>
<td>27,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplemental Security Income</td>
<td>8,000</td>
<td>9,587</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicaid Only</td>
<td>8,190</td>
<td>16,232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Persons Assisted</td>
<td>66,107</td>
<td>53,569</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of Population Assisted</td>
<td>55.8</td>
<td>41.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: NYC Human Resources Administration

3. Land Use and Zoning

Existing land use conditions within Bronx CB #5, as compiled by the NYC Department of Finance and NYC Department of City Planning in 1999, are shown on the following page.

Table 5: 
Community Board #5 Land Use Distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use</th>
<th># of Lots</th>
<th>% of Total Lots</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-2 Family Residential</td>
<td>1,199</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-family Residential</td>
<td>1,050</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Residential &amp; Commercial</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial &amp; Office</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial &amp; Manufacturing</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation &amp; Utility</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Facility &amp; Institutional</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Space &amp; Outdoor Recreation</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking Facilities</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant Land</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,327</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Total percentage of lot areas may exceed the sum of individual land use categories since lots classified as “other/miscellaneous”, such as land under water, are included in the totals but excluded from the categories.

Source: NYC/DCP & NYC Department of Finance

Zoning

Zoning maps for Bronx Community Board #5 are provided in Appendix C.

The following excerpt from the CB5 2000 Development Plan remains valid today:
The area with the lowest density is along the western ridge of the district – just before the steep drop-off to the Harlem River – known as Morris / University Heights. Here the zoning ranges from R5 (typically 2 and 3-family row houses and small apartment buildings) to R7-1 (typically medium-density apartment houses common in many sections of the Bronx.) The Jerome Avenue valley, the Grand Concourse ridge, and the western side of the Webster Avenue valley are relatively homogeneous in residential character and density. Here the zoning is R7-1 and R8 (exemplified in the type of development found along the Grand Concourse.) These areas are known as South Fordham in the northern section of the district, and Mount Hope in the southeast."
Table 5 provides a distribution of land use within Bronx CB #5 by number of lots.
4. Transportation

Bronx Community Board #5 is easily accessed from the regional roadway network via the West 179th Street (northbound), and Fordham Road exits of the Major Deegan Expressway, which travels north and south along the community’s western boundary. The Board is also easily accessed from the Cross Bronx Expressway via the Webster Avenue, and Jerome Avenue, exits. From Manhattan, the Board is accessed via the Washington Bridge which crosses from Martin L. King, Jr. Blvd. (University Avenue) to West 181st Street in Manhattan.

Major north-south roadways traversing the district include Martin L. King Jr. Blvd (University Avenue), Jerome Avenue, the Grand Concourse, and Webster Avenue. Major east-west roadways include Tremont Avenue, Burnside Avenue, and Fordham Road.

The Hudson division of the Metro North commuter train line, and accompanying Amtrak regional rail lines are located along the district’s western boundary adjacent to the Harlem River. The Harlem division of the Metro North commuter train lie just east of the district’s eastern boundary. This is particularly important as commutation to employment centers in Westchester County has become more important in recent years. Fordham Plaza, adjacent to CB #5’s northeastern corner, has become a major hub of commutation activity.

The district is served by the IND B and D lines which travels beneath the Grand Concourse and have stops at 174th – 175th Streets, Tremont Avenue, 182nd – 183rd Streets and Fordham Road. The district is also served by the IRT #4 line which travels above Jerome Avenue and has stops at 176th Street, Burnside Avenue, 183rd Street and Fordham Road.

The district is served by the following bus routes, all operated by the NYC Transit Authority:

| #3 University Avenue (MLK, JR. Blvd.) | #41 Webster Avenue |
| #32 Jerome, Morris Avenues | #40 Burnside Avenue |
| #1 Grand Concourse | #42 Burnside Avenue |
| #2 Grand Concourse | #18 Macombs Road, Sedgwick Avenue, Undercliff Avenue |
| #12 Fordham Road | #36 Tremont Avenue |
5. Recreation and Open Space

Over the past 15 years, a number of pocket parks have been constructed, and a number of playgrounds have been renovated in Bronx Community District #5. Roberto Clemente State Park’s 25 acres along the Harlem River are also a relatively recent addition to the community’s recreation and open resources. Nevertheless, Bronx Community District #5 continues to have fewer than one acre of recreation / open space per 1,000 residents.

