



DOWNTOWN FAR ROCKAWAY ROADMAP FOR ACTION



INVESTING IN THE DOWNTOWN VILLAGE

DOWNTOWN FAR ROCKAWAY IS POISED FOR A TRANSFORMATION. Major new investments will better connect the neighborhood, increase economic opportunity, and improve the quality of life for the people who call the area home. Based on feedback from community leaders, business owners, and residents, the de Blasio administration is investing in Downtown Far Rockaway's existing infrastructure—as well as supporting new commercial and residential developments—to strengthen and revitalize this community.

The backbone of a successful downtown is the people who call it home. The de Blasio administration is committed to creating affordable housing for its residents by pursuing creative opportunities to encourage the development of new mixed-income housing with services and amenities. With an eye to the future, we are investing in and revitalizing commercial corridors including Central Avenue, Mott Avenue, and Beach 20th Street to support small businesses and draw a new mix of retail offerings that will bring new services to the area. Our initiatives will improve the neighborhood's connectivity by expanding pedestrian walkways and public spaces, as well as many other ambitious and exciting new projects.

Despite its unique character and history, the area has experienced decades of disinvestment. The Downtown Far Rockaway Roadmap for Action is focused on strategic investments to build on the community's existing infrastructure and support Downtown Far Rockaway's growth as a vibrant neighborhood with affordable housing, commerce, and local industry.



SMART, COMMUNITY-DRIVEN INVESTMENT WILL BETTER CONNECT THE NEIGHBORHOOD, INCREASE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY, AND IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR THE PEOPLE WHO CALL THE AREA HOME.



TIMELINE

- November 2015 – Ongoing** Downtown Far Rockaway Working Group Meetings
- November 2015 – Ongoing** Outreach to elected officials, civic organizations and neighborhood groups
- January 2016** Public Meeting: Shaping the Future of Far Rockaway
- February 2016** Working Group Recommendations delivered to Mayor
- May 2016** Public Open-House: Shaping the Future of Far Rockaway
- Summer-Fall 2016** Release of City's Response to Working Group
Release Scoping Notice

Public Meeting: Informational Session on Shaping the Future of Downtown Far Rockaway
Public Scoping Hearing

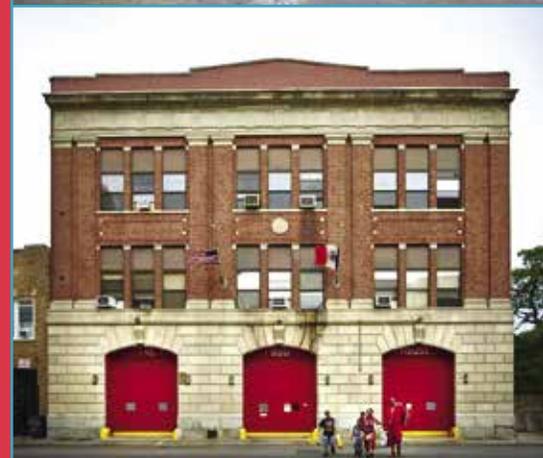


GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In November 2015, Council Member Donovan Richards convened the Downtown Far Rockaway Working Group—a team of local and state elected officials, and community, business, and nonprofit stakeholders—to develop a set of goals and recommendations to support the revitalization of the neighborhood. The Working Group received input from over 100 community members and delivered their recommendations to Mayor de Blasio in February 2016.

THE FIVE GOALS

1. Re-establish Downtown Far Rockaway as the commercial and transportation hub of the peninsula
2. Reposition the area as a mixed-use retail and residential district and encourage new mixed-income housing
3. Activate sidewalks and streets with pedestrian walkways, amenities, and public open spaces
4. Improve the quality of life for residents through access to community services, education, and quality jobs
5. Build the capacity of community organizations and support local businesses

