

# Flatbush African Burial Ground Remembrance and Redevelopment Task Force Meeting #6

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July 21<sup>st</sup> 2021



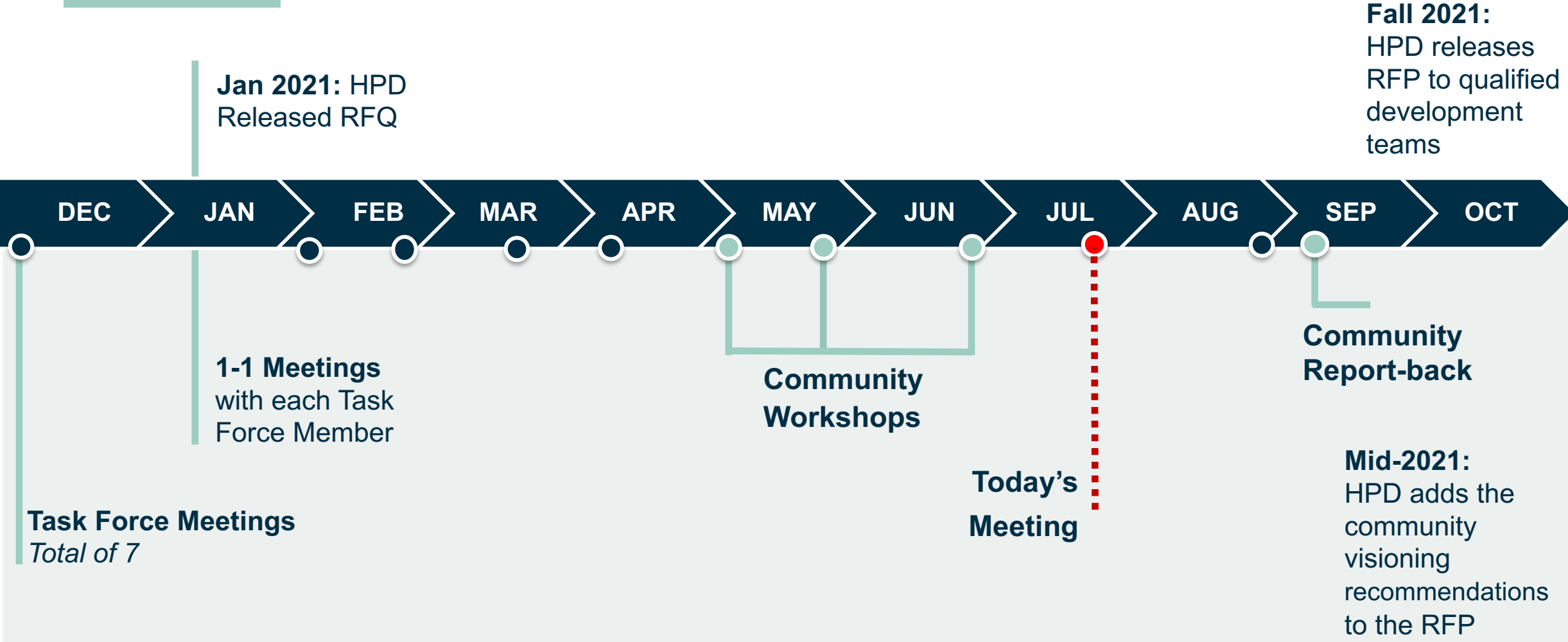
# Welcome

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## Goals for today's session:

- To intentionally frame and set expectations about the process to date and what's to come for the project.
  - To share an update on the public engagement process and high-level review of insights collected.
  - To outline the process of developing the report and to build clarity on the process following the completion of the report.
- To hold meaningful discussions regarding the role and the relationship between the Community, the Task Force, the future Developer, and the City.
- To outline next steps.

# Project Timeline



# Zoom 101

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## Framing best practices for this platform.

- **The chat box is a great tool!** Use the chat box for questions, comments and thoughts.... This is a helpful space for discussion.
- **Please stay on mute** unless you are asking a question or in the breakout sessions. Trick: you can use the space-bar like a walkie-talkie.
- **We love seeing you!** If you are comfortable, please keep your video on. It helps me to see if you are nodding, confused... or looking to say something.

