

GOWANUS INDUSTRIAL BUSINESS ZONE (IBZ) VISION PLAN

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Executive Summary

The Gowanus portion of the Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Business Zone (IBZ) is a vital employment hub with approximately 295 businesses and 3,789 private jobs that serves the surrounding neighborhoods, Brooklyn, and New York City as a whole. Anchored along the Gowanus Canal, a historically industrial waterway, and flanked by the thriving residential communities of Park Slope and Carroll Gardens, the Gowanus IBZ is an active industrial and commercial area, home to a wide range of businesses – from manufacturing, construction, and warehousing to arts-based, retail, and offices. The Gowanus IBZ also has several important assets, including access to public transit, arterial roads, and the Brooklyn Queens Expressway (BQE), as well as close proximity to the city's central business districts of Downtown Brooklyn and Lower Manhattan.

While the Gowanus IBZ continues to flourish as a local employment hub, the existing zoning has remained largely unchanged since 1961, limiting the ability for businesses to grow and expand. In addition, the Gowanus Neighborhood Plan, a comprehensive planning effort seeking to facilitate mixed use growth to the north of the IBZ, has elevated the need for crafting a vision for the southern part of the neighborhood. Many stakeholders requested that a vision for the Gowanus IBZ be provided in conjunction with the public review of the Gowanus Neighborhood Plan.

In response to this request, the New York City Department of City Planning (DCP), agency partners, and local stakeholders kicked off a vision study following the 2018 release of *Gowanus: A Framework for a Sustainable, Inclusive, Mixed-use Neighborhood*. Geographically, the study encompasses the southern part of Gowanus located within the Southwest Brooklyn IBZ, along with industrial and commercial zoned blocks adjacent to the IBZ and the 3rd Avenue corridor between 7th and 16th Streets.

Study Purpose & Goals

The study's core goals are to put forth a land use framework that can inform future private land use applications, and identify infrastructure and workforce development opportunities that can reinforce the area as a 21st century jobs hub. Although specific zoning districts are not being proposed, this Vision Plan is intended to serve as a guide for future development, infrastructure improvements, and policy.

Based on the study's analysis and public outreach, this Vision Plan lays out a land use framework with four geographic sub-areas, and targeted goals and strategies for workforce development and infrastructure improvements. Below is a summary of the goals for land use, sustainability and resiliency, transportation, and workforce development.

While most of the study's outreach, data, and research was collected prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is critical to recognize the ongoing citywide challenges related to the pandemic – not only job loss, business restrictions, and supply chain constraints, but also long-standing inequities that elevated the need for open space and broadband access. Despite this period of uncertainty, the fundamental study goal – supporting a job-dense neighborhood with strong access to transit and nearby residents – remains true and in part reinforced by the city's path to full economic recovery. The pandemic has also demonstrated the need for zoning to be flexible and allow businesses to adapt to unforeseen and disruptive changes.

Land Use

- ▶ Increase flexibility for existing industrial businesses to grow and support continued industrial operations around major truck-intensive facilities
- ▶ Support industrial, arts, and other sectors that contribute to the local economy, build on the area's competitive assets, and provide quality jobs accessible to local residents
- ▶ Promote greater job density in targeted areas closer to transit and to residential neighborhoods

- ▶ Increase connectivity on large waterfront sites to promote improved circulation and pedestrian access
- ▶ Recognize existing conditions in areas with concentrations of residential use

Transportation & Other Infrastructure

- ▶ Improve mobility and safety along major corridors
- ▶ Apply strategies developed as part of the New York City Department of Transportation's Smart Truck Management Plan
- ▶ Support the operations of industrial and commercial businesses in the IBZ through targeted parking and loading improvements
- ▶ Explore improvements to high-speed commercial internet access

Sustainability & Resiliency

- ▶ Improve capacity of infrastructure to reduce street flooding issues and Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO)
- ▶ Support flood-resistant retrofitting and new construction options for non-residential buildings
- ▶ Improve building efficiency and alternative energy options, especially rooftop solar

Workforce Development

- ▶ Strengthen connections between Gowanus-based employers and local residents, particularly lower-income residents
- ▶ Reinforce and build upon existing local and citywide workforce development programs
- ▶ Promote industrial, arts and office-based businesses operating in the Study Area

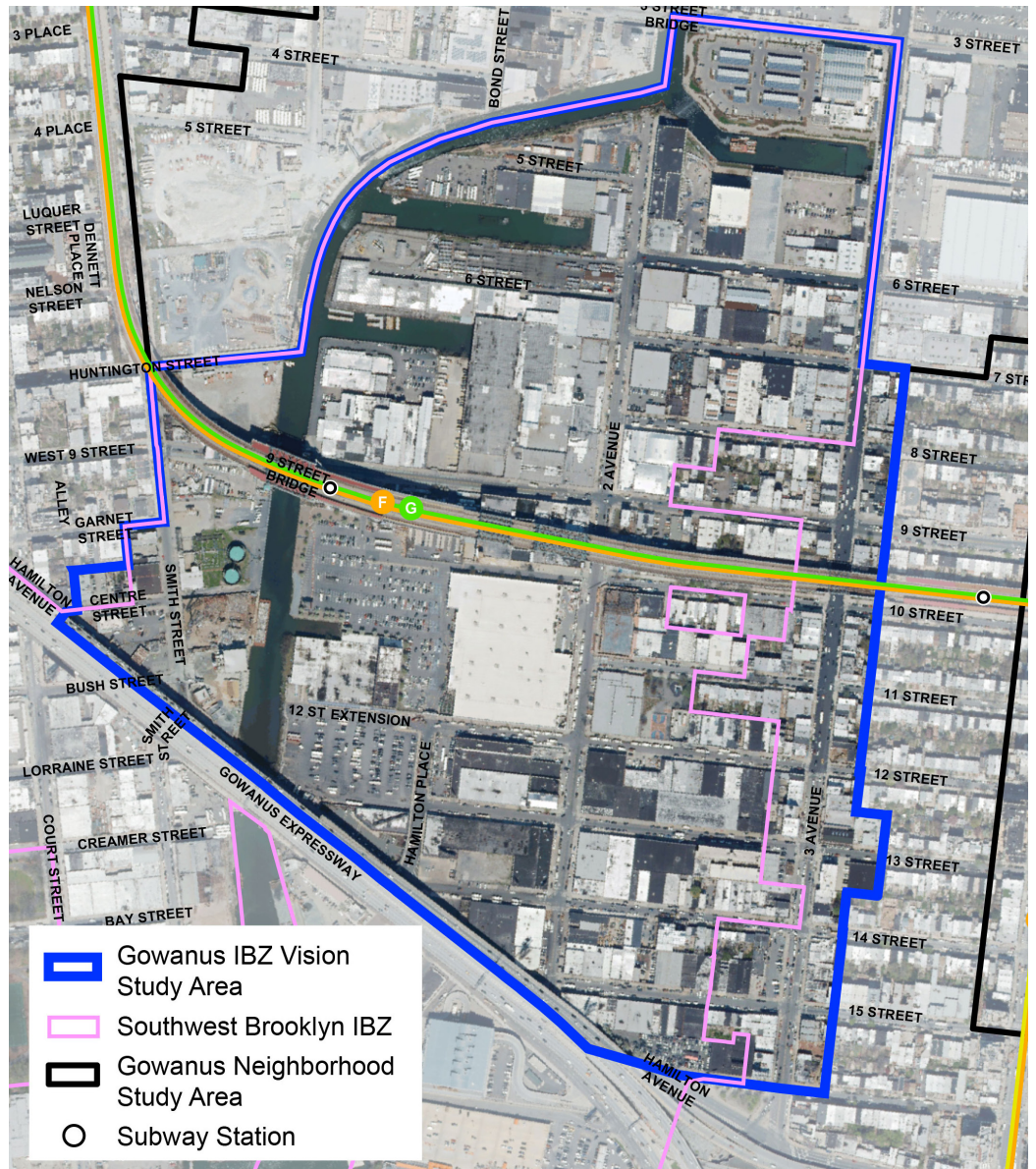
Introduction

As a follow-up to the Gowanus Framework released in June 2018, which proposed new land use changes in the northern part of Gowanus, the New York City Department of City Planning (DCP), agency partners, and local stakeholders led a public engagement effort to develop a shared vision for the southern part of Gowanus within the Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Business Zone (IBZ), along with industrial and commercial zoned blocks adjacent to the IBZ, and the 3rd Avenue corridor between 7th and 16th Streets (Study Area). While this portion of Gowanus is not subject to the proposed land use actions, the City recognizes the area as a vital center of industrial and commercial employment.

Study Goals & Process

The main objectives of this study are to create a land use framework and identify infrastructure and workforce development priorities that can support business growth and reinforce the area as a 21st century jobs hub for industrial and commercial uses.

This study was undertaken in collaboration with Council Member Brad Lander and his office, Community Board 6, community-based organizations, and local businesses and property owners. As part of the study, DCP facilitated a community engagement process—including an online survey, two public business roundtable meetings, and a core stakeholder working group – along with an analysis of land uses, market and real estate conditions, business and employment trends, and infrastructure needs. Outreach and analysis was completed from the spring of 2019 through the winter of 2020.



Map of Gowanus IBZ Study Area

History

The Gowanus Canal was originally a wide tidal creek surrounded by marshland with small tributaries that extended northeast from its mouth at Lower New York Bay south of Red Hook. In the mid-1800s, plans began to fill, dredge, and install a bulkhead to create the approximately one-mile-long Gowanus Canal with turning basins to accommodate the movement of vessels. By the 1870s, the waterbody had been transformed into a major industrial waterway where materials and goods arrived to support a variety of industrial activities, including heavy manufacturing of coal and oil, foundries, paint and ink factories, electroplating shops, and paper mills, as well as the storage and distribution of materials used to build and maintain nearby residential neighborhoods.

During the height of its activity, the Canal processed six million tons of cargo per year. However, heavy industrial use along the Canal and surrounding blocks gradually declined due to a culmination of factors, including local population loss and the construction of the Gowanus Expressway, nationwide trends of container ships and trucks becoming the dominant mode to transport goods, and broader changes to the labor market and manufacturing sector.

In an effort to support local revitalization and job opportunities, the Gowanus Industrial Urban Renewal Area was established in 1971. An amendment to the Urban Renewal Plan (URP) and other land use actions were subsequently approved in 1977 to facilitate the commercial redevelopment of a formerly vacant factory site with the goal of bringing amenities to nearby workers and promote more pedestrian activity. The site is currently occupied by a retail shopping center and the URP expired in 2011.

In 2006, the City introduced the Industrial Business Zone program as part of a commitment to land use and public policies that encourage the retention and growth of industrial businesses, including financial incentives, a resolution not to support residential rezonings in IBZs to help provide stability for industrial businesses, and the designation of a City-supported local ombudsmen and service provider – the Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Development Corporation (SBIDC).

Over the past few decades the Gowanus IBZ has experienced a resurgence of both industrial and commercial activity. For example, reinvestment in the area has led to many single- and multi-story warehouses being repurposed for small-scale “artisan” or “maker” uses, artist studios, offices, and entertainment-based uses. A few large waterfront properties have also been redeveloped with large food and retail establishments, such as Whole Foods and Lowe’s Home Improvement.

Due to the area’s low-lying topography and historic use as a waterway for heavy industry, the Canal has faced chronic challenges from the discharge of sewage and industrial waste, leading to long-term issues of drainage and flooding, and contamination. The Canal’s designation as a Federal Superfund Site by the U.S. Environmental

Protection Agency (EPA) in 2010 was a critical milestone that kicked off an ongoing effort to address these long-term environmental issues, alongside other City-sponsored projects to improve drainage and sewer systems. In addition, flooding from Hurricane Sandy in 2012 caused significant damage that called attention to how local infrastructure and buildings could be better protected from future storms.

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in shifts to the city's economy, workforce, and fiscal climate, a trend that continues to evolve and affect local businesses in Gowanus.

Planning Context

Since 2009, pre-pandemic New York City has gained over half a million jobs, with significant growth outside Manhattan and its central business hubs. This includes over 150,000 in Brooklyn alone, representing approximately 23% of the city's job growth. Transit-accessible neighborhoods in Brooklyn and other boroughs increasingly serve as local employment hubs, as businesses are attracted to locations near public transit.

