

**Testimony of the New York City Economic Development Corporation
New York City Council Committees on Economic Development
Brooklyn Marine Terminal Redevelopment Oversight Hearing
June 12, 2025**

Good morning, Chair Farías, and members of the Economic Development Committee. My name is Andrew Kimball, and I serve as President and Chief Executive Officer of the New York City Economic Development Corporation. I am joined by my colleagues Jennifer Sun, Executive Vice President, Planning, and Mikelle Adgate, Senior Vice President, Government and Community Relations. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today about the Vision for the Brooklyn Marine Terminal.

Just over a year ago, Mayor Adams, Governor Hochul, the Port Authority of New York & New Jersey (Port Authority) and the New York City Economic Development Corporation (EDC) stood together to announce a generational opportunity to transform a key site on the Brooklyn waterfront into a modern maritime port and vibrant mixed-used community, ending 50 years of disinvestment and decay. Thank you for the opportunity to walk you through the BMT Vision Plan and the planning and engagement process that has led to its creation. This Vision Plan is the result of extensive collaboration with the input of 4,262 community members, six Advisory Groups led by subject area experts and guided by the 28-member Brooklyn Marine Terminal Task Force Chaired by Congressman Goldman and Vice-Chaired by State Senator Gounardes and Council Member Aviles. It also reflects input and collaboration with the State of New York and the New York City Departments of Transportation, Environmental Protection, Parks & Recreation, and Design & Construction.

The BMT Vision Plan charts a new future for this site with a modern, all-electric port at its core surrounded by a mixed-use community with housing, open space, resiliency and light industrial space. BMT provides a generational opportunity to deliver a port that will be central to our Blue Highway initiative to get trucks off our streets, create thousands of new jobs, and provide waterfront access and resiliency measures that protect against climate change and sea-level rise. The BMT Vision Plan offers a long-overdue revitalization of this vital portion of Brooklyn’s waterfront and reimagines the future of NYC’s Harbor to fuel 21st-century innovation and growth.

History

Before we dive further into the future of the Brooklyn Marine Terminal, I want to take a moment to place this project in its historical context. New York’s waterfront was once a mighty engine of global commerce. Armies of longshoremen and stevedores – often new immigrants, supporting growing families – worked on the bustling piers up and down the East River.

But starting in the middle of the 20th century, changing shipping patterns, bigger vessels, low-cost land with rail and highway access on the New Jersey side of the harbor and new

technologies like the shipping container moved trade away from New York City's waterfront. Factories and warehouses shuttered, workers left, and vibrant industrial neighborhoods hollowed out. The Brooklyn Marine Terminal is a casualty of this era. However, its stagnation and decay in recent decades are also the result of unique governance challenges.

For many years, the site was governed by a "tri-party agreement" between the City, the State, and the Port Authority, with the Port Authority holding operating control of the vast majority of the site. Due to the size of BMT, lack of water depth as well as rail and highway access, the Port Authority focused its attention on New Jersey ports, which handle 98% of the containers that come into the metro region, leaving the Brooklyn Marine Terminal as a forgotten site east of the Hudson. A lack of vision and attention meant a lack of City, State and federal support and crumbling piers and infrastructure. The lack of public investment also resulted in short-term leases to private operators meaning the property received limited private investment.

At the same time, other City-controlled sites along the Brooklyn waterfront were able to pivot to the future. The Brooklyn Navy Yard turned a venerable shipyard into the nation's most successful urban industrial park. Brooklyn Bridge Park turned rotting piers into an international model of resilient, restorative green infrastructure. The Brooklyn Army Terminal continues to grow in impact while providing much-needed industrial and manufacturing jobs. And the South Brooklyn Marine Terminal is turning a vacant lot that had languished for 50 years into the country's biggest offshore wind terminal.