### IN FULL TRANSPARENCY

- We are currently recording
- We are currently livestreaming
- The recording, notes and presentations will be hosted on the FABGRR website after the meeting

# Descendant Community Research Update

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## Overview

- Historical Perspectives, Inc. (HPI) has been supporting the ongoing archaeological and descendant community research for this stage of the project since December 2020.
- Their research has focused on answering the following questions:
  - *What was the history of the Flatbush African Burial Ground, where exactly was it located, and what dates was it in use by the local community?*
  - *Who were the people buried in the Flatbush African Burial Ground and can they be identified in historical records or by family members?*
  - *Who are the descendants of the people buried in the Flatbush African Burial Ground and how can they be identified and contacted? Which populations constitute the Descendant Community in Flatbush?*
  - *Based on the results of the current work, what are the avenues for future research and outreach?*
- HPI presented their research at Task Force Meetings 1 and 2, and the first Community Workshop. The City team hosted site history breakout rooms at Community Workshops 2 and 3.

# Descendant Community Research Update

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## Status Update

- HPI has not uncovered new information about the Flatbush African Burial Ground since the last Task Force meeting.
  - Two definitive names have been found to date of people who were buried at the Flatbush African Burial Ground: **Phyllis Jacobs** and **Eve**.
  - Lineal descendants of these women or others buried at the Flatbush African Burial Ground have not been identified. There is a public notice on Ancestry.com that will remain active in order to help identify lineal descendants in the future.
  - This phase of Historical Perspectives' research is wrapping up in the coming weeks with the release of their research report.

# Descendant Community Research Update

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## Research Report

- HPI's research report will include detailed information about their research questions, methodology, research results, and conclusions and recommendations.
  - It also will include appendixes that are even more in-depth, including resources reviewed and consulted, maps and figures, and records.
- The report will be made public on LPC's website and [fabgtaskforce.nyc](http://fabgtaskforce.nyc) in the coming weeks (August). The Task Force will be notified when it is available.
  - The report will recommend that research continue about the Flatbush African Burial Ground and the people buried there.
- The **archaeological research into the Flatbush African Burial Ground is ongoing and evolving**, and primary and secondary source documents may become accessible over time.

# Task Force Members

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## Co-Chairs

- **Eric Adams**, Brooklyn Borough President
- **Mathieu Eugene**, District 40 Council Member

## Task Force Members

- **Dr. Ben Talton**, Author and Professor of African History from Temple University
- **Carol Reneau**, Community Board 17
- **Chantal Eugene Desdunes**, Erasmus Hall High School for Youth and Community Development
- **Kathy De Meij**, CAMBA
- **Lauren Collins**, Flatbush Ave. BID & Church Avenue BID
- **Naima Oyo**, Ifetayo Cultural Arts Academy
- **Natiba Guy-Clement**, Center for Brooklyn History at Brooklyn Public Library
- **Robin Redmond**, Executive Director of Flatbush Development Corp.
- **Pastor De Lafayette Awkward**, Flatbush Reformed Church
- **Rev Sheldon N.N. Hamblin**, St. Paul's Church in the Village of Flatbush
- **Ron Schweiger**, Brooklyn Borough Historian
- **Roslyn Joinvil**, Office of District 40 Council Member
- **Ryan Lynch**, Office of Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams
- **Samantha Bernardine**, Erasmus Hall High School for Youth and Community Development
- **Shawn Campbell**, Community Board 14
- **Tyrone McDonald**, Neighborhood Housing Services of Brooklyn CDC Inc. (NHS Brooklyn)



# City Team in Attendance

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- **Josh Saal**, Deputy Director of Predevelopment, HPD
- **Uriah Johnson**, Project Manager in Neighborhood Planning, HPD
- **Perris Straughter**, Assistant Commissioner for Planning & Predevelopment, HPD



- **Lena Ferguson**, Senior Project Manager, Neighborhood Strategies, NYCEDC



- **Amanda Sutphin**, Director of Archaeology, LPC

# Past Meeting Resources

## Staying up-to-date on this project

- The recording, notes and presentations for Meetings #1-5 and the 3 Community Workshops are currently hosted on the project website:

[fabgtaskforce.nyc](https://fabgtaskforce.nyc)



Get Involved

The success of the Flatbush African Burial Ground Remembrance and Redevelopment Task Force will rely on the involvement of the larger Flatbush community to support the shaping of the final recommendations. Opportunities will include:

- **Viewing livestreamed Task Force meetings** - To ensure an open and transparent process, all Task Force meetings will be livestreamed on this site, with meeting minutes and project documents being shared here as well. This page will be updated as recordings and documents become available.
- **Completing a project questionnaire** - To maximize input, this spring, an online questionnaire will be shared across the community to solicit feedback on the future of the project.
- **Attending workshops** - Two virtual public workshops will take place this spring to gather input on how best to honor the past and identify opportunities for the new development to support the community.

