PREPARED BY
Fundamentals of Planning - Studio Spring 2019
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Mothers on the Move
Mary Mitchell Family and Youth Center
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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tr>
<td>CBO</td>
<td>Community based Organizations</td>
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<tr>
<td>BCDI</td>
<td>Bronx Co-operative Development Initiative</td>
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<td>BHR</td>
<td>Bronx Health REACH</td>
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<td>BID</td>
<td>Business Improvement Districts</td>
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<td>BRAC</td>
<td>Bronx River Arts Center</td>
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<td>CASA</td>
<td>Community Action for Safe Apartments</td>
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<td>CCPA</td>
<td>Climate and Community Protection Act</td>
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<td>CDCU</td>
<td>Community Development Credit Unions</td>
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<td>CERT</td>
<td>Community Emergency Response Teams</td>
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<tr>
<td>CLT</td>
<td>Community Land Trust</td>
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<tr>
<td>DEP</td>
<td>Department of Environmental Protection</td>
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<td>FBHC</td>
<td>Fordham Bedford Housing Corporation</td>
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<tr>
<td>HPD</td>
<td>Department of Housing Preservation and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IARCA</td>
<td>Integrated Airman Certification and Rating Application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LESPMHA</td>
<td>Lower East Side People’s Mutual Housing Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAF</td>
<td>Mission Asset Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MHA</td>
<td>Mutual Housing Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>MOM</td>
<td>Mothers On the Move</td>
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<tr>
<td>MOU</td>
<td>Memorandum of Understanding</td>
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<tr>
<td>MRC</td>
<td>Medical Reserve Corp</td>
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<tr>
<td>MRTA</td>
<td>Marijuana Regulation and Taxation Act</td>
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<tr>
<td>MWBE</td>
<td>Minority and women owned business enterprises</td>
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<td>NWBCCC</td>
<td>Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition</td>
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<tr>
<td>NWBRC</td>
<td>Northwest Bronx Resource Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>NYBG</td>
<td>New York Botanical Garden</td>
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<td>NYPD</td>
<td>New York Police Department</td>
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<tr>
<td>TIL</td>
<td>Tenant Interim Lease</td>
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<td>UNHP</td>
<td>University Neighborhood Housing Program</td>
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Executive Summary

This report is the final phase of a comprehensive study produced by Pratt Institute Spring 2019 City and Regional Planning graduate students in partnership with Mothers On The Move alongside the Mary Mitchell Family and Youth Center. The first phase of the study examined the existing conditions of the Belmont, East Tremont, Bathgate and West Farms neighborhoods, formally known as Bronx Community District 6. The analysis focused on three topic areas: the built environment, the socioeconomic environment, and the natural environment.

The following report will summarize the built environment with the history of CD 6, an overview of building characteristics and land use, and a summary of relevant zoning and developments plans. The socioeconomic environment section will focus on the area’s demographics, housing characteristics, economic development, and social infrastructure. Lastly, the natural environment section will discuss open space, transportation assets, physical infrastructure, and climate change.

Following the existing conditions summary, the recommendations in this report aim to build off the current strengths and assets of Bronx Community District 6 and respond to the weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in the built, social, and natural environments, as well as the client’s concerns for the area. Research for the Existing Conditions Report began with a neighborhood survey where the studio class identified key assets, such as the legacy of community-based organizations and a strong local business sector. It also found numerous opportunities, such as the ability for MOM to influence the decision making over the numerous vacant lots in the district.

The analysis also determined some weaknesses, such as the constraints on affordable housing and lack of access to open space. As well as potential threats to the community district, such as the increasing population and its impact on existing infrastructure and the implications of climate change and high adult incarceration rates.

From the analysis of existing conditions, the Studio developed four asset-based objectives for Mothers on the Move and the Mary Mitchell Family and Youth Center. These objectives each include 3-5 specific recommendations for the client to address their concerns and steps towards implementation.

1. Housing Affordability and Financial Stability
2. Social Cohesion through Networks, Art and Open Space
3. Environmental and Health Burdens
4. Build Local Wealth and Justice

The following recommendations build on key research findings and provide innovative strategies for generating employment and creating local wealth - particularly for youth. The approach includes an exploration of two potential interventions: the statewide legalization of recreational cannabis and the redevelopment of land uses on selected sites. The goals of the studio are to help stabilize the landscape, strengthen socio-environmental relations, improve living conditions and plan for the potential impacts of gentrification and housing displacement within CD 6.
Client

Mothers on the Move is a grassroots social justice organization focused on bringing equity to the historically disenfranchised community of South and Central Bronx. Originally comprised of a determined group of parents and residents who saw the resources of their local school districts unjustly allocated to wealthier white neighborhoods to the north, and drained from the low-income Black and Latino neighborhoods to the south. Since 1992, MOM has played an integral role in advocating for long-term solutions to educational injustice, decent housing, traffic safety, environmental justice[1].

The existing conditions analysis was used to inform the four objectives in this report. At the request of the client, this studio focused on two potential interventions: the redevelopment of land uses on selected sites, and statewide legalization of recreational cannabis. The recommendations in this action plan take these requests into consideration but especially aim to help stabilize the landscape, strengthen socio-environmental relations, improve living conditions and plan for the potential impacts of gentrification and housing displacement within CD 6.

Source: mothersonthemove.org
Geographic Context

Bronx Community District 6 (CD6) is located in the Northwest Bronx, and comprises of the neighborhoods of Belmont, East Tremont, Bathgate and West Farms, with a total miles area of over 900 square miles [2]. CD 6 is bound by the Bronx zoo to the east and north, Webster Avenue to the west and Crotona Park North and Cross Bronx Expressway to the south.

In CD 6, the land slopes downward from west to east. The highest ground is at Tremont Park, and the lowest is near the Bronx River [3]. Three physical barriers border CD 6: the Metro-North railways to the west, the Bronx Zoo and New York Botanical Garden to the north, and the Cross Bronx Expressway to the south. All three barriers are obstacles for residents and visitors to move in and out of the district. The Cross Bronx Expressway, in particular, have had negative social and environmental effects on the neighborhood.

Planning Process

- Community visit and Land use survey
  (January - February)
- Existing conditions Analysis
  (March)
- Stakeholder interview
  (April)
- Recommendations / Proposals
  (April - May)
Figure 0.01 Bronx Context Map (Left), Figure 0.02 Neighborhoods of CD6 (Right)
EXISTING CONDITIONS
RESEARCH
(SWOT ANALYSIS)
An analysis of the built environment includes a history of CD 6, an overview of building characteristics and land use, and a summary of relevant zoning and developments plans. The socioeconomic environment focuses on the area’s demographics, housing characteristics, economic development, and social infrastructure. Lastly, the natural environment section discusses open space, transportation assets, physical infrastructure, and climate change.
Demographics

CD 6’s population is estimated to be 98,823. Out of the total 98,823 residents in CD 6, 63,445 are Hispanic forming 64.2% of the total population. The breakdown of the Hispanic population shows a sizeable Puerto Rican presence at more than a third of the total. The second largest population group are non-Hispanic black or African American residents at 27.1%. There’s a big presence of foreign-born residents at 33%, in which 13% are naturalized US citizens. [2]

Predominantly a district of people of color, the only census tract that records low numbers of populations of color—at 31%—is census tract 397 which is home to Fordham University. The rest of the census tracts in the district record percentages of 60% and more [3]. The highest densities of populations of color are located in census tracts adjacent to Bronx Zoo’s southwest border, which also happen to be the densest census tracts.

Population by Age and Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 to 9 Years</td>
<td>7,977</td>
<td>7,581</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 to 17 Years</td>
<td>6,650</td>
<td>6,650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 to 24 Years</td>
<td>7,092</td>
<td>6,760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 to 35 Years</td>
<td>7,756</td>
<td>8,324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 to 44 Years</td>
<td>4,920</td>
<td>5,584</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 to 54 Years</td>
<td>5,364</td>
<td>5,992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 to 61 Years</td>
<td>3,081</td>
<td>3,253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62 to 69 Years</td>
<td>2,155</td>
<td>2,174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 to 79 Years</td>
<td>1,185</td>
<td>1,056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 and Over</td>
<td>666</td>
<td>771</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 0.03 BX CD6 Population Pyramid

Figure 0.04 Ratio of Hispanic to Not Hispanic In CD6
Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2017)
Land Use

Bronx Community District 6 (CD 6) has a long history of immigration, racial segregation, disinvestment, and redevelopment, which is in turn reflected in the urban fabric and building characteristics of the area.

CD 6 is a mixed-use neighborhood characterized by medium- to high-density residential uses. There are distinctive commercial corridors, large lots of public facilities, and a concentration of industrial land use in Bathgate where an industrial business zone is located. In comparison to the Bronx and New York City, CD 6 has considerably more land devoted to multi-residential buildings and public facilities. The majority of the vacant lots are privately-owned [4]. Although the amount of parks and outdoor recreation spaces is low, the prime location of these spaces make them accessible to residents.

While the Bronx and New York City have approximately the same share of land used for strictly commercial and office purposes, CD 6 has a higher portion—almost doubled—of land devoted to this land use. There is also a high amount of parking facilities in the area at 6.2%, which is tripled the percentage of these facilities in the greater Bronx and New York City. However, the amount of vacant land and parks and outdoor recreation space is low at 9.4%—this is almost four times lower than that of the Bronx and NYC at 36.6% and 32% respectively. [5]

There are 200 vacant lots in CD 6, totalling over 20 acres of land. The majority of available vacant lots at at 81.5% are privately owned. City agencies hold 15.5% of vacant land area, while state and federal authorities own an additional 0.5% of vacant land area. Mixed city-private ownership accounts for 0.5% of vacant land area, and fully tax-exempt organizations own the remaining 2%. The city agency with the most vacant land is NYC Transit with 54,423 sqft, that is, 44.8% of the total vacant land that is publicly owned. [6]

An inventory of vacant land is listed in the Appendix, on page 82.
Poverty and education are both major issues in CD 6 as low figures of educational attainment as well as high numbers of residents below the city’s poverty line are recorded throughout. As seen in Figure 0.09, percentages of residents below the poverty line reach figures of up to 71%. [7] This is the general trend in the district and not an exception, the only exception being census tract 60, which is zoned for Manufacturing. This area known as West Farms, resides on the southeast edge of the district and is quite low in population numbers. In terms of educational attainment of population over 25 years, the numbers show figures lower than New York State rates. About 37% of the total population are less than high school graduates, while only 26% graduate from high school. 24% have some college or associate’s degree, but only 9% possess bachelor’s degree. [7]

In Figure 0.10, tracts are categorized based on changes within low-income and non-low-income population between 2000 and 2016. [9] Low-income individuals are defined as those below 200 percent of the federal poverty line. There are two types of changes depicted on the map, economically expanding neighborhoods experiencing low-income displacement and economically declining neighborhoods experiencing low-income concentration.