The NYC Department of City Planning prepared a report entitled Recreation and Open Space in New York City: The Bronx, in the Spring of 1995. In the report, population to parkland ratios are computed for each community district in relation to parkland administered by the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation. Based on this report, Bronx CB #5 had 0.19 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. It should be noted that this report relied on the district’s 1990 population; with an increase of approximately 10,000 residents through 2000, and little new parkland added to the inventory, the ratio has only become lower.

Recreation and open space resources are listed in Appendix A: Selected Facilities & Program Sites in New York City: The Bronx (1999 edition). Appendix E provides a graphic depiction of the parkland to population ratio within CB #5 and other Bronx community boards. Appendix E also provides specific information relative to the amount of parkland within CB #5 and the other Bronx community boards.

An excerpt from the City’s Greenway Plan is included in Appendix F. Three greenways are planned within CB #5, including the Harlem River Trail (a portion of which is currently usable), the Aqueduct / University Greenway, and the Grand Concourse Greenway. Water crossings are also located within the district at Washington Bridge, and in proximity to the district at University Heights, and High Bridge.

Finally, an excerpt is provided in Appendix G from Places for People, a 1976 publication in which River Park Towers, and Roberto Clemente State Park were highlighted as examples. Text and illustrations included in this publication depict the original intent for the Harlem riverfront within Bronx CB #5, as envisioned in the mid 1970s.

6. Social Services

The following social services are also listed in Appendix A: Selected Facilities & Program Sites in New York City: The Bronx (1999 edition):

1. **Schools**, including public and private elementary and secondary schools, colleges, universities and instituitions granting post-secondary degrees.

2. **Recreational and Cultural Facilities**, including facilities administered by the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation, federal monuments and
parklands administered by the National Park Service, state parks managed by the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, conservation areas administered by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, the branch libraries of the New York Public Library and related systems, and cultural institutions receiving City support via the Department of Cultural Affairs.

3. **Public Safety and Criminal Justice Facilities**, including FDNY facilities, ambulance stations, training facilities, NYPD facilities, NYC Housing Authority police service areas; city, state and federal correction facilities, including juvenile detention facilities and group homes; and state and federal court buildings.

4. **Health Facilities**, including public and private hospitals, nursing homes, and ambulatory general health care services.

5. **Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Facilities**

6. **Mental Health Facilities and Programs**

7. **Mental Retardation and Development Disabilities Facilities and Programs**

8. **Residential and Day Care Facilities for Children**

9. **Residential Facilities and Day programs for Adults and Families**

10. **Facilities for Seniors**
CHAPTER III: NEEDS ASSESSMENT

A questionnaire has been developed to assist in performing a needs assessment. The questionnaire would be targeted at a specific population in CB #5 involved with the day to day administration of educational, social service and community agencies, church and religious organizations, Community Board members and staff, and others.

The questionnaire is provided on the following pages. The questionnaire has been designed to utilize a ranking system. Results may then be tabulated and analyzed by statistical means.
Community Visioning Questionnaire

Thank you for your time. The following will be used to develop a list of critical issues, and to develop a series of specific recommendations.

1. What do you view as the most pressing issue facing Community Board 5 today? Please rank the top 4, with 1 being the most important.

   Housing quality    ___    Lack of youth services    ___
   Crime             ___    Education                   ___
   Drug abuse        ___    Lack of senior services    ___
   Availability of social services ___    Housing affordability ___
   Commercial revitalization ___    Jobs / Economic development ___
   Availability of health services ___    Lack of parks / Open space ___
   Pollution / Rodents ___    Park maintenance        ___
   Other: ______________________________________________________________________
   _____

2. 2000 Census data show the district to have 128,313 inhabitants as compared to 118,435 in 1990, and 107,997 in 1980. In your view, has the introduction of new inhabitants contributed to or adversely affected any of the following?

