

*together for*  
**KINGSBRIDGE**  
*juntos para*



**Community Vision for the Future of the Kingsbridge Armory**

# Introducing *Together for Kingsbridge*



The Kingsbridge Armory is the largest armory in the United States. It is an awe-inspiring and unique building, one with the potential to be catalytic for economic development in the local community, the borough, the city, and the region. The Kingsbridge Armory will be a place of hope, a place of possibility, one that capitalizes on the community's strengths and assets to create jobs for the people of the neighborhood and the Bronx. Redevelopment at the Kingsbridge Armory is a special opportunity, at a location that is well connected by transit and highways to the rest of New York City, making it a gateway to the greater region.

There are two critical elements that differentiate today's effort from the failed efforts of the past. First, nine months of deep and intentional community engagement was

foundational and resulted in the *Together for Kingsbridge Vision Plan*. Second is a shared sense of urgency from the community and every level of elected officials that now is the time to transform the Armory into a valuable resource.





***The Together for Kingsbridge Vision Plan is more than a vision: it is a significant public investment in the community's future that will create new opportunities and jobs for the community.***



Borough President Gibson, Council Member Sanchez, and Executive Director of NWBCCC Sandra Lobo pose for a photo at the *Together for Kingsbridge* second public workshop held on Saturday, January 21, 2023.



Mayor Adams addresses the audience during a Town Hall hosted by Congress Member Espaillat at Our Lady of Angels church on Sunday, February 26, 2023.

# The Together for Kingsbridge Working Group

To support the creation of an inclusive community engagement process, NYCEDC partnered with Council Member Pierina Sanchez and local community leader Sandra Lobo, Executive Director of Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition to assemble the Together for Kingsbridge Community Working Group (CWG).

The CWG included a broad cross-section of community stakeholders, representing faith-based organizations, cultural groups, local business organizations, educational leaders, labor, and economic development organizations as well as local elected officials at each level of government.



## The Together for Kingsbridge Community Working Group included:

### Co-Chairs

New York City Council Member Pierina Sanchez  
Sandra Lobo, Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition (NWBCCC)

### Elected Official Offices

Bronx Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson  
Congress Member Adriano Espaillat  
New York State Senator Gustavo Rivera  
New York State Senator Robert Jackson  
New York State Assembly Member Jose Rivera  
New York State Assembly Member George Alvarez

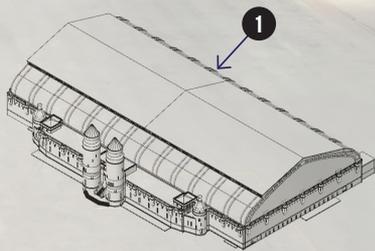
### Community Stakeholders

Bronx Community Board 7  
Bronx Cooperative Development Initiative (BCDI)  
Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation  
Burnside-Tremont-Jerome Merchant Association  
Central Labor Council  
Dominicanos USA  
Kingsbridge Heights Community Center  
Kingsbridge Merchants Association  
Lehman College  
Local Union 79  
Mekong NYC  
Monroe College  
Morris Heights Health Center  
Our Lady of Angels  
Community School District 10  
Street Vendor Project  
The Gardiner Foundation

# The Kingsbridge Armory

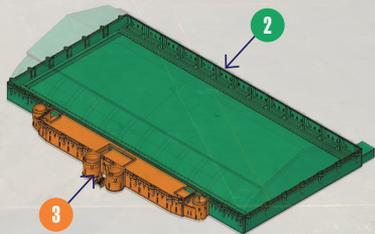
The Kingsbridge Armory was built between 1912 and 1917 and designed by architect Lewis Pilcher for military use. The building was in military use until 1994, and in 1996 ownership of the Armory reverted to the City. Since the 1990s, the Armory has largely been vacant. The City has tried twice to redevelop the Armory and community groups have organized around advocating for a renewed Kingsbridge Armory.

The Kingsbridge Armory has over 570,000 square feet in existing floor space, with a number of discrete and unique spaces, from the ornate and remarkable headhouse entrance to the approximately 115-foot tall column-free drill hall. These spaces each present their own opportunities for future redevelopment at the site.



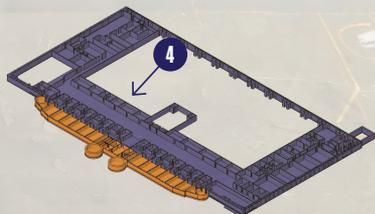
## 1 Exterior

The Armory's imposing structure and its large scale make it a significant landmark for the borough, one that is visible throughout the surrounding community.