Historical Perspectives, Inc. (HPI) is seeking **public insight to help uncover more of the site's history** and more fully document the enslaved population of Flatbush. If you have information to share, please [fill out this form](#) to support this ongoing research effort.

### Task Force Livestreams

Watch livestreamed Flatbush African Burial Ground Remembrance and Redevelopment Task Force meetings below:



March 24, 2021 - Focus: Affordable housing, non-residential uses, including youth space and programming, and public engagement.

[Contact the Project Team](#)

### Task Force Meeting Records

To make the Task Force's process as accessible as possible, records of the Task Force

# Community Engagement Overview

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## Multi-prong Outreach Approach

- Digital materials shared across channels (newsletters, social media, direct emails)
- Banners on the site
- In-person distribution in the neighborhood
- Presentations with community-based organizations

## 3 Community Meetings

- 70+ attendees at each community meeting

## Community Questionnaire

- 190+ completed, both online and in person

# Community Workshops

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## **Workshop #1:**

Wednesday, May 5<sup>th</sup>

Focus on honoring and memorializing the site's history and archaeological findings.

## **Workshop #2:**

Wednesday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>

Focus on the future affordable housing and non-residential amenities.

## **Workshop #3:**

Wednesday, June 30<sup>th</sup>

Focus on the site and building's design.



# Community Workshop #1 Discussions

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To hold meaningful discussions on the recommendations that honor the historical significance of the site and the archaeological findings.

## Discussion Topic 1:

**Honoring  
of the Site**

## Discussion Topic 2:

**Memorial Themes,  
Location & Design  
Elements**

## Discussion Topic 3:

**Sensitive  
Handling of  
Human Remains**

*All insights are currently being analyzed alongside the insights from the community questionnaire and Task Force to support the development of the community visioning recommendations.*

# Community Workshop #2 Discussions

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To hold meaningful discussions regarding affordable housing needs and different non-residential programming the building could include for youth and the community at large.

## Discussion Topic 1:

### Flatbush Housing Needs

(including response to Neighborhood data)

## Discussion Topic 2:

### Prioritized Population for the Affordable Housing Program

## Discussion Topic 3:

### Non-Residential Amenities

(including ground floor & youth programming)

*All insights are currently being analyzed alongside the insights from the community questionnaire and Task Force to support the development of the community visioning recommendations.*

# Community Workshop #3 Discussions

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To hold meaningful discussions on the contextual design of the future project including site footprint, open space / memorialization and building design priorities.

## Discussion Topic 1:

**Open Space and  
Memorialization**

## Discussion Topic 2:

**Building Design  
Considerations**

## Discussion Topic 3:

**Public Space  
Amenities**

*All insights are currently being analyzed alongside the insights from the community questionnaire and Task Force to support the development of the community visioning recommendations.*

# Outreach Tracking Questionnaire

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**Please take a few minutes to complete the Outreach Tracking Questionnaire** (link in chat).

To appropriately document our outreach within the Flatbush community, we are looking to track how each Task Force member promoted participation in the three community workshops and the community questionnaires.



# Project Report Objectives

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**This process is to identify recommendations** to be included in the Request for Proposals (RFP) for the future project.

Honoring of the site recommendations:

- Memorialization
- The sensitive treatment and handling of human remains, if discovered in the future

Affordable housing recommendations:

- Populations served
- Non-residential amenities including youth programming
- Site layout and urban design