   Youth services   ___    Class size / overcrowding at district schools    ___
   Crime rate      ___    Lack of on-street parking                    ___
   Senior services ___    Overcrowded housing                        ___
   Quality and/or availability of social services ___    Housing affordability ___
   Quality and/or availability of health services ___    Adequacy of parks / open space ___
   Overcrowded transportation systems ___    Availability of day care    ___
   Other: ______________________________________________________________________
   _____
3. **During the last two Censuses, the City has argued that Latino and black areas of the City, such as CB #5, have been undercounted.** Based on your experience, has there been an undercount of CB #5 neighborhoods as part of the 2000 Census?

Yes [ ]  No [ ]

4. **For each of the following transit services, please indicate whether service levels are adequate or need improvement. Below each you may elaborate.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Description</th>
<th>Adequate [ ]</th>
<th>Needs improvement [ ]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IRT #4 elevated / subway line</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IND B, D subway line</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NYCTA bus lines</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3: University Avenue (MLK, JR. Blvd.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#41: Webster Avenue</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#32: Jerome, Morris Avenues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#40: Burnside Avenue</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#1: Grand Concourse</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#42: Burnside Avenue</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2: Grand Concourse</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#18: Macombs Road, Sedgwick Avenue, Undercliff Avenue</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12: Fordham Road</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#36: Tremont Avenue</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Given the increasing levels of vehicle ownership and usage in the Bronx parking may often be difficult to find, particularly in commercial areas. Please indicate below the commercial areas in which you feel parking is inadequate?

___ Grand Concourse/ Fordham Road
___ Webster Avenue
___ Jerome Avenue
___ Burnside Avenue
___ Featherbed Lane
___ East 183rd Street
___ Rev. Martin L. King Jr. Blvd./ East 176th Street/ West Tremont Avenue

___ Other:_______________________________________________________
For questions 6 through 12, except where a Yes or No answer is requested, please rate each choice according to the following scale:

1 = Very Important  
2 = Important  
3 = Somewhat Important  
4 = Not Important

You may also provide your own choice, and rate it as indicated in each question.

6. Economic development is one of the issues highlighted in the most current Community District Needs Statement (Fiscal Years 2002/2003). This theme has been articulated for many years in CB 5’s Needs Statements. How do you believe this issue can best be addressed?

   - Investment in adult occupational education / training ________
   - More formal links with area industrial enterprises such as Bathgate Industrial Park, Port Morris and Hunt’s Point Economic Development Zones ________
   - Investment in literacy / ESL ________
   - Availability of GED classes ________
   - Facilitate financing of expanded / start-up businesses ________
   - Other: ________________________ ________

7. Commercial revitalization is another issue highlighted in the most current Community District Needs Statement (Fiscal Years 2002/2003). This theme also has been articulated for years in CB 5’s Needs Statements. How do you believe this issue can best be addressed?

   - Assemble sites and attract new commercial investment ________
   - Seek funding / lobby City to make improvements to commercial districts ________
   - Make portions of existing strips into part-time / full-time pedestrian malls ________
   - Organize commercial areas / merchant’s associations ________
   - Organize commercial areas / Business Improvement Districts ________
   - Develop and fund specific commercial facade program ________
   - Reduce / eliminate retail commercial uses on Grand Concourse ________
   - Institute community patrolling along community commercial streets ________
   - Facilitate financing of expanded / start-up businesses ________
   - Other: ________________________ ________
8. It is increasingly being recognized that open space and recreation areas are vital to an individual’s development, community’s health and desirability as a place to live. During its last review of district conditions, Community Board 5 determined that it was difficult, particularly in its western neighborhoods, for people to get to area recreational resources. It was also evident at that time that recreational areas were too few and in need of investment. As of 1995, Bronx CB #5 continued to have a mere 0.19 acres of parkland for each 1,000 residents, among the lowest of all of the City’s community districts. What, in your view, continues to be needed?