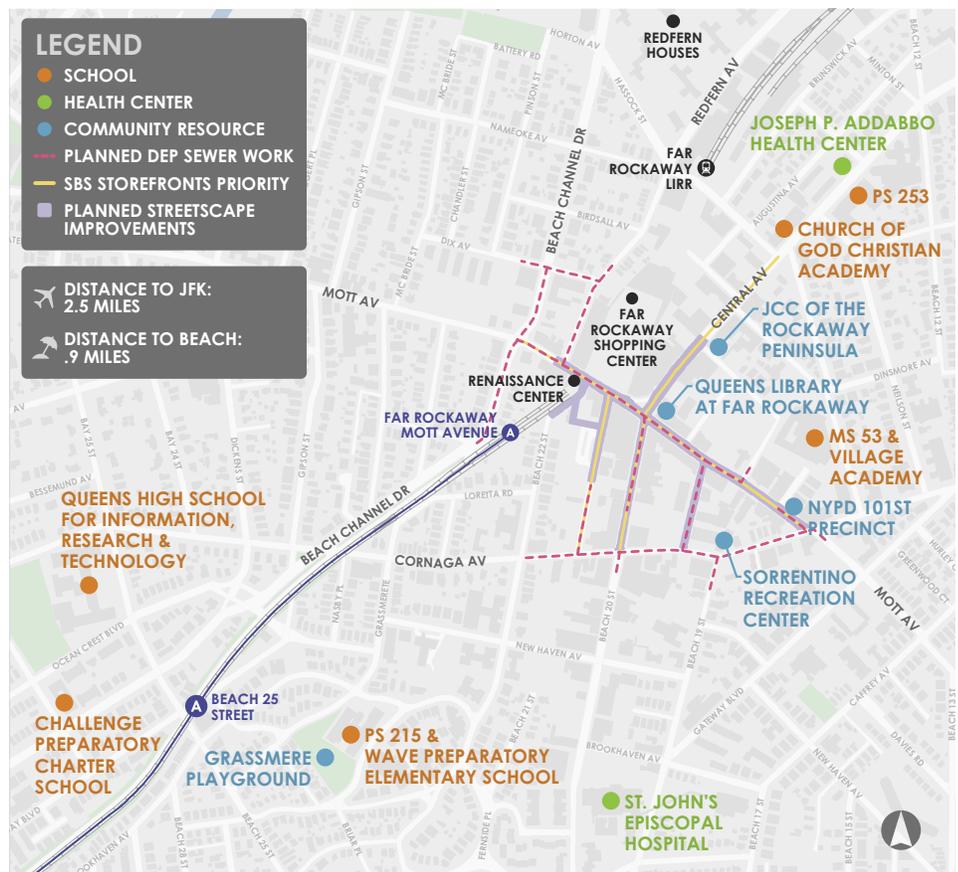


LETTER FROM COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS AND THE WORKING GROUP MEMBERS SENT TO MAYOR BILL DE BLASIO ON FEBRUARY 1, 2016

View full letter at www.edc.nyc/downtown-far-rockaway

DOWNTOWN FAR ROCKAWAY

- Home to 50,314 residents compared to 117,000 on the peninsula
- Served by subway, Long Island Railroad and 6 bus lines
- Direct access to the beach, 2.5 miles to JFK, less than ½ mile to St. John’s Hospital
- Median household income of \$41,593, compared to NYC median of \$50,100
- 12% of residents live and work locally
- 73.2% of residents are renters; 47% spend more than 35% of their annual income on rent
- 31% of residents are 19 years old or younger, compared to 24% in NYC and 14% are 65 years old or older, compared to 12% in NYC



Source: Far Rockaway-Baywater Neighborhood Tabulation Area – 2009-2013 ACS



“I AM PROUD TO ANNOUNCE THAT THE CITY OF NEW YORK IS INVESTING \$91 MILLION DOLLARS TO TRANSFORM DOWNTOWN FAR ROCKAWAY—THE KIND OF INVESTMENT THIS NEIGHBORHOOD HAS NOT SEEN IN YEARS.”

MAYOR BILL DE BLASIO'S
2016 STATE OF OUR CITY ADDRESS

ROADMAP FOR ACTION

In the letter to the Mayor, the Downtown Far Rockaway Working Group asked that the City activate long-vacant sites, increase access to housing and retail opportunities in the neighborhood, and help the area realize its potential as the commercial hub of the peninsula. The community's vision emphasized the need for comprehensive and coordinated City action to transform Downtown Far Rockaway. The Downtown Far Rockaway Roadmap for Action seeks to respond to the community's needs through the following strategies:

1. HOUSING

Identify opportunities for new mixed-income housing that include a range of income levels and preserves existing affordable housing to reflect the needs of Far Rockaway residents