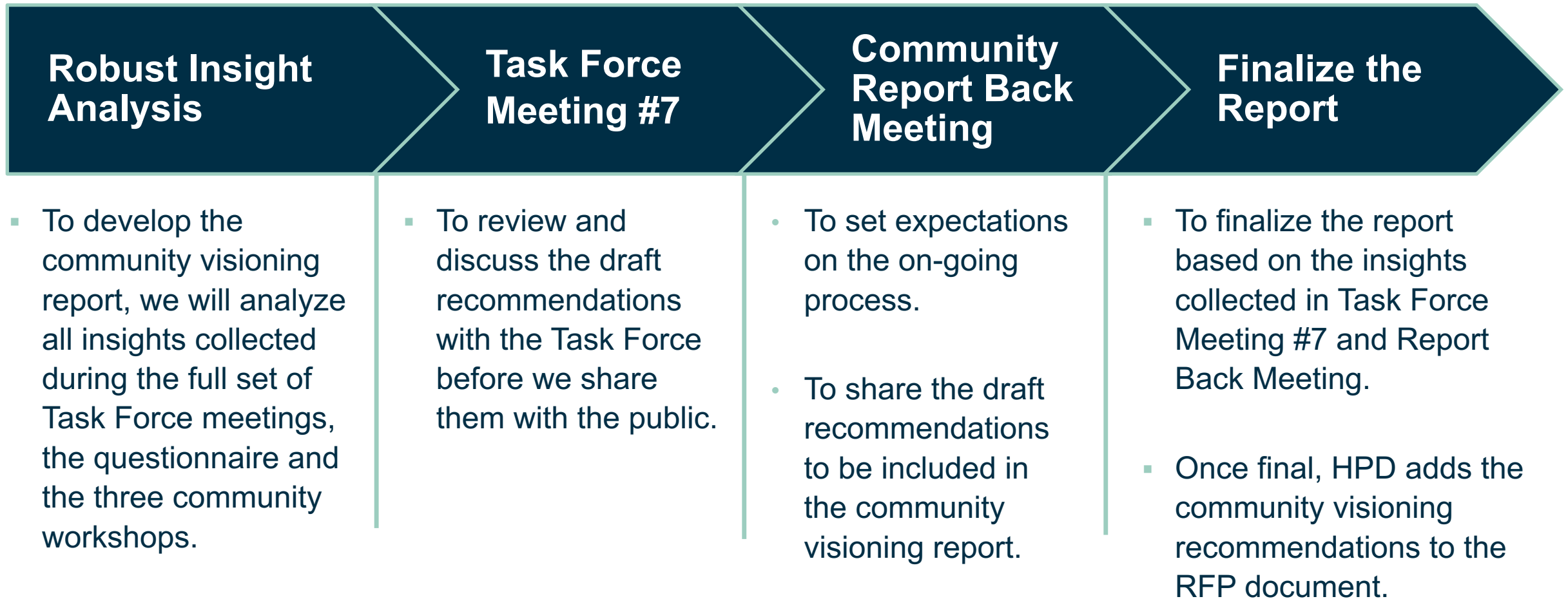
# Project Report Objectives

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- Based on the suggestion of the Task Force to ensure this process is more inclusive, the report will be based on **all insights** collected during the Task Force meetings, Community Workshops and the Questionnaire.
- As such, we are
  - adapting the framing of the report from a Task Force Recommendation Report into a **Community Visioning Report**.
  - **Refining recommendations** regarding the role and the relationship between the community, the Task Force, the Developer, and the City.

# Report Development Process



# Project Timeline



# Project Timeline



# Developer Selection Process

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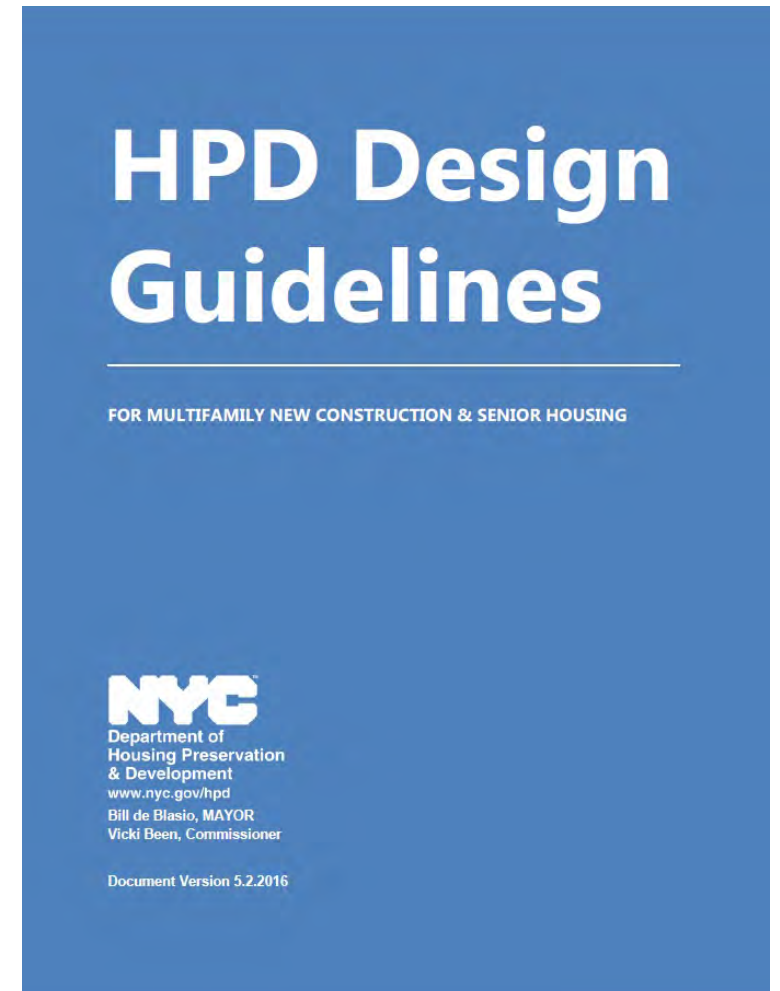
## Requirements