Socio-Economic Conditions
Workforce & Economic Development

Bronx CD 6 consists of two Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) and one Industrial Business Zone (IBZ). Seen in Figure 0.11, the Belmont BID is located in the northeast corner of the district in the Belmont neighborhood. Started in 2008, the Belmont BID is known as “Bronx Little Italy” and is home to approximately 320 businesses. The second BID is the Fordham Road BID which began in 2004 and is located in the relative area of Fordham University in the northern part of the district. It is home to 300 businesses. The district also shares the Bathgate IBZ with Bronx CD3 which is located on the southeastern border of the district and is home to 154 tax lots.

In addition, the Tremont Avenue Commercial Corridor is important to the economic vitality of the community. Tremont Avenue is located along the southern portion of the district and connects the two major transportation hubs on the east and west sides of the district and is home to many small businesses. In the 1950s and 60s, the construction of the Cross Bronx Expressway and the discontinuation of the 3rd Avenue elevated rail service brought significant economic turmoil and decline to this corridor. The area was rezoned in 2010 and there is potential for a BID development to support this key area of the community.

![Figure 0.09 Commercial Land Uses, BIDs and IBZ](Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2017). ACS 5-year estimates.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common occupations in the Bronx</th>
<th>NYC Annual median wage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Less then high school diploma</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail salesperson</td>
<td>$23.6K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborer and material mover</td>
<td>$28.7K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food preparer and server</td>
<td>$22.7K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>High school diploma</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale trade and Manufacturing</td>
<td>$60.2K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer service reps</td>
<td>$37.7K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home health aid</td>
<td>$24.3K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>College or Associate degree</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LPN</td>
<td>$48.3K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavy truck driver</td>
<td>$47.0K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-school teacher</td>
<td>$35.2K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bachelor’s degree</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered nurse</td>
<td>$85.0K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical and health service managers</td>
<td>$121.8K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer related jobs</td>
<td>$89.8K</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Figure 0.10 Common Occupations in the Bronx](Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2017). ACS 5-year estimates.)
Social Fabric/Cohesion

CD 6 possesses an array of cultures and ethnicities, based in part on its role as a home for diverse immigrant communities. The population is predominantly Hispanic, notably of Puerto Rican descent, and Black. Residents of the study area experience high unemployment, high poverty and low educational attainment levels. Residents are challenged with increased financial strain based on stagnant incomes, rising rents, low home-ownership, and a considerable lack of affordable housing options.

The majority of the estimated total 31,842 households in CD 6 are family households in structures of two or more units. In the study area a significant number of family households are single-parent households with more than 10,000 consisting of a single female householder. Around 6,000 households are led by a single male householder, and one-unit structures are quite rare in the area. Homeownership rates (??%) are very low compared to Bronx (??%) and NYC (??%) [11]

There are four fire stations servicing CD 6 with personnel reaching approximately 190 firefighters and staff. Precinct 48 is the coverage area serving residents with two police stations, the main Police Department is located on the Cross Bronx Expressway in the East Tremont neighborhood. Black arrests account for 41% of total arrests in Precinct 48, followed by White Hispanic at 38% of total arrests. The most common criminal offenses in this area are Assault and Related and Dangerous Drugs. In terms of adult incarceration rates, 1,236 per 100,000 [12] persons aged 18 and up are incarcerated in CD 6. This is the fifth highest level of incarcerated adults compared to the rest of NYC. According to the US Census, there is also 19.8% of “disconnected” youth which measures teenagers and young adults aged 16 to 24 who are not in school and not working (NYC average is 14.3%). [13] Due to these statistics and the client’s request, the following recommendations will focus on youth programs throughout the study area.
Environmental Impacts

The natural environment and infrastructure of Community District 6 provide a unique set of opportunities and challenges. Community gardens play a vital role in connecting the residents of CD 6 to the open space system. The majority of these spaces are stewarded by volunteers who are passionate about education, community service and cultural connectivity through traditional horticultural practices. These spaces also help to foster meaningful partnerships between neighboring institutions and non-profit organizations, which help to provide technical assistance and educational resources to community garden volunteers. There are 18 community gardens located in CD 6, with a ratio of 1.8 community gardens per 10,000 residents. This ratio is more than double than that of the Bronx and New York City, which both provide only 0.7 community gardens per 10,000 residents. This is also greater than the New Yorkers for Parks recommended ratio of 1 community garden per 10,000 residents. [14]

Flooding and inundation from future storms presents a potential threat to the region. 76.76 acres are vulnerable to inundation based on the SLOSH and FEMA data, the potential of extreme flooding can potentially affect 11,000 living in nearby census tracts [18]. Notably, these areas currently contain both subway stations within CD 6, as well as two of the bulk chemical storage sites in the district. [18,19] Even though the areas in discussion (zones 5 and 611) fall within NYC Hurricane Evacuation Zones, they are the least likely to be evacuated during a storm. Furthermore, these areas are not priorities for flood preparation according to the the Department of City Planning District Profile [20], as their flood predictions rely mainly on the more conservative FEMA flooding predictions. Due to this, planning for future storm and inundation must be spearheaded by neighborhood organizations.

Another threat to the residents of CD 6 is heat waves. Figure 0.16 illustrates the heat vulnerability index from NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. [17] The heat vulnerability index is calculated with the following variables: a higher proportion of homes receiving public assistance, a higher proportion of non-Hispanic black residents, a higher proportion of overall deaths occurring in the home, a higher relative surface temperature, and a lower proportion of trees [18]. A higher composite index score indicates a residential area with a higher risk of heat related mortality. Despite the abundance of trees in the area, all of
the approximately 98,000 residents, representing each census tract in CD 6 are vulnerable to the disproportionate effects of heat. The Bronx, CD 6 and neighboring communities face the worst potential heat vulnerability in the city. [19]

Air Quality presents another public health climate related threat to the residents of CD 6. In terms of air quality, the major pollution contributor to human health impacts is a class of particles called PM 2.5 [20]. These particles are tiny airborne solid or liquid particles that are less than 2.5 microns in diameter -- just the right size to lodge in the human lung. [21] In New York City, 17.5% of PM 2.5 emissions come from traffic, and 49% of emissions come from buildings. [22] PM 2.5 concentrations from traffic and related health effects are 50% higher in high poverty neighborhoods relative to low poverty neighborhoods. [23] Further, the distribution of PM 2.5 pollution is disproportionate in New York City, with the highest concentrations from traffic impacting the Bronx. [24] Figure 0.17 shows the distribution of PM 2.5 in CD 6.

PM 2.5 levels are highest around major roadways. It’s important to note that this may be related to higher vehicle traffic resulting from environmental justice burdens in nearby neighborhoods, including high concentrations of waste transfer stations and the Hunts Point Terminal Market.

Figure 0.14 Average Annual PM 2.5
Source: NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- Strong and diverse network of community-based organizations and coalitions
- Sizable proportion of the population employed in industrial & healthcare sectors
- Bathgate IBZ protects industry and incentivizes job growth
- Historically strong small local business sector
- Inclusionary housing and commercial overlays

Weaknesses

- Loss of affordable housing (rent burden, low median household income)
- Toxic/Legacy pollution
- Low education levels
- Poor accessibility to public transportation

Opportunities

- Vacant lots
- Job growth and opportunities in the city and region
- Established institutions, public arts and free performance programming
- Large proportion of developable land
- Increased access to public transportation

Threats

- Historic high incarceration rate
- Increase in population impacting existing infrastructure
- Youth at risk with low-education and low-wages
- Climate change
- Gentrification / displacement
PRESERVE HOUSING AFFORDABILITY & PROMOTE FINANCIAL STABILITY
The Bronx is one of the densest counties in the United States, yet affordable housing is scarce and people tend to leave the borough for employment. Renter-occupied households are the overwhelming majority of the housing stock and records low numbers home-ownership at 6.8%. This exposes residents to extreme rent rates that are only increasing. With vacancy rates hovering at around only 2.6%, residents will face further issues in finding new homes as developers drive market prices further up. Financial stability must be achieved by keeping finances in the borough and enhancing housing in terms of its quality and affordability.

1.1 Promote increased access to community financial institutions

1.2 Advocate for the creation of community ownership models

1.3 Advocate for the preservation of existing affordable housing stock

1.4 Create new affordable housing on vacant / underutilized land
1.1 Promote increased access to community financial institutions

Nearly 30% of households do not have a bank account in CD 6. Another 30% is underbanked, meaning residents have a checking or savings account but still rely on alternative financial services. These trends are consistent with a greater degree of economic disadvantage for residents: above-city-average poverty and unemployment rates, and below-average income.

A majority of residents are living on the economic margins. Most people are either unbanked or underbanked. These trends are caused by three major factors: minimum balance requirements, overdraft fees, and insufficient funds fees that can make bank accounts expensive and limit their value for the community’s low-income consumers. In turn, traditional bank accounts become more of a burden than a resource for residents to build savings and assets. The higher unbanked and underbanked rates for CD 6 are consistent with a greater degree of economic disadvantage for CD 6 residents. The community has above-city-average poverty and unemployment rates at 38.6% and 17.8% respectively, and below-average income at $24,259. These trends suggest that the area has inadequate conditions to promote long-term financial security and opportunity for residents, and provide them with the resources to spend, save, borrow, and plan for life.