Greater accessibility to community parks ___

Additional pocket parks ___

Additional recreation centers ___

Waterfront recreation ___

Recreation in concert with schools (i.e., after-school programs) ___

Other: _______________________________ ___

9. Approximately five percent of the District’s land area is currently vacant. Much of the land is in the form of small and medium sized lots distributed throughout the district. In the past, the Community Board has recommended that these areas be assigned to recreational / cultural uses. Since the mid 1980’s, a number of new recreational resources have been added to the district’s inventory. At this time, how do you believe that these vacant lands would be best used?

In-fill housing / multiple-family ___

In-fill housing / single or two-family ___

Natural space ___

Community gardens ___

Passive recreation space (i.e., benches, areas for small children, chess boards) ___

Active recreation space (i.e., playgrounds, ball courts playing fields, tennis courts, roller blading areas etc.) ___

Other: _________________________________ ___
10. Roberto Clemente State Park is located along the Harlem River in the district’s westernmost section. The Major Deegan Expressway is a significant obstruction as there are a limited number of crossings. Other than River Park Towers, the State Park is the only destination on the west side of the Expressway. In your view, is the Roberto Clemente State Park an underutilized resource?

Yes □ No □

How can Roberto Clemente Park better serve the CB #5 communities?

Better maintenance □
Increased programmed activities □
Additional water-related activities □
Better physical accessibility to area □
More facilities (i.e., picnicking, benches, ball courts) □
Better notification of programs / activities □
Improved safety □
Other: ______________________________________ □

11. The Roberto Clemente State Park is mapped along much of the district’s Harlem River waterfront. According to the most current land use map prepared by the NYC Department of City Planning, the waterfront is also home to River Park Towers, a large industrial use, and a large piece of vacant land. How do you believe the waterfront can best be integrated into the future CB 5 community?

Housing □
Natural space □
Transportation Link □
Passive recreation space (i.e., benches, areas for small children, chess boards) □
Active recreation space (i.e., playgrounds, ball courts, playing fields, tennis courts, roller blading areas etc.) □
Mixed use □
Other: ______________________________________ □
12. The total size of the district’s population under 18 increased between 1990 and 2000. How important are the following specific services to the district’s youth population?

Drug abuse prevention  ___

Sex education / planned parenthood  ___

Child rearing skills  ___

English as a Second Language  ___

Occupational education  ___

Job skills  ___

Other: ________________________  ___

13. Please take an opportunity to list any personal comments below. For example, should you feel an important community service is lacking in the district, please list it here. Should you feel some subject was overlooked in this questionnaire, you may also list that here.

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________
CHAPTER IV: BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Discovering the Bronx. Lehman College of the City University of New York.

   Comparison of Bronx demographics based on 1990 and 2000 Census data.


   New York State Comptroller H. Carl McCall prepared this report in early 2002. The report includes a host of statistical data on the Bronx in various economic-related topics. Comparisons are made with New York City’s other four boroughs. This compilation of information was intended to give a clear picture of the economic status within the Bronx.


   Proposal for a boathouse on the Manhattan side of the Harlem River just south of Sherman’s Creek (i.e., opposite Bronx CB #5) prepared in February, 1999.

4. 1999 Annual Report on Social Indicators; A compendium of statistical data that describe the economic, social, physical and environmental health of the city. NYC Department of City Planning.

   This report gauges the economic, social, physical and environmental health of the City of New York. The data collected covers the period from 1994-1998, providing a fairly current evaluation of the city.


   Listed in this report are selected facilities within the twelve community districts of the Bronx which are either operated, funded, licensed or certified by a government agency.


   The Department of City Planning prepared this quick reference highlighting existing recreational or open space within the Bronx. Location maps, identifying information and descriptions are provided for the various facilities.


197-a Plan Technical Guide. NYC Department of City Planning.

These documents provide background and guidance for the 197-a planning process.


2001 Atlas of City Property / The Bronx Community Districts 1 to 12. Department of City Planning & Department of Citywide Administrative Services.

Latest in a series of reports required under Section 204 of the NYC Charter. Along with Criteria for the Location of City Facilities (the Fair Share Criteria), the Statement of Needs is part of a planning process in which communities are informed at the earliest possible stage of the city’s needs for facilities and the specific criteria for selecting the locations of those facilities.

The Gazetteer of City Property (2001 Atlas of City Property), published in conjunction with the Citywide Statement of Needs, supplies information about the use and location of existing city-owned and leased properties.