Finally, in May of last year, there was a breakthrough for the Brooklyn Marine Terminal. The Port Authority and the City exchanged Howland Hook and the Brooklyn Marine Terminal. The land-swap agreement allowed the Port Authority to extend its existing lease of Howland Hook, supporting its ability to drive future expansions and capacity enhancements in close proximity to their NJ Port assets. EDC secured long-term control of BMT through a lease allowing for the redevelopment of BMT into a modern, mixed-use maritime district, with an all-electric port at its core. And now, BMT finally has a chance at its own rebirth.

The Memorandum of Understanding codifying this deal was signed on April 17, 2024 by the City, State and Port Authority ending the Tri-Party Agreement and decades of dysfunction and disinvestment and lack of accountability. A key element of the agreement was that given the regional importance of Howland Hook and BMT and their role in maritime activity in the harbor that the ownership transfer of the property – Howland Hook to the Port Authority and BMT to the City of New York – be facilitated through a State General Project Plan (GPP).

Process

Starting in May 2024, EDC began to meet biweekly with Task Force Leadership: Congressman Goldman, Council Member Avilés, and State Senator Gounardes. Task Force Leadership convened the BMT Task Force, a 28-member group with representatives from elected officials and local organizations and community leaders to provide feedback on the

planning and engagement process as well as the options presented by the EDC project team and their consultants. At Task Force meetings, EDC shared critical information, and members of the Task Force openly discussed and debated various elements of the project. The Task Force brought together a balance of perspectives that reflected interests and expertise in maritime and industrial business, labor and trade, environmental justice, sustainability, transportation, housing, planning, community development, and regional and local perspectives.

EDC and the Task Force Leadership worked together to form six Advisory Groups, led by subject area experts and composed of 90 people representing diverse community viewpoints, organized by key themes and issues. The Advisory Groups played a key role throughout the process by reviewing and providing feedback on planning work.

Leadership agreed that to move into the GPP process the Task Force would need to approve the BMT Vision Plan by a two-thirds majority vote. Upon an affirmative vote, the City and the State will continue to work closely with stakeholders to advance this project through a State GPP, a process and set of requirements that includes a neighborhood condition study and an environmental review scoping that will take place this fall. The BMT Vision Plan and the associated commitments are contingent on an approved GPP, which requires positive votes by the Empire State Development Corporation Board and by the Public Authorities Control Board.

Community and stakeholder engagement have been instrumental in creating the contours of the BMT Vision Plan. The engagement process was extensive and included:

- 4,200+ People Engaged
- 915 Survey Responses
- 47 Public engagements including 27 workshops, 15 feedback and info sessions, 3 Town Halls, 2 surveys
- 11 Site Tours with 198 members of the public, NYCHA residents, elected officials, and city agencies
- 23 Advisory Group individual and All-Hands meetings, joint Task Force meetings
- 32 Task Force Meetings, Office Hours, Small Group Discussions
- 13 Stakeholder focus groups and project briefings with small businesses, community associations and organizations
- 9 NYCHA Red Hook Houses East and West tabling event, focus groups, feedback sessions
- 5 Canvassing Efforts in Red Hook with Green City Force

Over the course of the engagement process, consistent themes emerged which included a desire for:

- a modern and sustainable port
- job creation and workforce development
- affordable housing
- public open space and waterfront access

- increased resiliency
- enhanced light industrial spaces
- community facilities
- commercial/retail spaces
- Blue Highway

The BMT Vision Plan integrated community feedback and delivers on each of these priorities.

BMT Vision Plan

Next week the Task Force will vote to advance a project that will deliver:

- A 60-acre modern and sustainable all-electric port focused on water-to-water freight, removing trucks from local streets and New York City roadways and serving as a key node in the City's Blue Highways initiative, and reducing direct-to-consumer vehicle trips. To-date, EDC has secured nearly \$360M in public capital to rebuild and modernize the port. This includes an early \$80M City Capital commitment, \$15M in State funding, and a \$164M Federal Grant, the largest ever received by EDC, and a corresponding \$109M City Capital local capital match. The Vision for the port includes a new marginal pier, improved infrastructure, and new equipment that responds to market demands and industry trends, positioning the port for success.
- Three BMT districts – BMT North, Atlantic Basin, and BMT South – totaling a maximum of approximately 7,700 units of housing, including a minimum of 35% or 2695 will be permanently affordable. If and when the BMT plan achieves full funding, any additional money raised by BMTDC will be dedicated first toward increasing on-site affordability with the goal of 40% of all the housing units or 3080 units being permanently affordable. The permanently affordable housing will be rented at or below an average AMI of 60% to match Option 1 of the City's MIH Program, with at least 10% of the units at 40% of AMI and no units above 100% of AMI.
- A \$50M fund to support off-site preservation and/or creation of affordable housing within Community Board 6 that would preserve approximately 450 units
- \$200M in funding to NYCHA Red Hook Houses East and Red Hook Houses West that would preserve approximately 575 units and 200 affordable units reserved at BMT for NYCHA Red Hook residents
- At least 35 acres of public open space, including new destination parks adjoining Brooklyn Bridge Park and Valentino Pier, each of which will bring the public directly to the water, as well as neighborhood parks
- A mile-long greenway and new waterfront access connecting Brooklyn Bridge Park to Red Hook
- A pedestrian-first traffic and transit plan that prioritizes pedestrian mobility while also improving bus speeds to rider destinations and reducing the burden that trucks place on local streets including but not limited to: pedestrianized streets, parking maximums, district-wide garages, blue highways, micromobility and freight hubs,

bus priority lanes, increased ferry services, and one or more electric shuttle(s) to improve intra and inter neighborhood mobility

- Over 270,000 sf of light-industrial space available at discounted rents, with non-profit management of stand-alone industrial spaces at Pier 11 and BMT South
- The establishment of a \$10 million industrial development fund to support the industrial sector within the broader Red Hook neighborhood
- Over 280,000 sf of community facility and cultural space, including space for a new public school in BMT North and a destination non-profit cultural center in BMT South
- Over 300,000 sf of commercial space through the site, which will help to enliven and support community retail corridors
- A new Brooklyn Cruise Terminal with community integrated public open space and an adjacent approximately 400-key hotel, all of which will help to make the Atlantic Basin a community amenity and connect it to Red Hook's existing commercial corridor
- A comprehensive coastal protection strategy that will protect the site against sea-level rise and threats from climate change and deliver the first 30 percent of a potential future Red Hook peninsula-wide resiliency system
- A comprehensive workforce strategy that includes a Project Labor Agreement, targeted community hiring, a dedicated world-class experiential learning center at Pier 11, and funding to establish an economic mobility network in Red Hook and a maritime career readiness program for NYCHA Red Hook Houses East and Red Hook Houses West residents
- Over \$21 billion in economic impact for the city and region
- Approximately 39,000 temporary construction jobs
- Approximately 2,400 permanent maritime, industrial, commercial, and residential jobs

EDC is an Experienced Industrial Landlord

EDC is one of New York City's largest industrial landlords, with our assets supporting 1 in 12 industrial jobs in the outer boroughs. This scale underscores our deep commitment to the city's industrial sector and BMT. That commitment is reflected in our work across key City industrial sites: in the Hunts Point Food Distribution Center, where we have over \$1 billion in active redevelopment projects, including a new Produce Market and the establishment of the Hunts Point Marine Terminal, announced publicly this week; in our Sunset Park District where at the Brooklyn Army Terminal and the MADE campus, are investing over \$750 million to support modern manufacturing, creative industries, and green jobs, and at the South Brooklyn Marine Terminal, where our investment of over \$100 million has leveraged over \$1 billion in private investment for the development of one of the nation's largest offshore wind port facilities, anchoring New York's clean energy transition.