![Diagram: Community Owned Banks vs. Global Banks](Image)

**Source:** NYC DOHMH 2018 Community Health Profile
Community Development Credit Unions (CDCUs) and public banks are alternative financial institutions that are low-barrier and exist to serve communities. Unlike big banks that use public money to benefit their shareholders, these institutions invest public money to benefit local economies—and they provide the same range of financial services as for-profit banks. However, there are no CDCUs in CD 6 and a NYC public bank does not currently exist.

**Steps to Implementation:**

1. Mothers on the Move can advocate for the creation of a community-owned credit union or public bank in three ways. First, MOM can partner with Inclusiv to take the first steps in organizing a Community Development Credit Union in CD 6. Inclusiv is a federation of CDCUs that acts as a financial intermediary to invest capital in its members. To get started MOM can bring together a dedicated core of volunteer organizers who are willing to commit the time necessary to organize these credit unions.

Another resource that can assist volunteer organizers in creating a community credit union is Fordham University. The university’s MBA program requires students to work as consultants for a real-world project in their first year of study. MOM can collaborate with an MBA student to build the framework for a community credit union. This opportunity benefits both parties: MOM can gain technical knowledge for the initiative and further build its relationship with a prominent institution in the area, while students can gain real-world experience as well as fulfilling school requirements.

2. MOM can partner with Mission Asset Fund (MAF) to expand access to lending circles where community members can build and save credit together. This nonprofit organization is committed to creating a fair financial marketplace for low-income residents, and they have created a social loan program where friends and family come together to lend money to each other and build credit in the process. Over 35 nonprofits have partnered with MAF, including Chhaya Community Development Corporation in Jackson Heights, NY and Harlem Congregations for Community Improvement in Harlem, NY.

3. MOM can join the NYC Public Bank Coalition to support existing grassroots advocacy efforts for the creation of a municipal public bank. This NYC-based coalition is committed to creating a public bank that makes equitable investments, finances cooperative models, and expands high-quality and affordable financial services to low-income, immigrant communities and communities of color.⁴ Over 20 nonprofits are members of the coalition including South Bronx Unite and the University Neighborhood Housing Program. Most recently the coalition and other community groups like CASA rallied at NYC Banking Commission to call on the city to divest public money from banks that provide financing to landlords responsible for evicting large numbers of NYC tenants.⁵ MOM can join the fight by supporting and partnering with experts in this field of financial literacy and stability.

**Case Studies and References:** See Appendix 1.1
1.2
Advocate for the creation of community ownership models

Long term  High cost

With increasing public and private investment comes the serious threat to existing affordable housing of CD 6. As rents and housing prices rise, the neighborhood is becoming more segregated, displacement and homelessness continue to rise.

CD 6 has low homeownership and rental vacancy rates, with rents and property values rapidly rising it makes it difficult for current residents to keep their homes or find new affordable homes in the immediate area. From 2016-2018, sales prices for all residential properties have increased by 13% in CD 6, compared to 10% in Bronx and 8.3% citywide. This increase in sales prices discouraged many low-and moderate-income residents from attaining home loans.

Due to low wages and high rents, more than half of the households in CD 6 are rent burdened (spending at least 30% of their income on rent). Out of the total 58,037 rental units, only 14,078 (24%) units are rent-stabilized. In 2018, more than 12% of the total multi-family households were sold within one year of purchase. In addition, among the already subsidized units, CD 6 has the highest number of at-risk HUD subsidized units in the borough. Almost 1,100 units are on the verge of being flipped back into the market due to expiration of the attached subsidies. These trends clearly indicate the high risk of displacement and gentrification in this community.

Also, almost all the City sponsored projected plans and rezonings planned in and around CD 6 propose increases in density and encourage new development. While their stated goal is to provide affordable housing, the reality of the impact is gentrification of the area. Several organizations throughout New York City are working to challenge the City’s ongoing affordability crisis and rising tide...
of gentrification, to safeguard the communities. This recommendation suggests Mothers on the Move to join these actions to protect the low income and working class people of CD 6 and bring permanent affordability to the area.

**Steps to Implementation:**

1. Mothers on the Move can support the creation of a Community Land Trust (CLT) with Mary Mitchell Family and Youth Center and Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition, who are already participating in the Learning Exchange Program arranged by the Department of Housing Preservation and Development. Mothers on the Move can also collaborate with Bronx Co-operative Development Initiative (BCDI), a non-profit organization, that is willing to form community land trusts in this area of the Bronx. This CLT would preserve affordable housing, acquire and develop spaces like public centers for recreation, health and social services and make space affordable for small businesses and non-profits.

2. Mothers on the Move can support the creation of Mutual Housing Association (MHA) that gives an opportunity to low and moderate income residents to manage the building they live in and also gives them a lifetime right to stay in the building.

3. Mothers on the Move can encourage HDFCs to become a part of the CLT and in return provide them with technical assistance required to help struggling homeowners.

This CLT would own the land and provide a long term planning framework, while the MHA would facilitate housing development and promote the use of cross subsidies to preserve affordable housing. The composition of the CLT would be such that it is governed by three parties; members (land providers and homeowners), community partners (Fordham University, Bronx Lebanon Hospital, and/or St. Barnabas Hospital) and technical assistance providers (Mothers on the Move and Pratt Center For Community Development).

To get started, Mothers on the Move can implement this community ownership model on the building located at 2107, Mapes Avenue in CD6, which is already purchased by the Mary Mitchell Family and Youth Center.

**Case Studies and References:** See Appendix 1.2
Advocate for the preservation of existing affordable housing stock

Increasing property values and speculation has encouraged harassment and displacement of residents in CD 6. An increasing number of neighborhoods in the community district suffer from high concentrations of housing code violations, rising building maintenance costs and home foreclosures. In 2018, 128 units out of every 1,000 units in CD 6 qualified for serious housing code violations. There were 321 Housing Court Actions initiated by HPD against owners of privately owned buildings or brought by tenants against landlords or private developers, for the same year, indicating an urgent need to address the poor housing conditions in the district.

In 2018, NYC Marshals recorded 587 tenant evictions in CD 6, and it was also found that 13 out of every 1,000 multi-family and condo residential properties received foreclosure notices. In this situation, both landlords and homeowners or renters have a common difficulty of navigating through the multiple government resources and deciding which non-profit to approach. This recommendation would suggest Mothers on the Move to address the housing advocacy issues faced by the community, by instituting a housing resource center to connect residents with the right nonprofits that have the capacity to assist in these situations.

Steps to Implementation:

1. Create a centralised Housing Resource Center to provide technical assistance to tenants who are at risk of displacement or facing landlord harassment and also assist those seeking affordable housing in the community district.

2. Collaborate with University Neighborhood Housing Program to expand their Northwest Bronx Resource Center in CD 7.

3. Host pop-up sessions at community events or public places, where counsellors are available to answer questions.

This Housing Resource Center will provide an umbrella for preserving and creating new affordable housing in the community district.

Case Studies and References: See Appendix 1.3
1.4
Create new affordable housing on vacant / under-utilized lots

Several vacant and underutilized lots exist in CD6; there are 20 acres of vacant land and 15.5% of that is publicly owned. These properties can be used to create new affordable housing in the district.

Through the use of legislation and existing planning structures, the community could work to create new affordable housing in the study area. This can be achieved by making use of the strong ties that already exist in the community, exploring structures that are already set up by certain community organizations (such as the Northwest Bronx Community Land Trust, in partnership with BCDI), and advocating for new legislation that makes the creation of new affordable housing possible, such as right-of-first refusal legislation that gives the community an advantage in acquiring private property. The close ties to elected officials in the Bronx can make for a smooth process.

The Department of Housing Preservation and Development controls many of these properties. To monitor landlord and developer activity, MOM can take advantage of existing tools like justfix.nyc as a tool to keep track of new property sales and building permits as well as other development activities.

Prominent organizations in the Bronx advocate for preserving and creating affordable housing and their operational structures are conducive to equitable development. Some of these are Belmont Arthur Avenue LDC, Habitat for Humanity NYC, the Mutual Housing Association of New York, and the Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition. The Community Action for Safe Apartments (CASA) in the Bronx, which already works with MOM on advocacy issues.

![Figure 1.5 Vacant lot Inventory](Source: NYU Furman Center)
Steps to Implementation:

1. In coordination with recommendation 1.1, which advocates for the creation of a community-owned bank or credit union, the potential of acquiring vacant land for the creation of new affordable housing is encouraged.

2. Networks are key to this, and strong ties and coordination between nonprofits and community organizations are crucial in making use of existing community land trusts. The presence of a solid sense of community is helpful, and the existence of various community organizations and public facilities outlined in the existing conditions report indicates feasibility. Some of the most prominent organizations in the Bronx advocate for preserving and creating affordable housing and their operational structures make them very approachable. Some of these are Belmont Arthur Avenue LDC, Habitat for Humanity NYC, the Mutual Housing Association of New York, and the Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition.

3. Furthermore, affordable housing nonprofits and coalitions can be formed with these entities to advocate for right-of-first refusal legislation and consequently utilising it when it comes to acquiring property. Currently, a senate bill is being reviewed at the New York State Senate to establish right-of-first refusal in the state for federal public land to be transferred.

4. Outreach to community boards and council members should be included in this strategy. The elected politicians and council members in the Bronx pride themselves on being close to the communities of their upbringing, and their involvement can advocate for right-of-first refusal for the sale of private properties which can greatly benefit affordable housing nonprofits.

Several vacant and underutilized land lots exist in the district as shown in the existing conditions report. (A vacant land inventory is further detailed in Appendix section 1.4.) The Department of Housing Preservation and Development controls many of them. As a start, the department can be contacted and made aware of potential plans.

When it comes to private property, sources for monitoring landlord and developer activity are easily accessed, such as justfix.nyc. This tool can be utilised to keep track of new property sales and building permits as well as other development activities.

