

BRONX GUIDELINES AND PRINCIPLES

Bronx Close Rikers Neighborhood Advisory Committee Mission Statement

The Bronx Close Rikers Neighborhood Advisory Committee (NAC) was formed in October 2018 to provide input about the City's plan to close the jails on Rikers Island and replace them with a borough-based jail system. In particular, the Bronx Close Rikers NAC has provided ideas on ways to integrate the proposed new jail facility into the existing neighborhood; it has identified community assets and concerns; and it has provided recommendations about investment opportunities needed in the Mott Haven community. The goal of this process is for the compiled ideas to be viewed and considered during the project's ULURP review.

A Vision for the Mott Haven Neighborhood

As the City closes the jails on Riker's Island and creates a smaller, safer, fairer criminal justice system, the Mott Haven community has an opportunity to envision and implement strategies that promote positive change in their community and the criminal justice system.

Mott Haven will become a more equitable place to live; expanded opportunities for residents will lead to a more resilient and competitive Mott Haven. Residents will benefit from restorative community investments focused on health, recreation, economic vitality, education, and housing.

To create this new vision we have explored the shortages that currently face Mott Haven. The following represent the areas of opportunity identified by the NAC.

1. CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM AND DECRIMINALIZATION

Objective:

The Bronx Close Rikers NAC demands that the proposed borough-based jails system be accompanied by criminal justice reforms, community-based alternatives to incarceration, and concrete steps towards decarceration.

Bronx Close Rikers NAC Recommendations:

1.1 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends supporting and collaborating with criminal justice reform community organizations to strengthen advocacy efforts for decarceration, including:

- a. Alternatives to Incarceration (ATI) programs
- b. Right to a speedy trial and efforts to reduce case processing time
- c. Bail reform
- d. Decriminalization of low-level offenses
- e. Ending broken windows policing

- f. Efforts to reduce chronic recidivism

2. AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Objective:

The Bronx NAC supports and wants to ensure that quality affordable housing opportunities are provided to current, low-income Mott Haven residents, and that those opportunities reflect the economic composition of the neighborhood and protect their existing social networks.

The Bronx Close Rikers NAC Recommendations:

- 2.1 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends developing the western portion of the proposed jail site into an affordable housing complex for existing residents at all income levels in Mott Haven.
- 2.2 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends leveraging innovative public pilot programs to maximize the built capacity of the future affordable housing development on the western portion of the proposed jail site, in accordance with new proposed zoning designation of the site.
- 2.3 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends engaging with city agencies to develop and identify funding sources to achieve a comprehensive affordable housing plan for Mott Haven residents.
- 2.4 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends conducting a survey of all vacant and underutilized parcels in Mott Haven to identify sites suitable for affordable housing and /or community uses. The Bronx NAC recommends facilitating the redevelopment of sites through Request for Proposals (“RFPs”), targeted City subsidies, and design support for infill development on small/irregular lots. The Bronx Close Rikers NAC has identified the following three sites to become part of a comprehensive affordable housing plan for existing and low income residents in Mott Haven:
 - a. NYC Department of Education (“DOE”) parking lot at 351 Powers Avenue;
 - b. NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development (“HDP”) vacant lot at 453 West 142nd Street; and
 - c. NYC Police Department 40th Precinct parking lot at 337-345 East 139th Street.
(This site can also be used to develop Youth Hub facility. See item 3.1)
- 2.5 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends that residential properties with a significant number of violations that deems it inoperable be transferred to the City’s inventory or to a new Community Land Trust to be considered as part of the comprehensive affordable housing plan.

- 2.6 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends that all infrastructures in New York City Housing Authority (“NYCHA”) developments be compliant with the American Disabilities Act (“ADA”).
- 2.7 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends that all NYCHA developments implement green building technologies such as, solar panels, green infrastructure, smart appliances, and high-performance building envelopes.
- 2.8 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends the construction of more Extremely Low and Low-Income Affordability (ELLA) housing and Senior Affordable Rental Apartments (SARA). Furthermore, the City should identify alternative funding sources and/or reform ELLA and SARA programs to offer more deeply affordable housing for moderate-income residents.