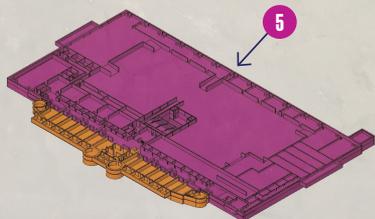
## 2 Drill Hall

The Kingsbridge Armory's drill hall is one of the largest column-free spaces in North America.



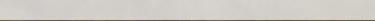
## 3 Headhouse

With its main entrance to the building from West Kingsbridge Road and four flanking towers, the headhouse is the Armory's most striking and prominent feature. The headhouse contains rooms of various sizes that have access to natural light.



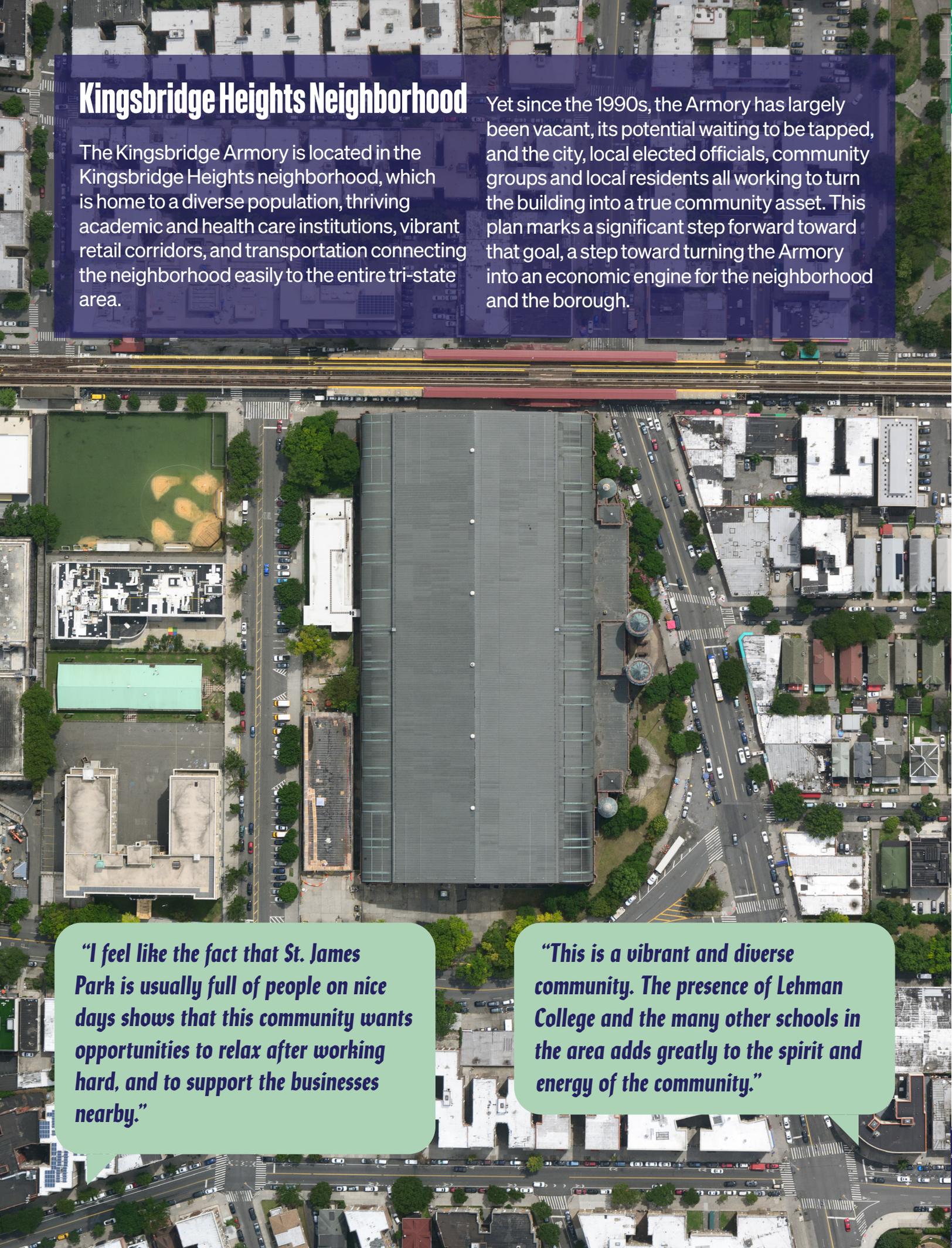
## 4 Basement Mezzanine

A portion of the basement mezzanine is below street-level along Reservoir Avenue and West Kingsbridge Road, but there are street-level accessible entries on Jerome Avenue, creating an opportunity for public facing uses.