Case Studies and References: See Appendix 1.4
BUILD SOCIAL COHESION THROUGH NETWORKING, ARTS & PUBLIC SPACE
The second objective builds on existing vacant lots, community gardens and the power of its community based organizations to facilitate social cohesion as it relates to resiliency and gentrification. By fortifying local art projects, expanding open space amenities, and the installation of equitable communication infrastructure, MOM can drive progress within its own community where healing from digital, social and physical divides is of utmost importance.

2.1
Create a digital community hub to improve local digital communication

2.2
Coordinate Local Arts and Cultural Programming through a Community Art Coalition

2.3
Promote the expansion of the open space system and public programming through activation of underutilized spaces
2.1 Create a digital community hub

As of 2014, only 60% of homes in CD 6 had access to internet, below the city wide average of 73% and the US average of 82%. However, in NYC as a whole 80% of people have smartphones. By promoting themselves online and expanding the number of people who have access to the internet, MOM and the Mary Mitchell Family and Youth Center can lead the creation of a digital community hub in CD 6.

This recommendation aims to bridge the digital divide prevalent in low-income areas to access free and needed information to the public. It will serve as a digital and physical bulletin board to assist in organizing the community.

Short term & Medium cost:
2.1a Create a Digital Community Hub
Using a platform like Squarespace, Wix or Wordpress, MOM can quickly create an updated website that can be used as a public communication tool for sharing information relevant to the needs of the immediate community. MOM could utilize a Pratt GCPE intern to create this website.

Messages will be posted both online and can be sourced from MOM’s posts on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram. Additionally, MOM and enable user generated participatory content, where anyone can post information, as well as official content shared by the Hub coordinator and community partners.

Mid term & Low cost:
2.1b Partner with SoBRO to invest in skilled job training for green manufacturing jobs, wifi network maintenance and IT services
Using a partner like New America/Resilient Communities or Lehman College, help develop a Digital Stewards Job Program that could offer a paid six to eight month training program for young adults to maintain and promote a locally owned WiFi network. By using the Digital Community Hub outlined in 2.1a to find prospective trainees and partners, job training could include tech-related projects and media production skills.

Long term & Low cost:
2.1c Support the newly trained workers to launch a Cooperatively owned WiFi network
Approximately 15-30 sites (businesses, houses of worship or community facilities) will volunteer to host resilient WiFi hotspots. Network will be owned and maintained by the employees when possible, backup sources of power (solar, generators) can be used to keep the network operational during emergencies.

Case Studies and Resources: See Appendix 2.1

Figure 2.1 Digital Hub Website
Source: Fundamentals Studio Spring 2019
2.2
Coordinate Local Arts and Culture Programming

Short term  Low cost

CD 6 has a powerful network of community based and established art organizations such as the Theatre Arts Production Company and High School (TAPCO), the Bronx River Arts Center (BRAC), and the Belmont Library and Enrico Fermi Cultural Center.

Current Bronx community-based organizations possess both the physical space and bandwidth to boost local art projects and plan programming for residents. When discussing the needs of the area during stakeholder interviews, members of Community Board 6 were especially concerned with finding opportunities for youth after school, during summer and on the weekends. Members also sought to find ways to implement the creation of local job opportunities which are not low-wage or requiring low-skills such as retail employment.

In referencing the public facilities of CD 6, youth development accounts for the second largest type of facility within the study area, after schools.³ Considering the existing infrastructure, coordination and resource sharing of the programming and the accessibility to register for parents who are seeking to enroll their children can be improved.

Steps to Implementation:

This recommendation proposes a South Bronx Youth Art Coalition which meets bi-monthly to produce and facilitate a year-round arts programming calendar to serve three goals:

1. Advertise and coordinate free, year-round arts programming for the children of CD 6 to expose them to art as a healing tool, keep them off the streets and illustrate potential career pathways in the arts

2. Raise awareness in the community to the many local organizations serving CD 6

3. Lead public art projects from within, bolstering local pride and culture by commissioning only local artists and the youth of the community to revitalize the neighborhood

The proposed Community led Arts Coalition will take a three pronged approach to achieve the previously stated goals. First, through justice-based arts and service learning activities, the programs facilitated under the umbrella of the proposed Art Coalition will have a wider range to support the academic, pre-professional and positive social development of young people and engage them as leaders in sustainable community development.⁴ By teaming up with community based organizations in the area including The Point, BRAC, Groundswell and countless others, a dedicated coalition can cultivate and preserve of Bronx culture, making the arts economically and geographically accessible to residents, especially the youth. Lastly, with the three-pronged approach of environmental justice, youth development, and using arts and culture to engage thoughtful decision making, the youth of CD 6 can create the community they want to see, and generate economic opportunity for themselves.

This short term goal for this recommendation is to build capacity for local arts and culture programming in coordination with afterschool programs and public spaces. This is a coalition that will explore how to best activate and curate ongoing art education and projects for all ages, but particularly for the youth.
MOM’s role can be to facilitate the formation of a community coalition, comprised of local stakeholders and arts based organizations. This coalition will be focused on curating NYC art programs specializing in culture, music, theatre, visual and digital themed programs and make them readily available to the youth of CD 6 through a series of planned after school programs and summer camps. MOM and the Mary Mitchell Family and Youth Center can support this effort by providing space for workshops, afterschool programs, and grant writing to compensate for the various programs of their choosing, especially in attaining funding through the NYC Department of Youth and Community Development.

Figure 2.2 Public Art
Source: NYU Furman Center
2.3 Promote the expansion of the open space system and public programming

According to the existing conditions research, Bronx CD 6 has only a 6.2% of total area as open space, when compared to the 30% in the Bronx and 23% in the City.

Despite sharing boundaries with some of the most significant open spaces in the city like the Bronx Zoo and the New York Botanical Garden, there is very little publicly accessible open space that can be used and controlled directly by the community. This makes it difficult for local organizations that aim to improve the social participation and networking in the neighborhood. The lack of space for social interactions is a major challenge for local arts and culture, given the ethnic and cultural diversity of the district.

The lack of spaces for people and organizations to gather and interact has an impact on factors that drive an equitable and healthy community. It also discourages pedestrian activity and minimizes economic opportunity. This is also reinforced in the Community District needs assessment to, “Expand public programming and activation of public spaces on city owned sites.”

There are underutilized spaces starting from vacant lots, street parking, curbs, plazas that could be activated and made accessible to the public. This would provide ground for people to gather, create a more enjoyable urban environment, boost civic pride and encourage community involvement.

Short term & Low cost:

2.3a Partner with local organizations and schools to transform curbs and school yards into playgrounds for children

According to the U.S Census Bureau and American Community Survey, Children and youth below 17 years of age constitute almost 29% of the districts population. Although there are 62 public school district, only one school on E 181 Street has converted its playground and school yard into a publicly accessible playground. Also accessibility of playgrounds from all parts of the neighborhood or during all parts of the day is observed to be an issue in CD6. MOM can connect schools and organizations like MMFYC that run after school programs to groups that will support them with training, resources and funding. On the longer run, centralize all the efforts to establish a district wide program for children to use curbs, school yards and plazas as activity areas. Larger areas like parking lots, school yards could be permanently

Figure 2.3 Open Space Programming
Source: NYU Furman Center
transformed, while smaller-scale on-street parking spots or underutilized sidewalk space in residential neighborhoods could be used as spaces to play on a temporary basis.

2.3b Promote the use of vacant lots as a meeting space for community organizing and gatherings

The lack of urban public spaces directly impacts community organizations by making it difficult for them to find locations to conduct workshops and programs which encourage outreach and participation. MOM can support community organizations by helping them use vacant and unused lots for their meetings and outreach events. This will help grassroots organizations to have an improved amount of participation from the community. This recommendation could contribute largely to this district, where there is already a strong presence of organizing and resilience.

Mid term & Medium cost:

2.3c Advocate and support the creation of pop-up bike lanes that connect more people to open spaces

In the district, it was also noted that people’s accessibility to open and green spaces was compromised because of issues regarding connectivity and transportation. MOM can collaborate with organizations that provide technical and financial assistance for creating pop-up bike lanes through placemaking techniques. This will make the newly created open spaces easily accessible from all parts of the district. The map highlights a route that runs along the streets (1) that have no or little undulations and (2) that have been identified as dangerous in the existing conditions. On the longer run, advocate for permanent bike lanes in the identified roads in partnership with DOT.

Mid term & Low cost:

2.3d Advocate for green buffer zones along the physical barriers to mitigate environmental impacts they create

The community district is flanked by Cross Bronx Expressway and the Metro North in the south and west as its boundaries. The discussions the studio had with the community during the stakeholder interviews also reinforced the impacts that these physical barriers imposed on the community and its residents. Although there are physical, aesthetic and visual that are created by these interventions, their environmental impacts are creating health hazards that cannot be ignored. This recommendation is for MOM to advocate for the
Figure 3.4 Cross Section of the Cross Bronx Expressway (Before)
Source: NYU Furman Center

Figure 3.5 Cross Section of the Cross Bronx Expressway (After)
Source: NYU Furman Center
ALLEVIATE ENVIRONMENTAL AND HEALTH BURDENS
There are multiple public health threats to the residents of CD6. These include diet related negative health outcomes, poor air quality, looming emergency events related to climate change. By increasing access to fresh food, improving respiratory health through air quality monitoring and mitigation infrastructure, improving community preparedness for emergency events, and addressing heat vulnerability in the community through a variety of existing and proposed interventions, the residents of CD6 will have better access, information, health outcomes, as well as new employment opportunities, and lower energy bills, which tend to increase living costs threatening affordable housing.

3.1 Increase access to fresh food

3.2 Improve respiratory health through air quality monitoring and mitigation

3.3 Improve community preparedness during an emergency event

3.4 Address heat vulnerability

3.5 Improve weatherization to reduce energy costs, create jobs, and save lives
3.1 Increase Access to Fresh Food

Bronx residents currently lack access to fresh food.\(^1\) CD 6 has the highest ratio of supermarkets to bodegas in the Bronx at 1:37, while the healthiest food environment in New York City has a ratio of 1:3. These food access inequities are happening where residents are most in need.