As necessary, these reports and maps should be supplemented annually.


New York City Comprehensive Waterfront Plan; Reclaiming the City’s Edge. Department of City Planning, City of New York.


The Bronx Harlem River Plan. NYC Department of City Planning.

The Coastal Zone Boundary report includes a series of maps outlining New York’s coastal zone boundary.

These publications outline the past, and present conditions along New York City’s extensive waterfront.

The Comprehensive Waterfront Plan provides a recommended blueprint for future development along the entire City’s waterfront, while the second report...
provides an overall description and plan for the Bronx waterfront, and the third publication concentrates specifically on the Bronx’s Harlem River waterfront.

10. **CB5 2000 Development Plan.** Community District 5 (Bronx).

This document was prepared in the early 1990’s and includes recommendations in the following four critical areas: housing, commercial & economic development, open space & recreation facilities, and community facilities.

11. **Community District Needs; The Bronx, Fiscal Years 2002/2003.** Department of City Planning, City of New York.

Publication summarizing pertinent geographic and population data for all Bronx community districts, along with each district’s Statement of Needs for Fiscal Years 2002/2003.

12. **Waterfronts Alive; Tips for New York from Revitalized Shorelines Across North America.** Department of City Planning/ New York City.

This report suggests that we are at a very exciting turning point in our waterfront development. History has shown us how vital waterfronts have been to the development of civilization. This report outlines trends observed in the revitalization of other communities which may be applicable to the New York experience.

13. **Partnership for the Future; A 197-a Plan for the Revitalization of Bronx Community District #3.** Community Board 3/ Borough of the Bronx, New York City.

Originally presented by Bronx Community Board 3 in 1989, the Partnership of the Future was the city’s first adopted community board 197-a plan.


Detailed transportation recommendations for each segment of the region, and for specific long-term regional transportation goals are provided in this report prepared by this regional planning agency in the late 1990s.


This report provides a historical background of the Grand Concourse, one of New York City’s most significant boulevard, and the spine of activity in Bronx CB 5. Specific recommendations are offered which attempt to balance the need for a regional vehicular thoroughfare, with the residential, commercial, institutional and recreational activities which line it.
## CHAPTER V: POTENTIAL BUDGET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Budget (Range)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection / Existing Businesses: Proprietary Services</td>
<td>$5,000 to $10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windshield Survey: CB #5’s 7 Commercial Districts</td>
<td>$3,500 to $5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CB #5 Market Analysis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selected Merchant Interviews: CB #5’s 7 Commercial Districts</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Revitalization Activities: Administrative (i.e work with Bronx Overall Economic Development Corp., existing merchant associations, LDCs, BIDs, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate Potential for Light Rail Transit Along Fordham Road Corridor</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Streetscape Studies: Fordham Road Commercial Areas</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Streetscape Studies: 1 or 2 Other Commercial Strips</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Visioning: Targeted Questionnaire, Follow-up Interviews</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Visioning: Public Forums / CB Meetings</td>
<td>$10,000 to $15,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Harlem Riverfront: Inventory Existing Conditions / Analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Harlem Riverfront: Explanade Construction Recommendations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Harlem Riverfront: Identify Waterborne Transportation Options</td>
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<tr>
<td>Harlem Riverfront: Regatta Park (Work with BP)</td>
<td>$2,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Streetscape Studies: Fordham Road Gateway</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Streetscape Studies: Jerome Avenue Gateway</td>
<td>$12,000</td>
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<td>Streetscape Studies: MLK, Jr. (University Avenue) Gateway</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reconsider CB Boundaries</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grand Concourse: Noncomplying / Nonconforming Conditions Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grand Concourse: Strategy Development</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Concourse: Historic District Extension</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL (excluding light rail transit feasibility)</strong></td>
<td><strong>$148,000 to $164,500</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER VI: POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES


Additional potential funding sources include the following:

- Local banking institutions
- Local corporate partners
- TEA-21 funds
- Environmental Preservation bond funds; Clean Air, Clean Water Act funding
- Local elected officials discretionary funding