



EAST HARLEM DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION APPLICATION

**TO THE 2022 NEW YORK STATE
DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE**

**PRESENTED BY:
THE MANHATTAN BOROUGH PRESIDENT
&
UPTOWN GRAND CENTRAL**



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Mark D. Levine, Borough President

September 23, 2022

Mr. Winston Fisher, Co-Chair
Mr. Félix V. Matos, Co-Chair
New York City Regional Economic Development Council
633 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10017

Re: East Harlem Downtown Revitalization Initiative Application

Dear Co-Chairs Fisher and Matos,

We, Uptown Grand Central and Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine, hereby transmit our application for the 2022 New York State Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Despite a rich history of diverse cultures, local activism, vibrant street art, and a large small business community, East Harlem has faced significant systemic disinvestment over recent decades. Now, however, with the impending Second Avenue Subway construction and Park Avenue Viaduct Replacement, East Harlem is perfectly poised for a unified plan of action that will maximize the projects' transformative impact. Being awarded the Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant will enable the development of a transit hub and a gateway to East Harlem in order to build upon existing economic activity and drive future economic and employment growth to the region, ensuring a vibrant, thriving neighborhood for generations to come.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Mark Levine
Manhattan Borough President

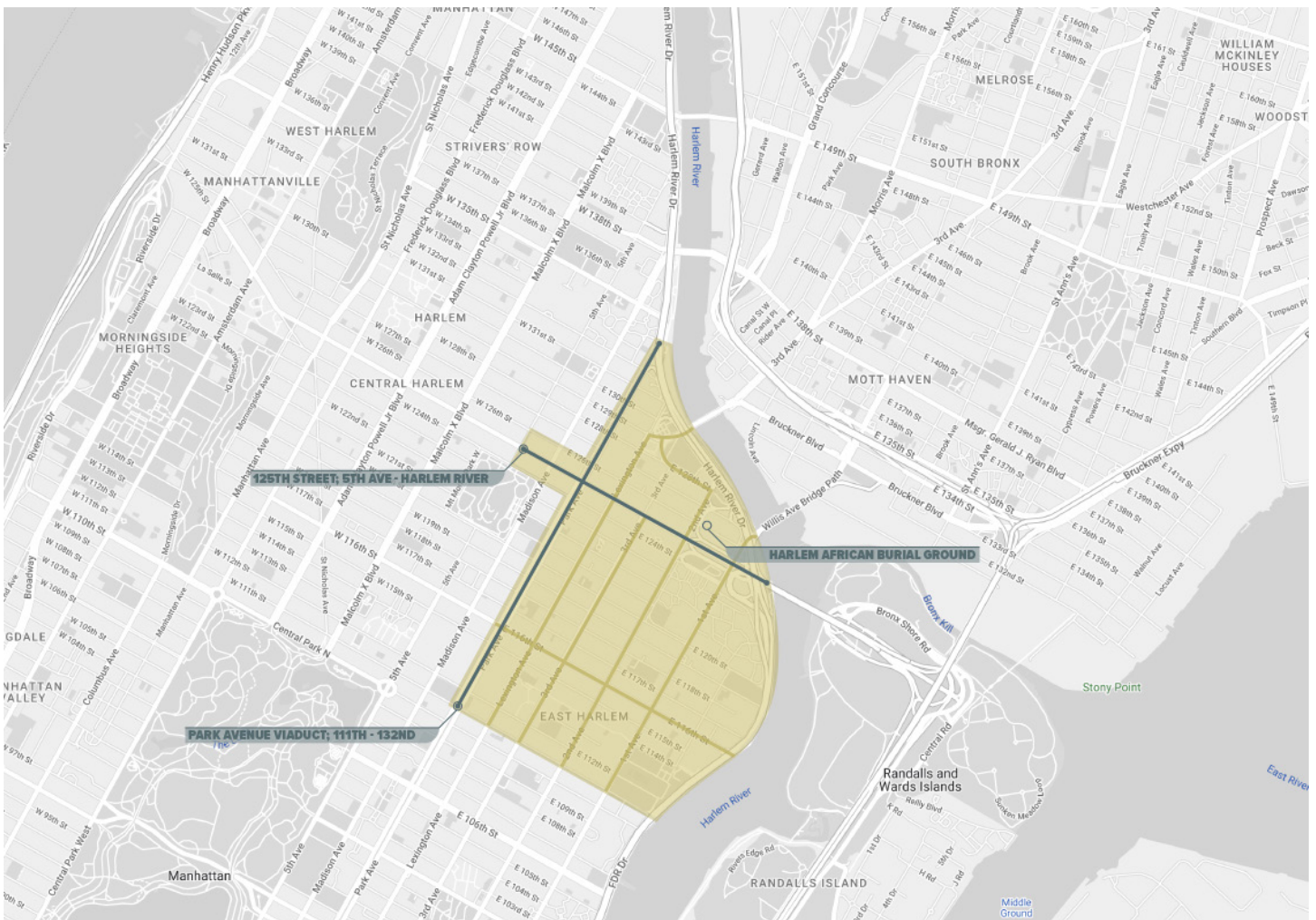
BASIC INFORMATION

REDC Region	New York City
Applying for Which Program	Downtown Revitalization Initiative
Municipality Name	Manhattan
Downtown Name	East Harlem
County Name	New York County
Applicant Contact	Organization: Office of the Manhattan Borough President Name/Title: Amy Slattery, Director of Capital Projects & Budgets Email Address: aslattery@manhattanbp.nyc.gov
Secondary Contact	Organization: Uptown Grand Central Name/Title: Carey King, Executive Director Email Address: carey@uptowngrandcentral.org
Applicant Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caribbean Cultural Center African Diaspora Institute • National Black Theatre • New York Proton Center • Community Board 11 • Representative Adriano Espaillat • Deputy Council Speaker Diana Ayala • Assemblymember Eddie Gibbs • State Senator Cordell Cleare

GEOGRAPHIC AREA AND JUSTIFICATION

Clearly define the proposed DRI and explain why the area is ready for the DRI/NY Forward investment and how that investment would serve as a catalyst for revitalization.

East Harlem is bordered by 96th Street to the south, 142nd Street to the north, Fifth Avenue to the west, and the East River and Harlem River to the east, and includes Randall’s Island, Ward’s Island, and Marcus Garvey Park. The preliminary/proposed area of focus for the East Harlem Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) will be East 125th Street from Fifth Avenue to the Harlem River, the spaces under and along the Park Avenue viaduct from 111th to 132nd streets, and the blocks of the East 125th Street Development Project (MEC Sites) northeast of East 125th Street that include upcoming community transformation projects including the Harlem River Greenway and Harlem African Burial Ground.



Justification/Neighborhood Background

East Harlem is a racially and ethnically diverse community – home to a total population of 120,000, with 45.1% of residents identifying as Hispanic/Latino, 28.1% identifying as Black non-Hispanic, 15% identifying as white, and 7.8% identifying as Asian. As early as the 1800s, it was home to Native Americans and later African American farmers and German and Irish immigrants. The area was predominantly Italian until after World War II, when a wave of Puerto Ricans arrived, transforming it into El Barrio – Spanish for “neighborhood” – also known as Spanish Harlem. It is the world’s biggest Puerto Rican neighborhood after San Juan, the Puerto Rican capital. The neighborhood is known for

bustling streets and local businesses, vibrant street art and murals, carefully tended-to community gardens, and a community dedicated to advocating for and preserving their homes. It is a community that is committed to maintaining its rich cultural heritage, while remaining true to its legacy of social justice activism.

However, redlining and systemic racism have forced deep economic, environmental and health disparities upon the residents of East Harlem, leaving community members vulnerable to direct and indirect harm. The most vulnerable are those living near or below the poverty line, many of whom are elderly, at-risk and unemployed youth, or those with existing illness. Approximately 28.36% of families live below the federal poverty level, with rates higher for youth below age 18 (45.6%) and seniors over 65 (34.9%). The median income in East Harlem in 2019 was \$32,960, less than half the rate citywide. More than 28% of adults have not completed high school or an equivalent, contributing to a cycle of unemployment and poverty that persists for generations. Elementary school absenteeism (the percent of public school students in grades K through 5 missing 19 or more school days) stands at 30%.

According to New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) data from 2018, East Harlem is home to 27,342 NYCHA residents – making it the source of housing for 1/3 of East Harlem residents – the largest NYCHA population citywide, and more than 5.5 times New York City’s average. Ongoing disinvestment in public housing by federal, state, and city agencies have had serious implications for East Harlem residents. With more than \$32 billion in capital needs citywide, NYCHA residents suffer from collective neglect and a lack of necessary repairs impacting their housing security, health, and livelihood. The daily living conditions of residents are worsened by mold, broken elevators, and a lack of heat and hot water, creating a baseline of instability that can be felt on the streets.