The high rates in diabetes and obesity are major health problems in CD 6. Greater access to affordable, fresh food can help reduce these health risks. MOM can lead efforts to increase access to fresh foods by (1) encouraging community retailers to provide healthier food offerings and (2) taking the first steps in creating a Bronx food cooperative.

**Short term & Low cost:**

3.1a Improve healthy food offerings at local food retailers

One strategy to reduce fresh food costs is to improve the food and beverage offerings at local food stores. As a consumer, MOM has the power to work with community stores to increase stock and promotion of healthy foods. MOM can arrange for nearby community gardens to sell fresh fruit and produce to bodega owners. This partnership can help increase supply of healthy food in bodegas, while allowing costs to remain low and prices to be lowered. To provide bodegas with infrastructure to store and display these products, bodegas can consider serving the community as cooling centers—and in doing so, receive subsidies to cover increased energy bills from new refrigerators that are needed to maintain fresh food.

The biggest challenge is encouraging bodega owners to make this first step. Stores may be unwilling to stock an item because they are afraid no one will buy it. MOM can allay this concern by collaborating with the Bronx Health REACH coalition (BHR) to expand its Healthy Bodega Initiative. BHR is a community coalition led by the Institute for Family Health that launched a healthy bodega training program in 2016. Bodega owners who participate in the program receive loans for store improvements from Spring Bank, a community bank based in Bronx Community District 4. Most recently the Institute for Family Health was awarded $4M to be used over a five-year period to expand the activities of the coalition, one of which is to increase access to healthier food and beverages.\(^2\) MOM and BHR can support one another in achieving this common goal.

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*Figure 3.1 Community Health Survey*  
Source: NYU Furman Center
Mid term & Medium cost:
3.1b Lead the creation of a Bronx Food Cooperative

Another strategy to reduce fresh food costs is to create a Bronx food cooperative in the area. The food coop would be owned and run by the people who shop there. Bodega owners, for example, could take part in the coop in exchange for supply of fresh fruits and produce in their stores. The cooperative model encourages member-owners to pool their resources and contribute most of the work. In return, overhead stays low, prices are lowered, and the quality of products remain high.

MOM can take the first steps to organize a core group that assesses the community’s interest and needs for a food coop. Once a shared vision has been established, the group can work out the operations of the coop, the coop’s potential site, and then the construction of it. Several financial and technical resources are available to support this process. For example, Shared Capital Cooperative is the nation’s loan fund that provides financing to cooperative businesses and housing through the United States. A community credit union (see Recommendation 1.1) can also be a financial resource to this initiative. MOM can primarily partner with BCDI to use the resources in place to build cooperatives around the BX Food Coop. For technical assistance, CAMBA’s small business workshops offer free courses on business management and strategy for new and aspiring entrepreneurs. MOM can also consider partnering with the Gabelli School of Business at Fordham University to task business students with the creation of the coop.

Case Studies and References: See Appendix 3.1

Figure 3.2 Economy flows in Food Co-op vs. Traditional grocery store
Source: NYU Furman Center
3.2 Install an air quality monitoring and advocate for mitigation infrastructure

28.5% of the population of CD 6 is under the age of 18, and child asthma rates are double the NYC average. In general, PM 2.5 levels are 50% higher in low-income neighborhoods relative to high-income neighborhoods.

Despite this, there are only three official air quality monitors in the Bronx, none of which are in CD 6. The Cross Bronx Expressway is a known source for hazardous vehicle emissions, but the closest air quality monitor is over 1 mile away. These recommendations will enable MOM and other community members to generate new knowledge on local air quality. This will enable them to make decisions on when and where children should be able to play outside and enable them to determine which locations in the neighborhood are most in need of physical interventions to mitigate air pollution.

**Short term & Medium cost:**

3.2a MOM or the Mary Mitchell Center installs a Purple Air sensor to track local air quality in real time.

Using the existing platform of the grassroots organization PurpleAir, MOM can connect groups that are already concerned about childhood asthma to the tools to detect and prevent it. MOM can then link to/distribute the air quality data generated via their proposed website/digital community hub Families can access this information for free (with the help of the proposed expansion to the WiFi network) to determine for themselves where and when their families play outside.

**Mid term & Low cost:**

3.2b MOM collaborates with schools, libraries and community facilities to use the crowdsourced data to locate areas needing physical intervention

Because there are many sources of PM 2.5 pollution including buildings, trucks and cars, there are likely numerous locations that could benefit from green infrastructure or other interventions to mitigate air pollution. Since funding may be limited, or linked to a one-time NYC DOT reconstruction project,
identifying these locations in advance will help MOM prioritize projects that will have the most impact in reducing childhood asthma.

3.2c When future funding becomes available, MOM leads the advocacy and organization to break ground on new air quality improvement projects.

Examples of potential project include building green infrastructure or physical barriers between the Cross Bronx Expressway (as seen in figures 3.23 and 3.24) and the Admiral Farragut Playground or the Fairmount Playground.

Case Studies and References: See Appendix 3.2
Improve community preparedness during an emergency event

From extreme heat to poor air quality, the effects of climate change are already being felt in CD6. The area has a mixture of environmental and social conditions that make it particularly more vulnerable to disasters.

Community resiliency is defined as the ability of the community to respond to, withstand and recover and learn from the experiences of facing adverse situations. Rising rents, gentrification and displacement have a negative impact on community ties and long standing support networks, which are the key for community preparedness during an event of disaster. In addition to the set of recommendations in the previous sections to strengthen social networks and reduce socio-economic and environmental vulnerabilities, this recommendation focuses on building community preparedness to emergency conditions.

Steps to Implementation:

MOM can partner with NYC Emergency Management to increase awareness and provide training and technical assistance to support community members’ preparedness to emergency situations. This would involve identifying and working with local partners like the Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) Fire Corp Units, Medical Reserve Corp (MRC) units, as well as coordinating with the local fire and police departments to improve the residents’ capacity to respond and recover from disasters. MOM could also partner with a planning school, such as Pratt Institute’s GCPE, for preparation of a local emergency plan. MOM can also partner with the MMYFC to identify specific Condo Boards (like the Jacobo family) to organize with them, taking advantage of the social tissue that is already in place around the HDFC buildings.
3.4 Address heat vulnerability in the community

Heat is a public health threat to the residents of CD6. According to the federal government, extreme heat often results in the highest number of annual deaths among all weather-related hazards.¹

The EPA estimates more than 1,300 deaths per year in the United States are due to extreme heat, and the CDC states that extreme heat causes more deaths in US Cities than all other weather events combined.² Extreme heat is defined as a period of 2 to 3 days of high heat and humidity with temperatures above 90 degrees.³ In extreme heat, evaporation is slowed and the body must work extra hard to maintain a normal temperature. This can lead to death by overworking the human body.⁴ When it's hot out, vulnerable populations, like those under 4 and those over 65 years of age are at the highest risk for heat illness and death.⁵

1. Address heat vulnerability through air conditioning
2. Address heat vulnerability through cooling centers
3. Address heat vulnerability through cool roofs
4. Address heat vulnerability using solar installation and green roofs
3.4a

Address heat vulnerability through air conditioning

There are two more immediate interventions designed to help people stay cool when it’s hot outside: air conditioner giveaways, and neighborhood cooling centers.

Air conditioning is one of the most efficient and effective ways to keep people from feeling the negative effects of heat and reducing the public health threats that extreme heat presents. The New York State Home Energy Assistance Program, or HEAP provides a small number of free air conditioners for New Yorkers on a first come, first served basis until funding runs out. The program usually begins accepting applications in May. HEAP can also assist with installation of air conditioners for those accepted into the program, and can provide financial assistance to those having trouble paying for high energy bills as a result of running their air conditioners -- regardless of their participation in the A/C giveaway program. There are eligibility requirements for participation, but many in CD6 are likely to meet these.

Mothers on the Move’s role regarding A/C giveaways could be two-fold. Mothers on the Move can promote the program among their constituency on the “HUB’s” free digital bulletin board as it’s not well publicized -- particularly around the time that HEAP begins accepting applications. They can also take on an advocacy role, lobbying Albany to devote more funds to the program and NYC to match/create their own version of the program.

Figure 3.6 Addressing heat issues with air conditioning
Source: Fundamentals Studio Spring 2019
3.4b
Address heat vulnerability through cooling centers

Mid term Low cost

Neighborhood cooling centers are another tool to combat the health impacts of heat. They are generally public facilities with increased access during extreme heat events that keep the doors to their air conditioned facilities unlocked so that heat vulnerable residents have a safe place to cool off.

There are 539 public facilities within CD6, and some are opened as cooling centers during extreme heat conditions. These centers are often out of the way and poorly marked, presenting challenges for many New Yorkers, particularly the elderly and most heat vulnerable. NYC’s website publicizes the locations of cooling centers, but only does so when a heat emergency is announced by the City. This information could be better publicized, and a more permanent log/map of these facilities could be kept by Mothers on the Move or the Mary Mitchell Family and Youth Center, as well as proper signage and directions so that local residents aren’t confused about where to go (and what to bring) when temperatures rise.

Mothers on the Move can publicize the locations of these centers before and during high heat events, and advocate for more cooling centers in CD6. If public facilities are overburdened or inadequate, Mothers on the Move can also lobby the MTA to bring buses from their electric fleet into the area to act as mobile cooling centers. Using buses from this fleet would avoid increasing the pollution load to the area. Additionally, the Mary Mitchell Youth and Family Center is a natural fit for a new cooling center.

Figure 3.7 Potential Cooling Centers
Source: NYDCP
3.4c
Reduce heat vulnerability through cool roofs

Short term $ Low cost

Addressing the way that buildings interact with their environment is an important way to address the impact on heat inside buildings and the way that buildings contribute to higher heat conditions. One simple and cheap intervention that can cool buildings has to do with the color of their roofs. Roofs that are dark in color absorb heat, while those painted white reflect heat.

NYC has an initiative to paint roofs white called the NYC Cool Roofs program. The program is designed to make buildings more efficient and also to support local jobseekers. NYC CoolRoofs aims to coat 1 million square feet of rooftop annually and connect NYC CoolRoofs participants to full-time work at the end of the season. Participants also earn certifications like OSHA30, 4-Hour Flagger, and 4-Hour Scaffolding that support employment in the industrial and construction sectors.