This study builds upon several recent and ongoing planning projects and initiatives, including the Gowanus Neighborhood Plan, covering the industrial and commercial zoned area in the northern part of Gowanus. The following section provides background and context on some of these local and citywide initiatives, which informed the study and are interconnected with the goal of supporting businesses and growing quality jobs.

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to social, physical, and economic crises across the world, highlighting broad inequities in our society across the racial and socioeconomic spectrum. It has also elevated the importance of holistic neighborhoods to a community's health and resiliency, including walkability, housing and job security, open spaces, and active places. The underlying aspects that make New York City successful have not fundamentally changed and the pre-COVID-19 trends and issues surrounding sustainability and equity are not anticipated to abate. Spurring job growth near homes and public transit is a critical goal to plan for in seeking to achieve a more just, equitable and sustainable city.

Citywide

Industrial Action Plan

Mayor de Blasio's 10-Point Industrial Action Plan, released in November 2015 in coordination with the City Council, committed to investing in City-owned industrial properties, creating affordable industrial space, and providing key support services to industrial businesses. Among the DCP initiatives that followed this plan were the North Brooklyn Industry & Innovation Plan and new special permit requirements to limit as-of-right self-storage facilities in IBZs and hotels in light manufacturing (M1) zoning districts. These special permits were adopted in 2017 and 2018, respectively.

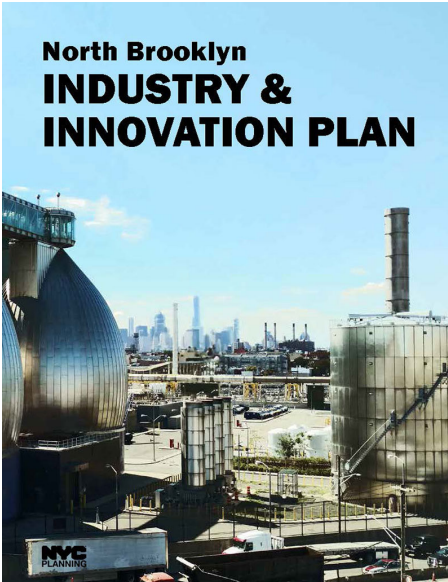
New York Works

In June 2017, Mayor de Blasio released New York Works, a plan to catalyze the growth of 100,000 good-paying private sector jobs over the next 10 years. The City committed to target jobs in both emerging and established sectors, including technology and cybersecurity, healthcare and life sciences, industrial/manufacturing, and creative ventures. To maximize available space to accommodate new jobs, impediments in zoning were identified as a component that could strengthen established office districts in Manhattan, emerging commercial centers (e.g., Downtown Brooklyn and Long Island City), and smaller-scale, neighborhood employment districts near transit.



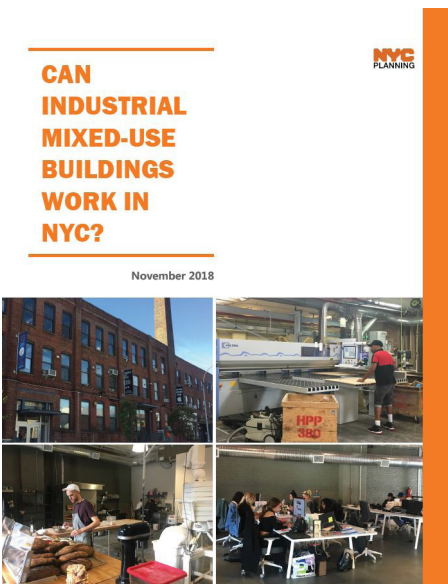
DCP Initiatives

North Brooklyn Industry & Innovation Plan



In 2015, the City and DCP launched the North Brooklyn Industry & Innovation Plan, an important part of Mayor de Blasio's Industrial Action Plan and that also supported the goals of the New York Works jobs plan. It identified strategies to better align local land use policy in the North Brooklyn IBZ with the needs of today's businesses while supporting a diverse and equitable 21st century economy. The report acknowledges that zoning in many industrial areas – M districts – which dates back to 1961, constrains the expansion or creation of new space for jobs.

In November 2018, DCP released a report that recommended strategies to update M district zoning to better support the creation of modern workspace for an array of businesses, including industrial/manufacturing uses, and, in targeted areas near transit, growing office uses such as TAMI (tech, advertising, media, information). These recommendations included increasing buildable FARs (floor area ratios), reducing parking requirements near transit, and updating loading requirements. It also included complementary infrastructure and workforce development recommendations.



Can Industrial Mixed-Use Buildings Work in NYC?

This study assesses the feasibility of new buildings that combine industrial uses with office, residential, retail, or other uses. The study found that construction of new industrial mixed-use buildings can be feasible with certain compatible tenant mixes, suitable sites, and favorable real estate market conditions. However, these buildings face a number of physical and financial constraints, and should not be expected to be broadly feasible. Based on these conclusions, the City can support individual projects on an opportunistic basis in cases where such developments are feasible, but zoning that broadly requires industrial set-asides within new buildings risks stifling investment and is inadvisable.

Resilient Industry Study

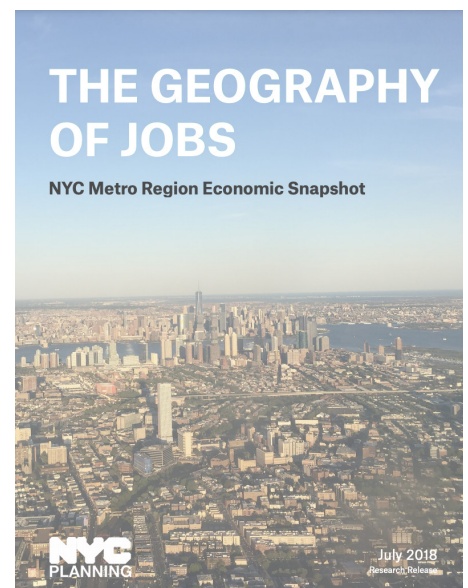
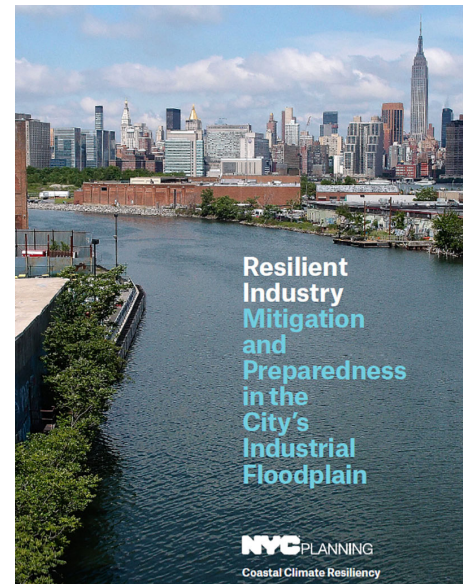
Resilient Industry is a planning initiative to support industrial businesses located in the city's floodplain by helping to identify cost-effective strategies to prepare for future floods, minimize damage to facilities, and quickly restore operations following a disruption. In addition to providing recommendations to reduce risk on industrial sites, the work informed DCP's Zoning for Coastal Flood Resiliency, which updates the Zoning Resolution citywide.

Zoning for Coastal Flood Resiliency

Zoning for Coastal Flood Resiliency, a citywide zoning update that was approved by the City Council in May 2021, seeks to promote resilient buildings throughout the city's current and future floodplains. In an effort to assist businesses in protecting critical supplies from future flooding, this new zoning, which provides a floor area exemption for mezzanine space, encourages existing industrial businesses to raise equipment, offices, and supplies above floodplain levels.

The Geography of Jobs & Data Briefs

DCP has also produced several data briefs and reports on local- and region-wide job trends. *The Geography of Jobs* report analyzed the relationship between the city and region's labor force, highlighting the city's, and especially Brooklyn's, contribution to the region's job growth. The *NYC Workers without a Bachelor's Degree* data brief found that workers without a bachelor's degree represent half of NYC workers, but face challenges in an economy where the greatest growth has been in high-skill professional and low-paying service jobs. Lastly, the *Middle Wage Jobs in NYC* data brief analyzed employment and wage data across different economic sectors, finding that approximately 40 percent of all middle wage jobs – defined as jobs in occupations requiring less than a four-year college degree and paying average annual wages of \$40,000 or higher – were in the following three major sectors: finance, insurance and real estate services; professional, scientific and technical services; and construction.





Local Initiatives

Bridging Gowanus

From 2013 to 2015, local elected officials organized a community planning process called Bridging Gowanus to shape a sustainable, livable, and inclusive future for the Gowanus neighborhood. Bridging Gowanus included a vision for a mixed-use neighborhood with resiliency and sustainability strategies, public investments, job growth, and affordable housing, among other goals.

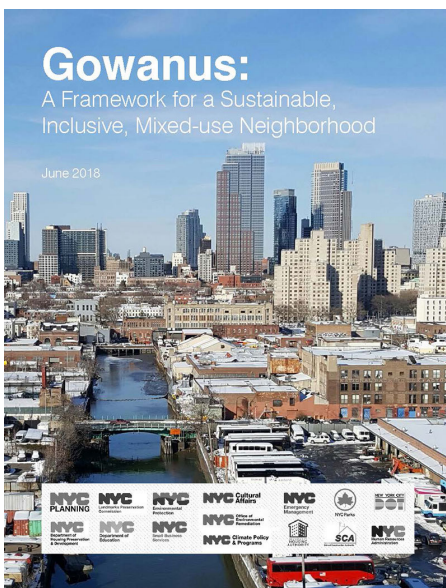
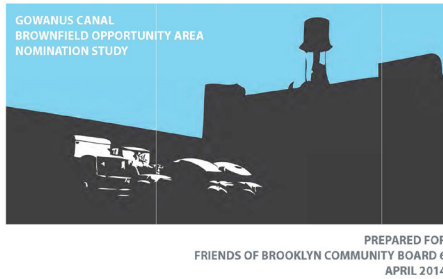
Gowanus Brownfield Opportunity Area

In an effort to catalyze economic development and clean up environmentally contaminated sites, a Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) Nomination Study for Gowanus was prepared in 2014 for Community Board 6 and submitted to the New York State Department of State and Department of Environmental Conservation. The BOA study surveyed businesses, analyzed land use, building and economic trends, and developed a series of findings and recommendations. Nineteen sites were also studied further to explore opportunities for strategic investment and redevelopment.

Based on community outreach and an existing conditions analysis, the BOA study presented three recommendations: support and grow industrial business in Gowanus; preserve a navigable canal for all users; and integrate evolving interests in Gowanus (cultural, environmental, recreational) with existing industrial and business interests to foster a multi-faceted, productive, and creative economy.

Gowanus Neighborhood Study and Plan

Launched in 2016, DCP and agency partners have been working jointly with elected officials, local organizations, and various stakeholders on a study for the northern part of Gowanus with the goal of advancing a neighborhood plan with land use actions. Building upon decades of planning efforts, the study seeks to foster a thriving neighborhood by reinforcing and encouraging a robust local economy anchored by a mix of uses and businesses, while creating opportunities for new housing with affordable housing in appropriate locations. Over the past several years, the study involved a robust community outreach



and public engagement process, including numerous public meetings and workshops, an online engagement tool, and five working groups devoted to various planning topics. Following the release of the *Gowanus Framework* in 2018 and a draft zoning proposal in 2019, DCP has completed a draft Environmental Impact Statement and, in April 2021, began the public review period, known as the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP). Many businesses, residents, and stakeholders from the IBZ were deeply involved in the neighborhood plan process, which provided an important foundation for this Vision Plan.

One of the five working groups formed during the study outreach process was the Industry and Economic Development Working Group (shown in the photo below), which involved businesses and stakeholders from the Gowanus IBZ. During these meetings, DCP heard numerous issues and challenges related to zoning, flooding and sustainability, transportation, and operation-based and “quality of life” conflicts between residents and industrial businesses.

Based on the feedback from the working groups and prior outreach, DCP and partnering agencies released *Gowanus: A Framework for a Sustainable, Inclusive, Mixed-use Neighborhood* in 2018, including several goals and strategies that overlap with the Gowanus IBZ. Specifically, the framework called for partnering with community-based organizations to identify the needs of businesses in the Gowanus IBZ, a strategy that served as a basis for this study and Vision Plan.