### Aligns with city-wide goals

- Increase access to affordable housing across neighborhoods
- Increase M/WBE and non-profit participation
- Sustainability and building performance (beyond code)

### Regulatory and legal requirements and obligations

- Financing rules
- Environmental requirements
- Building codes

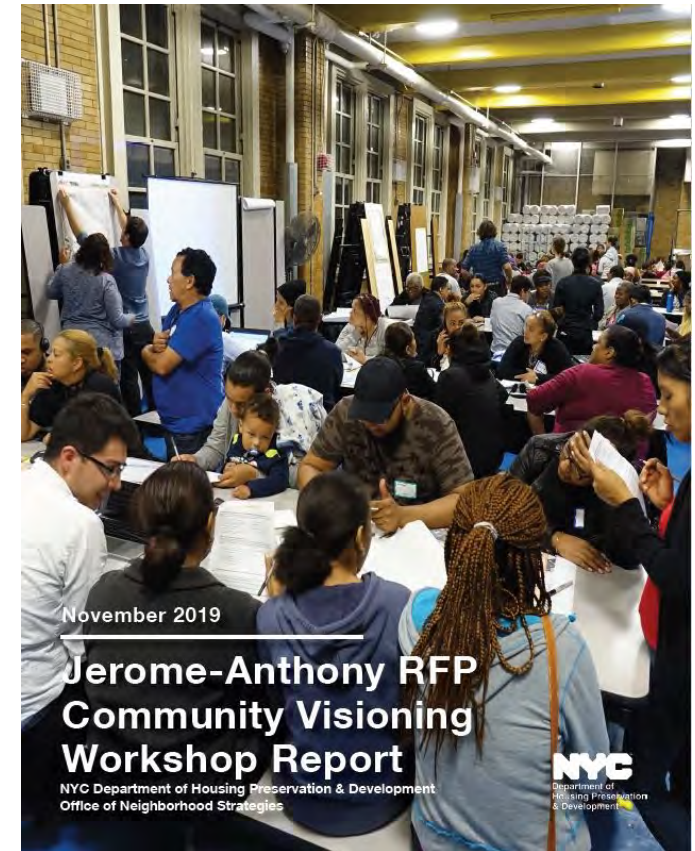


# Selection Process

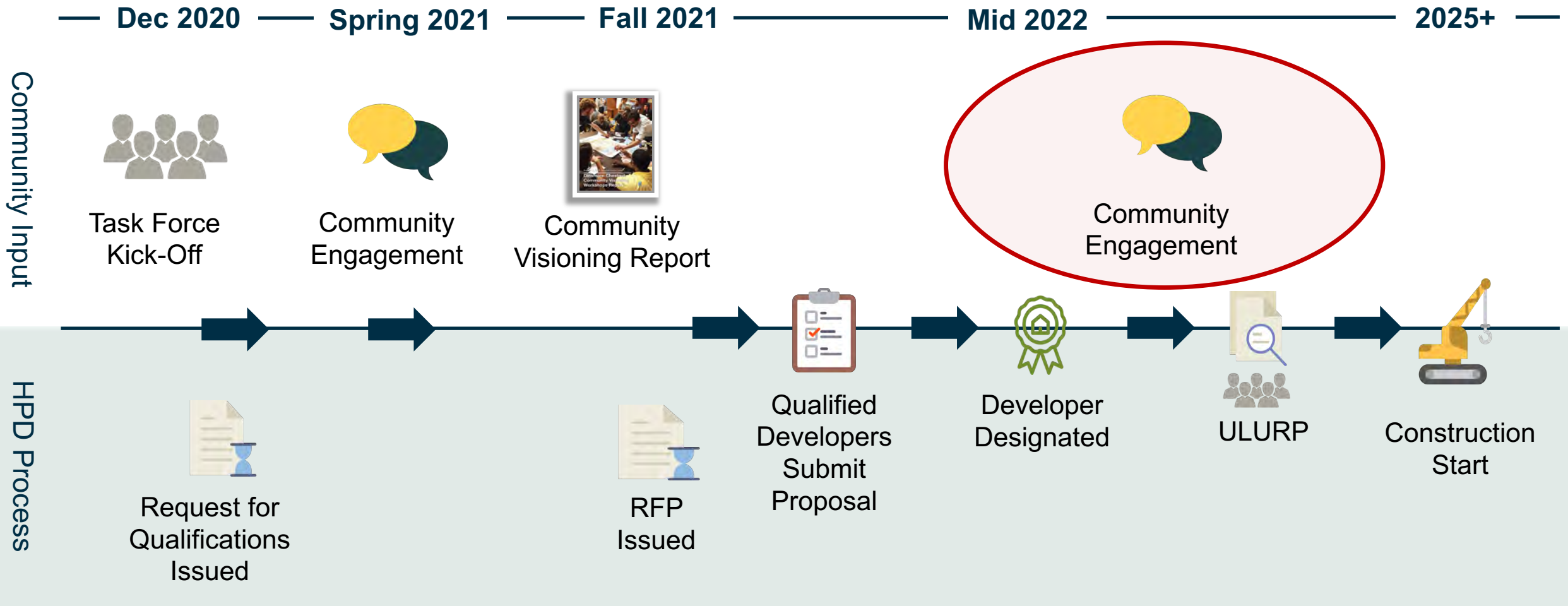
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## Criteria for Selection