The coating used on the rooftops is highly reflective and quickly releases heat, which results in reduced absorption of solar heat leading to cooler buildings. Temperatures within the building can be reduced by up to 30 percent, cutting cooling-related electricity costs in warmer months. By regulating rooftop temperatures, the coating also helps to extend the life of rooftops as well as cooling equipment. In addition to the immediate benefits for the coated buildings, white rooftops reduce temperature in the surrounding areas and combat the Urban Heat Island Effect—the warming effect experienced in cities when paved areas prevent evaporative cooling processes, and dark surfaces, such as asphalt, absorb solar heat, increasing average ambient temperatures by up to five degrees. Coating all eligible rooftops in New York City could mitigate this effect by up to one degree.

Mothers on the Move’s role in the CoolRoofs program could be two-fold. Mothers on the Move can promote participation in the program among building managers and owners in CD6, and also partner with Sustainable South Bronx and the HOPE program to provide a meaningful path to employment for those connected to Mothers on the Move currently seeking work.
3.4d
Reduce heat vulnerability using solar installation and green roofs

Installing solar panels or green roofs are other ways to deal with the absorption of heat by building roofs. These methods not only reflect heat, but capture the sun’s energy to use it more productively for residents.

Green roofs keep buildings cooler, and can act as natural air conditioning through the process of evapotranspiration. Solar energy can be captured to lower energy bills for building owners, landlords, and tenants. Increased solar production can also reduce the need for highly polluting “peaker power plants,” primarily located in communities of color, that only come online during the highest energy usage days of the year - the hottest ones, where air conditioner use is at a maximum.

There are a variety of incentives from NYS and NYC to supplement the cost, or even fully reimburse the cost of materials and installation of these roofing technologies. New York State offers several tax incentives to encourage solar energy. Incentives for residential installations include:

- An income tax credit for 25 percent of the cost of the system ($5,000 maximum) for grid connected and net metered residential (including multi-family) solar electric and solar thermal systems.
- Exemption from state sales tax for passive solar space heat, solar water heat, solar space heat and photovoltaics installed in residential and multi-family residential buildings.
- Subject to local option, a 15-year real property tax exemption for the cost of solar and certain other renewable energy systems constructed in New York State, to ensure that property taxes do not rise because owners install solar energy equipment.²¹

NYC Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has a reimbursement program for the costs of green roof installation.²² To be eligible for the grant, a project’s minimum roof area to be greened must be a minimum of 3,500 square feet (325 square meters). A sliding scale was recently introduced whereby building owners are now reimbursed according to depth of system installed; in other words, the deeper the system installed, the greater the reimbursement. Note there are minimum and maximum depths for such reimbursements.²³

Additionally, community solar group projects have begun to pick up momentum in NYC, in part based on tax abatements and incentives from NYC, and NYS through NYSERDA.²⁴ OnForce Solar is a Bronx-based vertically integrated solar company that has created a variety of projects and installations throughout the Hunts Point and Port Morris IBZs.²⁵ A new solar array built by Clean Choice Energy on an industrial building in the IBZ in Parkchester (on Zerega Avenue) allows renters without the ability to install solar on their roofs to share in the contribution to the electrical grid provided by the solar array, receiving a discount from their energy provider for participating in the community solar group.²⁶ The IBZ in CD6 has potential for hosting a solar array that could benefit both the IBZ and local residents, helping to cool the ambient temperature and lowering energy costs for local residents.

MOM can promote participation in City and State programs to promote solar and green roofs among building managers and owners in CD6, and investigate partnerships with companies like OnForce Solar and Clean Choice Energy to bring a community solar array to CD6 (possibly in the IBZ). SoBro can facilitate these partnerships and assist with procedures around financing and tax incentives and abatements.

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Figure 3.9 Solar Installation and Green roofs to reduce heat issues
Source: Fundamentals Studio Spring 2019
3.5

Improve weatherization to reduce energy costs, create jobs, and save lives

Mid term $$$

Assessments for the performance and weatherization needs of buildings can be a catalyst for broader changes in CD6. Mothers on the Move can partner with Pratt and the MIT Environmental Solutions Initiative (MIT-ESI) to gain a new understanding of how to assess weatherization needs in CD6. This can lead to unique economic and employment opportunities for CD6 residents while simultaneously benefiting the health and finances of CD6 residents.

Another method for keeping interior temperatures in buildings more comfortable and consistent is weatherization. Weatherization has mostly been discussed as a method for increasing energy efficiency for heating/cooling, but it is important to note that it is also an effective, long-term solution for reducing the impacts of heat waves. Older buildings can be poorly insulated and have multiple places where interior air can leak to the outside, making it more challenging and costly to keep interior temperatures comfortable. Weatherizing, or retrofitting buildings with better insulation, tighter windows, and eliminating air gaps can significantly improve the temperature consistency and energy usage for residents. The most efficiently weatherized buildings maintain consistent interior temperatures year-round, greatly reducing the need for additional heating and air conditioning. In order to better understand the strategies for weatherizing buildings, an assessment of the current conditions of the building must be done.

There are two current providers of weatherization assessments and retrofits in the Bronx that service CD6, the Northwest Bronx Community & Clergy Coalition, and Bronx Shepherds Restoration Coalition.

An emerging technology for assessing the weatherization needs of buildings is drone technology with thermal imaging. In collaboration with researchers from MIT’s Environmental Solutions Initiative, Pratt Institute students and faculty, MOM, the Mary Mitchell Center, and local residents, an assessment of 785 East 181st street was conducted on Monday, 4.29.2019 from 6-11 am using this technology. Pratt students and Professor Juan Camilo Osorio facilitated joint fieldwork to demonstrate the benefits of a proprietary algorithm created by the MIT-ESI for conducting weatherization assessments using drones outfitted with thermal imaging cameras. According to PhD Candidate Nourhan Bayomi, this technology...

Figure 3.10 Building Statistics
Source: Fundamentals Studio Spring 2019
was first tested in Cairo, Egypt, which makes the assessment the assessment of 785 East 181st Street, constituting the second time the technology has ever been used outside of the lab -- and for the first time in the United States.

The building is a pre-war, five story walk-up building built in 1913. Through the extensive efforts of their patriarch, Mr. Astin Jacobo, to save affordable housing in the area, the building was purchased by the Jacobo family from NYC HPD for $250 in 1992 through the NYC HPD Housing Development Fund Corporation (HDFC) program and converted to an affordable housing coop. As founder of the Crotona Community Coalition, Mr. Jacobo helped organize residents in their own defense against crime, arson and the loss of housing and drew the attention of government officials and investors to the neighborhood’s problems and possible solutions, especially involving housing. Due to Mr. Jacobo’s efforts, this building, along with many others in the area, were saved from bulldozers and brought up to code, providing a critical source of affordable housing where it is most needed.

The building is typical for the area. According to PLUTO data, there are 4,156 total buildings in CD6; 4,042 of those buildings are mid-rise buildings (categorized under PLUTO land uses 2 and 3). According to tenants, the building’s windows were recently replaced as a weatherization intervention.

The preliminary results of the thermal analysis by the MIT-ESI indicate areas of heat leakage from inside to outside that are very clear around the window frames, moisture accumulation in the building materials, especially in the upper floors (highlighted as cooler areas than the rest of the facades), missing or deteriorated insulation in the corners, and particularly in the third facade (See Figure 3.11 and 3.12). There will be an upcoming presentation to community members by MIT-ESI faculty to discuss the full results of the fieldwork.

There is a need to assess and weatherize other buildings typified by 785 East 181st Street from the perspectives of energy efficiency and public health impacts. In order to address the issue comprehensively, systemic and procedural issues at the root of the inefficiencies in weatherization processes and building performance must be studied. This type of investigation will directly inform and update the strategies to address general weatherization issues. This is particularly important in an area where low-middle income residents are investing to weatherize their buildings to protect against the most severe effects of heat waves in NYC, and may not be seeing the anticipated results.
of those investments.

Launch Initial Study
A systematic study performed in partnership with MIT’s Environmental Solutions Initiative and Pratt Institute using thermal drone technology could be conducted to better understand trends in the performance and weatherization needs of similar buildings in CD6. Pratt Institute could collaborate with Mothers on the Move to design a community-based planning process to engage CoOp boards and residents. Pratt would then carry out background research on individual buildings and existing conditions research on the neighborhoods to better inform the study. MIT ESI would then gather and analyze thermal data and collaborate with Pratt to disseminate the results among study participants. Drone technology enables the analysis of buildings in a short amount of time (relative to conventional hand-held tools), and a comprehensive study could be conducted relatively quickly. The initial study could focus specifically on HDFC CoOps in the area. Potential partners could also include NYC HPD, NYC EDC’s Retrofit Accelerator, as well as current weatherization providers in the area, like Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition and the Association for Energy Affordability.

Establish Drone Pilot Academy
This technology also presents an opportunity to train young people from CD6 to become drone operators -- a lucrative career opportunity. FAA licensed drone operators charge an average of $300 per hour for their services. This seems like a ripe opportunity for high paying career development, particularly for young people with an interest in remote controlled vehicles and/or video games. Drones are piloted with an interface similar to video gaming systems, and the operator uses a screen and joystick to pilot the craft.

Consequently, we propose that a drone pilot academy in CD6 that could train a new workforce to certify pilots from the community to perform the service of building weatherization assessments be created. According to the FAA's Part 107 regulations, drone pilots who profit from drone flights must pass a licensing examination. The cost for the examination is $150, and it can be completed at one of over 700 facilities in the U.S. in under two hours. The test covers a wide range of topics in aeronautics, radio communications, map and chart reading, weather, and drone performance, and between 15-20 hours of study are recommended. Results of the test are available on the FAA website between 48 and 72 hours after the examination, at which point the pilot can apply for an FAA Remote Pilot Certificate through the FAA’s Integrated Airman Certification and Rating Application (IACRA) system, and pass a TSA background check before
Foster the Creation of Green Jobs Cooperatives
A host of potential Green Jobs cooperatives could also follow, created in partnership with Green Worker Cooperatives and/or Bronx Cooperative Development Initiative (BCDI). Initially the drone pilot academy could be hosted at the MMYFC in partnership with Green Worker Cooperative, supported by resources from BCDI. A cadre of CD6 residents could be trained to conduct the retrofits of buildings as identified through the thermal drone imaging assessments. This could be done in conjunction with existing weatherization retrofit providers in the Bronx like Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition and Association for Energy Affordability.