Gun violence continues to be an issue in East Harlem; both the 23rd and 25th Precincts report an upward trend in shooting incidents since 2018, and the NYPD has attributed the uptick in violence to turf wars among youth crews across the district’s NYCHA developments. As a result, residents do not feel safe or comfortable traveling throughout the district by themselves or with their children, especially at night. Residents have reported a lack of responsiveness by the police, as well as a lack of trust in police. Many residents would like to see increased police presence throughout the district not only to deter criminal activity, but also to foster relationships with residents and businesses and build trust. Elements of the built environment also factor into feelings of unsafety among residents, including poorly lit areas due to broken street lamps, and the obstruction of lighting by poorly maintained street trees.

East Harlem is home to the largest congregate shelter population in the city and carries more than its fair share of drug treatment centers. As noted in the City’s own 2017 Fair Share report: East Harlem is home to 2,691 shelter and transitional housing beds, 1,312 mental health treatment beds, and 1,082 chemical dependency treatment beds. The community hosts 5% of all Department of Homeless Services (DHS) shelter beds, 19% of all State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS)-licensed beds, and 11% of all State Office of Mental Health (OMH)-licensed beds in the city. Data from OASAS show that more than 12% of the state’s Opioid Treatment Programs are in East Harlem, while 75% of OASAS clients receiving services in East Harlem reside outside of East Harlem. This oversaturation has stressed East Harlem’s already overextended resources and contributed to a range of quality-of-life and public safety concerns for residents – such as public urination and defecation on the sidewalks and in parks and public spaces, public substance abuse, and safety concerns on public walkways and in parks. This concentration is especially apparent in northeast Harlem along East 125th Street and on Randall’s Island. The intersection of East 125th Street and Lexington Avenue is the drop-off point for the M35 bus route that travels to and from shelters on Randall’s Island, and is often congested and unwalkable due to the congregation of individuals

waiting for the bus. As noted in the City’s own report: “The current state of affairs embodies the legacy of decades of poor planning by and coordination between City and State governments and the failures of Fair Share.”

Rationale for Selecting this Downtown Area

The situation is dire, and more reason than ever that the once-in-a-century Second Avenue Subway and Park Avenue Viaduct Replacement projects should be carefully considered by the neighborhood in terms of economic development. East Harlem is a community of activism and action. Over multiple decades community groups and stakeholders have developed numerous plans envisioning future development for the neighborhood – but never before have any of these plans coincided with the potential benefits of the construction of a \$7 billion subway line. The East Harlem DRI is needed now so that East Harlem can create the vision for the neighborhood benefits alongside the subway and related development, and maximize the opportunities adjacent to the project. These benefits include:

Economic development and opportunity: Active transit hubs generate significant benefits for the surrounding community in jobs, local spending, and ancillary economic benefits. Properly envisioned, Second Avenue Subway Phase II has the potential to inject unprecedented opportunities for economic development. Phase II will include the construction of three new subway stations, extending train service for 1.5 miles to 106th Street, 116th Street, and 125th Street, and providing for economic development opportunities across the neighborhood. Each station will have above-ground ancillary buildings that house ventilation, mechanical, and electrical equipment. These structures will also include space for possible ground-floor retail.

Additionally, La Marqueta is a marketplace under the elevated Metro North railway tracks between 111th Street and 116th Street on Park Avenue in East Harlem. Its official address is 1590 Park Avenue and remains one of the most iconic markets in East Harlem. Today, La Marqueta’s rich blend of community, culture, and cuisine continues to thrive in what has become one of the largest Latinx neighborhoods in New York City.

Equity: New York has spent billions of dollars to develop and improve transit hubs at Grand Central, Fulton Street, and Penn Station, which today boast a wide range of retail options that serve users and neighboring communities. In contrast, northeast Harlem – which is home to connections to the Metro-North Railroad, NYC Transit 4/5/6 subway lines, and the M60 bus to LaGuardia Airport – has lacked the investment that comes in creating a regional transit hub, despite the growing volume of users in the area. Currently, East Harlem is serviced only by the severely overcrowded Lexington Avenue lines and the anemic Harlem-125th Street Metro-North station. The advent of Second Avenue Subway Phase II, with meaningful and enclosed connections to the Metro-North and M60, offers New York the opportunity to right historical disinvestment and create a thriving regional transportation hub in a historic community of color.

Accessibility: In East Harlem, 71% of residents use public transit to get to work, compared with a citywide average of 56%. Expansion of the Second Avenue Subway Phase II will serve an additional 100,000 daily riders, reducing commute times and changing lives in this working-class community of color. Phase II will also provide three new ADA-accessible stations, raising the bar for customer comfort and convenience.

Environment: The emergence of East 125th Street as a major transit hub will encourage greater use of public transit to LaGuardia Airport, as well as upstate New York and Connecticut, thus reducing the volume of automobile traffic and minimizing greenhouse gas emissions. Maximizing this opportunity

locally is crucial in East Harlem, where asthma rates are 2.4 times higher than citywide. In addition, transit investments are coinciding with conversations about relocating East Harlem’s sanitation garage and constructing a state-of-the-art consolidated garage that would remove collection trucks from the streets and service both East and Central Harlem.

Historic & cultural preservation: Less than 2% of East Harlem is landmarked, compared to 70% in neighborhoods further downtown. In 1936, Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia opened the Park Avenue Retail Market, which was previously an informal East Harlem gathering place for pushcart vendors and other merchants. From the 1930s to the 1950s, the area became home to Puerto Rican, Dominican, Cuban and Mexican immigrants, transforming East Harlem into the vibrant Spanish Harlem, or El Barrio – and the Market into “La Marqueta.” Iconic sites like the original underground 125th Street station, with its vaulted arches and original rail alignments, could be restored and populated by retail, solidifying the historic importance of the station and creating an attraction for tourists and commuters. This, alongside creating cultural wayfinding markers, can showcase the rich culture and heritage of northeast Harlem – such as the historic African Burial Ground and Elmendorf Reformed Church; the Mt. Morris Park (now Marcus Garvey Park) Fire Watchtower, the Harlem Casino; the host of buildings that once housed Jewish synagogues and vaudeville theaters (including one owned by famed producer Oscar Hammerstein); the studios for Old Town Records that recorded groups including the Fiestas and the Solitaires; the blocks of cultural activism that were the birthplace of the National Black Theatre, the Studio Museum of Harlem, the Grandassa Models, and the international “Black Is Beautiful” movement. East Harlem is also home to the “Spirit of East Harlem” mural by Hank Prussing and Manny Vega, and the internationally known “Crack Is Wack” mural by street artist Keith Haring.

Regional transit resiliency: Upper Manhattan is currently home to many different forms of transportation, with little in the way of a unified vision of how they work together. The 4/5/6 subway is the most-used rapid transit line in the country, with 1.3 million daily riders, surpassing the total ridership of the transit systems of San Francisco (450,000), Chicago (770,000) and Boston (570,000). The Harlem-125th Street Metro-North station is the third most used in the Metro-North system, with 98% of all trains running along the Park Avenue Viaduct. Alongside other critical routes, including the M60 bus to LaGuardia Airport, East Harlem moves millions of people daily. Developing a unified vision along with Second Avenue Subway Phase II and the Park Avenue Viaduct Replacement will create a more resilient and prepared New York City and metropolitan region.

Readiness for DRI

The recent rezoning of East Harlem and advent of the Second Avenue Subway has heightened interest in development along Park Avenue and along the East 125th Street corridor more broadly. Developers have purchased properties at and above the right-of-way of the new extension, and are likely to move forward with construction on timetables informed by progress on the subway terminus between Park and Lexington avenues. However, little planning has been done to consider opportunities to uniformly transform the public realm, incorporate amenities that can benefit the surrounding community, and simultaneously manage the additional density and traffic that these buildings will bring.

VISION STATEMENT

Provide a brief statement of the municipality’s vision for downtown revitalization.

The vision for the East Harlem DRI is to transform the area into a transit hub and a gateway to El Barrio in order to build upon existing economic activity and drive future economic and employment

growth to the region.

East 125th Street and Park Avenue are ready for a unified plan of action that will maximize the transformative impact of the Second Avenue Subway and Park Avenue Viaduct Replacement projects and allow East Harlem to create a transportation hub that incorporates safe streets, green and functional public spaces, intermodal connections, and local retail, all infused with opportunities to showcase its rich history and culture. These transit investments must be paralleled by projects that support community health, clean air and clean sidewalks, and cultural caretaking and wayfinding that will ensure that the history and future of El Barrio is solidified amid neighborhood change. The Second Avenue Subway is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for the neighborhood, and the East Harlem DRI will help amplify community voices and create the change East Harlem requires to thrive.

