



JAMAICA NOW

NEIGHBORHOOD ACTION PLAN

FEBRUARY 2015



The City of New York
Mayor Bill de Blasio

Alicia Glen, Deputy Mayor for
Housing & Economic Development



The Borough of Queens
President Melinda Katz

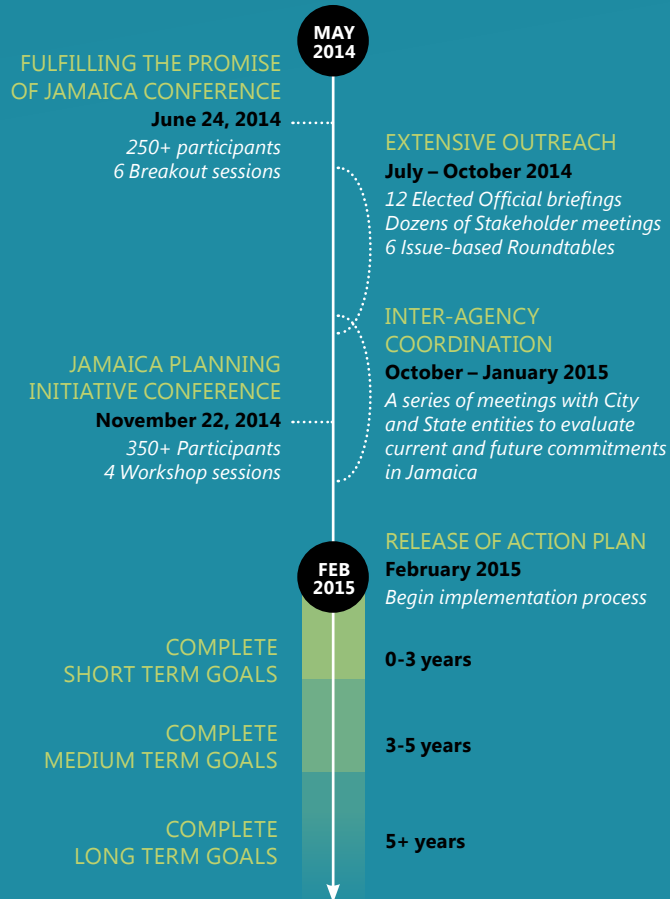
NYC

VISION FOR JAMAICA

Partnerships among the City, Queens Borough President, Greater Jamaica Development Corporation, Regional Plan Association, York College, community, and private sector will build upon existing community assets to enhance Jamaica as a diverse and vibrant destination that includes:

- Increased housing options for residents at diverse income levels
- Improved transportation connections and attractive public spaces and streetscapes
- Vibrant commercial districts that showcase Jamaica's identity as a fashion, arts and cultural hub
- Strong educational and community resources for youth and young professionals
- A robust economy providing quality jobs for both residents and entrepreneurs

TIMELINE AND ENGAGEMENT PROCESS



Now is the time to harness the interest of the community, City, and Queens Borough President to set forth an ambitious agenda for a diverse, vibrant, and accessible community around one of our City's great central business districts and inter-modal transportation hubs – Jamaica, Queens.

The City has made significant investments in recent years to lay the groundwork for increased growth and economic opportunity in Jamaica, including the investment of \$1.9 billion in the construction of the AirTrain to JFK Airport in 2003 and the rezoning of 368 blocks of the downtown core in 2007. However, high unemployment, inadequate infrastructure, and limited supportive programs have contributed to a decline in job growth and real estate activity over the last decade, precluding Jamaica from realizing the potential of these investments.

The Jamaica Now Action Plan seeks to address these challenges by using Jamaica's strengths as a dynamic commercial, cultural, and arts hub to **increase quality jobs and small business support, promote commercial growth and economic development, and improve livability.** The strategic actions proposed in the Plan are the product of a nine-month community engagement process and incorporate recommendations from more than 30 meetings and two public conferences with Jamaica residents, businesses, community leaders, and elected officials.

Today, new housing, retail, and commercial projects are underway and estimated to produce approximately 3,000 housing units, 500,000 SF of retail space, and 800 hotel rooms over the next five years. The time is right to leverage this momentum and help Jamaica thrive as an attractive and affordable destination to live, work, shop, and play.