3. YOUTH INVESTMENTS

Objective:

The Bronx Close Rikers NAC supports and wants to ensure the development of safe havens for youth where they can feel safe and welcomed while being provided with services and programs that will promote positive growth academically, mentally, and physically. The NAC supports additional funding is made available to hire highly skilled staff to provide these services and programming.

The Bronx Close Rikers NAC Recommendations:

- 3.1 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends creating a state-of-the-art “Youth Hub” facility at the NYC Police Department 40th Precinct lot at 337-345 East 139th Street. This facility should provide programming and services free of charge for residents between the ages of 14-24, including, but not limited to:
 - a. Adolescent clinic providing medical services, mental health services, and prevention education;
 - b. LGBTQ services;
 - c. Youth counseling;
 - d. Meditation and Spirituality programming;
 - e. Gang prevention programs;
 - f. Therapeutic arts programs;
 - g. Mentorship programs;
 - h. Business incubators;
 - i. Entrepreneurship opportunities;

- j. Summer youth employment programs;
 - k. Year-round work experience programs; and
 - l. Alternatives to detention services.
- 3.2 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends creating a network of satellite facilities to provide specialized education, recreation, art/culture, and technology programming to youth who live further away from the Youth Hub and intergenerational members of the community. The Bronx NAC recommends identifying NYCHA facilities (“carriage rooms”) as potential sites for these satellite facilities. As part of creating these satellite facilities, the spaces should be renovated and remodeled. Programming in these satellite facilities should include:
- a. Software development, coding, and STEM education/training;
 - b. Music, sports, cultural enrichment, and recreational activities;
 - c. College Bound programming; and
 - d. Vocational training.
- 3.3 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends the presence of trained violence disruptors in all youth focused facilities.
- 3.4 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends that any potential future housing development at the 351 Powers Avenue (currently DOE parking lot) include a community center.
- 3.5 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends transforming the closed Family Dollar store on Alexander Avenue and 3rd Ave into an intergenerational facility.
- 3.6 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends identifying existing community centers that can benefit from additional funding streams to improve programming and staffing to provide adequate services for youth ages 14 -24.
- 3.7 The Bronx NAC calls for dedicated funding streams to ensure ongoing programming and the repair of existing community centers.
- 3.8 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC calls for immediate renovation of all public Mott Haven playgrounds using a similar scope and funding structure as the City’s Community Parks initiatives, tasked with engaging communities and local partners in the redesign and reconstruction of dozens of smaller parks across the five boroughs.
- 2.10 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends the addition of sport facilities in the neighborhood. This includes the creation of an additional park along the Mott Haven waterfront, possibly 80 Willis Ave (Block 2277, Lot 50). Design for this space should

include a field that can be utilized for a variety of sports including soccer, football, and track.

2.11 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends a public school survey be undertaken to determine repairs needed within gyms throughout Mott Haven.

2.12 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends community centers in Mott Haven are given workout gyms as well as surveyed to determine whether repairs are needed.

4. TRANSPORTATION

Objective:

Bronx NAC supports and wants to ensure that residents of Mott Haven are provided with dignified, safe, and accessible transportation, serving both general neighborhood travel and specific travel to the proposed jail facility. In collaboration with the MTA and DOT the Bronx Close Rikers NAC hopes to bring significant improvements to the public transportation infrastructure in Mott Haven.

The Bronx Close Rikers NAC Recommendations:

4.1 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends dedicating funds, in addition to the State MTA Capital Plan 2015-2019 that includes station work renewal at 138th Street-3rd Avenue station, to transform the station area into a modern, accessible transportation hub. The Bronx NAC recommends:

- a. A complete rehabilitation of the station so that it is compliant with ADA standards by installing elevators, large print and tactile signs, audio and visual information systems, and other features specified by the MTA Accessibility Guidelines;
- b. Adding bus shelters, benches, lighting, and bus countdown screens on third avenue, 138th street, and Lincoln Avenue;
- c. A transformation of the street level outside the station by installing bus shelters, benches, lighting, and bus countdown screens.
- d. Developing an MTA support area at 134th and 135th street at 3rd Avenue. The area should be retrofitted to allow bus parking, provide bus drivers with a warm rest stop, and bathrooms. New bathrooms will prevent drivers of the BX1, BX2, BX21, and BX32 from blocking the senior building access ramps and using the senior center bathroom during hours of operation.