Background

125th Street is one of New York City's historic river-to-river corridors and an important entry from the north for rail commuters journeying through Harlem to the city's five boroughs and beyond. Once a bustling stop of the New York Central Railroad, with both the Third Avenue El (Elevated) and Second Avenue El nearby, the history of northeast Harlem is in many ways a history of a transportation hub. With current connections to the Metro-North Railroad, NYC Transit 4/5/6 subway lines, and the M60 bus to LaGuardia Airport, the community connects East Harlem with West Harlem, commuters from upstate New York and Connecticut, and travelers from outside New York and beyond.

However, the Harlem-125th Street Metro-North station is underdeveloped compared to similar intermodal transportation hubs, offering no underground connections to the subway lines, and limited areas and amenities for the public awaiting their trains. Only a small portion of the station is utilized, with half of its street-level area and an entire floor below closed off to the public. Beyond the station itself, the surrounding area remains problematic. It is plagued by high rates of opioid use, open narcotic sales, homelessness, and an overconcentration of outpatient drug clinics. Despite the efforts of community members to activate its public spaces, and the growing volumes of passengers passing through it, the East 125th Street corridor remains the least organized, least safe, and least attractive way to enter Manhattan on public transit – providing little to no benefit to the culturally rich community of East Harlem.

The now-funded extension of the Second Avenue Subway to 125th Street and Park/Lexington avenues, and the development that is likely to accompany it, offer an opportunity to transform the area into a regional transit hub serving travelers to LaGuardia Airport (via the M60 bus), commuters and recreational travelers headed north by rail, and passengers arriving into Harlem and the neighboring community. The planned replacement of the Park Avenue Viaduct on which the Metro-North trains run creates an opportunity for activating and rethinking large swathes of poorly utilized public space under and along the rail viaduct. It also has the potential to showcase and activate the historic 19th century Harlem-125th Metro-North Street station that today remains invisible to the public in the basement of the station house. In the future, the station house could serve as a location for retail by local small businesses, catering to travelers passing through the station and to the broader neighborhood.

These transit possibilities are nestled among other recent neighborhood investments including new cultural spaces for the National Black Theatre and Caribbean Cultural Center, the Harlem African Burial Ground, a waterfront park at the Harlem River Greenway, and nearly six acres of property adjacent to East 125th Street that is now being developed into mixed-use housing, a cultural/nonprofit space, a hotel, a new supermarket, and a state-of-the-art proton beam cancer treatment center.

Additional developments including Sendero Verde and the new home of the Afro-Latin Music & Arts Center are being built along Park Avenue.

PAST INVESTMENT AND FUTURE POTENTIAL

Describe how the DRI area will leverage prior private and public investment and catalyze future investments.

There has been a great deal of public and private investment in the proposed DRI catchment area, with each of these unique projects already beginning to change the neighborhood and those that surround it. However, much is yet to be done. Many of these projects need additional investment, making them perfect candidates for DRI support. As each of these projects come to fruition, the possibility of sparking future investment is endless. Examples of such projects are:

Public Investment

Park Avenue/125th Street Public Realm Project: Starting with feasibility studies in 2013 and completed in 2021, the Park Avenue/125th Street Public Realm Project was a \$5 million federally funded project guided by the NYC Economic Development Corporation and NYC Department of Transportation to improve pedestrian and vehicular traffic conditions around the Harlem-125th Street Metro-North station at Park Avenue. The project upgraded and expanded the space at the 125th Street community plaza that is overseen by NYC DOT's Public Space division and operated by Uptown Grand Central. The project also reconfigured the intersection at 125th Street and Park Avenue by widening sidewalks and adding a mega crosswalk to make the area more pedestrian friendly. While noise abatement and lighting is still needed to make the plaza space functional, this project was the first step toward meeting Vision Zero goals to make the area safer and more walkable.

MTA Enhanced Stations Initiative: In 2017, the Harlem-125th Street Metro-North Station was one of five stations chosen to be part of Metro-North's Enhanced Stations Initiative. The project added lighting and real-time signage in areas of the station frequented by passengers, as well as restroom improvements. While public spaces adjacent to the station continue to need lighting and investment, these upgrades to customer areas made the station much more functional for passengers on their way upstate and to Connecticut.

Harlem River Drive Reconstruction: Last year, the MTA completed construction of a new ramp that diverts about 17,000 cars per day from the Robert F. Kennedy (Triborough) Bridge to the northbound lanes of the Harlem River Drive, eliminating the need for cars to travel through East Harlem streets just north of East 125th Street. The new ramps eliminate 2,500 tons of carbon dioxide-equivalent emissions every year from the streets of East Harlem, an important improvement considering that this neighborhood has one of the highest child asthma rates in the city. Drivers who regularly take the route from the RFK Bridge to the Harlem River Drive are expected to save nine hours of travel time per year. Funding for the \$48 million project was allocated as part of the MTA Bridges & Tunnels 2015-2019 Capital Plan.

Sanitation Garage Relocation: The New York City Department of Sanitation (DSNY) with the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) has acquired approximately 120,000 square feet of space on the site of the former Potamkin Automobile Dealership on East 127th Street between Second and Third avenues to house the Manhattan District 11 Garage (M11), the Manhattan Lot Cleaning Unit (LCU), and the LCU Headquarters. M11 will relocate from its current City-owned facility

on East 99th Street between First and Second avenues, a building that is known to be structurally unsafe. The relocation of the 99th Street garage also opens up the possibility of finding a new home for DSNY’s “Treasures In the Trash” exhibit – a collection of items that sanitation workers found in East Harlem’s trash over the years, and has until now been housed at 99th Street.

Harlem River Greenway: The Harlem River Greenway, or Manhattan Greenway-Harlem River, is a new waterfront greenway along the Harlem River that will stretch from 125th to 132nd Streets, including bulkhead repairs from 145th Street to Swindler Cove in Inwood. It will create new links for a greenway and provide new open public space. The design of the project was completed in summer 2022, and construction is expected to begin in the first quarter of 2023.

107th Street Pier and Bobby Wagner Walk/East River Esplanade: This project will repair and rehabilitate the esplanade from 94th to 107th streets and from 117th to 124th streets. The project also includes building out a new pier on 107th Street and incorporating resiliency features. Design work is expected to start in the fourth quarter of 2022 and continue into 2024.

Harlem African Burial Ground: The Harlem African Burial Ground is located at the former MTA Bus Depot on East 126th Street near Second Avenue and will be the site of a mixed-use development including affordable housing, commercial retail, a memorial site for the burial ground, and a cultural center. NYCEDC is now in the process of obtaining a Certificate to Proceed for the archaeological evaluation of the burial ground site, which is expected to begin between the first and second quarters of 2023. EDC hopes to start this work and an expansive community engagement effort next year.

Park Avenue Viaduct Replacement Project: The Park Avenue Viaduct Replacement Project (PAV) is a project to replace major segments of the 130-year-old Park Avenue Viaduct structure that carries Metro-North trains from upstate New York and Connecticut through East Harlem into Grand Central. The project focuses on the elevated steel structure that carries four tracks along Park Avenue between the Harlem River Lift Bridge and East 110th Street. All Metro-North trains along the Hudson, Harlem and New Haven lines must travel the Park Avenue Viaduct to get in and out of Grand Central Terminal – on a typical weekday, approximately 750 trains and 220,000 customers travel across the viaduct. Nearly half of the Viaduct was constructed in the 1890s, and therefore is in need of work.

The goal of the project is to keep the public safe and provide reliable Metro-North train service, while replacing major sections of the structure as quickly and safely as possible and ensuring that service to and from the Harlem-125th Street Metro-North station continues to serve local residents. The project is also expected to support the local economy during construction, and reduce noise and vibration levels in the replaced sections with the use of stronger, more modern materials.

Currently the City and EDC are negotiating Access Agreements with the MTA and expect PAV work to commence in late 2023. The PAV will require the demolition of La Placita at La Marqueta, with a pledge from the MTA to replace La Placita in-kind at the end of the PAV project. The PAV will also require temporary relocation of the Urban Garden Center to La Marqueta’s Lot 1 with relocation, site improvements, and rent differential costs covered by the MTA.

Second Avenue Subway: Since the first proposal to build it in 1929, taxpayers have been awaiting the Second Avenue Subway. Delayed first by the Great Depression and then by decades of competing budget interests, Phase I of the Second Avenue Subway was completed in January 2017, creating three new Q train stations for the Upper East Side (72nd Street, 86th Street and 96th Street). Phase II is now planned to bring three new stations to East Harlem (106th Street, 116th Street and 125th Street).

The goals of the project are to reduce congestion on the 4/5/6 subway, the most-used rapid transit line in the country, and bring transit equity to East Harlem, a neighborhood where 76% of residents are dependent on public transportation. Once complete, Phase II is expected to service an additional 100,000 passengers daily, as well as service riders coming from the Harlem-125th Street Metro-North Station.