## 5 Basement

The basement, at almost 200,000 square feet, spans the entire site and has many different spaces including storage, a basketball court, a shooting range, a bowling alley, and lower-level theater access.



# Kingsbridge Heights Neighborhood

The Kingsbridge Armory is located in the Kingsbridge Heights neighborhood, which is home to a diverse population, thriving academic and health care institutions, vibrant retail corridors, and transportation connecting the neighborhood easily to the entire tri-state area.

Yet since the 1990s, the Armory has largely been vacant, its potential waiting to be tapped, and the city, local elected officials, community groups and local residents all working to turn the building into a true community asset. This plan marks a significant step forward toward that goal, a step toward turning the Armory into an economic engine for the neighborhood and the borough.

*“I feel like the fact that St. James Park is usually full of people on nice days shows that this community wants opportunities to relax after working hard, and to support the businesses nearby.”*

*“This is a vibrant and diverse community. The presence of Lehman College and the many other schools in the area adds greatly to the spirit and energy of the community.”*



BRONX ZOO

Mosholu  
PKWY

# Community-Owned

## Community Strengths

The engagement process began by identifying the community's numerous strengths and assets. Community members want to build from these strengths and assets, and they want to see a future Armory that is a sustainable economic engine for the Bronx, one that creates good, local jobs and local wealth.

**"This community is resilient and supports the community through organizing, strong work ethic, and looking out for each other."**



**VIBRANT CULTURE**

**"The Bronx produced break dance, hip hop, and graffiti art— what other city has had that influence on the world?"**



**RESILIENCE**



**ANCHOR INSTITUTIONS**



**ORGANIZING POWER**

**"Authentically Bronx [means] unapologetic loudness, vibrancy and possibilities."**



**LONG AND RICH HISTORY**

**"Here in this community of Kingsbridge Road, we care and support each other and treat them like family."**

**"This community is an education hub. There is also great diversity of cultures and backgrounds, along with a wide range of age groups."**

**"The Bronx represents history that still lives until this day through culture and community... the community is what makes this neighborhood thrive. From the sounds of reggae-ton to the taste of the various Hispanic cuisines."**

# Community Vision for the Future of the Kingsbridge Armory

The *Together for Kingsbridge Vision Plan* brings together two key components of what we heard from the community. The first is a set of Guiding Principles which are actionable goals that would support a future development responsive to the community's strengths and needs. The second, is identifying Priority Uses which offer a range of potential industries and uses that respond to the community's economic development priorities.

Community Health & Wealth

*"We need opportunities for the young and old to be able to enjoy."*

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE KINGSBRIDGE ARMORY



**PRIORITIZE YOUTH**



**CREATE JOBS AND WEALTH FOR EXISTING WORKERS AND COMMUNITIES**



**WELCOME OLDER ADULTS**



**GROW A REGENERATIVE LOCAL ECONOMY**



**MAXIMIZE COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP**



**FOSTER INTERGENERATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS**



**PUT THE BRONX ON THE MAP**

*"The Armory can support the community by providing resources, programs, and initiatives that focus on strengthening the local economy, building social connectedness and resilience, and promoting community engagement."*

*"There are so few arts locations in the Bronx. The Bronx produced break dance, hip hop, and graffiti art — what other city has had that influence on the world? It's time the Bronx claimed its position as a serious arts capitol!"*

Celebrate the BX

ROOFTOP CAMPUS



# Engagement Process

Over the course of the process NYCEDC heard from over 4,000 people, through surveys, workshops, town halls, and small group discussions.