4.2 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends making safety and accessibility improvements to the 143rd Street subway station, including:

- a. Increased booth staffing, security camera surveillance, and lighting for improved safety;
- b. Making the station ADA compliant by installing elevators, large print and tactile signs, audio and visual information systems, and other features specified by the MTA Accessibility Guidelines; and
- c. Addressing flooding issues in the station.

4.3 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends rehabilitating the Cypress Avenue subway station by:

- a. Installing lighting and additional benches on the platform;
- b. Fixing leaks; and
- c. Ensuring ADA accessibility by implementing the MTA Accessibility Guidelines.

4.4 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends engaging MTA/NYCT through the existing Bronx Redesign Plan and the New York City Department of Transportation (“NYC DOT”) in conducting a comprehensive transportation planning study to evaluate the feasibility of and opportunities for improving courts-to-jail linkages and providing a direct route between the jail and the rest of the borough. Specifically, the study should evaluate the feasibility of and opportunities for:

- a. New East-West subway line connectivity for Bronx neighborhoods along the number 6 subway line that does not require having to take a subway through Manhattan;
- b. Alignment between public transit
- c. Service schedules and periods of high demand related to the jail (e.g. visitation hours, court appearances);
- d. Expanding bus service on the BX33, BX19, BX17 lines, including a minimum of at least two additional buses on the BX33 line, in order to reach the proposed jail site and providing public transportation for lawyers, service providers, and visitors;
- e. Introduction of new Select Bus Service (SBS) routes with dedicated bus lanes along 138th Street to connect neighborhoods along the number 6 subway line (and in between) with the 2/4/5 subway lines;
- f. Integration of potential bus service expansions with planned or future NYC DOT street reconstruction projects; and
- g. Prioritizing the implementation of:
 - Bus lanes with and without barriers,
 - Transit Signal Priority (TSP) installation throughout Mott Haven,
 - NYPD bus lane enforcement support unit,
 - And pilot programming to modernize dispatching, avoid delays and bunching.

4.5 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends that the City work with NYC DOT and the MTA in the immediate-term to identify dedicated funding sources available

through the MTA's 10-Point Transformation Plan to support evaluation and implementation of the proposed service expansions from Bronx NAC Recommendation #3.4. As critical investments to ensure that the proposed jail site is well-connected to the Bronx courthouses and Bronx neighborhoods via public transportation – a primary objective of the proposed project – the City should identify other local, state, federal funds and/or private funding for improving connectivity over the long-term.

- 4.6 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends that future court-to-jail linkages and connectivity between the jail and surrounding communities be examined explicitly as part of the Bronx Bus Network Redesign effort currently underway.
- 4.7 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends the City provide a zero-emission shuttle from the proposed jail facility to the Bronx courts.
- 4.8 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends the creation of visitor off-street parking lots near the proposed jail site. The Bronx NAC recommends any future housing development and commercial space include underground parking.
- 4.9 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends the procurement of a feasibility study on the creation of a new Metro-North Railroad Station in Mott Haven.
- 4.10 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends studying traffic patterns along 138th Street to limit or restrict the amount of trucks that cut through residential communities. Heavy vehicles along this route cause noise pollution and fatal accidents that endanger the lives of Mott Haven residents, specifically elderly members who live along 138th Street.

5. JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Objective:

The Bronx NAC supports and wants to ensure that the construction of the proposed jail facility and other buildings/facilities adjacent to the site will generate new jobs for Mott Haven residents and investments made within the borough-based jails plan.

The Bronx Close Rikers NAC Recommendations:

- 5.1 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends establishing a Community Benefits Agreement (“CBA”) in which City contractors must commit to hiring workers who reside in Mott Haven/ Bronx Community District #1 for the construction of the proposed jail facility and other recommended development on publicly-owned land.