- **Development Team Experience and Capacity**
- **Financing and Affordability**
- **Development Program and Community Development**
- **Design and Performance**
  
- **Responsiveness to community priorities identified through engagement and documented in community visioning report**
  - Memorialization priorities
  - Priorities for future site design, including open space
  - Affordable housing populations prioritized
  - Community facility programming that will meet community needs
  - Community engagement



# Project Timeline





# Questions

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How can we support your understanding of the community engagement process and report development?

## Process Notes:

- Feel free to use use the **CHAT box** to share all your questions.

# Break

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We will dive back into our discussion in 5 minutes.

# Harlem African Burial Ground Task Force Presentation

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# Questions

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**What questions do you have about the role and experience of the Harlem African Burial Ground Task Force?**

## **Process Notes:**

- Feel free to use use the **CHAT box** to share all your questions.

# Task Force Discussion

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We will dive into a discussion regarding the role and the relationship between the community, the Task Force, the Developer, and the City.

# Guidelines for Productive Conversation

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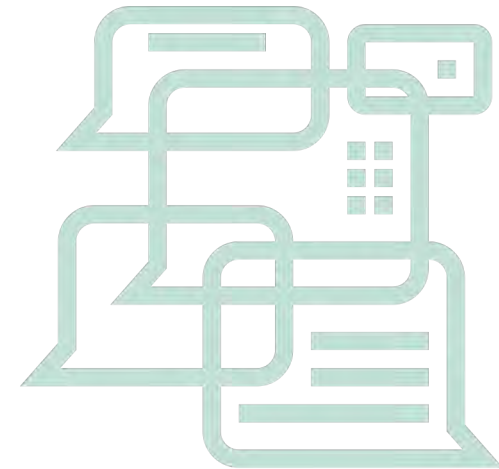
- Have empathy to, and awareness of, the unique perspectives in the virtual room.
- Being conscientious and acknowledging to the lens and perspective you speak of. Where possible, speak from the I. Acknowledge if you are speaking from your lived experience, the lens of your organization or an assumption.
- Assume the best intentions of your fellow group members. Be mindful not to make assumptions about others or their experiences.
- Be comfortable with discomfort as we together unlearn history related to slavery in this community, and be wary of oppressive, offensive or racialized language that may be triggering to others.

# Supporting the Process

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## Supporting the relationship between the Developer, the City and the Community.

- What does successful and transparent communication look like between the Task Force, the community, the City and the Developer?