2017 Industry and Economic Development Working Group Meeting



View of the sewer infrastructure work along 9th Street looking north at 7th Street

Existing Conditions

Neighborhood Context & Transportation Network

The Gowanus IBZ Study Area is situated between the residential neighborhoods of Park Slope and Carroll Gardens, and located near the regional employment hubs of Downtown Brooklyn and Lower Manhattan—a competitive advantage enabling the area to tap into a large pool of customers and workers.

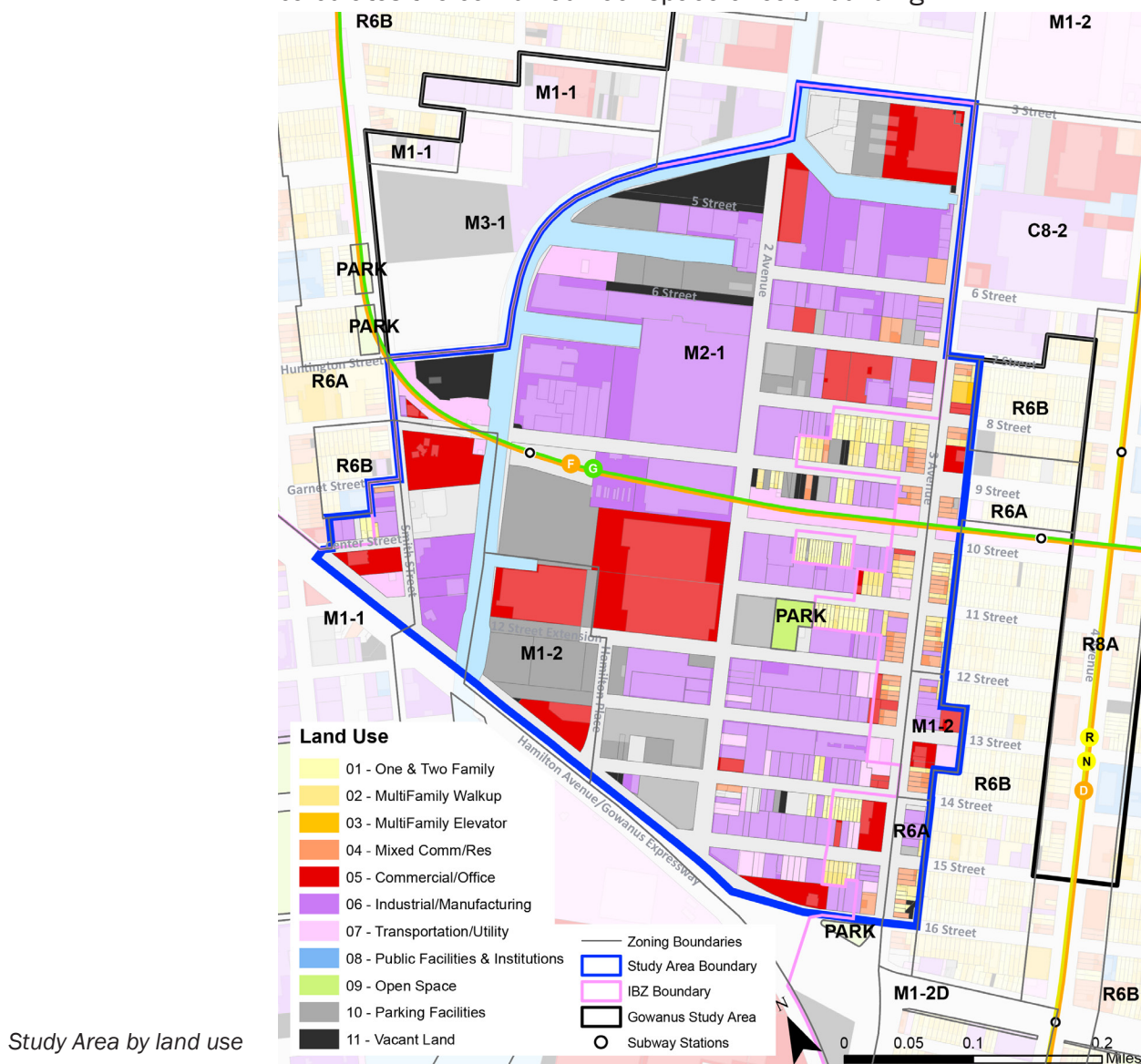
The Study Area's access to the street and transportation network represents one of its greatest assets. In comparison to the larger Southwest Brooklyn IBZ, the Study Area's waterfront access is limited to the Canal, while being located between two residential neighborhoods. Most strikingly, almost the entire Study Area is located within one quarter mile of a subway station, an asset that distinguishes the Gowanus IBZ from other IBZs, such as the Brooklyn Navy Yard and Flatlands. The R subway line runs along 4th Avenue, and the F and G subway lines run east-west above 9th Street, with stations at Smith Street and 4th Avenue. Multiple bus lines also run on 9th Street and 3rd and 4th avenues. In addition to public transit, the Study Area is well-connected to the Gowanus Expressway, an interstate highway, and local truck routes, such as Hamilton Avenue, 3rd Avenue, 4th Avenue, and 9th Street. Despite the Study Area's transportation network, many businesses have challenges maneuvering trucks on side streets and during peak traffic periods, particularly on 3rd Avenue near the entrance to the Gowanus Expressway.



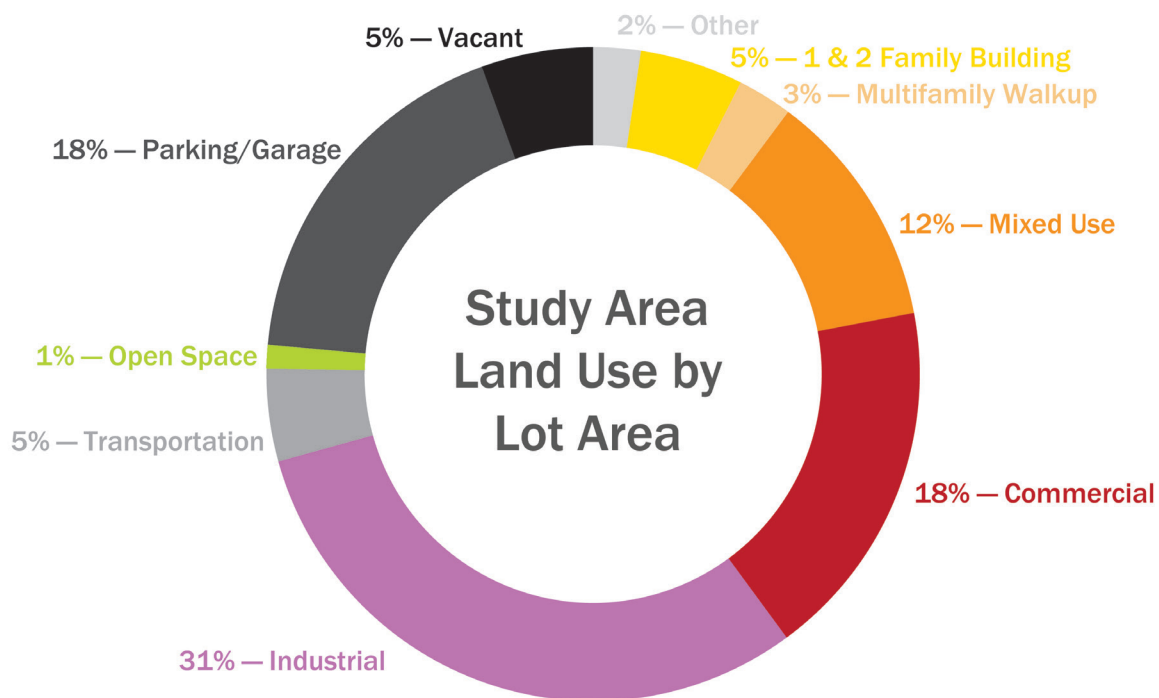
Study area context and transportation access

Land Use & Zoning

The Study Area contains approximately 91 acres of lot area, which encompasses the total land coverage of publicly or privately owned lots, excluding public street right-of-ways and the Canal. The size of individual lots within the Study Area vary greatly, ranging from narrow 20-foot-wide lots occupied by residential uses to sprawling waterfront lots with multiple acres of land. Most lots are between 5,000 to 20,000 square feet in size, consisting of one- to two-story warehouse-style industrial buildings, some of which have been subdivided into multiple industrial and commercial tenants. In total, the Study Area contains approximately 78 acres of building area – an indicator of density that calculates the combined floor space of each building.



The Study Area contains a wide array of uses. Industrial use (eg manufacturing, construction, building supply, warehousing and storage) accounts for the largest percentage of land use by lot area, comprising approximately one-third of the total lot area. Open parking and enclosed garages, mixed use lots (eg ground floor commercial with residential above), and commercial uses (eg service-based businesses, artist studios, offices, retail, and entertainment) represent about half of the total lot area. Transportation-based uses (eg subway stations/ infrastructure, gas stations, and auto repair shops) and vacant lots or buildings also represent a sizable portion of area. While industrial uses are scattered across the Study Area, larger, heavier industrial and truck-dependent uses are concentrated more in the southern part of the Study Area, south of 9th Street. Along the Canal, a few large industrial uses depend on the waterway to transport materials and goods. These include a fuel oil depot and scrap metal yard on the western edge of the Canal and Study Area.



Directly outside of the Gowanus IBZ, between 2nd and 3rd avenues, are clusters of residential buildings consisting primarily of row-house-style homes and small apartment buildings, while 3rd Avenue serves as a local retail and mixed-use corridor.

Except for a few pockets of M1-1, M1-2, and M3-1 zoning, the industrial-zoned part of the Study Area is mapped as M2-1, an industrial zoning district where the only new uses permitted are industrial and commercial. M2-1 is typically mapped on industrial waterfronts buffered from residential, occupying a middle ground between light and heavy industrial areas. New development and enlargements are allowed up to a FAR of 2.0, often producing one- to three-story warehouses, while building heights are controlled by the sky exposure plane, allowing taller buildings if they are set back farther from the street. Off-street parking and loading requirements vary by use, but generally reflect a high rate of vehicle use that is out of sync with modern business needs, particularly when many employees use public transit, or bike or walk to work.

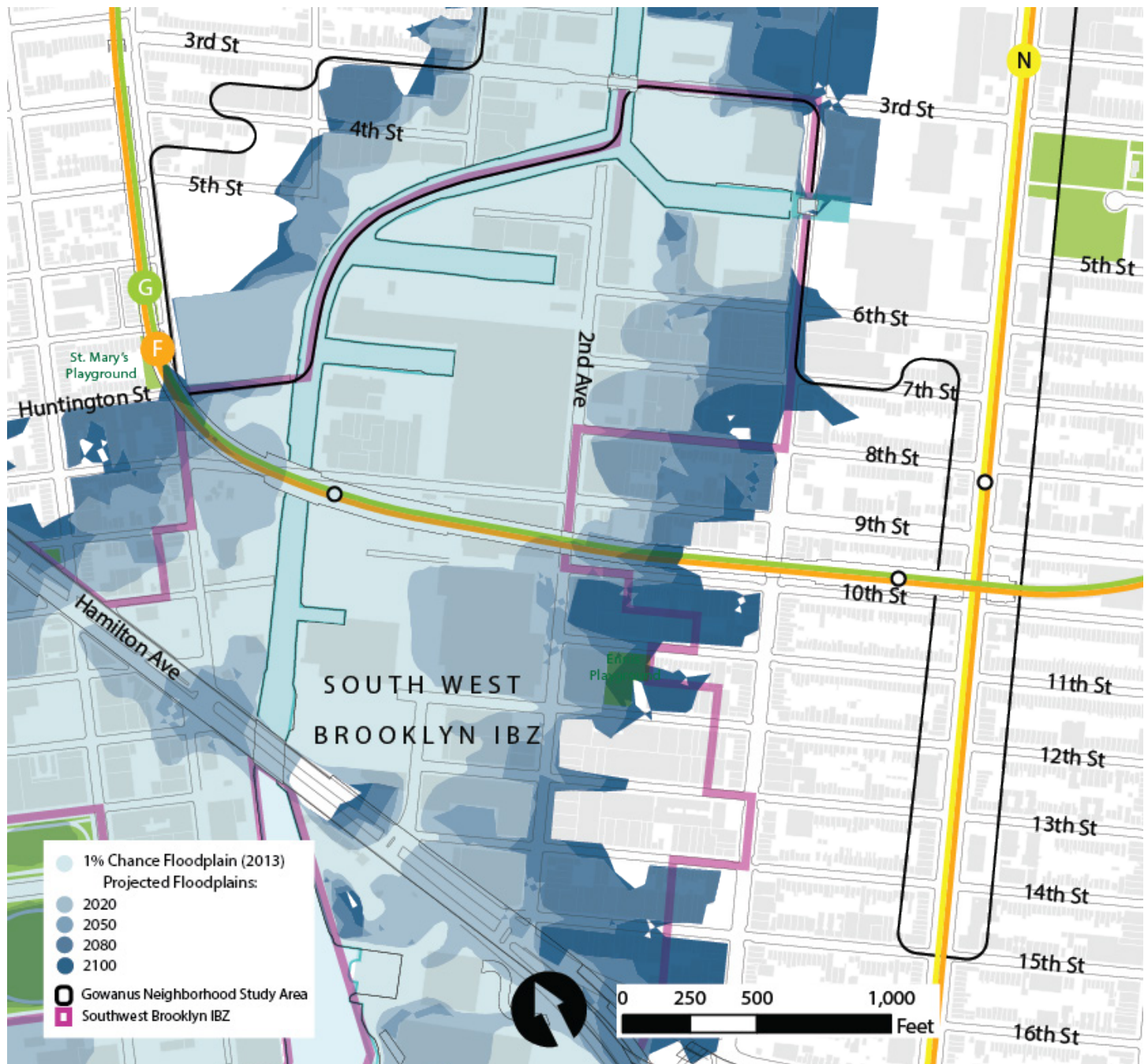
The east side of 3rd Avenue is mainly zoned R6A/C2-4, a moderate density contextual residential district with a commercial overlay, reflective of the local retail and mixed-use character of the corridor. Although new residential is not allowed in the industrial-zoned areas between 2nd and 3rd avenues, there are several clusters of residential, which predate the existing zoning and are legally non-conforming.