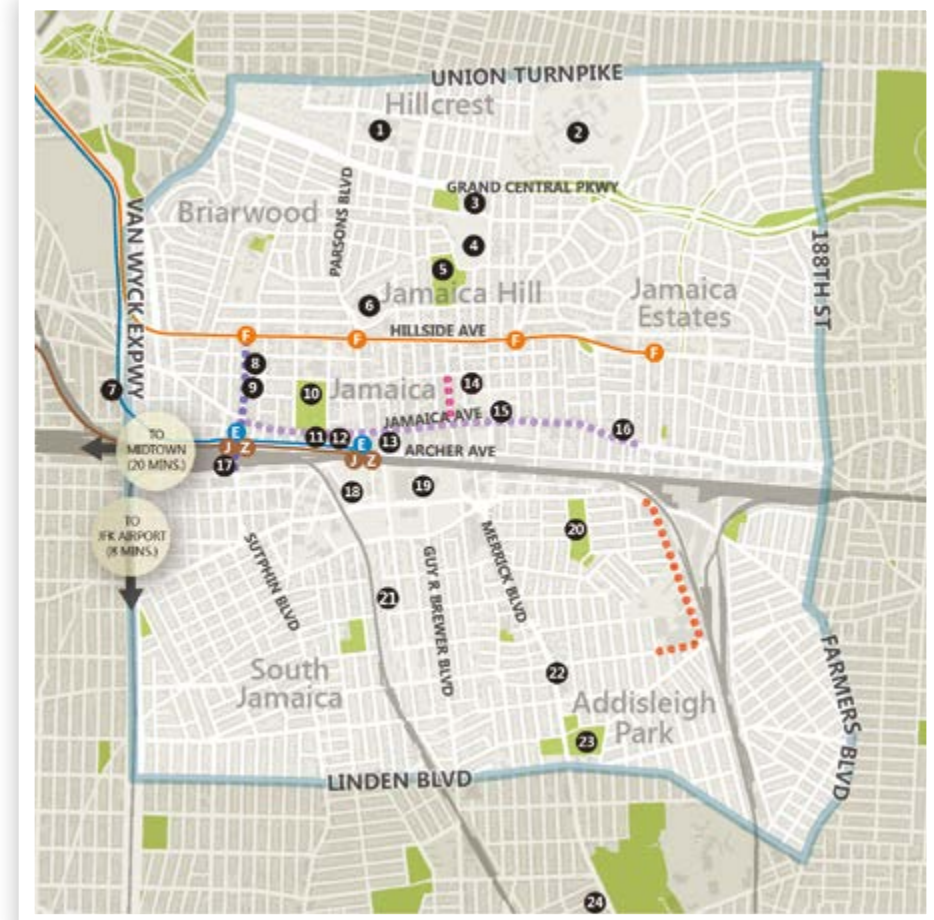
THE NEIGHBORHOODS

The Jamaica Action Plan study area encompasses the neighborhoods in and around the heart of the downtown, including Jamaica Estates, Hollis, St. Albans, Addisleigh Park, South Jamaica, and others.

Downtown Jamaica is characterized by a mixture of residential, commercial, retail, and light industrial uses. Neighborhoods outside of the downtown are predominantly residential with 1- and 2-family homes and some lower-density multifamily buildings containing ground-floor retail establishments along prime commercial corridors.

Jamaica is also a vibrant center for arts, culture, and commerce. Once home to many legendary musicians, the community has a growing reputation as a venue for theater, musical and dance performances, and fashion designers. The neighborhood boasts more than a dozen cultural institutions and hosts hundreds of festivals, concerts, and live performances every year, and has four Business Improvement Districts representing more than 800 businesses. Multiple large anchor institutions such as the United States Food & Drug Administration's Northeast Regional Laboratory, Queens Hospital Center, Jamaica Hospital, Queens County Family and Civil Courts, and York College of the City University of New York are all located near downtown Jamaica.

STUDY AREA AND EXISTING ASSETS



While downtown Jamaica is the civic center of the neighborhood, the focus of the Action Plan includes the area bounded by Union Turnpike, 188th Street/Farmers Boulevard, Linden Boulevard and the Van Wyck Expressway.