The BMT Vision Plan builds on this foundation, reinforcing EDC's long-standing dedication to industrial growth and innovation. To that end, the project includes:

- The creation of a \$1.75 billion electrified port facility focused on getting trucks off our roads
- 275,000 sf of new, modern light-industrial space at discounted rents
- \$10 million industrial development fund to support the construction of new industrial space, acquisition and/or renovation of existing industrial space, and equipment purchases within the broader Red Hook community

And in the short term, EDC is already delivering on the City’s commitments to invest in BMT, in recent months entering into contracts for:

- a new \$15 million electric crane;
- \$2 million of fender repairs to Pier 10 allow the continued use of that critical bulkhead for Red Hook Container Terminal; and
- \$1 million to demolish and remove the four out of service cranes.

Blue Highways

While developing a Blue Highway network is an idea that been around for 30 years, the Adams Administration, through the coordinated efforts of the New York City Department of Transportation (NYCDOT) and EDC, has done more to build out Blue Highway landings in the last three years than the entire 30 previous years combined. For example, earlier this year, EDC announced a new public-private partnership at the Downtown Skyport to invest \$10 million in the build-out of a barge landing for fast ferries that would deliver cargo instead of people for delivery by e-cargo bike to Lower Manhattan destinations. And earlier this week, the Administration announced that the prison barge at Hunts Point will be removed and replaced by a Hunts Point Marine Terminal that will allow for the unloading of containers with perishable goods coming by barge to the Food Distribution Center from BMT as well as from ports on the New Jersey side of the Harbor and other points along the East Coast. The Administration made an initial \$28 million commitment toward this Hunts Point facility that is projected to remove 9,000 monthly truck trips from city streets and reduce roadway congestion. EDC and NYCDOT are continuing to evaluate another 25 sites across the boroughs for the feasibility of activating Blue Highway landings. BMT will be a key node in the citywide Blue Highways initiative using barges, fast ferries, and zero-emission vehicles.

Blue Highway Workforce Study

Blue Highways aren’t just about freight and ferries – they’re about people and career pathways. Earlier this week, EDC published a first-ever “Blue Highways Workforce Assessment” to understand the labor force impacts and opportunities created by our investments in the city’s Blue Highways system. The report found that Blue Highways-related employment could grow by 72 percent in the next decade, creating 8,000 net new jobs in New York City by 2035 for a total of 117,000 jobs across maritime, transportation, and logistics sectors. The findings of this report will act as a blueprint for EDC’s future investments in workforce development, to provide underserved and underrepresented New

Yorkers access to family-sustaining Blue Highways careers. To advance training and pathways to Blue Highways jobs, BMT will center a modern maritime port and a Blue Highway welcome and experiential learning center that will provide workforce training, bridge and adult education to these jobs of the future.

Housing

New York City is in an unprecedented housing crisis, with an identified need to construct over 500,000 new units, including thousands of affordable units, by 2030 to meet demand. More than half of renters in the City are rent burdened, meaning they spend more than 50 percent of their income on housing costs, with a vacancy rate across rentals of 1.4 percent; the problem is particularly acute in Brooklyn and Manhattan.

In 2025, Brooklyn Community District 6 identified affordable housing and the need for additional housing among their top three most pressing priorities. The Community Board highlighted that the critical housing shortage in the district spans a range of housing types, including affordable and market-rate housing, urging City agencies to invest in building a diversity of housing options within the district.

This community has seen very little housing built over the last decade. The quarter mile area immediately around the BMT site has seen 557 new housing units, of which 111 were affordable, between 2014 and 2024. The Vision Plan responds to the community's housing needs by delivering approximately 7,700 new units. Notably, it preserves or creates around 4,105 affordable units — a remarkable accomplishment that underscores the plan's commitment to inclusive growth.

Governance

From the outset of the BMT Vision Plan engagement process, Task Force leadership and EDC established that any future development scenario at the site must be financially viable and self-sustaining, while creating a modern port and delivering a range of benefits that meet the needs of the community.