Phase II is estimated to cost \$6.95 billion, making it one of the most expensive transit projects in the world. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act signed by President Joe Biden in November 2021 provided \$23 billion in new grant opportunities for transit expansion, a historic level of funding that doubled the amount of grants available for major projects such as Phase 2 of the Second Avenue Subway. Phase 2 of the Second Avenue Subway is now in the Engineering phase of the Capital Investment Grant “New Start” program with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), with the goal of achieving a fully funded grant agreement with the FTA by the end of 2022 or first quarter of 2023.

Public/Private Investment

East 125th Street Development project (E125)/MEC Sites: The East 125th Street Development project (E125) will span from 125th to 127th streets between Second and Third avenues, and when completed, is expected to include 1,000 units of housing at a variety of income levels, as well as up to 700,000 square feet of commercial space, including 50,000 square feet of retail reserved for local businesses, at least 30,000 square feet of community facilities uses, and publicly accessible open space. Also known as the the MEC (Media, Entertainment & Cultural) sites, the project consists of approximately six acres and seven parcels under NYCEDC jurisdiction and is the culmination of the City’s collaboration with the East 125th Street Development Task Force that also established the \$10 million Local Investment Fund to assist small businesses and entrepreneurs located in the new development. Currently under construction, the MEC sites include the New York Proton Center, the first and only proton therapy center for cancer in New York State, and One East Harlem, a development that includes 404 housing units (297 affordable), a new Food Bazaar supermarket, public open space, and cultural space. Once complete, the development will also include space for commercial, retail, office, cultural/nonprofit uses, and a hotel. The RFPs for the remaining undesignated parcels on these sites will be released at an undetermined later date.

National Black Theatre: More than 50 years ago, Barbara Ann Teer rented space in a building at East 125th Street and Fifth Avenue that would serve as the home of a nascent organization called the National Black Theatre. Now the pathbreaking company is getting ready for its next act. The organization is planning on replacing its longtime home with a 21-story building that will include a mix of housing, retail and – on floors three through five – a gleaming new home for the theater. This \$185 million project is planned as a space where Black artists can thrive and the company can work on bringing a deeper sense of racial justice to the American theater industry. The new building is slated to include 222 units of housing, an event space, and a communal living room where people can eat, work, and hang out. Amenities will also include health and wellness programming. Partners for this project include the National Black Theatre, the new real estate firm Ray, and L+M Development.

Afro Latin Music & Arts Center: The Afro Latin Jazz Alliance, in partnership with Lantern Organization and Mega Development, will build its new home, the Afro Latin Music & Arts Center, on the east side of the Park Avenue Viaduct between East 118th and East 119th streets (currently an NYPD 25th Precinct parking site). The Timbale Terrace development will also include a 330-unit affordable housing complex and community spaces. The center will offer afterschool programs, education classes, community events, music and technical production training, and world-class live performances.

RECENT AND IMPENDING JOB GROWTH

Describe how recent job growth will leverage the DRI investment

While primarily a residential neighborhood, East Harlem has a large number of businesses and nonprofits that together employ over 40,000 individuals. The neighborhood's many employers reinforce the cultural, ethnic, and economic diversity in the neighborhood. The small businesses offer goods and services that residents need at prices they can afford, and there are major hospitals and museums, as well as many smaller nonprofits, that provide a broad range of employment opportunities. East Harlem has an active workforce with many more who are seeking work. Many people work outside East Harlem due to its transportation links, but there are also opportunities for greater employment with local organizations and possibilities for capturing East Harlem's entrepreneurial energy through shared kitchens such as at La Marqueta.

Phase I of the Second Avenue Subway created 16,000 jobs, generated \$842 million in wages, and produced \$2.87 billion in economic activity during its construction. Building upon that job growth, Representative Adriano Espaillat recently established the Charles B. Rangel Center for Infrastructure Workforce Training Center at City College, which will prepare local residents with the training they need to acquire high-paying construction jobs.

Phase II of the Second Avenue Subway is expected to generate over 87,000 new jobs and over \$18 billion in economic activity. In addition to construction jobs for both the subway itself and the ancillary facilities required, the added transit connection to East Harlem will encourage the growth of economic activity. Local jobs will be created as more people are brought into the neighborhood and businesses are founded to fill their needs. Also, the subway extension will improve existing residents' access to jobs across the city.

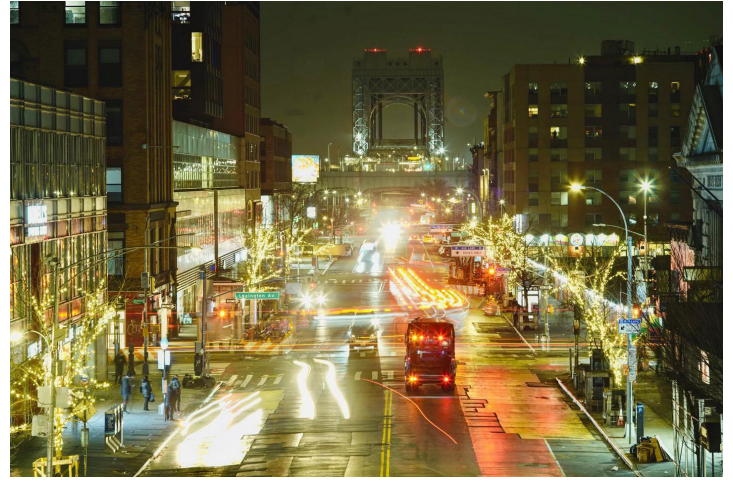
QUALITY OF LIFE

Describe the defining characteristics of the DRI area that make it a desirable place to live, work, and visit.

East Harlem, which is also known as Spanish Harlem or El Barrio, is a neighborhood full of rich history and culture. The area is known both among residents and visitors for its local businesses, street art, cultural institutions, and vibrant streets.

Residents love East Harlem for its diversity, connection to the rest of Manhattan, and tight-knit community. Streets are full of restaurants, and the neighborhood is home to several parks, including Marcus Garvey Park and Thomas Jefferson Park. Well-tended community gardens exhibit the strong sense of community in the area.

Visitors are drawn to East Harlem for its food, cultural institutions, and public art. Across the neighborhood, walls are filled with street art created by local artists. Murals often depict the history of the area, building on the traditions of both American and Latin American art. The neighborhood is also home to destinations such as the Museum of the City of New York, El Museo del Barrio, the Caribbean Cultural Center, the National Black Theatre, and La Marqueta.



Uptown Grand Central literally brightens the East 125th Street corridor every year by organizing a winter light display.

SUPPORTIVE LOCAL POLICIES

Describe any local policies in place that increase quality of life and advance the State's decarbonization goals.

Planning and policies that define north East Harlem as we now know it start with the **Harlem East Harlem Triangle Plan (1968)**, an urban renewal plan by the Community Association for the East Harlem Triangle that laid the foundation for the blocks of housing, schools, and social services now in place. (bit.ly/EH-triangle-plan)

The Triangle Plan is in tandem with the **Harlem/East Harlem Urban Renewal Plan (1968)**, which was also implemented that same year by the City Planning Commission and the City's Board of Estimate, and has been renewed with amendments every one to four years since. The plan is a tool of the past and is an approach to neighborhood development that still views the community as one in need of improvement. It also provides guidelines on contextual building height and public space. (on.nyc.gov/3LxWpFT and bit.ly/HEH-urban-renewal-plan)

The 125th Street corridor is also guided by the **125th Street Rezoning (2008)**, which put into place strategies to sustain the ongoing revitalization of both West and East 125th streets, to enhance its regional business district character and reinforce its identity as a premier destination for arts, culture, and entertainment. The 2008 rezoning established height limits for new developments within the West 125th Street corridor, and on East 125th Street increased height limits near the MTA Metro-North station at 125th Street and Park Avenue to create incentives for new mixed-use development and capitalize on the proximity to mass transit. It also added an Arts Bonus to provide additional incentives for the creation of visual and performing arts spaces within the corridor. The rezoning also put into place guidelines so that a consistent street wall frames 125th Street through the base of new buildings and ensures ground floor retail continuity to improve the pedestrian experience. (on.nyc.gov/3Stjegi)

The area was again rezoned with the **East Harlem Rezoning (2017)**, which replaced previous zoning to focus new development on the Park Avenue, Lexington Avenue, Third Avenue, Second Avenue,

and East 116th Street corridors. This included mapping Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH) areas to require that permanently affordable housing units are a part of new developments along these corridors. It also modified existing provisions of the Special 125th Street District near the Harlem-125th Street Metro-North station and shifted the boundaries of the Special Transit Land Use (TA) District to reflect the plans of the MTA for prospective Second Avenue Subway locations and accommodate ancillary support facilities. (on.nyc.gov/3LCLbjb)

The East Harlem Rezoning built upon and responded to the land use and zoning recommendations in the **East Harlem Neighborhood Plan (2016)**, which was developed through a community-based planning process led by a steering committee comprised of local stakeholders led by then-New York City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, then-Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Community Board 11, and Community Voices Heard. Through a series of meetings on various neighborhood topics – ranging from arts and culture, to schools, to NYCHA and housing, to small business and economic development, to zoning and land use, to transportation, to safety, to seniors – the steering committee produced a plan that included 232 recommendations for addressing key neighborhood concerns that in recent years has become something of a blueprint for the future of the neighborhood.