MAP LEGEND

- | | | |
|--|---|---------------------------------|
| 1 Queens Hospital Center | 13 Jamaica Center for Arts and Learning | ••••• Sutphin Blvd BID* |
| 2 St. John's University | 14 Queens Borough Public Library | ••••• Jamaica Center BID* |
| 3 Thomas Edison High School | 15 Workforce 1 Center | ••••• 165th St. BID* |
| 4 Jamaica High School | 16 Afrikan Poetry Theatre | ••••• 180th St. BID* |
| 5 Captain Tilly Park | 17 AirTrain Terminal | |
| 6 Hillcrest High School | 18 Food and Drug Administration | * Business Improvement District |
| 7 Jamaica Hospital Medical Center | 19 York College | |
| 8 NYS Supreme Court | 20 Detective Keith L. Williams Park | |
| 9 Queens Civil Court | 21 South Jamaica Houses | |
| 10 Rufus King Park & King Manor Museum | 22 Brinkerhoff Mall | |
| 11 Queens Family Court | 23 St. Albans Memorial Park | |
| 12 Jamaica Performing Arts Center | 24 Black Spectrum Theater Company | |

JAMAICA SNAPSHOT

- Home to 150,000+ residents
- Provides employment to 60,000+ workers
- Served by:
 - 50+ city and regional bus lines
 - 4 subway lines, with 115,000+ daily riders
 - 10 Long Island Rail Road lines with 200,000+ daily commuters
 - AirTrain to JFK International Airport, carrying 15,000+ daily riders

INCREASE QUALITY JOBS AND SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT

Steadily drive economic growth in Jamaica by connecting workers to high growth industries and quality employers, enhancing and expanding youth and adult training programs, and supporting existing businesses and budding entrepreneurs

ACTIONS + [LEAD PARTNERS]

TIMEFRAME

Launch a program to train and jump start the next generation of Jamaica entrepreneurs and food businesses [EDC]

Providing entrepreneurs with the resources, training, and workspace to develop new food and catering businesses will contribute to new quality dining options and nighttime activity

0-3 years

Expand JobNet and existing youth programs to support additional afterschool job preparation and placement activities [DYCD, QBPO]

Afterschool mentorship, skills training, job readiness workshops, and paid internships will place youth on the career pathway to obtain quality jobs

0-3 years

Connect residents to quality job opportunities through New York Alliance for Careers in Healthcare (NYACH) [SBS]

Increasing access to skills training will provide low-income residents with pathways to job opportunities with higher wages and better career potential

0-3 years

Strengthen Career and Technical Education (CTE) programming at Thomas Edison High School by increasing access to work-based learning for students and improving partnerships with businesses [DOE, SBS]

Improving access to internships and apprenticeships will help students become career-ready graduates

0-3 years

Establish a working group with local workforce providers, employers, and local academic institutions to identify opportunities to provide stronger, industry-linked skills training and workforce development programs that align with the City's Career Pathways framework [SBS, CUNY, EDC]

Increasing coordination and partnerships between key players in workforce development will help ensure that the local workforce is equipped with skills that match the needs of employers

0-3 years

PROMOTE COMMERCIAL GROWTH AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Leverage existing assets to spur the local economy and build a more dynamic neighborhood identity by revitalizing commercial corridors, bolstering Jamaica's cultural district, and strengthening York College's role as a downtown anchor

ACTIONS + [LEAD PARTNERS]

TIMEFRAME

Fund redesigns of storefronts for local businesses on Sutphin Blvd and release a Business Guide for Hillside Ave and other key corridors [SBS]

Resources for more appealing storefront designs and coordinated marketing strategies will increase business activity and build more dynamic commercial corridors

0-3 years

Actively explore unification of downtown Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) to strengthen marketing, programs, and service delivery [SBS, QBPO]

Completing a marketing needs assessment will help determine the best methods to provide stronger support for local business owners and rebrand downtown Jamaica as an unique commercial destination

0-3 years

Establish the Jamaica Arts Alliance to better strengthen connections between artists and existing arts and culture institutions [QBPO]

Cross-marketing and collaboration will increase the capacity of local organizations to promote programs, develop new large-scale events, seek resources for local artists, and design and fund public art projects highlighting Jamaica's cultural legacy

0-3 years

Fund a \$250,000 study to determine the cost and scope of Jamaica Avenue streetscape improvements [DOT]

Additional seating, increased plantings, and improved pedestrian circulation will create a more walkable, attractive, and inviting downtown