## Public Engagement by the Numbers

**4,000+**  People Engaged in the Process

**1,000+**  Participants Across four Public Workshops

**13**  Hours Spent in Public Workshops

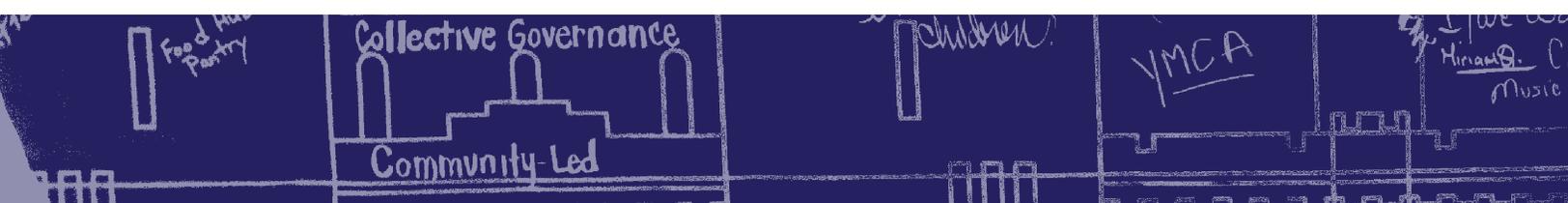
**500+**  Community Members Toured the Armory

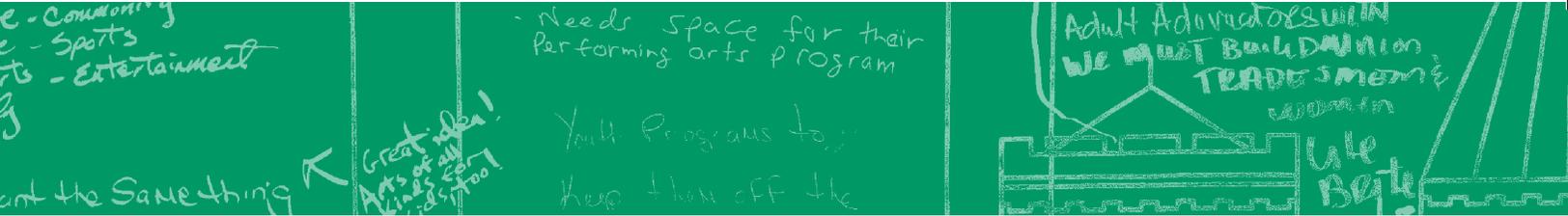
**950+**  Surveys Completed

**9**  Community Board Presentations

**16**  Small Group Discussions

**75+**  Industry Stakeholders Engaged





## Priority Uses

The community identified two general categories of Priority Uses for the Kingsbridge Armory: Potential Industries which are envisioned as the main use of the Armory to attract major private investment that can transform the Armory into a sustainable economic engine for local jobs and local wealth, while generating enough revenue to make the project financially viable; and Complementary Uses that provide services and work opportunities for Bronx communities (especially youth and senior community members), while infusing the Armory with Bronx culture. Throughout the process, community members highlighted the desire for the Armory to be redeveloped in a way that contributes to the environmental sustainability and resilience of the Bronx.

## POTENTIAL INDUSTRIES

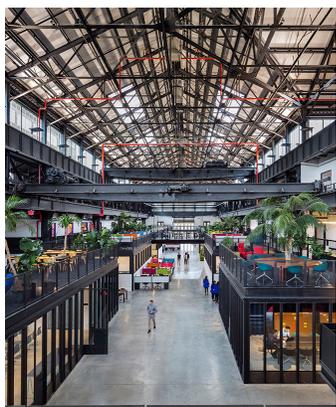
When considering Potential Industries for the Kingsbridge Armory, community members consistently voiced two key principles: creating jobs and wealth for local workers and residents; and maximizing community ownership.