Additionally, new solutions and technologies to address weatherization issues could emerge. It seems that some of the strategies currently implemented to address weatherization issues provide modest improvements in performance (such as window replacement), but significant gains could manifest through new measures and technologies. These could illustrate inefficiencies in the installation processes (either improper initial weatherization intervention installation, need for replacement, or inefficient technology), and could become another arena to develop and test new materials that could be prototyped in the Bronx. Mothers on the Move could partner with BCDI to create a cooperative that would identify new technologies for weatherization, manufacture these technologies in the CD6 IBZ, and train a workforce to install these technologies throughout CD6 and NYC. Further strategies to enhance local industry in the IBZ are outlined in Objective 4 below.

Explore New Initiatives
Further, Mothers on the Move could also partner with BCDI and local weatherization retrofit providers, like Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition and Association for Energy Affordability, to create a cooperative centered around drones to be hosted at the proposed Innovation Center, outlined in Objective 4 below. The success and growth of the proposed pilot academy would necessitate the need for service and maintenance of drones in the area. This could also be expanded to the manufacture of new drones in CD6, or the adequation of commercial models to perform thermal imaging and weatherization techniques.

Cooperatives from this community have the potential to create new strategies and technologies that would result in better weatherization for area residents, reducing energy costs, reducing environmental burdens and impacts, increasing local wealth (that would remain in the community), and support ongoing efforts to protect heat-related deaths. These new ventures will require incubation (technical and financial resources) in order to thrive; Objective 4 will describe potential strategies, using cannabis as an example.
BUILD LOCAL WEALTH AND JUSTICE
The final objective provides progressive platforms and innovative strategies for creating local wealth in CD 6. Per the client's request, the section focuses on key research findings of workforce development needs and the negative impacts of mass incarceration from the War on Drugs. This objective focuses on the implications of legalization of recreational marijuana in New York State. For equitable employment and marketing opportunities, suggested programs center on those disproportionately affected by the criminalization of cannabis. They provide a pathway to build sustainable job pipelines for minorities, women, and returning citizens. This framework is also flexible enough to incorporate other industries like resilient infrastructure and green jobs.

4.1 Launch Advocacy campaign for Just Cannabis Legalization

4.2 Advocate for creation of revised NYS and NYC Marijuana Fund

4.3 Create a women and minority-owned cannabis business incubator and cooperative

4.4 Create a CannaBronx: “Buy Bronx Label” to support Bronx Cannabis Businesses

4.5 Coordinate green manufacturing jobs leveraging the Bathgate IBZ
No other state in the US has achieved a just transition in marijuana decriminalization and legalization. Today there are legislation discussions at the federal, state and municipal levels across the country including the Marijuana Freedom of Opportunity Act at the U.S. Congress. Then there is the Marihuana Regulation and Taxation Act at the New York State level. Lastly, the NYC City Council resolution and policy recommendations by the NYC Mayor’s Task Force on Cannabis Legalization released by Mayor Bill De Blasio. Despite discussions at various levels, this studio’s research shows that a just pathway is not yet established to fully repair communities like CD 6 who have suffered immensely from the War on Drugs.

Now is a pivotal time and CD6 must be a part of the NYS legalization conversation. As a state that has not yet legalized recreational cannabis, New York has the opportunity to set expectations for the remaining states for just and fair cannabis legalization policy. To make this possible, many low-income communities and communities of color along with the organizations working in and with these communities, like Mothers on the Move, must be at the table during these discussions and important decisions.

**WAR ON DRUGS**

Nationally, in 2011 there were more arrests for marijuana possession than for all violent crimes put together. According to the Drug Policy Alliance, the US spends over $47 billion annually on the War on Drugs which includes associated costs like arrests and incarceration. In New York City, the New York Police Department (NYPD) made more than 8.2 million marijuana arrests from 2001 to 2010 and nearly nine in ten were for possession only.\(^1\)

Before Mayor Rudy Giuliani’s administration (1994 to 2001) the NYPD typically made fewer than 800 marijuana related arrests per year. Arrests increased dramatically after 1994, by the time Mayor Michael Bloomberg was in office in 2010, the NYPD made more than 59,000 marijuana related arrests.\(^2\)

Even if a person never goes to prison, Marijuana convictions can have lifelong consequences for getting jobs, education, and immigration status.

In Bronx CD 6, out of 2,457 crimes reported from January through June 2018, Black arrests account for 41%, followed by White Hispanic at 38% of total arrests. The most common criminal offenses in this area are Assault and Related and Dangerous Drugs. In terms of adult incarceration rates, 1,236...
per 100,000 persons aged 18 and up are incarcerated making it the fifth highest level of incarcerated adults per community district in New York City, after Brownsville, Hunts Point, Mott Haven and Central Harlem, respectively. The NYC Mayor’s Task Force on Cannabis Legalization found that in CD 6, 7.37% of all arrests from 2010-2017 were for marijuana-related offenses.

Even though holding small quantities of marijuana is no longer grounds for arrest, police still issue citations at a higher rate in Black and Latino neighborhoods. According to the American Civil Liberties Union, national marijuana use is roughly equal among blacks and whites, yet blacks are 3.73 times as likely to be arrested for marijuana possession. In some cases those convicted for marijuana drug offenses have served as much as 40 to 60 years in prison.

**MARIJUANA LEGALIZATION AND MARKET**

Despite the striking rates of enforcement there are 33 states which permit medical use, including New York and District of Columbia. There are 10 states which have fully legalized recreational use. This is an important distinction because in a state like New York the types of severe debilitating or life threatening conditions that are eligible for medical cannabis are the likes of terminal cancer, Parkinson’s, and PTSD that is prescribed by specific practitioners registered with the statewide marijuana program, making it hard to access without documentation.

Nationally, estimates show that the tax revenue that cannabis legalization would yield $58 billion annually (if taxed at rates comparable to those on alcohol and tobacco). States like Colorado, which legalized medical and recreational marijuana operations in 2014, have reported collecting a windfall of nearly $50 billion alone in tax revenue from “above ground” operations.

Cannabis production is now considered one of the fastest growing economies, and with this "green rush" comes venture capitalists who migrate to legalized states to begin multi-billion dollar operations. This provides even more barriers to the marginalized communities that were arrested during the war on drugs for selling low levels of marijuana. Due to their felon status, they are prohibited from participating in a lucrative economy like opening a dispensary or creating their own recreational cannabis products.

There is an exceedingly new information to analyze and research on this topic with updated data and policies emerging nearly everyday. In addition to the following series of recommendations, this studio recommends partnering with organizations like the Center for Urban Pedagogy to create a full length policy guide for communities seeking to equip themselves in preparation for this policy change and to be at the forefront of a just legalization and societal cultural shift.
4.1 Launch an advocacy campaign for Just Cannabis Legalization

Simple, Low cost

Current Federal, New York State, and New York City marijuana legalization policy proposals are not sufficient and do not consider the necessary priorities that must be included to ensure just cannabis legalization. Policy relating to the legalization, commercialization or regulation of marijuana must include provisions to reinvest revenue in low-income and communities of color who have paid the highest price of the War on Drugs.

This recommendation calls for MOM to advocate and organize around the federal, state and city proposals and ignite a new campaign for Just Cannabis Legalization. A brief summary, contributions and shortfalls of each government proposal are summarized in the following paragraphs. The six key policy priorities that this studio recommends should be included in the Just Cannabis Legalization campaign are:

1. Automatic Expungement
2. Keeping Money Local
3. Limiting Corporate Power
4. Provide a Sustainable Workforce
5. Applying Zoning Immunity
6. Funding for Education and Public Health

Federal: Marijuana Freedom of Opportunity Act

The Marijuana Freedom and Opportunity Act is a federal bill that has been introduced in the Senate by two of New York’s legislators, Senator Chuck Schumer and House Representative Hakeem Jeffries. This bill addresses federally decriminalizing marijuana and the psychoactive element, tetrahydrocannabinols, and broadly sets out to level the “economic playing field”. The bill proposes awarding grants to States and local governments to administer and expand expungement and sealing programs, for convictions of possession of marijuana, “with not less than 50% of those funds being directed to cover the cost of public defenders or legal aid providers”. The Marijuana State Opportunity Trust Fund would also be instituted under this act, and establish a 10% state tax of total revenue from marijuana sales be directed to the proposed fund. The legislation also creates a loan program for women and “socially and economically disadvantaged individuals” through the Small Businesses Administration.

Although covering the costs of legal fees for expungement programs is necessary, it is not required for expungement to be automatic as this recommendation further suggests. Additionally, while a required 10% of total revenue from state taxed marijuana will be directed to the proposed funds, it is still unclear how the profits will actually benefit individuals most adversely impacted by the criminalization of marijuana, or if any of those funds will be directed to these communities at all. The bill is equally vague in outlining who is gaining oversight over the profits, and if transparency mechanisms will be mandated to ensure ample community control over the release of said funds. In regards to access to loans, while stimulating minority-and women-owned business enterprise (MWBE) is necessary, only providing loans are not
sufficient. Small companies require much more than a small loan to stay afloat. To sustain new business, programs in training, affordable rent, administrative and legal services must be provided in order for new companies to effectively compete in the market. Strategies to implement these types of services will be discussed in the following Recommendations 4.2 (Advocate for the creation of a revised NYS and NYC Marijuana Fund) and 4.3 (Create a women and minority-owned cannabis business incubator and cooperative).