0-3 years

Provide technical assistance to support York College's effort to develop underutilized properties through the START-UP NY Program [EDC, DCP, City Hall]

Public-private partnerships to attract new and innovative businesses will spur commercial growth and diversify employment opportunities

3-5 years

Encourage absentee property owners to activate vacant and derelict sites in Jamaica's downtown core with new housing and economic activity [EDC, HPD, DCP]

Innovative mixed-use developments with active retail, business incubator spaces, and housing will transform currently vacant sites located in the AirTrain / LIRR transit hub in Jamaica's downtown core

5+ years



IMPROVE LIVABILITY

Improve quality of life for residents and visitors alike through targeted investments in transportation, health and safety, parks and open space, and affordable and mixed-income housing

ACTIONS + [LEAD PARTNERS]

TIMEFRAME

Develop a mixed-income and mixed-use project at the former NYPD garage on 168th St [EDC, HPD]	
<i>Redeveloping this strategic site with attractive and affordable housing, a community center, and retail will anchor Archer and Jamaica Avenues near the east end of the downtown core</i>	0-3 years
Install WalkNYC directional maps and obtain funding to study and develop a strategic transportation plan with multi-modal transit options in the downtown core [DOT, MTA, TLC]	
<i>Enhancements to pedestrian, bus, van, and automotive traffic and circulation patterns will reduce congestion and improve pedestrian safety</i>	0-3 years
Implement a new Select Bus Service Route from Jamaica to Flushing and study service needs on additional high-demand corridors [DOT, MTA]	
<i>Improving transit connections between these two primary central business districts with more robust bus service will facilitate increased economic and cultural activity in central Queens</i>	0-3 years
Expand opportunities for affordable homeownership and create small multifamily affordable rental buildings in Jamaica [HPD]	
<i>The New Infill Homeownership Opportunities Program (NIHOP) and Neighborhood Construction Program (NCP) Request for Qualifications will facilitate the development of affordable one- to four- family homes, condominiums or cooperatives, and small affordable rental buildings on approximately 11 city-owned sites in South Jamaica</i>	0-3 years
Connect homeowners, tenants, and property owners to educational programs, such as foreclosure counseling and financial literacy, through HPD's Public Outreach and Education unit [HPD]	
<i>Increasing access to information and services will provide more opportunities for homeownership, thereby facilitating neighborhood stability</i>	0-3 years
Fund and install additional NYPD surveillance cameras to improve safety in high-traffic corridors [QBPO, NYPD]	
<i>Increasing security cameras will provide NYPD officers better safety management tools for protecting the area's residents and visitors</i>	0-3 years
Provide increased resources and assistance to community partners to reduce health risks related to cardiovascular disease [DOHMH]	
<i>New and additional healthy living programs will encourage residents to increase physical activity, enhance their knowledge of healthy eating habits to reduce cardiovascular diseases, and aid clinical providers and pharmacists in assisting patients</i>	0-3 years
Enhance Rufus King Park to accommodate improved usage and programming and identify funding to create and implement community-sourced designs to upgrade Brinkerhoff Mall and other parks [DPR]	
<i>Improving the network of local parks will provide residents and visitors with more options for recreation and exercise</i>	3-5 years
Complete the Station Plaza project to improve safety and traffic circulation on Archer Ave and Sutphin Blvd [EDC, DOT]	
<i>Providing high quality public space and roadway improvements will complement the intermodal transit hub at Sutphin Boulevard and Archer Avenue and support significant private investments in the downtown core</i>	3-5 years
Construct new water mains and relieve constraints in the existing sewer network to accommodate demand for new development [DEP, DDC]	
<i>Enhancing storm and sanitary sewer networks will improve stormwater drainage, relieve constraints in the existing network, and accommodate demand for new development</i>	5+ years

Illustrative examples of ideas discussed by community participants at the Jamaica Planning Initiative charrette sessions on improving transit connections, safety, and open spaces to enhance livability and activate street life throughout the downtown