Throughout the engagement process for BMT, Task Force members expressed strong interest in i) forming a project-specific entity to govern the implementation and enforcement of the plan, and ii) ongoing engagement with the community to ensure plan commitments are honored. The governance entity will ensure transparency, accountability, and continued engagement with stakeholders on the project implementation. To that end, EDC is committed to establishing a Brooklyn Marine Terminal Development Corporation, a local development corporation that will be charged with implementing the approved BMT Vision Plan. Upon the adoption of a BMT Vision Plan, a Brooklyn Marine Terminal Advisory Task Force will be established to advise and guide the refinement of the site plan for the duration of the GPP process. After GPP approval, the purpose of the Brooklyn Marine Terminal Advisory Task Force will be to advise on ensuring consistency and follow-through on project commitments and to provide a forum for continued community input.

Economic Development, Workforce & Job Creation

A resounding theme of community input has been for the final project to deliver jobs for local residents, and workforce training, creating opportunities for family-sustaining wages. The redevelopment is estimated to generate over \$21 billion in economic impact and is projected to create 32,000 construction jobs and 2,400 permanent jobs, of which 295 will be maritime industrial jobs and 200 will be cruise-related jobs.

We've worked to ensure that these opportunities are available to community members. To that end, EDC will establish a Project Labor Agreement (PLA) for all City-funded construction. The PLA will incorporate EDC's Community Hiring goals to maximize opportunities for community members, particularly for NYCHA residents.

To ensure that community members have access to future jobs at BMT, EDC will establish an economic mobility network in Red Hook. The economic mobility network will be a community-led coalition of Red Hook nonprofit organizations that will partner with EDC to deliver ongoing workforce services. The coalition's objective will be to expand local resident employment and local resident internships and apprenticeships at BMT.

Additionally, EDC is committed to a comprehensive maritime career readiness program for young adults at NYCHA Red Hook Houses. This program will focus on introducing high schoolers to potential maritime career pathways at BMT and providing the training and credentials necessary to access those opportunities.

Finally, EDC is committed to establishing a world-class experiential learning center at Pier 11. The learning center will be a dynamic community space with educational programming, interactive exhibits, and public events that welcomes families, students, and visitors to the Brooklyn Marine Terminal while teaching them about key elements of NYC's working waterfront and the role of the port in the City's Blue Highways ecosystem.

Conclusion

In case this testimony doesn't make it clear – I've got a lot to say about the Brooklyn Marine Terminal! After decades of dysfunction and decay, EDC and this Mayor are taking action to deliver results for New Yorkers. After thousands of conversations with local residents, dozens of meetings with urban planners and community leaders, significant input and plan changes incorporated from the Task Force, and many hours walking the 122-acre site with any and all interested members of the public, I'm incredibly proud of the Vision Plan we have today.

Instead of a fenced-off, crumbling concrete lot with piers falling into the Harbor, the plan has thousands of affordable homes to meet the housing crisis. It has 35 acres of new parks and open space and major resilience upgrades. And of course, it has 60 acres of modern, working port at its core. That's thousands of union construction jobs. Hundreds of careers for union longshoremen and union hotel workers. New spaces for local creators, artists, and entrepreneurs.

And I'm not the only one excited about BMT. We've submitted with our testimony letters of support for the project from the maritime industry (ILA Local 1814, Maritime Association of NY & NJ, Red Hook Container Terminal, Shipping Association of NY & NJ), NYCHA leadership (Karen Blondel, President, Red Hook West Resident Association, and Frances Brown, President, Red Hook East Resident Association), labor (Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New York), housing advocates (Citizens Housing and Planning Council, Community Preservation Corporation, New York Housing Congress, New York State Association for Affordable Housing, Open New York), transit advocates (Regional Plan Association, Open Plans, Brightside, The E-Mobility Project, Electric Avenue, Brooklyn Spoke Media, Transportation Alternatives, Bike New York), among others.

As one final note -- I'm personally appreciative of the fierce advocacy of Council Member Aviles, in her leadership role on the BMT Task Force. We haven't always seen eye-to-eye, but I know that our debates have always been rooted in a shared belief that this project must deliver the maximum public benefit to New Yorkers. Thank you, Council Member.

With that, I'm happy to answer your questions about this project. I hope you all will join me in supporting our vision for a working, thriving, living waterfront at the Brooklyn Marine Terminal. Thank you.