Since the adoption of the 1961 Zoning Resolution, the Study Area's zoning has remained largely unchanged. In 1977, an area south of 11th Street and east of the Canal was rezoned from M2-1 to M1-2 to facilitate a retail shopping center, a project that also involved an amendment to the 1971 URP and a City Planning Commission (CPC) Special Permit.

Flooding

The areas surrounding the Gowanus Canal lie within FEMA's Flood Zone A (the 100-year floodplain with a 1% annual chance of a major storm event) and Zone X (the 500-year floodplain with a 0.2% annual chance of a major storm event). As most industrial buildings in this area predate flood-resistant construction requirements, they are especially vulnerable to flooding, and some experience chronic issues with drainage and stormwater management.

Map of the FEMA-designated flood zones



Employment Trends

The Study Area benefits from a higher job density than other portions of the Southwest Brooklyn IBZ. The Gowanus portion is only 8.6% of the lot area of the larger IBZ, but accounts for 13.3% of the private employment making it about 1.6 times more jobs dense than the rest of the IBZ. While the Southwest Brooklyn IBZ has a wide range of building and lot conditions, the job density of the Gowanus portion of the IBZ is an important asset.

As shown in the Private Employment Trends chart, while the Gowanus IBZ and the rest of the IBZ had similar amounts of industrial employment in 2017 (53% and 54% of their total employment respectively), the Gowanus IBZ's employment profile is oriented more towards the retail, leisure, and hospitality sector. Businesses in that sector account for approximately 30% of employment in the Gowanus IBZ, whereas the rest of the IBZ is only around 16%. Lowe's and Whole Foods are the principal

Study Area Employment Snapshot

3,789
Jobs

30.5
Jobs per acre

Amount of Jobs by Macro Sector

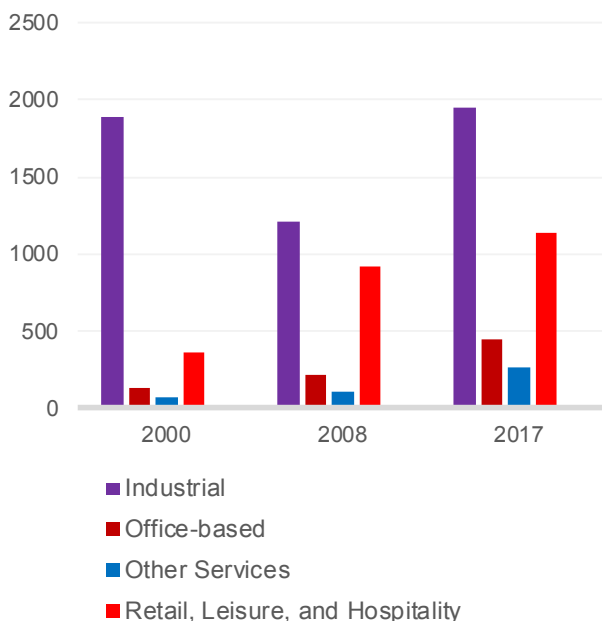
1,946 Industrial Jobs

442 Office-based Jobs

264 Other Services Jobs

1,132 Retail, Leisure, and Hospitality Jobs

Private Employment Trends



Industrial Employment Trends



Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, New York State Department of Labor

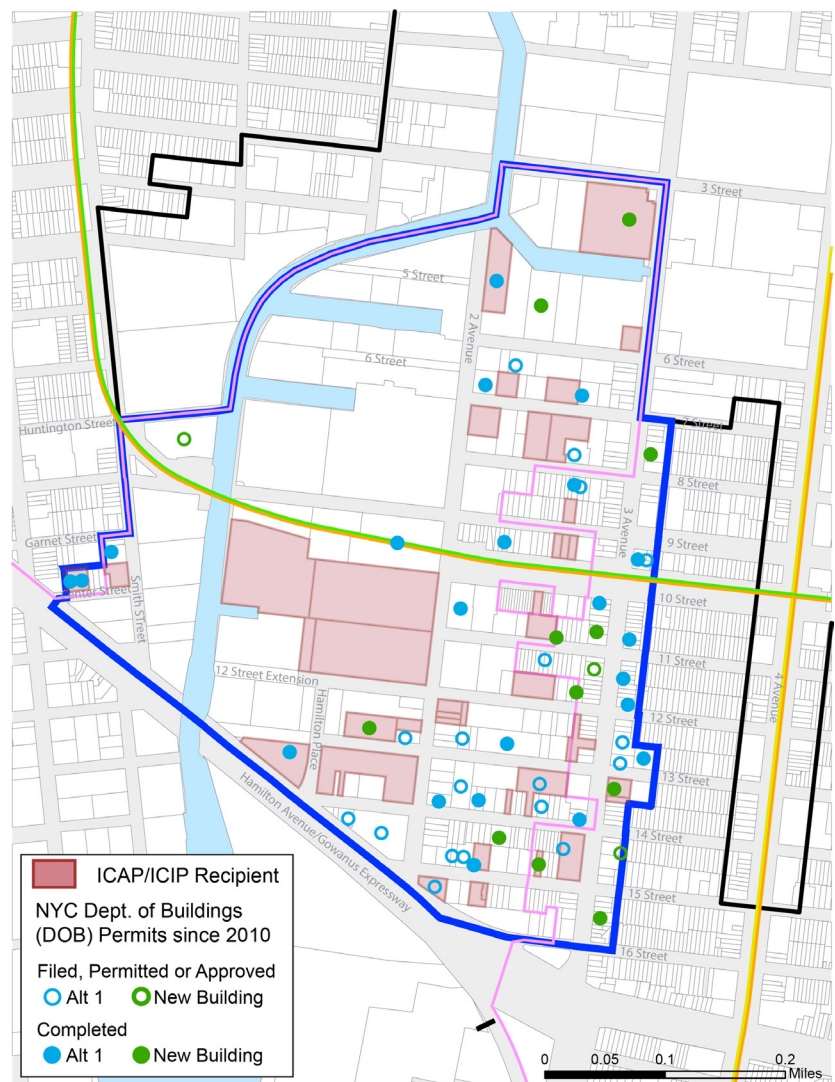
Note: Due to disclosure limitations, data for the Transportation and Warehousing (2017), Mining and Utilities sectors is unavailable.

contributors to retail employment in the Gowanus IBZ, being the only two large format retail stores. As shown in the Industrial Employment Trends chart, certain industrial-based sectors, such as the construction and wholesale trades, have grown substantially, offsetting losses in manufacturing jobs and contributing to an overall increase in industrial jobs since 2000.

Real Estate Trends & Private Investment

Private investment activity within the Gowanus IBZ has steadily increased over the past few years with renovations, enlargements, and new development that are “as-of-right,” a term that describes improvements made pursuant to existing zoning. These trends dovetail with the previously noted employment growth in warehousing, construction, and various commercial-based sectors. Since 2010, 71 permit applications for a new building (NB) or significant alteration have been filed with the New York City Department of Buildings (DOB). Among those applications, 25 have a commercial component, either office or retail, seven have a storage or distribution component, and six have an industrial component. Among the 14 NB permits, five were commercial, four were residential, and five were either industrial or storage, while among the 12 enlargements, nine involved either an office or retail component. In total, only nine curb cuts were added in connection with the DOB permits, generally indicating that either the scale of the improvement did not

Map of building permits and ICAP/ICIP tax benefit since 2010



Building & Business Profiles

The following section contains a few profiles of prominent businesses, buildings, and recent developments as examples of the types of uses and built typologies within the Study Area



519-529 3rd Avenue

519-529 3rd Avenue is a cluster of buildings on 3rd Avenue between 12th and 13th streets that have been adaptively reused and expanded with a co-working office space (The Yard) and future plans for a brewery and taproom, greenhouse, and other retail spaces.



530 3rd Avenue

530 3rd Avenue is a recently constructed five-story building containing a variety of small-scale office, retail, and creative-based business tenants.



168 7th Street

168 7th Street is a building complex with several art and music studios, nonprofits, offices, and small-scale, light industrial tenants, including the Gowanus Studio Space and Makeville Studio.

Building & Business Profiles

Architectural Grille

Architectural Grille is a family-owned manufacturer and fabricator of custom bar and perforated metal grilles that has been in operation since 1945. In the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, the business has completed many resiliency upgrades and also participates in several workforce development initiatives.



Salvation Army Distribution Center

The Salvation Army operates a 20,000-square-foot distribution center at 2nd Avenue and 10th Street, serving as a central location for workers to sort through clothes and other donations. In 2019, the center underwent a major renovation and expansion.



adi

adi (audible difference inc.) is an industrial business that specializes in precision audio-visual design and installations for fashion, theatre, contemporary art, and corporate events around the world.



trigger required parking under the Zoning Resolution or the demand for parking was not sufficient.

Over that same period, 18 properties applied for or started receiving tax benefits from the Industrial & Commercial Incentive Program (ICIP) or the Industrial & Commercial Abatement Program (ICAP). ICIP and ICAP are tax incentives for property owners that have invested significant capital in their buildings. ICAP replaced the ICIP program in 2008, but since the benefit period begins after the completion of the construction, some ICIP recipients in the Study Area entered the program as late as 2014.

Additionally, some large sites have transferred ownership and were recently acquired. For example, a real estate development company recently purchased a group of multi-acre properties located along the waterfront south of 9th Street.

Although quantitative data to analyze local trends since the COVID-19 pandemic is limited, business stakeholders have anecdotally indicated that there have been minimal turnover and closures with the exception of retail and entertainment businesses. Some businesses have scaled down operations, while demand for warehousing and storage has increased, especially for spaces with less than 10,000 square feet.

Public Facilities

Several industrially-oriented public facilities that the city depends on for essential services are located along 2nd Avenue in the Study Area. These include the NYC Department of Sanitation (DSNY) Salt Lot and vehicle garages for Community Districts 2 and 6, and a DOT fleet services and maintenance facility. Directly south of the Study Area are DOT's Hamilton Avenue Asphalt Plant and DSNY's Marine Transfer Station. In addition, a State-operated parole facility is located at the corner of 2nd Avenue and 6th Street.

Apart from existing facilities, a few ongoing public infrastructure projects are in various stages of operation. Of the planned, active, or recently completed capital infrastructure projects, there are eight

related to sewer and flood infrastructure, including a \$43 million sewer improvement upgrade on 9th Street and 2nd Avenue led by the NYC Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) that began in 2019. DEP is also coordinating two other major infrastructure projects, a water main replacement along Hamilton Avenue and sewer system upgrades at 7th Street between 3rd and 4th avenues.