The plan expressed a fear that the trend toward new market-rate development under existing zoning could change the character of East Harlem and erode opportunities for affordability. Other concerns included improving local air quality, reducing trash, providing mental health resources, supporting education and culture, and ensuring that public open space meets the needs of existing residents and keeps pace with a growing population. There were also recommendations to increase overall economic activity and workforce development, attract more tourists and visitors to East Harlem, and provide multi-year funding to establish and sustain merchants' associations on East 116th Street and East 125th Street, with the ultimate goal of establishing a Business Improvement District (BID) if found to be warranted. The plan also included the goal to create a multi-modal transit hub that connects the Harlem-125th Street Metro-North Station and the Lexington Avenue 4/5/6 line with the Second Avenue Subway. (bit.ly/EH-neighborhood-plan)

Concurrent with the planning for the East Harlem Rezoning, the NYC Department of Small Business Services convened three East Harlem nonprofits – Uptown Grand Central (then known as the New Harlem East Merchants Association), Union Settlement, and Hope Community – to conduct neighborhood surveys of both residents and businesses and then author the **East Harlem Commercial District Needs Assessment (2017)**. The assessment found a number of longstanding small businesses in relatively affordable commercial spaces, and highlighted East Harlem's cultural anchors, medical institutions, and transit accessibility. It also noted that the high concentration of social services, real and perceived safety concerns, and high percentage of storefront vacancies (14%) impeded growth. The assessment recommended growth strategies including: Developing a consistent plan for cleaning and beautification along East Harlem's commercial corridors, enhancing lighting on key commercial streets, programming underutilized open spaces, developing wayfinding materials and guides to direct more workers, residents and visitors to the full array of local retail and restaurant options, and creating and marketing a unified East Harlem district identity. The assessment also stressed the importance of supporting existing small businesses and the coalitions that support them, as well as attracting new businesses. (on.nyc.gov/3Ux64Av)

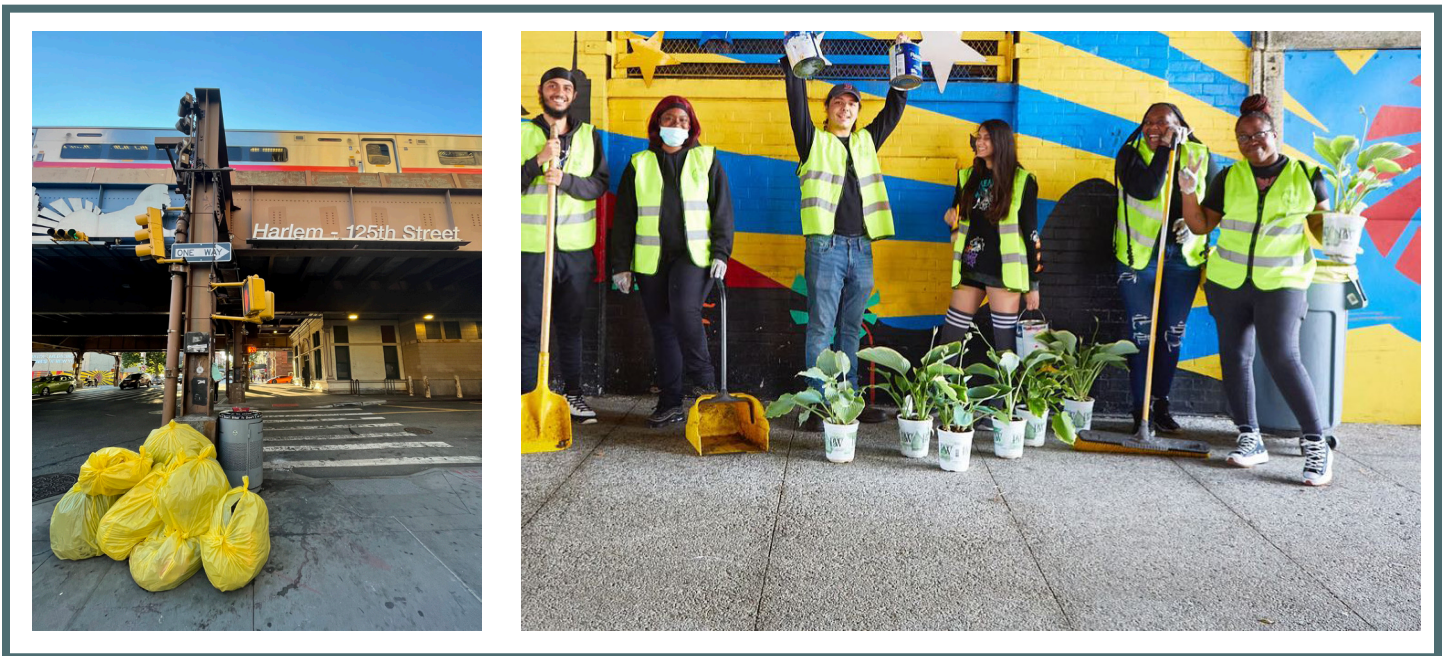
In May 2014, then-Mayor Bill de Blasio announced a new **M60 SBS bus route** and a dedicated bus lane on 125th Street, serving approximately 15,000 daily riders pre-pandemic. One year later, SBS trips were 32-34% faster on the segments of 125th street with the dedicated lane, and 27-36% faster in on-bus lane segments. Local buses also enjoyed increased bus speeds, including the M35, M101,

M100 and M125. These transit improvements allowed for increased public transit reliability and efficiency for New Yorkers who did not or could not rely on private car use, a key strategy for reducing carbon emissions in the area. Furthermore, these investments will strongly align with the State’s future implementation of congestion pricing, which will help to reduce congestion, reduce emissions, improve street safety, and provide badly needed funding for the MTA.

PUBLIC SUPPORT

Describe public participation in the development of the DRI application and recent past engagement, including how these engagement efforts shaped the downtown vision statement and the project list.

Since its inception, Uptown Grand Central (“Uptown”) has served as a community convener for East 125th Street and, increasingly, surrounding sections of East Harlem. When Uptown first started 10 years ago, there had not been an organizing presence along the corridor for at least two decades for the small businesses, property owners, residents, and other stakeholders in East Harlem. Now serving its current role, Uptown has laid the bedrock for this DRI application by continually bringing partners together through regular events and Corridor Meet-ups, weekly e-blasts and social media communications, and needs assessments and surveys. The Uptown board is representative of this capacity to bring stakeholders together, with members representing key organizations, coalitions, and businesses along the East 125th Street corridor including the National Black Theatre, Positive Workforce, Artimus Construction, Blumenfeld Development Group, the 1775 Houses Tenants Association, the Harlem Neighborhood Block Association, Sisters Caribbean Cuisine, the Brownstone, and Harlem Berry Beauty Lounge.



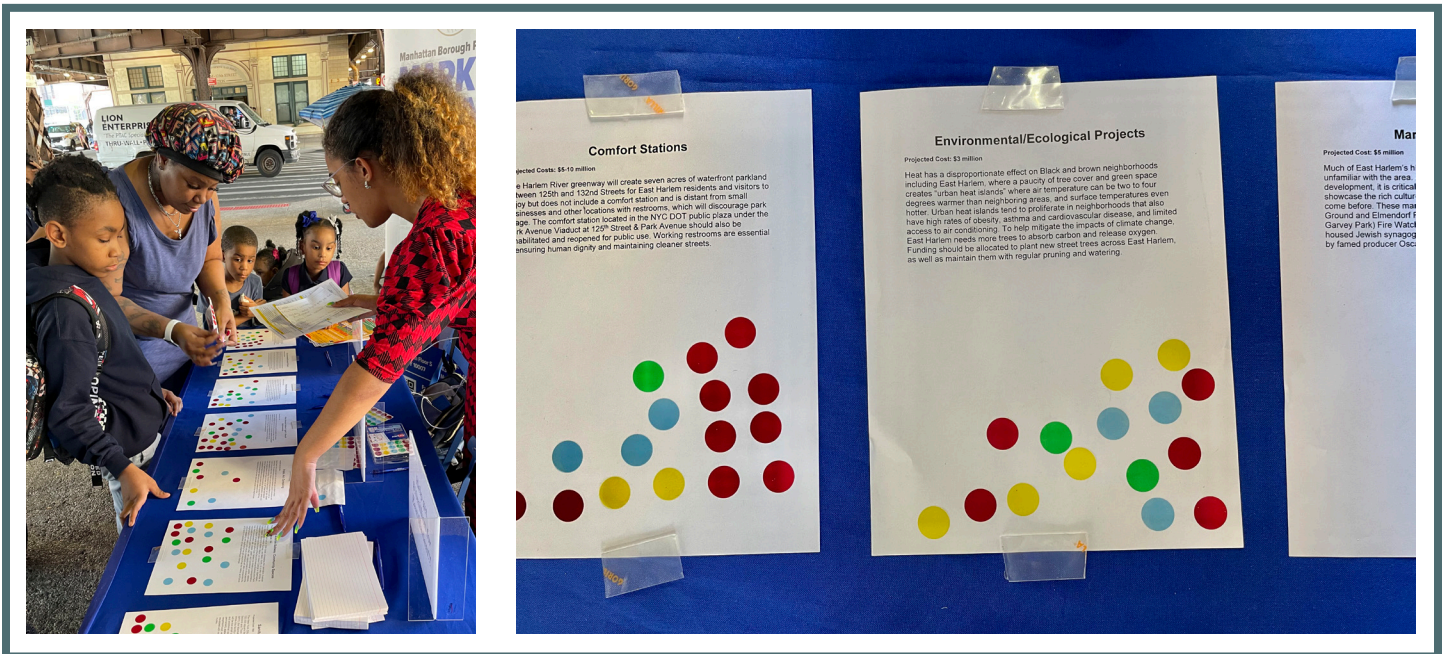
Uptown Grand Central has spearheaded clean streets and beautification efforts along the East 125th Street corridor.