# The Role of the Task Force

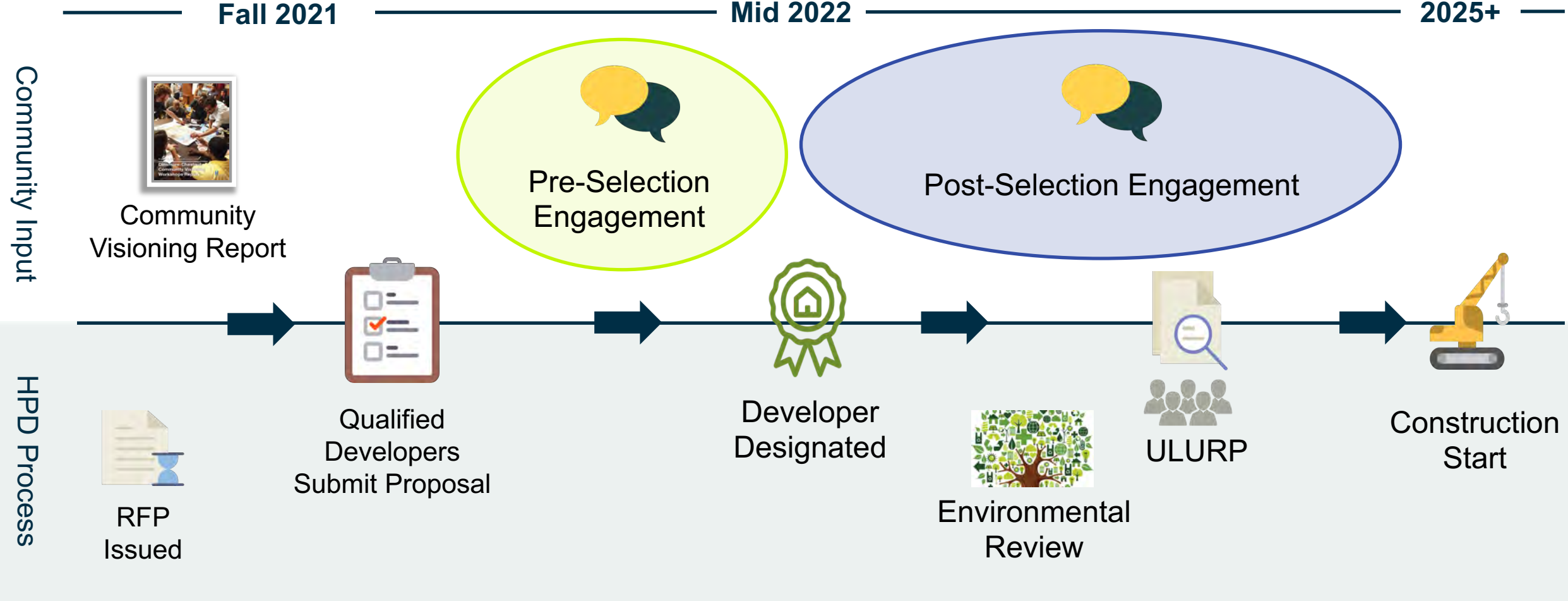
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**The Task Force can play a key role in the process, in an outreach or consultation role:**

- An Outreach Role is to establish and utilize communication channels for on-going outreach, awareness building and community involvement.
- A Consult Role is to provide community-based input and insights on key aspects of the project.



# Project Timeline



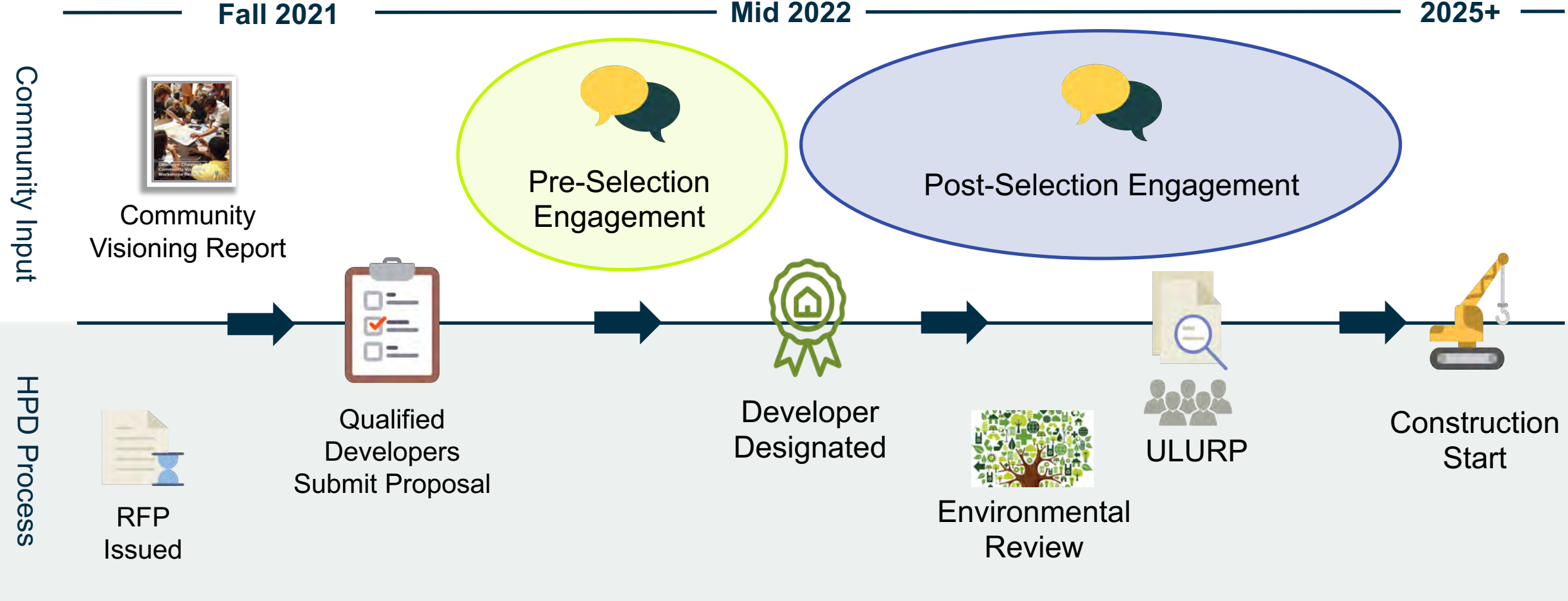
# Pre-Selection: Possible Task Force Roles