In conjunction with the Superfund designation and ongoing clean-up of the Gowanus Canal led by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), DEP has acquired a site on the northern head end of the Canal for a CSO facility and will site another facility by the DSNY Salt Lot site within the Study Area. These projects represent vital steps towards addressing the Canal's long-term clean-up and sewer infrastructure challenges. Other local projects include the Ennis Playground reconstruction, completed in the summer of 2019 by the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation and the rehabilitation of the DSNY garage for Brooklyn Community District 6.



View of Ennis Playground, which was recently renovated and reopened in 2019

Outreach & Engagement

In the spring of 2019, DCP, in collaboration with agency partners, elected officials, and community-based organizations, kicked off a public outreach process to collect feedback on the shared vision for the Study Area. As part of this effort, DCP and local partners released a survey for business and property owners, receiving 26 responses, and hosted two public roundtable discussions, attended by over 50 business and property owners and community members.

Based on this outreach, several important themes emerged, which are summarized below. The main topic of discussion centered around the needs of industrial businesses, with additional focus given to the advantages and challenges of locating and doing business in the Gowanus IBZ.

What We Heard

Land Use & Business Operations

- ▶ The Study Area's mix of industrial, commercial, and residential uses represents an opportunity for growth. This mix is also a source of conflict for industrial businesses experiencing pressures from rising rent and land prices, and competition over space with office, retail, and entertainment businesses.
- ▶ Active industrial uses located adjacent to or near residential and commercial can pose health and safety challenges, as well as quality of life conflicts related to noise and congestion.
- ▶ There is growing demand for both industrial and commercial activity, but limited space in existing buildings to accommodate that growth. Increasing the permitted density and removing barriers in zoning could help meet future demand.

Transportation & Parking

- ▶ 3rd Avenue functions as one of the Study Area's most active truck routes. It is a vital connection for trucks accessing the Gowanus Expressway, but also functions as a mixed-use corridor and bike route. In particular, the major intersections and blocks near the highway were highlighted as major sources of congestion and conflict with other roadway uses.
- ▶ Streets need to be able to accommodate truck loading and parking to continue functioning well for industrial businesses. Trucks often have difficulty efficiently turning on side streets due to the narrow street widths. Load-



Images from the business roundtable discussions

ing frequently occurs on the street, rather than in a berth, due to physical constraints. Meanwhile, the off-street parking requirement is high and decreases the physical and financial viability of new development.

- ▶ DSNY operates two garages along 2nd Avenue within the Study Area. Many businesses indicated that DSNY trucks parked on the street limits the availability of on-street parking.



View of loading along 9th Street

Jobs & Workforce Needs

- ▶ The manufacturing sector is becoming more specialized, requiring more technical skills from its employees. Some businesses raised concerns about the ability to attract workers with more specialized skills and the cost to train and on-board employees.
- ▶ Connections between the industrial businesses in the IBZ and the local community, especially NYCHA residents, should be increased through job training programs tailored to help bridge a technical skills gap.
- ▶ While many employees live in surrounding neighborhoods, due to the high cost of living, many employees commute longer distances from other parts of New York City and New Jersey.

Sustainability & Resiliency

- ▶ Flooding and drainage issues were the most common issue related to infrastructure. Many businesses have completed major upgrades to their facilities to protect against flooding by installing backflow preventers, pumps, and elevated mezzanines for equipment.
- ▶ DEP's ongoing sewage and flooding infrastructure improvements are desperately needed.



Land Use Framework

The land use framework seeks to put forth a forward-thinking vision that accommodates growth and fosters a 21st century jobs hub. The primary objective of the land use framework is to inform future private applications, in the absence of a City-sponsored area-wide rezoning. While private applications would be subject to public review under ULURP, the framework is intended to serve as a tool for applicants, local stakeholders, and the public to evaluate what land use changes are appropriate and how to align individual proposals with the framework and neighborhood-wide goals.

The land use framework was shaped greatly by public outreach, alongside a study of existing conditions, and the local and regional context. The framework also builds on the 2018 *North Brooklyn Industry & Innovation Plan* and its comprehensive study of business needs and land use strategies, which has been instructive for developing strategies in Gowanus and other industrial areas across New York City.

Approach

The process and approach for crafting the framework were led by three main goals:

1. Create a vision for the Gowanus IBZ in anticipation of significant growth in northern Gowanus (as part of the Gowanus Neighborhood Plan)
2. Establish a framework to guide private applications
3. Identify subareas with different existing conditions and articulate planning approaches that can adapt to future market and neighborhood conditions

Goals

The framework is shaped by five overarching goals:

1. Increase flexibility for existing industrial businesses to grow and support continued industrial operations around major truck-intensive facilities
2. Support industrial, arts, and other sectors that contribute to the local economy, build on the area's competitive assets, and provide quality jobs, including for local residents
3. Promote greater job density in targeted areas closer to transit and to residential neighborhoods
4. Increase connectivity on large waterfront sites to promote improved circulation and pedestrian access
5. Recognize existing conditions in areas with concentrations of residential use

Recent Land Use Trends

The Study Area contains a diverse range of uses. Industrial uses account for 31% of the total lot area, while the remaining area contains a mix of parking, open storage, transportation, commercial, mixed residential and commercial, and residential uses. Over the past two decades, commercial uses have steadily grown. A few large properties along the Canal have become regional shopping destinations that serve surrounding neighborhoods, such as the Lowe's Home Improvement store and Whole Foods supermarket. Meanwhile, 3rd Avenue continues to serve as a local retail corridor with auto-oriented uses and mixed-use buildings with ground floor retail, such as restaurants, bakeries, shops, and other retail establishments. Combined, these uses have contributed to a more than three-fold increase in commercial-based employment since 2000. In addition, several public facilities operate in and around the Study Area.

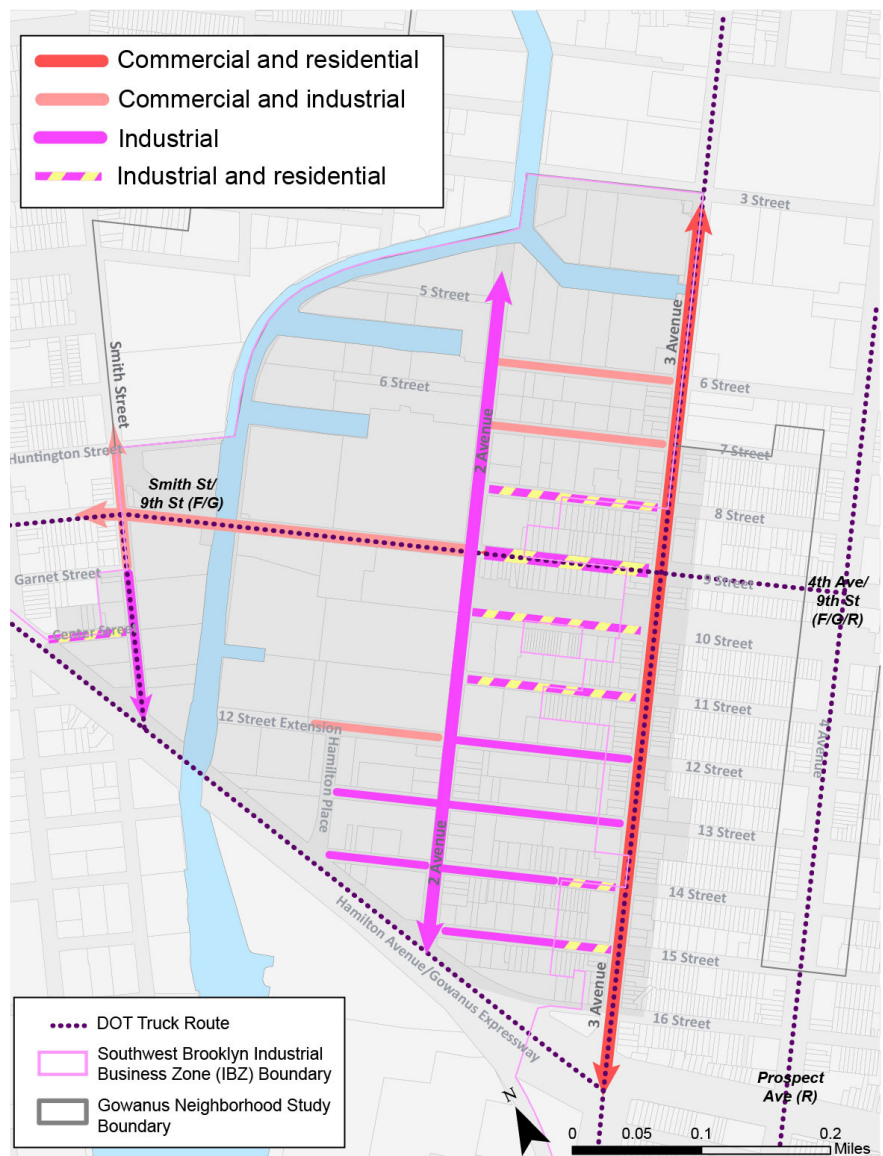
Although employment in the manufacturing sector has declined since 2000, overall employment in industrial-based sectors has remained stable due to growth in the construction and wholesale trade sectors. This trend is reflected in the land use character across the Study Area. The blocks between 2nd Avenue and 3rd Avenue, particularly south of 12th Street, consist of one- to two-story warehouse-style buildings

with large curb cuts and high floor to ceiling heights to accommodate loading and unloading from trucks, storage of materials, and other industrial activities. In contrast, portions of the Study Area north of 9th Street have become an attractive location for smaller-scale, specialized forms of light manufacturing with businesses that have fewer parking/loading needs and often co-locate with arts and other creative-based sectors.

Circulation & Block Character

In order to synthesize land use trends and the character of street frontages, the predominant uses on each block frontage were analyzed and organized into four groups: commercial and residential, commercial and industrial, industrial, or industrial and residential. As shown in the chart to the right, most industrial and other truck-intensive uses are concentrated south of 12th Street and along 2nd Avenue, while frontages with commercial and residential uses are concentrated along 2nd Avenue, while frontages with commercial and industrial uses are concentrated on 6th and 7th streets, and 9th Street between Smith Street and 3rd Avenue. The block frontages between 8th and 11th streets contain a variety of uses, where industrial and residential uses are often located directly adjacent to one another. With a wide spectrum of land uses, both 9th Street and 3rd Avenue are active truck routes that facilitate the movement of goods in and out of the Study Area. In particular, 9th Street serves as a vital east-west, cross-Canal connection for trucks, cars, bicyclists, and pedestrians, many of whom access the Study Area from the subway stations at Smith Street and 4th Avenue.