In the past year, Uptown has been tapped by the City to explore the formation of a Business Improvement District (BID) for East 125th Street and surrounding blocks. The steering committee guiding this BID exploration work represents additional key stakeholders including the Caribbean Cultural Center African Diaspora Institute, Harlem Children’s Zone, The Durst Organization, the

Richman Group, ddm development, MADDD Equities, Extell Development, Zaro's Family Bakery, Mt. Sinai, and the New York Proton Center. The committee has been meeting monthly for a year, and through its work is committing to mutual goals for the neighborhood, as well as sustained investment. (surveymonkey.com/r/EastHarlem125BID)

In recent years, Uptown has been the organizing force behind a number of surveys and data collection specific to East 125th Street, including the East 125th Street portion of the East Harlem Commercial District Needs Assessment, as well as multiple Business Improvement District needs assessments, plus surveys on issues ranging from supermarket accessibility, to district marketing, to street cleaning, to COVID recovery. These past surveys inform a deep knowledge of the needs and desires of the community surrounding East 125th Street – the priority of which is safe streets, clean streets, mental health, public space, culture, transit access, and economic development.

Uptown is also involved in the majority of task forces and partnerships that are working on issues most critical to the neighborhood, including the M11 Sanitation Garage, the Support and Connection Center (Diversion Center), and Deputy Speaker Diana Ayala's East 125th Street Working Group. Alongside these previous and ongoing engagements with stakeholders, the ideas in this DRI application are shaped alongside larger community planning processes including Community Board 11's Statement of District Needs and the East Harlem Neighborhood Plan, which five years since its creation continues to guide community development. The ideas also reflect anticipation for upcoming transit and development projects such as the MTA's Second Avenue Subway and Park Avenue Viaduct Replacement, and NYCEDC's Harlem River Greenway and the Harlem African Burial Ground.



To solicit community feedback for DRI projects, the Office of the Manhattan Borough President set up outreach stations, including under the Park Avenue Viaduct. Residents picked their favorite proposed projects.

The specific projects listed in this application were nominated through conversations with the diversity of stakeholders described above, then ranked by community members during public engagement sessions at the 125th Street community plaza. Community input was solicited throughout the summer, with one final culminating public event in mid-September 2022 where the community resoundingly ranked four proposed projects as their top choices (see next section for project

descriptions): construction of comfort stations; renovation/construction of the sanitation garage on 127th street; tree plantings throughout the proposed DRI area; and light and sound improvements under the Park Avenue Viaduct.

TRANSFORMATIVE PROJECT OPPORTUNITIES

Identify and describe project opportunities that build on the community's strengths and needs and have the potential to be transformative in the DRI and/or NY Forward area.

If awarded, East Harlem will convene a local planning committee to develop a variety of transformational projects to include in a strategic investment plan. Many of these projects have been proposed for a number of years by the community in the Statement of District Needs that is updated annually by Community Board 11 or in the East Harlem Neighborhood Plan. Some of these projects will require DRI investment to complete the projects, while other potential projects to be funded by the DRI will help leverage additional sources of support.

Second Avenue Subway: Community Spaces

Projected Cost: \$500,000 - TBD

Investments should be allocated to build a major transit hub on 125th Street, connecting the Lexington Avenue line, the future Second Avenue Subway, and Metro-North, in a way similar to Fulton Station, Brooklyn's Atlantic Station, or Grand Central in Manhattan. 125th Street is a strategic location that connects the railroad, buses to the airport, and multiple lines of subway stations. East 125th Street is ready for a unified plan of action that will maximize the transformative impact of the Second Avenue Subway and Park Avenue Viaduct projects and allow East Harlem to create a transportation hub that incorporates safe streets, green and functional public spaces, intermodal connections, and local retail, with opportunities to showcase the neighborhood's rich history and culture. These transit investments must be accompanied by projects that support community health, clean air and sidewalks, and the cultural caretaking and wayfinding that will ensure that the history and future of El Barrio is solidified amid neighborhood change. The Second Avenue Subway is truly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for this neighborhood. The goal for the East Harlem Downtown Revitalization Initiative is to help amplify community voices and create the change that East Harlem requires.

Park Avenue Viaduct: Light & Sound Improvements

Projected Cost: TBD

As the MTA and Metro-North Railroad plan to replace or rehabilitate major segments of the Park Avenue Viaduct – the elevated steel structure that carries four tracks along Park Avenue between East 110th Street and the Harlem River Lift Bridge – there are openings for the community to engage with the improvement projects that East Harlem has been requesting for years. Namely, these improvements include better lighting under the length of the viaduct structure, lighter paint colors on the structure to make it more light-reflective and brighter at night, sound amelioration especially at the spaces under the tracks where the community gathers for events and arts performances (the 125th Street Plaza, La Marqueta, and La Placita), and opportunities for local artists to create public art on the underside of the structure, as well as inside the stone tunnels that make up the viaduct south of 111th Street.

Public Art: Caretaking

Projected Cost: \$2 million

East Harlem has a proud and rich cultural history and a vibrant artistic community. The neighborhood is home to important cultural institutions including the Museum of the City of New York, El Museo

del Barrio, the National Black Theatre, the Julia de Burgos Cultural Center, the Caribbean Cultural Center African Diaspora Institute, the Africa Center, the Graffiti Wall of Fame, PS 109 Artspace, and La Marqueta. The community is also home to many visual, musical, and performance artists as well as many beautiful murals including “The Spirit of East Harlem” at 104th Street and Lexington Avenue and Keith Haring’s “Crack Is Wack” at 128th Street and Second Avenue. Capital funding is needed to provide the maintenance, upkeep, and revitalization of East Harlem’s historic murals, ensuring that they continue to maintain their historic and colorful presence for the neighborhood and draw visitors and tourist spending to the neighborhood.

Marketing/Wayfinding

Projected Cost: \$5 million

Much of East Harlem’s history is oral and often inaccessible to those unfamiliar with the area. As the neighborhood begins to welcome new development, it is critical to place cultural wayfinding markers to showcase the rich culture and heritage of northeast Harlem and what has come before. These markers will include the historic African Burial Ground and Elmendorf Reformed Church, the Mt. Morris Park (now Marcus Garvey Park) Fire Watchtower, the Harlem Casino, the buildings that once housed Jewish synagogues and vaudeville theaters (including one owned by famed producer Oscar Hammerstein), the studios for Old Town Records that recorded groups including the Fiestas and the Solitaires, the blocks of cultural activism that were the birthplace of the National Black Theatre, the Studio Museum of Harlem, the Grandassa Models, and the international “Black Is Beautiful” movement.

Environmental/Ecological Projects

Projected Cost: \$3 million

Heat has a disproportionate effect on Black and brown neighborhoods including East Harlem, where a paucity of tree cover and green space creates “urban heat islands” where air temperature can be two to four degrees warmer than neighboring areas, and surface temperatures even hotter. On one recent summer day, the street temperature in East Harlem was measured at 30 degrees higher than on a block further south on the Upper East Side. Neighborhoods that have been subject to disinvestment – including much of Harlem, the South Bronx and Manhattan’s Lower East Side – have fewer trees and shabbier parks, which translates to higher temperatures, air-pollution levels, and prevalence of environmental health problems. Urban heat islands tend to proliferate in neighborhoods that also have high rates of obesity, asthma, and cardiovascular disease and have limited access to air conditioning, all combining to exacerbate the risks of high heat. To help mitigate the impacts of climate change, East Harlem needs more trees to absorb carbon and release oxygen. Funding should be allocated to plant new street trees across East Harlem.