JAMAICA NOW ACTION PLAN PARTNERS

- CUNY** City University of New York
- DCP** NYC Dept. of City Planning
- DDC** NYC Dept. of Design and Construction
- DEP** NYC Dept. of Environmental Protection
- DOE** NYC Dept. of Education
- DOHMH** NYC Dept. of Health and Mental Hygiene
- DOT** NYC Dept. of Transportation
- DPR** NYC Dept. of Parks and Recreation
- DYCD** NYC Dept. of Youth and Community Development
- EDC** NYC Economic Development Corporation
- HPD** NYC Dept. of Housing Preservation and Development
- MTA** Metropolitan Transit Authority
- NYPD** New York City Police Department
- QBPO** Queens Borough President's Office
- SBS** NYC Dept. of Small Business Services
- TLC** NYC Taxi and Limousine Commission



IMPLEMENTATION AND NEXT STEPS

The 21 strategic actions outlined in the Jamaica Now Action Plan will guide catalytic investments for the revitalization and growth of Jamaica as a thriving destination. Sixteen of these actions will be launched and implemented in the next 3 years, providing immediate and ongoing service improvements in the community.

In support of the Jamaica Now Action Plan, Queens Borough President Melinda Katz will create a council of Jamaica stakeholders to provide oversight and evaluation of the implementation process. This effort will ensure the sustained growth of Jamaica as a mixed-income neighborhood with vibrant commercial corridors, inviting public spaces, improved transit networks, and a diverse economy providing quality jobs for local residents.

TO LEARN MORE

Visit our website www.nyc.gov/jamaicanow

Email jamaicanow@cityhall.nyc.gov

DEVELOPED BY THE CITY OF NEW YORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH QUEENS BOROUGH PRESIDENT MELINDA KATZ



The City of New York
Mayor Bill de Blasio

Allie Glen, Deputy Mayor for
Housing & Economic Development



The Borough of Queens
President Melinda Katz



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to recognize the following individuals and organizations for their contributions to the development of the Jamaica Now Action Plan:

Hon. Gregory Meeks, U.S. Congress
 Hon. James Sanders Jr., NYS Senate
 Hon. Leroy Comrie, NYS Senate
 Hon. Barbara Clark, NYS Assembly
 Hon. David Weprin, NYS Assembly
 Hon. Michele Titus, NYS Assembly
 Hon. Vivian Cook, NYS Assembly
 Hon. William Scarborough, NYS Assembly
 Hon. Donovan Richards Jr., NYC Council
 Hon. I. Daneek Miller, NYC Council
 Hon. Mark Weprin, NYC Council
 Hon. Rory Lancman, NYC Council
 Queens Community Board 8
 Queens Community Board 12
 Queens Community Board 13
 A Better Jamaica
 A Better Way Family & Community Center
 Addisleigh Park Civic Organization
 Alliance of South Asian American Laborers
 America Works
 Antioch Baptist Church
 Brinkerhoff Action Association, Inc.
 Center for Integration & Advancement for New Americans
 Center for New York City Neighborhoods
 Chhaya Community Development Corporation
 Citizens Housing & Planning Council
 Community Healthcare Network of New York City
 Cultural Collaborative Jamaica
 Damian Family Care Center
 Edge School of the Arts
 Exploring the Metropolis
 Farmers Boulevard Community Development Corporation
 First Presbyterian Church In Jamaica
 Fortune Society
 Goodwill Industries of Greater NY & Northern NJ
 Greater Allen Development Corporation
 Greater Triangular Civic Association
 Indo Caribbean Alliance
 Jamaica Center Business Improvement District
 Jamaica Center for Arts & Learning
 Jamaica Hospital
 Jamaica Muslim Center
 Jamaica Performing Arts Center
 Jamaica YMCA
 King Manor
 LaGuardia Community College Adult & Continuing Education
 Mutual Housing Association of New York
 Neighborhood Housing Services Jamaica
 New York Alliance for Careers in Healthcare
 Queens College
 Queens Council on the Arts
 Queens Economic Development Corporation
 Queens Hospital
 Queens Legal Services
 Queens Library
 Queens Workforce1 Center
 Self Help
 Sikh Cultural Society
 Sunnyside Community Services, Inc.
 Sutphin Boulevard Business Improvement District
 The 165th Street Business Improvement District
 The 180th Street Business Improvement District
 The Jamaica Young Professionals
 The Jamaica Youth Leaders
 The Tate Group
 Upwardly Global
 Visiting Nurse Service of New York
 Y-Roads

Action Plan Design: Perkins+Will

Photo Credits: Great Jamaica Development Corporation, Queens Workforce1, and NYCEDC