Map of block land use character



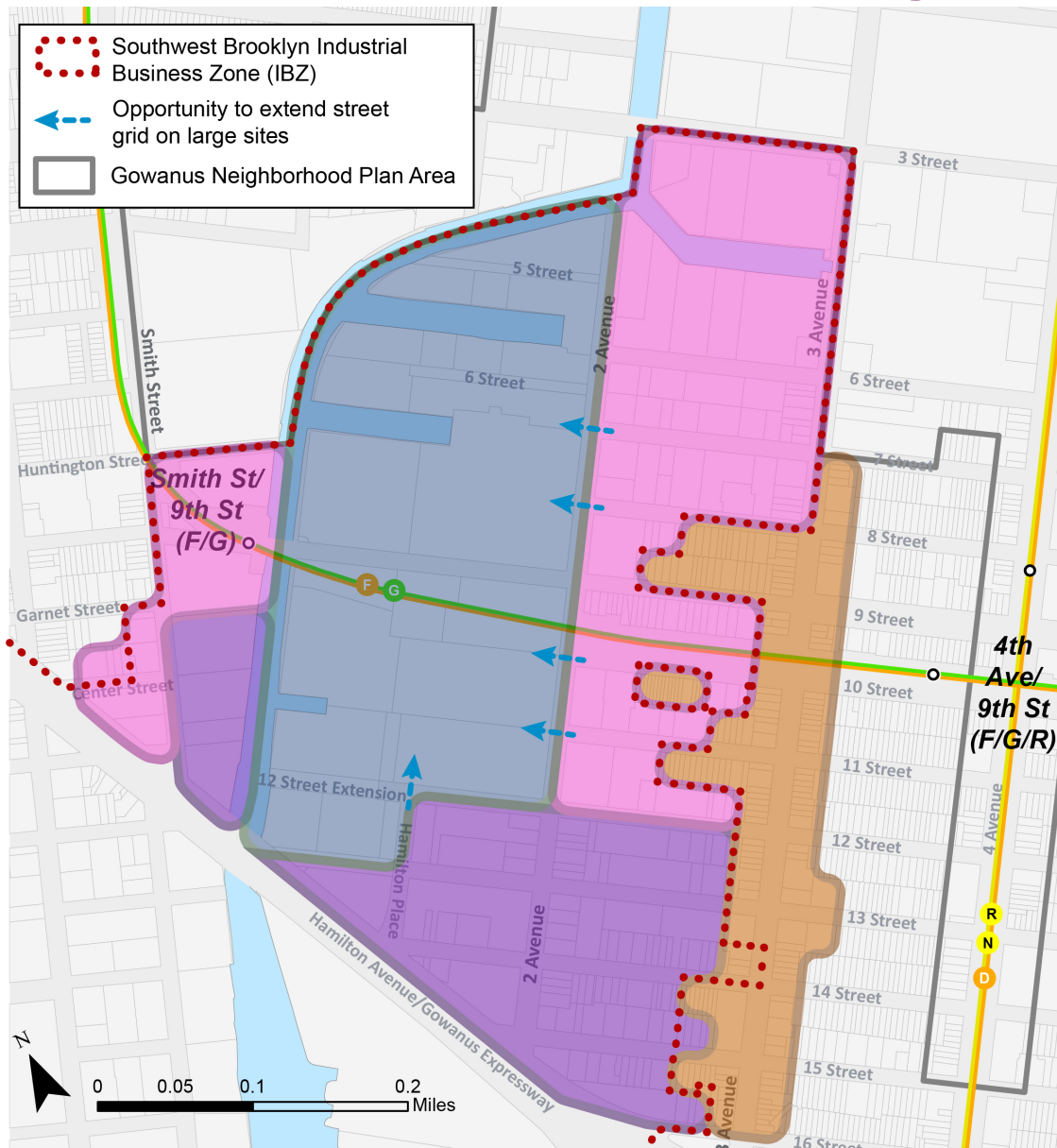
Study Area-Wide Land Use Goals and Strategies

Increase flexibility for businesses and remove barriers in zoning that limit business growth and expansion

- ▶ Reduce or eliminate parking requirements for non-residential uses
- ▶ Allow greater flexibility in loading facilities to better reflect modern business needs
- ▶ Enable new buildings to have multiple stories and floor to ceiling heights that accommodate a range of industrial and commercial businesses, much like traditional loft-style buildings

The framework recognizes the goals and strategies above that may be applied across the entire Study Area, rather than to a specific sub-area. The current industrial zoning has a high parking requirement – typically one space for every 300 feet of commercial or 1000 feet of industrial use – which does not reflect modern business needs and Gowanus-based employees who increasingly use public transit, bicycle, or walk when commuting to work. Moreover, meeting the parking requirement can be onerous and costly for businesses seeking to redevelop and expand. Accordingly, the framework proposes to reduce parking requirements and update loading regulations to better accommodate business needs. In line with *North Brooklyn Industry & Innovation Plan* and the Gowanus Neighborhood Plan, the framework also calls for promoting loft-style building envelopes that fit more appropriately within the local built context and neighborhood character.

Land Use Framework Summary



Smith/9th St Transit Node & Upland Areas

Goal: Support the retention and growth of industrial and arts-based uses, alongside office and retail-based sectors, especially along 2nd Avenue and 9th Street corridors

Industrial-intensive Areas

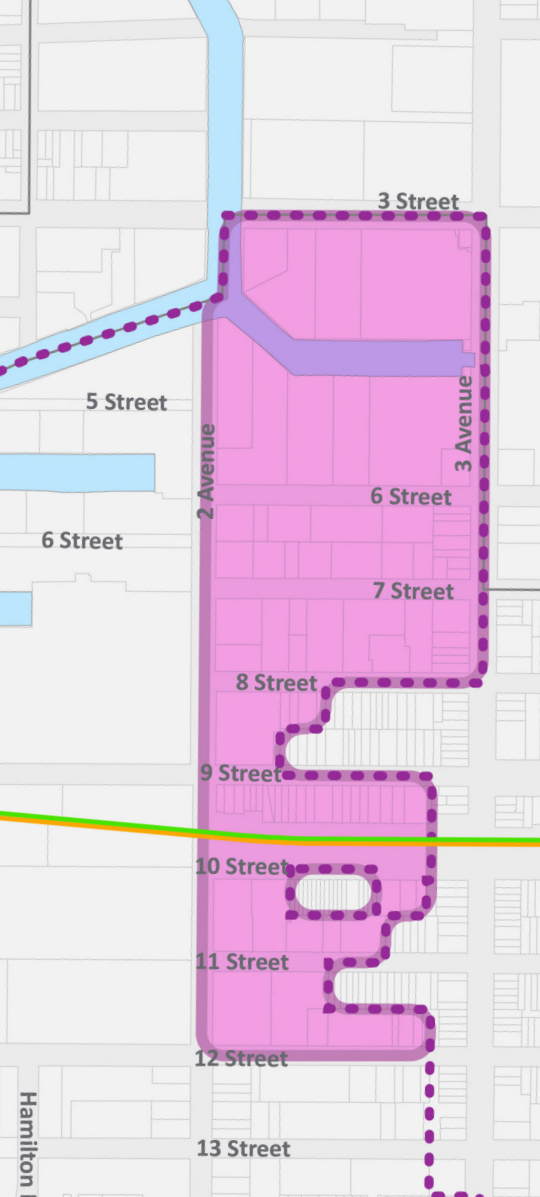
Goal: Support concentration of industrial and truck-intensive uses and increase flexibility for businesses

Large Waterfront Blocks

Goal: Support a mix of uses, including those that are there currently, and the long-term growth of commercial and industrial uses

3rd Avenue Corridor & Mid-Block Residential Clusters

Goal: Recognize clusters of residential use and promote mixed commercial and residential activity along 3rd Avenue



Sub-Areas

Based on the land use and built character of each block, four sub-areas were identified to form geographic-based goals and strategies.

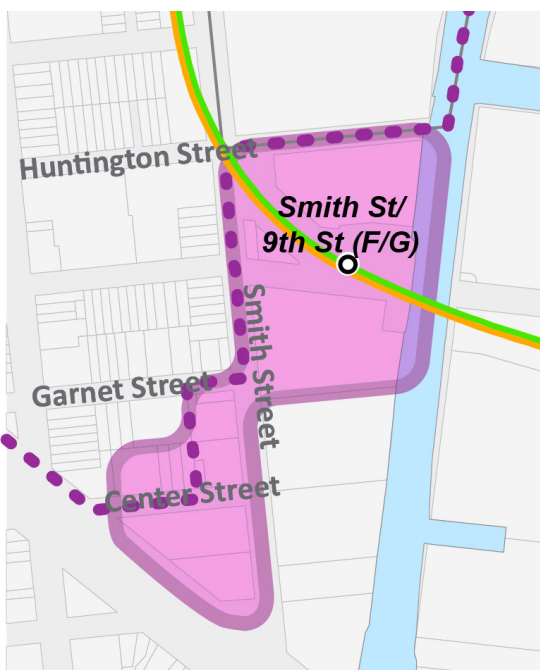
Smith/9th St Transit Node & Upland Areas

Support the retention and growth of industrial and arts-based uses, alongside office and retail-based sectors, especially along 2nd Avenue and 9th Street corridors

- ▶ Support additional space for business activity with increased FAR
- ▶ Promote waterfront access and connectivity to the Smith/9th St subway station
- ▶ Encourage growth of a range of uses, including arts, industrial, and office-based sectors

The blocks surrounding the Smith/9th Street subway station are especially close to the subway and represent an opportunity to promote uses for workers commuting by public transit. Similarly, the upland blocks bounded by 2nd Avenue, 3rd Avenue, 3rd Street, and 12th Street benefit from strong public transit access and close proximity to the adjacent residential communities of Park Slope and Carroll Gardens. Interspersed with residential uses, the upland blocks are already a transit-accessible jobs hub where workers can walk and bicycle to work.

The framework recommends continuing this thriving mix of artisan manufacturing, offices, arts-based uses, and other types of commercial and light industrial uses by increasing the permitted density and updating parking and loading requirements to better reflect the needs of existing and future businesses. While serving as a jobs hub, it is important that future proposals and land use changes work to minimize conflicts with adjacent residential uses and allow sufficient flexibility for uses and businesses to adapt to an evolving economy.



Support a mix of uses, including those that are there currently, and the long-term growth of commercial and industrial uses

- The blocks east of the Canal and west of 2nd Avenue are characterized by large waterfront sites, which contain multiple acres of land with long street frontages and irregular depths. The blocks north of 9th Street are generally built up with warehouse-style buildings comprising a variety of industrial businesses. Meanwhile, the blocks south of 9th Street consist of an auto-oriented shopping center with large format retail and surface parking. In contrast to the upland blocks between 2nd and 3rd Avenues, the waterfront blocks are more buffered from nearby residential uses and, given their significant size, have a greater ability to physically separate commercial from industrial uses, which often have challenges co-locating with other uses.

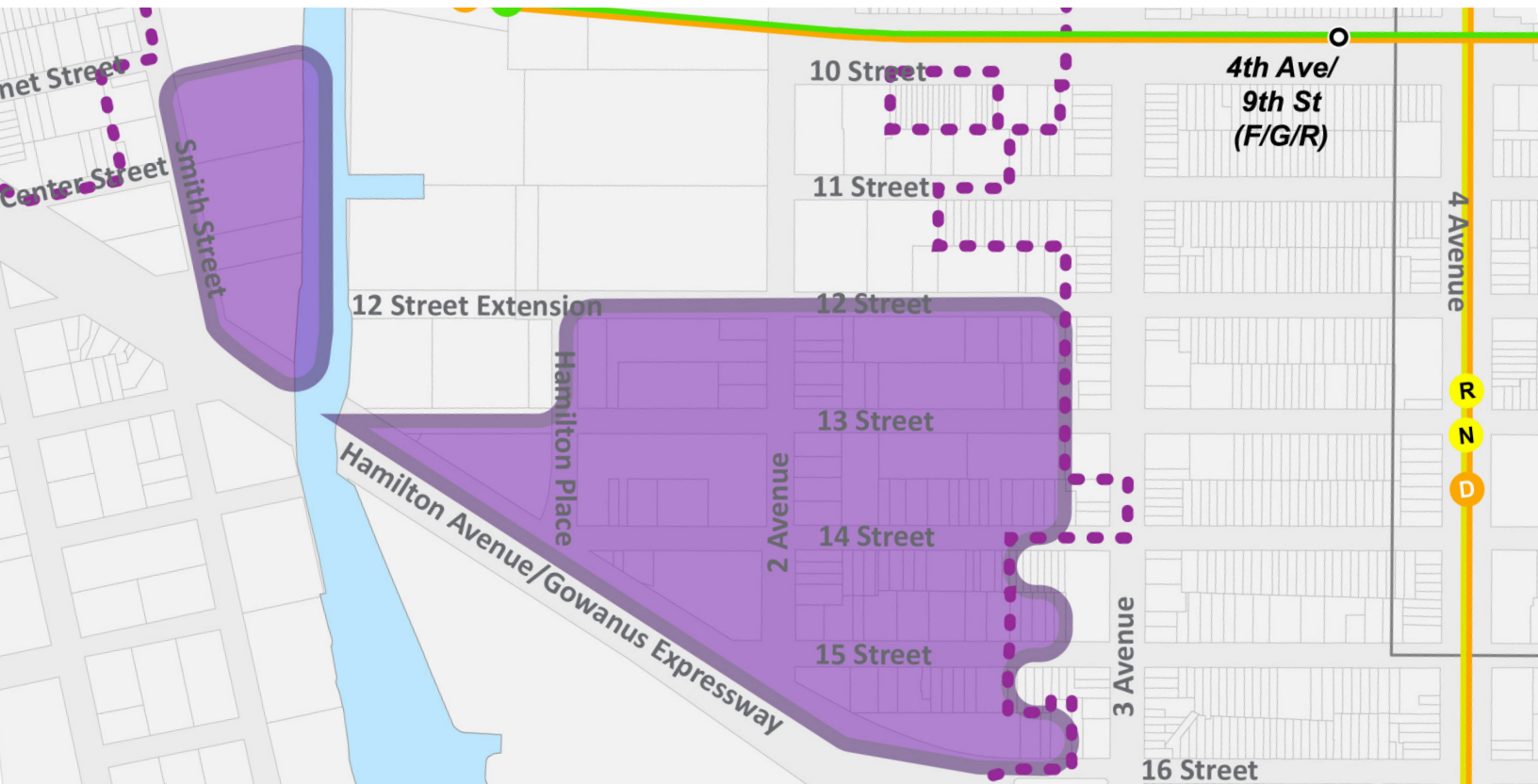
This map shows the proposed F/G station location, marked with an orange 'F' and a green 'G' on a line representing the subway route. The station is situated near the intersection of Smith St and 9th St. The map includes labels for various streets: 3 Street, 5 Street, 6 Street, 7 Street, 8 Street, 9 Street, 10 Street, 11 Street, 12 Street, and 12 Street Extension. It also shows 2 Avenue, Hamilton Avenue/Gowanus Expressway, and Hamilton Place. A blue area represents the Gowanus Expressway right-of-way, and a light blue area represents the water body. A purple dashed line indicates a boundary or route. The map is oriented with North at the top.