Comfort Stations

Projected Costs: \$5-10 million

NYC Parks should ensure that a comfort station is included in the design for the Harlem River Greenway. The greenway will create seven acres of waterfront parkland between 125th and 132nd Streets for East Harlem residents and visitors to enjoy. However, the current plan does not include a comfort station and is distant from small businesses and other locations with restrooms, which will discourage park usage.

The comfort station located in the NYC DOT public plaza under the Park Avenue Viaduct at 125th Street and Park Avenue should also be rehabilitated and reopened for public use. Given the large number of commuters as well as those in need from the shelters on Randall’s Island, an accessible public restroom is necessary for visitors to the area and the general public. Working restrooms are essential in ensuring human dignity and maintaining cleaner streets.

Sanitation: Consolidated Garage

Projected Cost: TBD

The New York City Department of Sanitation (DSNY), along with the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS), has acquired approximately 120,000 square feet of space on the site of the former Potamkin Automobile Dealership at 207 East 127th Street between Second and Third avenues to house the Manhattan District 11 Garage (M11), the Manhattan Lot Cleaning Unit (LCU), and the LCU Headquarters. M11 will relocate from its current City-owned facility at 343 East 99th Street between First and Second avenues, a building that is known to be structurally unsafe. While this facility will serve East Harlem in the interim, the planned garage at the Potamkin site will be too small to serve our growing community in the long term as new development is completed and additional residents move in. It is imperative that East Harlem build a permanent, state-of-the-art dual district sanitation garage to service Manhattan Community Districts 10 and 11. The new building should meet or exceed LEED Gold standards and be equipped with the most advanced indoor air filtration systems and emission-free sanitation trucks.

ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY

Describe the municipality's capacity to oversee implementation and ensure the long-term success of projects.

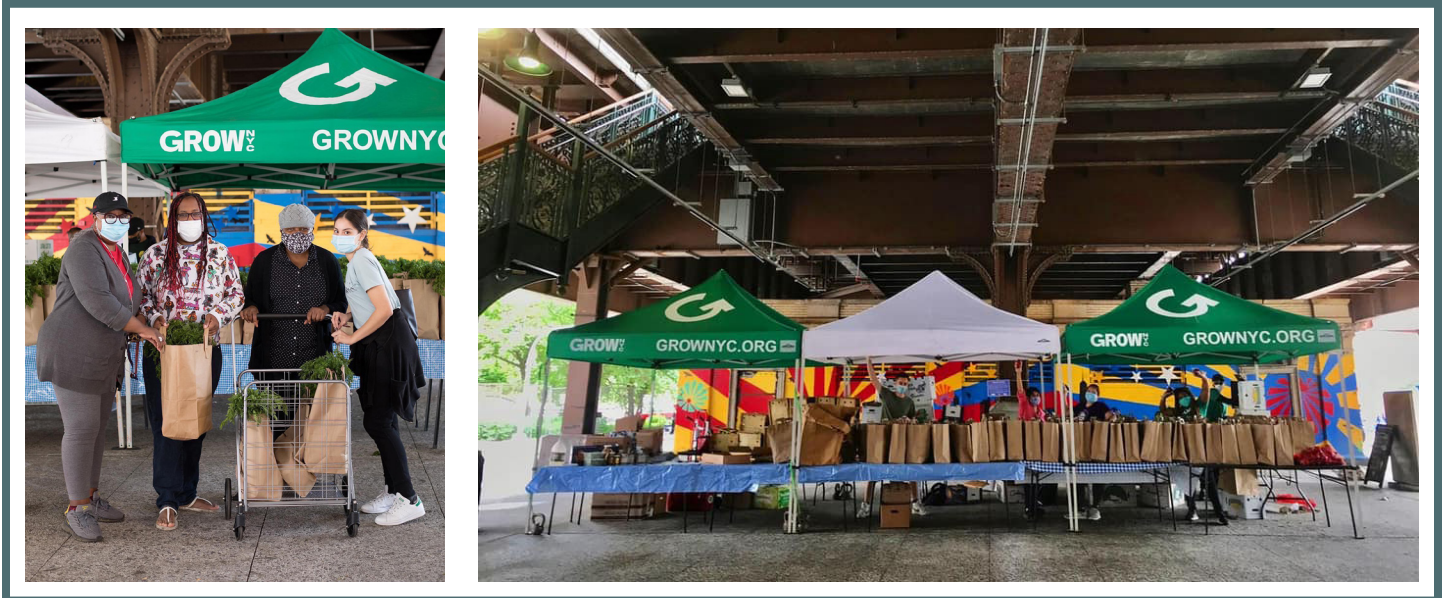
The lead applicants for the East Harlem DRI proposal are the Office of the Manhattan Borough President and Uptown Grand Central.

The Office of the Manhattan Borough President (OMBP): In 2022 the OMBP was the co-applicant for the successfully awarded Chinatown DRI and later served as the co-chair of the Chinatown DRI Local Planning Committee (LPC). In doing so, the OMBP helped to create and lead the LPC; helped guide and steer the planning and visioning process; helped to review and analyze potential projects; and worked closely with the LPC, members of the community, the consultant team, and the Department of State to put forth a high-quality slate of projects for consideration of \$20 million in DRI funding. Chinatown DRI funding decisions will be announced in the fall of 2022. After that, the OMBP will continue to work with relevant city and state agencies to ensure that the projects are implemented within the mandatory two-year period.

The OMBP also appoints members to Manhattan's Community Boards, convenes its Borough Board, plays a formal role in all land use applications throughout the borough, and allocates millions of dollars each year in capital funding to support projects in Manhattan.

Uptown Grand Central: Uptown Grand Central got its start in 2013 as the New Harlem East Merchants Association (NHEMA), when local business and property owners along the East 125th Street corridor – frustrated by the lack of services and oversaturation of needs along the corridor – first organized a series of volunteer street clean-ups. City agencies and leaders began to take notice, and within a year, the group was awarded seed funding to formalize as a nonprofit and take on the challenge of providing supplemental sanitation on the streets. The effort continued to grow, with the organization taking on projects including small business organizing; streetscape improvements like plantings, public art, and winter lights; district marketing events such as Make Music New York, Party On Park, and the Harlem Night Market; and transforming the space under the Park Avenue Viaduct adjacent to the Harlem-125th Street Metro-North Station into a community plaza that now features cultural events and a year-round farmers market. Uptown Grand Central now serves as the main community convener

for East 125th Street and works closely with a diversity of neighborhood stakeholders and agencies, including the NYC Department of Transportation, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, the NYC Economic Development Corporation, the NYC Department of Small Business Services, the NYC Department of Health, the NYC Department of Sanitation, NYPD, and FDNY. In the past year, Uptown Grand Central has been tapped by the city to explore the formation of a Business Improvement District (BID) for East 125th Street and surrounding blocks – and in doing so is continuing to advocate and organize for a stronger East Harlem.



The weekly Park Avenue Viaduct green market run by GrowNYC in partnership with Uptown Grand Central brings fresh, affordable produce to East Harlem residents.



LETTERS
OF
SUPPORT



CB11M

EAST HARLEM

Xavier A. Santiago
Chair

Angel D. Mescain
District Manager

September 23, 2022
Winston Fisher, Co-Chair
Felix V. Matos Rodriguez, Co-Chair
New York City Regional Economic Development Council
633 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10017

Dear Co-Chairs Fisher and Matos Rodriguez,

It is with great pleasure that we express our support to the Office of Manhattan Borough President and Uptown Grand Central's joint application to the New York City Regional Economic Development Council, for its \$10 million dollars in funding to East Harlem via the Downtown Rehabilitation Initiative.

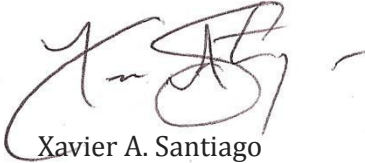
East Harlem is a historic treasure and melting pot that is racially and ethnically diverse. It is a community which is home to a total population of 120,000, with 45.1% of residents identifying as Hispanic/Latino, 28.1% identifying as Black non-Hispanic, 15% identifying as white, and 7.8% identifying as Asian. As early as the 1800s, it was home to Native Americans and later African American farmers and German and Irish and Italian immigrants. Following World War II, a wave of Puerto Ricans arrived, transforming it into "El Barrio" – Spanish for "the neighborhood". Also known as Spanish Harlem, it is the world's biggest Puerto Rican neighborhood after San Juan, the capital of Puerto Rico. In recent times, this community has been affected by the inequities of the pandemic and is now resurging in an economic renaissance.

