



Dear Taskforce Members,

As more of us are sharing our final thoughts before the vote, I'd like to share mine.

When I was invited to join the Taskforce, I hesitated. Like any plan of this scale, I knew this process would involve complicated tradeoffs that would place SBIDC in a challenging position. The plan included housing in the IBZ, something we've long opposed. And it relied on a controversial cross-subsidy model to fund what should be public infrastructure. I knew that regardless of how I voted, SBIDC would face pressure and criticism. Nevertheless, I joined because my job is to fight for investment in the working waterfront, and the good jobs that follow, wherever and whenever that opportunity presents itself.

Over the last year, I've heard a range of opinions from fellow industrial advocates. Some urged us to hold the line—no housing in the IBZ or on a port, ever. And a few gave me what I think was wise counsel: Be strategic and focus on the levers that can actually secure a future for this port and this sector. That's what I tried to do. From my perspective, we started with a flawed plan: a port footprint that was too small, no stand-alone industrial space, not enough clarity on a future blue highway network, and a proposal to rezone a 12-acre privately owned industrial site in the IBZ for housing. Through months of hard work—alongside allies on and off this Taskforce—we helped reshape it into something far more ambitious and sound.

Because of that work, this Vision Plan now includes the largest industrial investment in an IBZ in a generation: a \$1.7 billion commitment to a fully electric modern port; over 200,000 square feet of new industrial space at below-market rents; \$10 million for a local industrial development fund; and new workforce investments, including maritime training pathways for NYCHA residents. It also preserves three additional publicly owned waterfront sites in this IBZ for maritime freight, and it launches a feasibility study and advisory council for a city-wide blue highway network. These are real wins for the working waterfront, and they give the future of maritime freight in NYC a chance—one we may never get again.

I know that realizing the commitments secured in this plan will require sustained advocacy. That's why we pushed for both industrial and maritime advocates to have a seat on BMTDC.

Do I still have concerns? Yes. But I know that if we walk away from this now, we're no closer to our ideal scenario for the port, the industrial sector, workforce development commitments, or

affordable housing commitments. We're back at the starting line, and we risk watching this site crumble further until we're told it's no longer salvageable.

I believe the risk of doing nothing is far greater than the risk of moving forward. For the last twenty years, we have seen no reliable plan or political will to invest in a modern port for NYC. Today, we have a real plan in front of us, backed by strong oversight mechanisms. I believe that in a decade, we will look back and say this was the moment when the port and industrial sector had a real chance.

It is rare to see so many diverse stakeholders committed to the future of the port, each one pushing the City to achieve real commitments that meet neighborhood needs—from NYCHA repairs to affordable housing, blue highways, industrial space, parks, improved transportation, and workforce development. This is the moment to act, because we may not see an opportunity like this again. That is why I am voting yes.

See you on Thursday,

Jesse Tinen Solomon
Executive Director
Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Development Corporation