- Pursue creative opportunities to develop permanently affordable housing on City-owned land
- Explore use of zoning tools to provide permanently affordable housing on privately-owned land
- Encourage private developers to work with the Far Rockaway community to ensure that all new developments meet the community's needs and priorities
- Make it easier for residents to understand, prepare for, and complete the affordable housing application process
- Preserve existing affordable housing and conduct outreach to property owners to promote NYC Department of Housing Preservation & Development financing programs

2. TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC SPACE

Improve transportation infrastructure and transit resources and transform public space with new connections and open plazas

- Reinforce Mott Avenue as a 'Village Main Street' by expanding sidewalks, adding trees, and installing new lighting
- Build a new public plaza between Beach 21st & Beach 22nd Streets, and expand public space with a new gateway at the corner of Mott Avenue and Central Avenue
- Install district-wide amenities such as benches, wayfinding signage, and sidewalk plantings
- Upgrade stormwater infrastructure, including new storm sewers and catch basins, to reduce street flooding
- Identify short- and long-term transportation improvements including improved pedestrian crossings, signal timing, transit connections, and reorganization of bus and commuter van operations to increase efficiency and convenience for users
- Call on the Metropolitan Transportation Authority to improve the Long Island Railroad station, advocate for better service, and strengthen the connections between the Long Island Railroad and subway station

3. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Strengthen existing commercial corridors and small businesses, attracting a broad mix of retail offerings, and improving connections to jobs, workforce training, and education

- Support a retail mix that includes sit-down restaurants, entertainment venues, meeting space, hotels, and other commercial uses

- Explore partnerships to attract quality employers to Downtown Far Rockaway and improve access to opportunities at JFK airport, while increasing access for local residents to workforce training programs for in-demand occupations.
- Connect local entrepreneurs and businesses to services that can help them start or grow a business, navigate government regulations, and enhance the resiliency of their operations
- Implement improvements to approximately 20 existing storefronts on key retail corridors beginning in Summer 2016
- Improve connections to broadband network and increase free public wifi

4. COMMUNITY SERVICES AND CULTURE

Expand and build upon community services and cultural assets to improve the quality of life for residents and attract visitors

- Provide resources to support the growth and capacity of community based organizations
- Improve and upgrade community services, including the new Far Rockaway branch of the Queens Public Library, and the Sorrentino Recreation Center
- Work with community based organizations to develop multi-generational programming for public spaces that serves the diverse interests of the community
- Support cultural and arts organizations, while exploring ways to expand the cultural programming in the area

5. LAND USE AND ZONING

Rezone the downtown area to unlock development potential and foster a broad and vibrant mix of commercial and residential uses, including mixed-income housing

- Focus development and density close to the commercial core and mass transit resources
- Guide new development to blend into the existing neighborhood fabric, preserving the historic village center
- Require commercial ground floor uses along major corridors to enliven the streetscape
- Develop parking strategy that meets the area need, while also promoting a walkable and vibrant streetscape
- Utilize all city resources to activate long underutilized privately owned property in the area

IMPLEMENTATION

Downtown Far Rockaway has a bright and exciting future with more good jobs, new retail and amenities, and mixed-income affordable housing with accessible transportation options. The strategies outlined in this document are designed to attract public and private investments to begin immediate improvements to the neighborhood. In support of this roadmap, the City of New York and Council Member Richards will continue to seek and incorporate feedback from local stakeholders—including residents, businesses, and investors—to help shape the future of this beloved neighborhood. We encourage you to continue to make your voice heard.



For illustrative purposes only.



“YOU’RE BEING HEARD LOUD, LOUD, LOUD AND CLEAR AND I THINK THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I CAN HONESTLY SAY IN HISTORY THAT WE ARE.”

DONOVAN RICHARDS, JR
NYC COUNCIL MEMBER, 31ST DISTRICT

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Donovan Richards

Council Member 31st District, Queens

Melinda Katz

Queens Borough President

James Sanders Jr.

New York State Senate, 10th District

Philip Goldfeder

New York State Assembly, 23rd District

Michelle R. Titus

New York State Assembly, 31st District

Queens Community Board 14

Rockaway Development and
Revitalization Corporation

Far Rockaway Branch Queens Library

Redfern Houses Tenants Association

Rockaway Youth Task Force

First Church of God

Church of the Nazarene

Jewish Community Council of the
Rockaway Peninsula

Far Rockaway branch of the NAACP

St. John's Hospital

EazyLocks

Local Business Owner



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