Harlem's East 125th Street is ready for a unified plan of action that will maximize the transformative impact of the Second Avenue Subway and Park Avenue Viaduct projects and allow East Harlem to create a transportation hub that incorporates safe and clean streets, green and functional public spaces, intermodal connections, and local retail. All of this can be infused with opportunities to showcase the neighborhood's rich history and cultures. These transit investments, combined with projects that support community health and cultural caretaking will ensure the preservation of El Barrio's history and continue its growth in the future amidst the winds of neighborhood change. The Second Avenue Subway is truly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for the East Harlem Downtown Revitalization Initiative (EH-DRI), which will help us amplify our community voice and create the positive changes East Harlem requires to truly shine.

Community Board 11 has often advocated for this exact kind of action as an impetus so greatly needed in East Harlem to ensure its growth and recovery. Amazing changes can occur when all stakeholders and partners work together in New York City's shared commitment to maintain East Harlem's culture, business activity, and vibrancy.

On behalf of East Harlem's Community Board 11, thank you for the consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Xavier A. Santiago', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Xavier A. Santiago
Chair, Manhattan Community Board Eleven



September 21, 2022

Mr. Winston Fisher, Co-Chair
Mr. Felix V. Matos, Co-Chair
New York City Regional Economic Development Council
633 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10017

Dear Co-Chairs Fisher and Matos:

It is with pleasure that I express my support for the Manhattan Borough President and Uptown Grand Central's joint application for Regional Economic Development Council funding, through the Downtown Revitalization Initiative. As a historic and vibrant community in Manhattan awaiting a neighborhood-defining major transportation project in Phase II of the Second Avenue Subway, East Harlem needs economic development support to become a regional transit hub.

Uptown Grand Central is a 501c3 nonprofit that works to support, strengthen, and showcase East 125th Street in East Harlem, transforming it into a thriving corridor. Collaborating with businesses, residents, and neighborhood organizations, Uptown Grand Central has worked to maintain public spaces, engage in placemaking, sponsor and preserve public art, support small businesses, and advocate on behalf of the neighborhood.

East Harlem is a racially and ethnically diverse neighborhood that has been historically disinvested due to redlining and systematic racism. Despite its bustling streets and tight-knit community, residents today still face deep economic, environmental, and health disparities, leaving many vulnerable. Additionally, in the wake of a global pandemic, many residents have lost their jobs or family members, compounding already existing inequities.

In anticipation of the completion of Phase II of the Second Avenue Subway, East Harlem has an urgent need for investment to make the most out of this opportunity. With the support of this funding, community members will be able to create a vision for growth alongside the subway and maximize the neighborhood benefits that accompany development. An investment from the Regional Economic Development Council through this project will support our shared commitment to New York City's growth and recovery, especially where the need is greatest.

For these reasons I strongly support the Manhattan Borough President and Uptown Grand Central's joint application for Regional Economic Development Council funding and appreciate their proposal receiving your full and fair consideration, consistent with applicable rules, laws, and regulations.

Sincerely,

Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress



EDWARD GIBBS
 Assemblyman 68th District

THE ASSEMBLY
 STATE OF NEW YORK
 ALBANY

COMMITTEES
 Aging
 Correction
 Mental Health
 Science and Technology
 Tourism, Parks, Arts
 and Sports Development
 MEMBER
 Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic
 and Asian Legislative Caucus
 Puerto Rican/Hispanic Task Force

September 21, 2022

Mr. Winston Fisher, Co-Chair
 Mr. Felix V. Matos, Co-Chair
 New York City Regional Economic Development Council
 633 Third Avenue
 New York, NY 10017

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An investment from the Regional Economic Development Council through this project will support our shared commitment towards New York City’s growth and recovery especially where need is greatest.

Attentively,

ALBANY OFFICE: Room 532, Legislative Office Building, Albany, New York 12248 • 518-455-4781, FAX: 518-455-3893
 DISTRICT OFFICE: 55 East 115th Street, Ground Floor, New York, New York 10029 • 212-828-3953, FAX: 212-828-2807
 EMAIL: gibbse@nyassembly.gov

CORDELL CLEARE
30TH SENATE DISTRICT

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THE SENATE
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

CHAIR
WOMEN'S ISSUES

COMMITTEES:
CITIES 1
COMMERCE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & SMALL BUSINESS
CONSUMER PROTECTION
DISABILITIES
HEALTH

September 22th, 2022

Mr. Winston Fisher, Co-Chair; Mr. Felix V. Matos, Co-Chair
New York City Regional Economic Development Council
633 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10017

Dear Co-Chairs Fisher and Matos,

As the State Senator proudly representing East Harlem/El Barrio, I am honored to express my strong support for the Manhattan Borough President and Uptown Grand Central's joint application for Regional Economic Development Council funding, through the Downtown Revitalization Initiative. As an historic and vibrant community in Manhattan awaiting a neighborhood-defining major transportation project in Phase II of the Second Avenue Subway, East Harlem needs economic development support to become a regional transit hub and to empower local residents and small businesses.

Uptown Grand Central is a 501c3 nonprofit that works to support, strengthen, and showcase East 125th Street in East Harlem, transforming it into a thriving corridor. Collaborating with businesses, residents, and neighborhood organizations, Uptown Grand Central has worked to maintain public spaces, support small businesses, and repeatedly advocate on behalf of the neighborhood.

East Harlem is a diverse neighborhood that has been historically disinvested in due to redlining and systematic racism. Despite its bustling streets and tight-knit community, residents today still face deep economic, environmental, and health disparities, leaving many vulnerable. Additionally, in the wake of a global pandemic, many residents have lost their jobs or family members, compounding already existing inequities. In anticipation of the completion of Phase II of the Second Avenue Subway, East Harlem has an urgent need for investment to make the most out of this opportunity. With the support of this funding, community members will be able to create a vision for growth alongside the subway and maximize neighborhood benefits that accompany development.

Conclusively, I urge you to approve this transformative application forthwith.

Respectfully Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cordell Cleare".

Cordell Cleare
Senator | 30th District

NEW YORK
PR*TON CENTER

September 21, 2022

Mr. Winston Fisher, Co-Chair
Mr. Felix V. Matos, Co-Chair
New York City Regional Economic Development Council
633 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10017

Dear Co-Chairs Fisher and Matos,

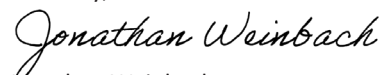
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An investment from the Regional Economic Development Council through this project will support our shared commitment towards New York City's growth and recovery especially where need is greatest.

Sincerely,



Jonathan Weinbach
Chief Executive Officer
New York Proton Center

September 23, 2022

Mr. Winston Fisher, Co-Chair
Mr. Felix V. Matos, Co-Chair
New York City Regional Economic Development Council
633 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10017

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East Harlem is a racially and ethnically diverse neighborhood that has been historically disinvested in due to redlining and systematic racism. Despite its bustling streets and tight-knit community, residents today still face deep economic, environmental, and health disparities, leaving many vulnerable. Additionally, in the wake of a global pandemic, many residents have lost their jobs or family members, compounding already existing inequities. In anticipation of the completion of Phase II of the Second Avenue Subway, East Harlem has an urgent need for investment to make the most out of this opportunity. With the support of this funding, community members will be able to create a vision for growth alongside the subway and maximize neighborhood benefits that accompany development.

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Sincerely,



Lauren Wolf
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THE COUNCIL OF
THE CITY OF NEW YORK
DIANA AYALA
COUNCIL MEMBER
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September 23, 2022

Mr. Winston Fisher, Co-Chair
Mr. Felix V. Matos, Co-Chair
New York City Regional Economic Development Council
633 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10017

Dear Co-Chairs Fisher and Matos,

It is with pleasure that I express my support for the Manhattan Borough President and Uptown Grand Central's joint application for Regional Economic Development Council funding, through the Downtown Revitalization Initiative. As an historic and vibrant community in Manhattan awaiting a neighborhood-defining major transportation project in Phase II of the Second Avenue Subway, East Harlem needs economic development support to become a regional transit hub.

Uptown Grand Central is a 501c3 nonprofit that works to support, strengthen, and showcase East 125th Street in East Harlem, transforming it into a thriving corridor. Collaborating with businesses, residents, and neighborhood organizations, Uptown Grand Central has worked to maintain public spaces, engage in placemaking, sponsor and preserve public art, support small businesses, and advocate on behalf of the neighborhood.

East Harlem is a racially and ethnically diverse neighborhood that has been historically disinvested in due to redlining and systematic racism. Despite its bustling streets and tight-knit community, residents today still face deep economic, environmental, and health disparities, leaving many vulnerable. Additionally, in the wake of a global pandemic, many residents have lost their jobs or family members, compounding already existing inequities. In anticipation of the completion of Phase II of the Second Avenue Subway, East Harlem has an urgent need for investment to make the most out of this opportunity. With the support of this funding, community members will be able to create a vision for growth alongside the subway and maximize neighborhood benefits that accompany development.

An investment from the Regional Economic Development Council through this project will support our shared commitment towards New York City's growth and recovery especially where need is greatest.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Diana Ayala". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'D'.

Council Member Diana Ayala
District 8 East Harlem/Bronx