### FILM AND TV

### SUSTAINABLE MANUFACTURING

### EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

### URBAN AGRICULTURE

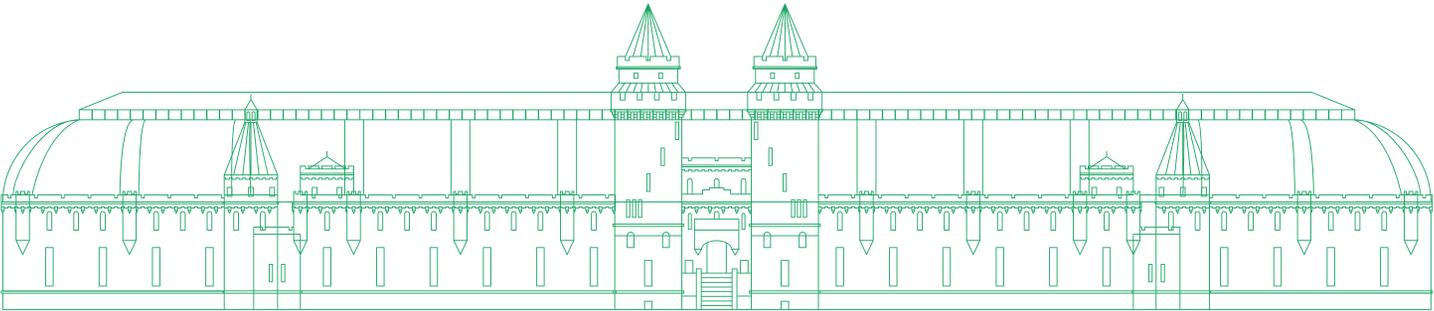


Based on the community's interest in certain industries, NYCEDC met with industry stakeholders to understand the feasibility of specific industries as part of a future redevelopment of the Armory.





***“The space can hold so many uses, it would be a shame to underutilize it, thus a maximalist approach to development would be best, and one that is inclusive of the many various communities within Kingsbridge and the Bronx at large.”***



## **COMPLEMENTARY USES**

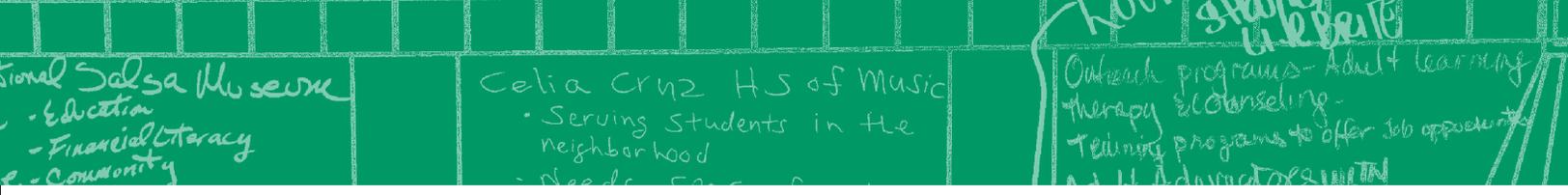
Community members identified many Complementary Uses that could help the Armory be an economic engine and at the same time respond to other community needs. While these complementary uses may not be significant enough to occupy most

of the Armory or generate enough revenue to offset its costs, community members felt that these uses would respond to a need in the community, which in turn would help the Armory achieve the Guiding Principles. Complementary Uses that follow were identified as priorities through the community engagement.

- VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND SMALL BUSINESS INCUBATOR**
- RETAIL, FOOD, AND BEVERAGE USES**
- COMMUNITY GATHERING AND ORGANIZING**
- BRONX ARTS AND CULTURE SPACE**
- RECREATION AND HEALTH**
- SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS**