- 5.2 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends the CBA require binding local hiring provisions in all leasing agreements for accessory space within the future jail facility (e.g. retail and community facility uses) and other future development in Mott Haven/ Bronx Community District #1.
- 5.3 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends engaging the New York City Small Business Services (“SBS”) and community-based organizations to design and establish a new on-site (or near-to-site) workforce development and job readiness program tailored to the needs of local community members.
- 5.4 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends engaging existing local businesses located on the proposed jail study area.
- 5.5 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends that Mott Haven residents get priority employment opportunities once they have received the adequate training through workforce development training programs. These programs will provide proper training to ensure that local workers are able to meet the qualifications required for future jobs created through the borough-based jails plan. Developers must give early notice of the types of roles that will be required so that the community, in conjunction with the City, can begin to create a pipeline of talent among local residents.
- 5.6 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends developing a list of trained community members who meet all the requirements to work with contractors on future building projects.
- 5.7 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends creating relationships with trade unions and organizations that provide training opportunities to ensure that Mott Haven community members are gaining the necessary training and experience to be employed in the local construction workforce.
- 5.8 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends supporting stability and growth of local businesses by establishing partnerships with community-based agencies and nonprofit organizations to ensure that local retailers have a place in the community.

6. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Objective:

The Bronx Close Rikers NAC supports ensuring that the proposed jail facility’s designated community facility space serves neighborhood residents by providing meeting and event spaces, as well as space for retail opportunities.

The Bronx Close Rikers NAC Recommendations:

- 6.1 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends providing modern, multi-purpose public spaces at the proposed jail site to serve as community gathering places for local meetings and events.
- 6.2 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends promoting community health and wellbeing through the provision of healthy food retailers and restaurants as well as a major commercial retail pharmacy in the podium of the proposed jail facility.
- 6.3 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends that all new City-owned or City-subsidized developments have a requirement to include discounted space and long leases for local small businesses and entrepreneurs.
- 6.4 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends that on-site retail leases prioritize tenancy of community-owned businesses. The precise percentage distribution between local and major retailers will be determined in conjunction with a dedicated council, whereby community members will be able to weigh-in on leasing decisions to ensure that future on-site uses are accommodating of community needs and priorities, demonstrate a commitment to local entrepreneurship, and offer quality levels of service.
- 6.5 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends that selected businesses be required to have a social entrepreneurship component that will ensure that they give back to the Mott Haven community. This can be in the form of discounts, food sharing, or credit lines for low income customers. Progress with respect to social entrepreneurship components will be tracked on an ongoing basis, with continued occupancy contingent upon fulfillment of agreed-upon commitments.
- 6.6 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends participating in the Percent for Art Program to commission local artists to provide public art installations in and around the proposed jail facility.

7. SERVICE PROVIDERS

Objectives:

The Bronx Close Rikers NAC supports the proposed jail facility providing a diversity of social services that can help people in detention and their families as they transition from jail to their communities so that they have the necessary tools and supports to thrive in their communities.

The Bronx Close Rikers NAC Recommendations:

- 7.1 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends establishing an on-site service center within the proposed jail facility to accommodate new permanent satellite offices for local service providers and a public benefits enrollment center targeted towards local residents and former detainees.
- 7.2 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends that service providers be local organizations with an established record of success, highly committed to the social development of Mott Haven residents.
- 7.3 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends providing complimentary childcare and support group services for family members and friends visiting detainees at the proposed jail facility.
- 7.4 Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends the creation of a commitments tracker or similar such tool for tracking quarterly/bi-annual/annual progress on all initiatives coming out of the Neighborhood Advisory Committees, similar to NYC Rezoning Commitments Tracker maintained by the Mayor's Office of Operations.

8. HEALTHY FOOD ACCESS

Objective:

Bronx NAC supports providing healthy food options for the residents of Mott Haven while also educating the community on healthy food practices to transform Mott Haven from a food desert into a healthy food oasis.

The Bronx Close Rikers NAC Recommendations:

- 8.1 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends building a supermarket on the ground level of the potential affordable housing development adjacent to the new jail facility.
- 8.2 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends leveraging New York City Industrial Development Agency (NYCIDA) incentives to attract an established commercial grocery operator (e.g., Trader Joe's, Stew Leonard's, etc.), possibly coupled with favorable financing terms for development through partnerships with local Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs). Other incentives should include marketing Mott Haven as a neighborhood attracting new opportunities and businesses that contribute to the economic stability of the community.
- 8.3 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends that the chosen supermarket operator have a dedicated space for healthy food preparation demonstrations to engage the community on healthy food recipes.