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Looking forward to this phase of the project, what opportunities, in addition to the ones listed below, do you see for the role of the Task Force?

- **Engagement**
  - Introduce and amplify additional community voices that can inform project
  - Lead outreach for future public meetings or events
- **Public Education**
  - Lead efforts to highlight site history, especially for youth
  - Produce events or other public efforts to raise awareness of slavery and history of Flatbush
  - Connecting public to existing project-related resources

# Project Timeline



# Post-Selection: Possible Task Force Roles

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Looking forward to this phase of the project, what opportunities, in addition to the ones listed below, do you see for the role of the Task Force?

- **Public engagement**
  - Assist in updating public on project status and opportunities for input
  - Lead continued outreach for future public meetings or events
- **Engagement with future development team to ensure community priorities**
  - Represent goals and vision outlined in community visioning report (design, non-residential uses workforce development, etc.)
  - Support discussions around new opportunities for community input as they arise (e.g workforce development, design charettes, etc.)

# The Role of the Descendant Community

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**Research efforts have yet to identify the lineal descendants of those buried at the Flatbush African Burial Ground.**

The FABGRR Task Force, as a group, are currently representing the Descendant Community; However, should additional descendants be identified in the future (either through research or self-identification), they too should be consulted on any actions that may impact the burial ground.

## ***WHAT IS THE DESCENDANT COMMUNITY?***

***The Descendant Community may comprise of lineal descendants of those people buried at the burial ground and may also include people who self-identify as descendants, such as people whose ancestors were part of the African diaspora.***

# The Role of the Descendant Community

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Looking forward to the next phase of this project (and beyond), the Descendant Community have a shared leadership role with the City and Developer for the following aspects of the project:

- Supporting ongoing historical research
- Establishing a preferred course of action for the respectful treatment, examination and reburial of human remains if found
- Establishing goals for the future memorialization
- Supporting the design, location and implementation of the memorial

# The Role of the Descendant Community

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**The FABGRR Task Force, as a group, are currently representing the “Descendant Community”**

- Moving forward should this still be the role of the Task Force?

*Looking forward to the next phase of this project (and beyond), the Descendant Community will have a shared leadership role with the City and Developer for the following aspects of the project:*

- *Supporting ongoing historical research*
- *Establishing a preferred course of action for the respectful treatment, examination and reburial of human remains if found*
- *Establishing goals for the future memorialization*
- *Supporting the design, location and implementation of the memorial*

# Building a Sustainable Task Force

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**Looking forward to this next phase (and long-term) how can the Task Force be more inclusive?**

- What skillsets, expertise and/or community perspectives do we feel are important to include in the Task Force?
- As we have discussed, this process is going to take several years. What other aspects should be considered to sustain the Task Force?
- Should the Task Force be renamed or called something different, such as a Working Group or Steering Committee?



**Lastly, is there anything else you would like to share regarding the role and the relationship between the Community, the Task Force, the Developer, and the City?**

# Next Steps

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## Request for information from Task Force:

- Complete the **Outreach Tracking Questionnaire** (which will be shared through email).

## What Happens Next on Our End:

- **Notes** from this meeting will be shared.
- **Outreach materials** will be shared for the public report back meeting.
- **Invitations for the upcoming meetings** will be shared.

# Thank You!

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