Industrial-intensive Areas

Support concentration of industrial and truck-intensive uses and increase flexibility for businesses

- ▶ Promote additional space for business activity with increased FAR and an incentive for industrial, arts, and production-based uses
- ▶ Allow a range of job-generating uses that are compatible with existing and future truck-intensive industrial uses

The blocks in the southern portion of the Study Area, generally south of 12th Street and west of 3rd Avenue, are predominantly industrial and are characterized by warehousing and distribution facilities, small-scale manufacturers, building and construction contractors, open industrial uses, and auto-oriented uses. Similar to the large waterfront blocks, the industrial-intensive areas are buffered from nearby residential uses. Businesses on these blocks also benefit from close access to major truck routes, such as Hamilton Avenue and the Gowanus Expressway, which support the transport of goods in and out of the Gowanus IBZ. The framework recognizes the existing character and highway access as strong assets, and recommends that future land use proposals work to ensure that truck-intensive uses can thrive and grow. In an effort to meet this goal, the framework calls for increasing the flexibility for existing businesses to operate and expand, along with an incentive for industrial, arts, and production-based uses.



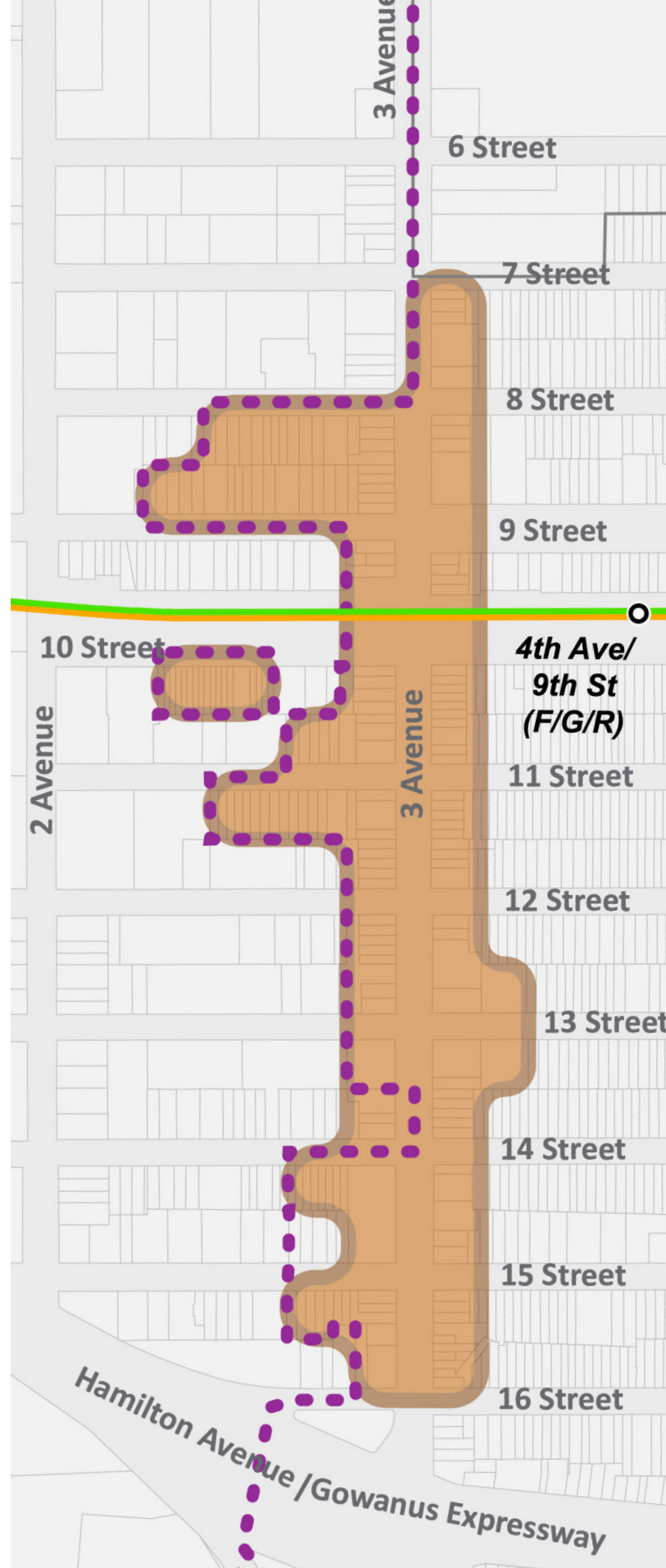
3rd Avenue Corridor & Mid-Block Residential Clusters

Recognize clusters of residential use and promote mixed commercial and residential activity along 3rd Avenue

- ▶ Allow mixed use buildings along 3rd Avenue, an existing mixed-use corridor, and accommodate multiple stories of non-residential uses
- ▶ Support continued residential use in mid-block residential clusters at an appropriate scale

The portion of 3rd Avenue south of 7th Street consists mostly of mixed-use buildings with ground floor retail and upper floor residential, as well as auto-oriented uses. While the eastern side is generally zoned to allow residential use, the western side is entirely zoned as a manufacturing district. Housing within this area was built long before the adoption of the 1961 Zoning Resolution and has remained non-conforming since that time.

Residential buildings located along 3rd Avenue and within the mid-blocks between 2nd and 3rd avenues are well-established and likely to continue to remain. As such, the framework recommends that these clusters be brought into conformance and that zoning aligns to match existing conditions. Further, where there are clusters of residential uses along 3rd Avenue and 9th Street, it may be appropriate to consider modest increases in density to reinforce these mixed-use corridors.



Infrastructure & Workforce Development

This section outlines targeted goals and strategies related to infrastructure and workforce development to both assess current needs and consider future needs as the Study Area's job density increases in the long-term. These recommendations aim to build on existing programs and initiatives, alongside active and future public infrastructure projects occurring within and near the Study Area.

Transportation & Other Infrastructure

The Study Area's transportation network represents both an asset and a challenge. The strong access to the highway and local truck routes supports truck-dependent uses, while the adjacency to residential neighborhoods and multiple public transit options supports smaller scale industrial and office-based uses that rely much less on vehicles and use alternative modes of transportation. The convergence of different road users has contributed to congestion on major corridors, especially as trucks and other vehicles in surrounding neighborhoods use the 3rd Avenue onramp entrances to the Gowanus Expressway. Additionally, much of the street network was not designed with the needs of current industrial businesses in mind. Trucks often face difficulty with turning onto narrow side streets and finding adequate space for on-street loading and parking. Further, portions of the Study Area suffer from limited access to high speed internet, which negatively affects business operations.



View of 3rd Avenue looking south towards the Gowanus Expressway

Goals & Strategies

Improve mobility and safety along major corridors

While 3rd Avenue is largely a commercial and residential corridor, it serves as an important truck route connecting with the Gowanus Expressway. As a result of 3rd Avenue's diverse condition as both a truck and pedestrian-oriented corridor, the Vision Plan acknowledges the need to further analyze the corridor and specific intersections to ensure that it continues to serve those functions efficiently and safely.

► 3rd Avenue

- Examine 3rd Avenue between 9th Street and Hamilton Avenue to assess roadway improvement needs
- Maintain 3rd Avenue as a truck route serving industrial businesses within and around the Southwest Brooklyn IBZ

2nd Avenue and 9th Street are also major corridors in the Study Area serving industrial businesses. As the neighborhood continues to evolve and support job growth near public transit, it will be important to ensure that these corridors continue to serve truck intensive uses while also enhancing the public realm and safety for pedestrians.

► 2nd Avenue and 9th Street

- Explore safety improvements for all road users
- Consider long-term public realm and pedestrian safety improvements

Support the operations of industrial and commercial businesses through targeted parking and loading improvements.

The *North Brooklyn Industry & Innovation Plan* piloted a toolkit of interventions to help improve the efficiency and safety of truck loading and unloading. Similar to Gowanus, many streets in North Brooklyn have narrow, physically constrained streets. Several strategies from this toolkit can be adapted to the Study Area, such as temporary areas to consolidate loading, and painting and signage that clearly demarcate active loading zones from pedestrian areas that can benefit from trees, seating, and other physical elements. If businesses recognize opportunities for interventions like these, requests can be made directly to DOT.

- Apply loading and parking strategies developed as part of the *North Brooklyn Industry & Innovation Plan* and NYC Economic Development Corporation's East New York IBZ Plan
- Consolidated loading and staging zones to formalize and organize loading activity.
 - “Pop-up” consolidation centers to increase space for loading and queueing.
 - Improved loading coordination among businesses.
 - Pedestrian-oriented streetscape designs to delineate pedestrian passageways apart from heavy loading activity.

Businesses in the Study Area often compete for limited street space to park and load vehicles. As such, it is vital that space is used more efficiently and that opportunities for increasing the space available are explored further, especially as the area grows.

- ▶ Explore ways to address chronic on-street parking challenges.
 - Develop measures to limit the number of trucks that currently park on streets near the DSNY garages
 - Explore additional parking opportunities under the Gowanus Expressway along Hamilton Avenue
- ▶ Improve and increase enforcement of traffic- and parking-related issues

In May 2021, DOT released a citywide freight mobility study, called the Smart Truck Management Plan, to improve the quality of life for all New Yorkers through the safe, reliable, and environmentally responsible movement of goods.

- ▶ Apply strategies that were developed as part of the DOT Smart Truck Management Plan.
 - Expand NYC Clean Truck Program to industrial business zones citywide
 - Improve truck route network
 - Improve truck signage wayfinding
 - Educate all road users on safe truck operations on city streets through various safety education and outreach initiatives
 - Increase the number of loading zones citywide to reduce conflicts between vulnerable road users and double-parked trucks
 - Promote urban freight consolidation concepts for last mile goods delivery

Many businesses throughout Gowanus have substandard access to broadband internet service, which can negatively affect relationships with customers and daily business operations. The City seeks to work with local stakeholders and businesses to identify the current needs and develop strategies to improve the speed and reliability of broadband service. Other citywide strategies are being explored as part of a study released in 2018. Broadband access has also emerged as an essential asset during the COVID-19 pandemic, as companies shifted to conducting business remotely.

- Expand improvements to high-speed commercial internet access.

Sustainability & Resiliency

Flooding and drainage is a major issue affecting not only properties along the waterfront, but the entire Study Area – an issue that local businesses and residents have been grappling with for generations. A large portion of the Study Area itself lies within the 100- or 500-year floodplain. During Hurricane Sandy in 2012, several businesses located by the Gowanus Canal suffered extensive damage. Major rainstorms also frequently result in flooding along 9th Street between Smith Street and 2nd Avenue. To address these issues, major drainage infrastructure projects are being implemented by DEP, along with the siting and development of two CSO tank facilities in connection with the EPA's Superfund clean-up of the Canal.

As businesses grow, there is an opportunity to build to higher standards of resiliency and sustainability, which can be facilitated by redevelopment, expansion, and major renovation projects. Across the city, several programs and initiatives partner with businesses to achieve these goals, including the Gowanus Canal Conservancy, a local nonprofit stewardship organization.