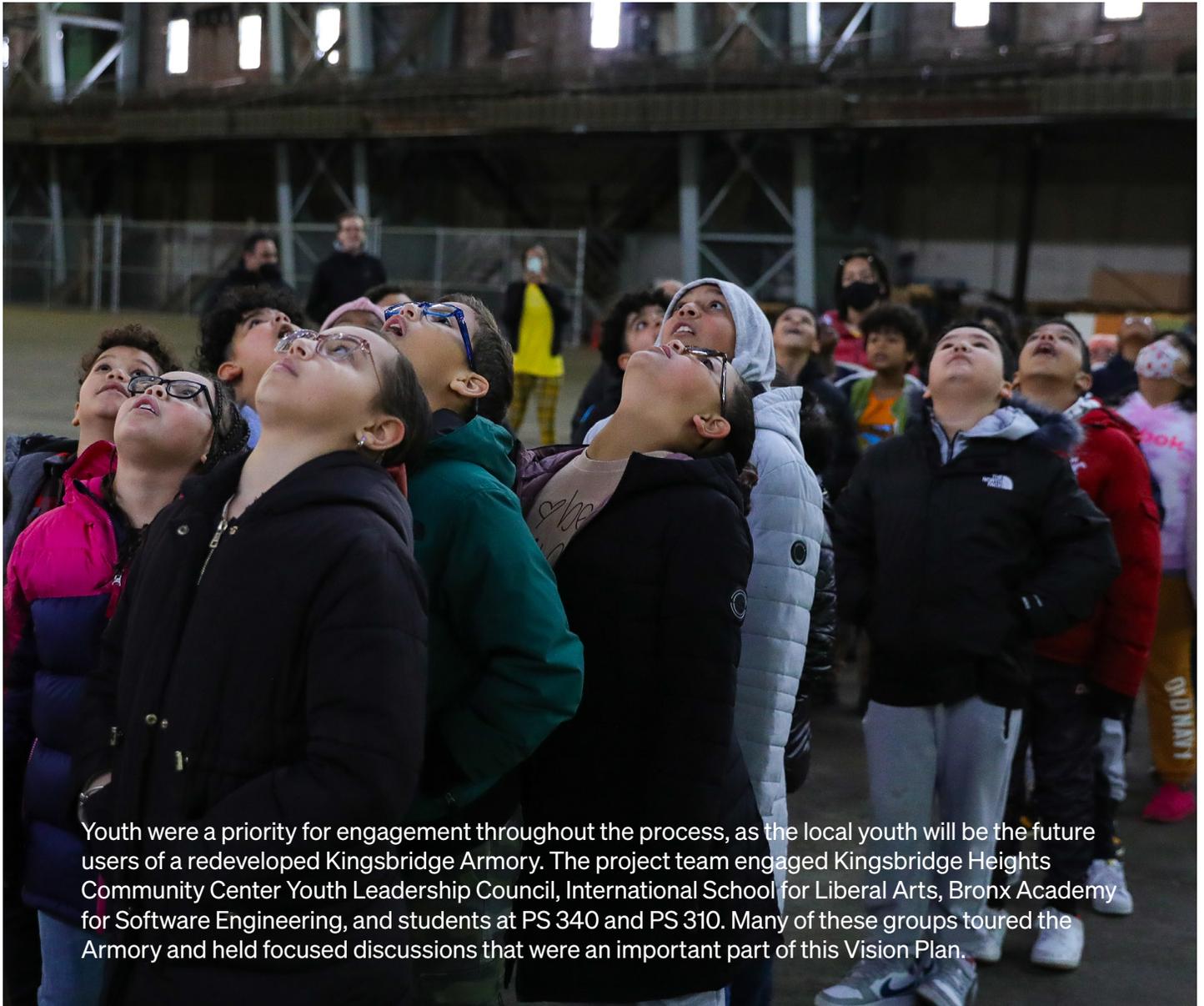
***“Provide a place to gather and participate in community activities, leisure, learning without having to travel into midtown or beyond.”***



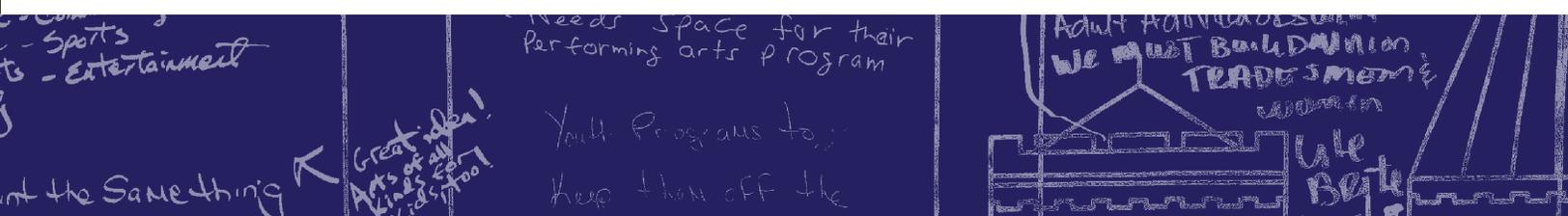


## Next Steps

The *Together for Kingsbridge Vision Plan* is an important and necessary step, but it is not the end of this process. This plan will be a part of a forthcoming Request for Proposals (RFP) for the redevelopment of the Kingsbridge Armory, helping to give future developers a real understanding of what the community would like to see in a future Armory.



Youth were a priority for engagement throughout the process, as the local youth will be the future users of a redeveloped Kingsbridge Armory. The project team engaged Kingsbridge Heights Community Center Youth Leadership Council, International School for Liberal Arts, Bronx Academy for Software Engineering, and students at PS 340 and PS 310. Many of these groups toured the Armory and held focused discussions that were an important part of this Vision Plan.



*The Together for Kingsbridge Vision Plan is a culmination of nine months of robust community engagement to guide the future of the Kingsbridge Armory.*

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**NYC / EDC**