- 8.4 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends below market rental rates for local food retailers to discourage them from high grocery mark-ups.
- 8.5 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends that the City commission a study to evaluate the pricing techniques of Hunts Point Market and distribution chain to recommend ways of reducing the price of food in the South Bronx.
- 8.6 Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends the development of an all-season market modeled after the existing markets managed by New York City Economic Development Corporation: Brooklyn (Moore Street) and East Harlem (La Marqueta). The two proposed locations are:
- a. Underneath the Major Deegan Expressway between 3rd Avenue and Lincoln Avenue on 135th Street, including the community garden on the corner of Lincoln Avenue and 134th Street; and
 - b. Underneath the 3rd Avenue Bridge on the Bruckner Boulevard intersection.
- 8.7 Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends that local vendors engage in sustainable food practices, donating expired food to the community for composting.

9. QUALITY OF LIFE

Objective:

The Bronx Close Rikers NAC supports providing programs and services to create and maintain a clean, safe, and healthy Mott Haven community.

The Bronx Close Rikers NAC Recommendations:

- 9.1 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends identifying streets and public spaces that can benefit from increased outdoor lighting.
- 9.2 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends improved design guidelines for buildings and facilities to improve and enhance the public realm.
- 9.3 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends improving sanitation services in the community by providing large, rat-repellant trash cans, as well as recycling bins throughout Mott Haven.
- 9.5 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends creating training programs to educate residents on best practices for waste management, recycling, and composting.
- 9.6 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends targeting community gardens, local parks, cultural assets, and other civic spaces as a means of building community cohesion.

Community gardens, in addition to dedicating space to grow food, should also provide multi-use green spaces for Mott Haven residents' use.

- 9.7 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends identifying funding opportunities for local community-based organizations with limited resources to help fund community building events.
- 9.8 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends leveraging investments in new technology at the future jail facility to serve surrounding communities:
 - a. Install solar panels at proposed jail site, offer excess grid capacity at negotiated community rate to surrounding households, and equip the proposed new jail facility with a micro grid that can also support the surrounding properties in times of crisis like storms and power outages.
 - b. Equip rooftop of jail facility with fixed wireless broadband equipment and radio antennas to relay high-speed internet to surrounding households and businesses at no cost.
- 9.9 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends leveraging the proposed jail facility's potential remediation capacity to absorb nearby air pollutants to ensure that the proposed facility does not contribute to additional air pollution in the area.
- 9.10 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends the addition of green walls along the Bruckner expressway to block traffic related pollutants.
- 9.11 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends the addition of trees and plants along roadways to filter air pollutants in the neighborhood.
- 9.12 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends improvements and additional lighting on NYCHA development's streets and parking lots.
- 9.13 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends that surveillance cameras in the immediate vicinity of the jail facility be installed after studying and determining the best practices for neighborhood-based jails across the country to prevent impingements upon residents' civil liberties through heavy surveillance presence.
- 9.14 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends improvements for homeowners on Concord Street, across the new jail facility (e.g. additional streetlights, new sidewalks and fencing, and structural monitoring during construction).
- 9.15 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends expanding anti-gun violence programming in Mott Haven, which would be under the Mayor's Office to Prevent Gun Violence and the New York City Crisis Management System.

9.16 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends expanding programming and services to tackle the opioid epidemic in Mott Haven.

10. CLOSURE OF THE BARGE

Objective:

The Bronx Close Rikers NAC calls for the closing of the barge and a commitment to include the Bronx in conversations about the future use of Rikers Island.

The Bronx Close Rikers NAC Recommendations:

- 10.1 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends closing the Vernon C. Bain Center jail barge in Hunts Point.
- 10.2 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends that no new individuals be placed in the Vernon C. Bain Center barge jail to ensure that it closes as soon as possible following completion of the borough-based jail facilities.
- 10.3 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends including the South Bronx community and other communities directly impacted by the Vernon C. Bain Correctional Center in future planning of the current jail barge site as it is transformed into new purposes.
- 10.4 The Bronx Close Rikers NAC recommends including the Bronx in conversations about the future use of Rikers Island.