Goals & Strategies

Support flood-resistant retrofitting and new construction options for non-residential buildings

In May 2021, the City Council adopted DCP's comprehensive update to the Zoning Resolution, called Zoning for Coastal Flood Resiliency. Through engagement with Gowanus business stakeholders and development of the citywide Resilient Industry Study, this citywide update improves, and makes permanent, the standards and allowances for resilient construction and building retrofits in the current and future floodplain. These zoning changes include floor area exemption for industrial properties that add interior elevated mezzanines as means

of moving critical equipment out of harm's way in case of flooding.

Facilitation of redevelopment would trigger NYC Building Code Appendix G requirements for flood resistant construction in new buildings, including elevation of occupiable space above anticipated flood levels.

- ▶ Support new construction and retrofitting in compliance with Building Code Appendix G requirements for flood-resistant construction.
- ▶ Help businesses and property owners understand new options under the recently adopted Zoning for Coastal Flood Resiliency, including interior elevated mezzanines.

Improve capacity of infrastructure to reduce street flooding issues and CSO

In addition to funding for the construction of two CSO facilities, the City has allocated approximately \$71 million in funding for water and sewer infrastructure improvements in and around the Gowanus IBZ. These include installation of storm and sanitary sewers and replacement of combined sewers and water mains on 9th Street, installation of combined relief sewers and replacement of water mains on 7th Street between 3rd and 4th avenues, and storm, combined, and sanitary sewer and water main replacements on 3rd Avenue and Hamilton Avenue. Apart from the current investments described above, DEP will study the need for water and sewer improvements on 10th Street between Second Avenue and Third Avenue.

DEP is advancing plans for a CSO infrastructure at the end of 2nd Avenue. The CSO infrastructure will intercept combined sanitary waste and stormwater runoff – up to 145 million gallons per day – during wet weather events and pump it back to the wastewater treatment plant, significantly reducing the volume of CSO that reaches the Gowanus Canal. The CSO volume discharged from the outfall, located below the end of 2nd Ave, is expected to be reduced by at least 85 percent, from 58 million gallons to 9 million gallons during a typical year.

- ▶ Continue to provide investment and updates on sewer and drainage infrastructure work (9th Street, 7th Street, 3rd Avenue, and

Hamilton Avenue) to affected business and property owners.

- ▶ Study the need for additional water and sewer improvements on 10th Street.

Improve building efficiency and alternative energy options, including solar

IBZ businesses and property owners are interested in exploring solar roof installations, but the age and structure of existing buildings can preclude that option. Facilitation of redevelopment would improve energy efficiency as new structures would meet today's Energy and Building Codes.

There is an ongoing Solarize NYC campaign led by Neighbors Helping Neighbors and in partnership with Mayor's Office of Sustainability to assist residents and businesses in Gowanus, Red Hook, and Sunset Park in understanding options for installing or purchasing local rooftop solar.

MOS offers energy-efficiency assistance programs including Retrofit Accelerator, a program to help existing buildings with energy- and cost-saving upgrades. They are expanding the program to accelerate energy efficiency best practices in new buildings and prepare the development and construction markets for substantial improvements in the Energy Code.

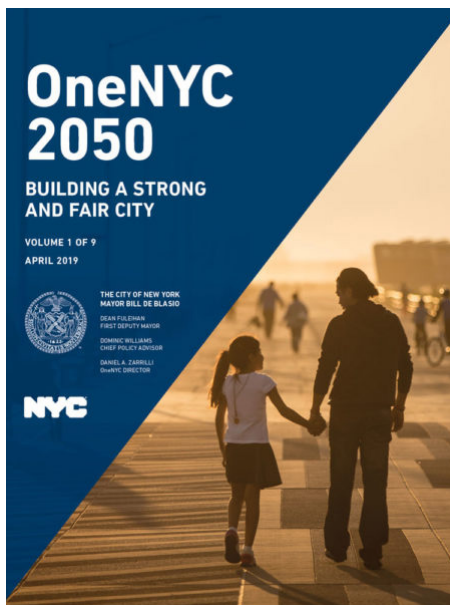
- ▶ Support new construction and redevelopment to produce buildings that meet today's Energy and Building Code efficiency standards
- ▶ Help business and property owners understand and take advantage of programs to install rooftop solar and retrofitting upgrades, such as MOS' Solarize NYC and Retrofit Accelerator

Workforce Development

The study also aims to put forth recommendations for workforce development to help ensure that existing and future jobs are accessible to local residents, particularly residents of public housing in Gowanus and Red Hook, and those with lower educational attainment or from lower income households. The current COVID-19 pandemic has also reinforced the need for equitable access to employment as the city recovers.

The Study Area is home to a wide array of industrial and commercial jobs that require diverse skillsets and training, which will continue to evolve as businesses adapt to a changing economy. Many growing sectors within Gowanus and in other industrial areas—such as professional services, arts and tech-based businesses, and advanced manufacturing—demand specific skills or on-the-job-training that local residents may be unable to access. As the area's job density increases, it is necessary to make connections among employers, local organizations, and job seekers in order to identify specific training and skills gaps, and strengthen job readiness programs.

Citywide, there are several well-established workforce development programs provided by SBS, EDC, and other public sector agencies, some of which directly serve industrial sectors. The study seeks to both raise awareness of these programs and build upon the services provided by local not-for-profit organizations including: SBIDC, the designated service provider for the larger Southwest Brooklyn IBZ; the Gowanus Alliance, a coalition of local industrial business and property owners; and Brooklyn Workforce Innovations, a local workforce development organization affiliated with the FAC. Lastly, the goals and strategies for workforce development are intended to build on recent neighborhood-based planning efforts, including the 2013 Gowanus BOA study, the 2015 Bridging Gowanus community plan, and the 2018 *Gowanus Framework*.



Citywide Programs & Initiatives

Career Pathways and Industry Partnerships

In 2014, the city released *Career Pathways: One City Working Together*, a comprehensive report with a series of recommendations for building a workforce system that targets skills sought by employers, improves the quality of jobs, and enhances coordination among agencies and service providers. As outlined in the report, SBS launched Industry Partnerships in sectors including technology, healthcare, industrial and manufacturing, hospitality, and construction to enable collaboration among businesses, community groups, training providers, academic institutions, and government to recruit, train, and connect unemployed and underemployed adults to quality jobs.

OneNYC and New York Works

Released in 2015, OneNYC developed a comprehensive vision for the city's future with a central goal of fostering a more inclusive economy that prepares New Yorkers for well-paying jobs in both core and emerging sectors. OneNYC also aims to strengthen the capacity of adult education by expanding partnerships with employers, schools, and educational institutions. Building on the goal of inclusive job growth, the 2017 New York Works plan set forth a goal to create 100,000 new jobs over 10 years, spread across tech-based sectors, life sciences and healthcare, industrial and manufacturing, creative and cultural sectors, and other office-based sectors. As part of an effort to connect New Yorkers with good jobs, New York Works highlighted a number of workforce strategies and programs, such as improving apprenticeship opportunities and construction industry partnerships.



Public Housing/NYCHA

There are several NYCHA public housing developments located near the Study Area, including the Red Hook Houses to the south, and Wyckoff Gardens, Gowanus Houses, and Warren Street Houses to the north. Many local organizations work closely with public housing residents on employment-based initiatives, while on a citywide level NYCHA's Office of Resident Economic Empowerment and Sustainability seeks to directly connect residents with training and job placement programs.

Workforce1 Career Centers

SBS's Workforce1 Career Centers are vital resources where job seekers can receive free workforce development services and connections to job and training opportunities. Sunset Park is home to the Workforce1 Industrial & Transportation Career Center located at the Brooklyn Army Terminal, 140 58th Street (Building "B" Lobby). Operated by the SBIDC, the center is focused on connecting people to high-quality employment opportunities in the industrial, manufacturing, and transportation sectors of Gowanus, Red Hook, Sunset Park, and other neighborhoods across the city. There is also a Workforce1 Career Center in Downtown Brooklyn, located at 9 Bond Street, on the 5th Floor.



ApprenticeNYC

In 2018, SBS and EDC launched the Apprentice NYC program as part of the 2017 New York Works plan. Currently, ApprenticeNYC is partnering with manufacturing firms to connect job seekers who have limited or no prior experience with paid, full-time apprenticeships as computer numerical control (CNC) machinists. ApprenticeNYC includes nine weeks of hands-on skills training that covers the basics of being a CNC machinist, including machine operation, shop math, blueprint reading, and safety. ApprenticeNYC represents a useful model to meet local workforce development goals by enabling residents to receive individualized, on-the-job-training and develop the necessary skills to obtain careers in specific industrial and manufacturing trades.



Gowanus-based Organizations

Many local not-for-profit organizations act as service providers in and around Gowanus, and continue to play a critical role in current and future workforce development efforts, including the following organizations.

Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Development Corporation (SBIDC), a neighborhood-based economic development organization serving businesses and residents in Red Hook, Gowanus, and Sunset Park. SBIDC serves as SBS's contracted service provider for the Southwest Brooklyn IBZ, advocating for the interests of industrial-based firms and providing a range of support services for businesses and job seekers, including operating the Workforce1 Industrial & Transportation Career Center in Sunset Park.

Gowanus Alliance, a coalition of local industrial business and property owners that advocate on behalf of the Gowanus portion of the IBZ.

Brooklyn Workforce Innovations, a local workforce development organization affiliated with the FAC, that seeks to connect low-income residents in and around Gowanus with living-wage job opportunities through skilled training, access to employer-recognized credentials, job placement, and career development support.

Goals & Strategies

The goals and strategies below are intended to serve as a blueprint for collective action by locally-based organizations with the support of City agency partners.

Strengthen connections between Gowanus-based employers and local residents, particularly lower-income residents


As the density of jobs grows within the Study Area and rezoning area to the north, the Gowanus IBZ represents an important opportunity for locally based organizations, in partnership with the City, to support inclusive growth that connects industrial and commercial job growth to residents of surrounding communities, especially for fast-growing sectors within the Gowanus IBZ. Access to locally-based jobs and skills training is especially vital for residents in neighboring NYCHA developments and lower-income residents.

- ▶ Continue support for neighborhood-based organizations that function as local service providers and facilitate connections between residents seeking employment and existing and future businesses
- ▶ Encourage efforts by businesses, property owners, local organizations, and other stakeholders to monitor job trends within the Study Area and develop an inventory or network of employment opportunities
- ▶ Connect local schools and institutions with vocational education to provide career pathways in growing industrial and sustainability-based sectors

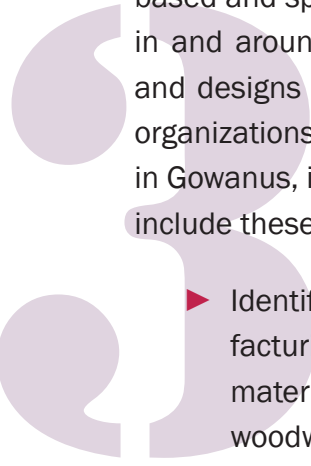


Reinforce and build upon existing local and citywide workforce development programs

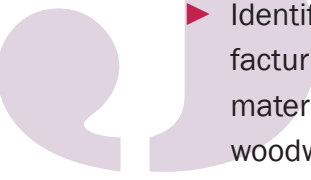
Within the past few years, the City has spearheaded a few programs designed to support employment in industrial and manufacturing sectors, particularly Industry Partnerships and ApprenticeNYC. These programs are a key foundation on which to build, with greater awareness and participation from Gowanus-based businesses.

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- ▶ Increase awareness of programs and services that meet gaps in skills and training, including the Workforce1 Career Center at the Brooklyn Army Terminal
 - ▶ Encourage increased participation by businesses and residents of ApprenticeNYC, pre-apprenticeship and high school internship opportunities, and training programs for growing occupations

Promote industrial, arts, and office-based businesses operating in the Gowanus IBZ area



The Gowanus IBZ is a thriving business community, ranging from traditional industrial and construction-based firms to emerging tech-based and specialized manufacturing firms. As business growth occurs in and around the Study Area, local businesses, as well as products and designs made in Gowanus, should be promoted by locally based organizations. Further, given the presence of arts and creative sectors in Gowanus, it is important to widen the focus of workforce programs to include these prominent sectors of the local economy.

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- ▶ Identify and track growing industries, such as advanced manufacturing, waste and recycling services, construction, arts and material production, and small-scale metal fabrication and woodworking
 - ▶ Create a marketing campaign to promote local businesses and profile artists, makers, artisans, manufacturers, and other emerging sectors