**State : Marijuana Regulation and Taxation Act (MRTA)**

Currently the NYS legislation intends to regulate, control, and tax “marihuana” in a manner similar to alcohol and generate millions of dollars in new revenue.¹³ The act includes provisions to end the racially disparate impact of existing laws and create new industries and increase employment in this new sector. The act is in committee at the New York State Senate as of this writing (June 2019).

The MRTA also establishes a fund called the “NYC Marihuana Revenue Fund”, in which 50% of state revenue ¹⁴ is allocated to the community grants reinvestment fund. The disbursement of the community grants would be administered by an executive steering committee comprised of members from various NYS health and child services agencies, as well as the appointment two representatives from community based organizations (CBOs).¹⁵ Albeit this is a step forward, there is still no guarantee the appointed CBO members will be representative of the experience of an individual incarcerated by the War on Drugs, or genuinely from low income communities and communities of color.

**City : Mayor’s Task Force on Cannabis Legalization**

Mayor Bill de Blasio convened a task force to investigate the implications of cannabis legalization in which the findings were issued in a report in December 2018. The report outlined the following considerations: protection of health and safety, redress of impacts of past criminalization, and promotion of economic opportunities to diverse participants, and ample local government control.¹⁶ Three of these principles are also included in this recommendation for a Just Cannabis Campaign, which will be discussed shortly.

The City is considering special banking services and economic development programs for MWBE’s. The report discusses working in partnership with nonprofit and community development organizations to target some of its existing small business support programs i.e. access to capital financing, “starting a business” courses, and similar trainings and offerings to help equity program applicants obtain low volume production and distribution licenses.¹⁷ Even though the City emphasizes the need to level the playing field for minority- and women-owned LLCs and cooperatives, there is not a defined mechanism outlined to fully train potential businesses and provide them with the technical and financial resources required for them to compete. This studio takes the NYS guidance for an incubator and recommends several improvements to its function in Recommendation 4.3 (Create a women and minority-owned cannabis business incubator and cooperative). Additionally, the NYC Mayor’s Task Force places total authority of land use and zoning with for local government, which in New York City is known to override the community’s and residents’ voice in favor of rapid development.

**Advocacy campaign for Just Cannabis Legalization**

In addition to the legislative proposals aforementioned, the successes and failures of other states were studied for this recommendation in order to put forth key priorities and guiding principles to best inform Mother’s on the Move for the quickly ascending fight towards a just cannabis legalization. The previous proposals discussed do require support, however they do not go far enough in guaranteeing the participation and oversight from the real communities that have been discriminated against by policy and police enforcement. This studio urges Mothers on the Move and their affiliates to ensure that equitable legalization and commercialization of marijuana will benefit all members of the New York City community, but especially those who are most severely impacted in the Bronx by the War on Drugs.

The following guidelines were carefully curated from multiple community-based coalitions, national governing bodies and legalized state policy, analyzed and strengthened. CD 6 and the greater Bronx must have representation in policy decisions in order to pursue any equitable change in regards to fair use programs. The recommended Key Policy Improvements to a Just Cannabis Legalization are:

1. **Automatic Expungement**
   - Automatically expunge non-violent marijuana convictions.
   - Expand re-entry programs to persons impacted by the War on Drugs

2. **Keep Money Local**
   - Additional City sales tax goes to participatory budgeting process
   - Mandate corporate revenues go directly to
locally dispersed funds
• Public funds to support Bronx MWBE and returning citizens

3. Limit Corporate Power
• Limit seed-to-sale licenses for large corporations
• Prioritize permits/licenses especially for persons and women of color

4. Sustainable Workforce
• 100% renewable energy for indoor cultivation or offer offset energy options
• Provide job training, right to unionize, and workers protections

5. Zoning Immunity
• Protect equal opportunity to sell and farm, as well as fair share
• Provisions to prevent local planning boards from “zoning out”

6. Education & Public Health
• Fund community-based medical workshops and abuse programs
• Expand proposed legislation to include public health research from NYC Dept. of Health and Mental Hygiene

Case Studies and Resources: See Appendix 4.1

Figure 4.4 Key Policy Improvements Towards Just Cannabis Legalization
Source: Fundamentals Studio Spring 2019
4.20 Advocate for the creation of a revised NYS Marijuana Fund

In NYC between 2015-2018, black people were arrested on low-level marijuana charges at eight times the rate of white, non-Hispanic people and Hispanic people were arrested at five times the rate of white people.¹⁸

Recommendation 4.2 works to establish a non-discretionary reparatory mechanism for communities, like CD6, that were disproportionately affected by the War on Drugs. The studio recommends that MOM advocate for a revised NYS Marijuana Revenue Fund and that NYC establish its own fund that guarantees taxes earned (or a portion of the taxes earned) from the cannabis market will be used towards building a stronger and healthier future for local communities whose members have been disproportionately affected by the War on Drugs. This recommendation advocates for a set portion of the state and city tax rate to go towards the fund(s), the addition of a mandated 10% corporate marijuana revenue tax, the use of the funds be towards the communities and individuals most affected by the War on Drugs, and that oversight of funds is given to local community members and organizations through mechanisms such as the participatory budgeting process.

The Office of the NYC Comptroller identified the neighborhoods in New York City between 2010 and 2017 that experienced the highest rates of marijuana-related arrests (CD6 being in the top 6). The analysis shows that disparities in marijuana enforcement exist across not only race and ethnicity, but also socioeconomic lines, as the neighborhoods with the highest arrest rates tend to be lower income, have higher unemployment, lower credit scores, and lower rates of home ownership. In fact, seven of the 10 lowest-income neighborhoods in the city, based on median household income, fall among the top 10 for marijuana-related arrest rates and account for more than one-third (34.3%) of all such arrests. The 10 highest-income neighborhoods account for only one-tenth (11%) of all arrests.¹⁹

It is for this disparity alone that MOM should consider advocating for the establishment of a NYC Marijuana Fund and a 10% corporate marijuana revenue tax, in addition to the already proposed NYS Marijuana Fund.

Set Tax Rates and Law Establishing Community Funds

States that have already legalized marijuana vary significantly in tax rates and tax approaches. As seen in Figure 4.6, states apply both local and state taxes as well as producer and sales taxes. Taxing marijuana, like other luxury items, is a delicate balance. If the rate is too low, revenue opportunities may be lost. However, if it is set too high, states risk driving users towards the cheaper, black market. Current legislation does not set New York marijuana tax rates. For the purposes of this report, let’s consider the simple proposal set by the NYC Comptroller as seen in Figure 4.7. This sets a 10% state excise tax and a 25% city excise tax. With these tax rates, it is estimated that New York State would earn $435.7 million and NYC would earn $336.4 million annually.²⁰

As mentioned in Recommendation 4.1, the current NYS legalization legislation proposes a NYS Marijuana Revenue Fund which allocates 50% of tax revenue towards a newly created Community Grants Reinvestment Fund. Using the figures discussed in the previous paragraph, this would mean close to $218 million
dollars would be earned for this fund.

While the NYS Community Grants Reinvestment Fund must be used statewide, tax revenues from NYC taxes amounting to $334.4 million would be contained to use within the city. The current Mayor's Task Force on Cannabis Legalization prioritizes impacts of past criminalization and the promotion of economic opportunities to diverse participants, however, it does not set a mechanism like the NYS Community Grants Reinvestment Fund in to law that would ensure local communities disproportionately affected by past criminalization will have benefit and have a voice in the process. The studio recommends that MOM consider advocating for such a fund to be set in NYC to ensure local community control over city tax revenues. Additionally, the NYC Marijuana Fund could combine funds allocated from the NYS Community Grants Reinvestment Fund to encourage greater coordination within the city on efforts to support formerly incarcerated individuals and the NYC communities they were removed from due to the War on Drugs.

In addition, the NYC Marijuana Fund should contain a diversity of funding streams that would combine public funds with private contributions. On the public side this would include a mandated 10% Corporate Tax added to the 25% city excise tax. On the private side this would include investments and donations to just legalization programs, as well as the funding mechanism described in the next Recommendation 4.3 which will create an exclusive “Buy Local” Bronx Cannabis label and would further support the greater community development process.

**Invest Tax Revenue in Local Communities Disproportionately Affected by War on Drugs**

Just as the tax rates vary in other legalized states, so does the use of marijuana tax revenues. In Colorado revenue is primarily used for public school construction and in Washington state the revenue has primarily been used to fund Medicaid. While the general trend is to use tax revenues for public goods, NYC and NYS should consider the historical impact and negative implications of marijuana arrests on low income communities and communities of color and ensure that these funds are used towards wealth building and justice for these communities.

The proposed NYS Community Grants Reinvestment Fund offers a model for the types of services marijuana tax revenue should support, which include job placement, adult education, mental health treatment, substance abuse treatment, and legal assistance related to reentry. The funds should go to support communities in their efforts and initiatives to sustain local projects in communities most hit by the war on drugs. Programs can provide education and training scholarships for the children of formerly incarcerated who were not able to save money or assist their children while they were detained and unable to work, and also support returning citizens in their reintegration process with supportive services, health care, and job training. The proposed fund would also financially support the Minority/Women Cannabis Incubator and Cooperative which will be expanded on in Recommendation 4.3 to grow and support local cannabis business development. See Figure 4.5 for more information on how the funds would be used.

The current Mayor’s Task Force for Marijuana Legalization leaves significant room for interpretation as to how the city’s tax revenues will be used. According to the report, “New York City tax revenues should be deposited and directed through the city. The City will pursue legislative authority to allocate cannabis tax revenues in the City’s general fund...” and goes on further to say that “tax revenues collected at the State level and allocated for spending in local communities be fairly distributed among local governments....” In other words, the tax revenues collected at the city level will be left under the discretion of the Mayor to decide how they will be spent and could include anything from education to parks to MTA. However, it is imperative that these funds be specified for community reinvestment in to the people and neighborhoods impacted by the War on Drugs.

**Ensure Oversight of NYC and NYS Marijuana Funds Include Members of Impacted Communities**

Residents of the local communities most affected by the War on Drugs, representatives of community-based organizations working within these...
communities, and individuals formerly incarcerated due to marijuana convictions should be at the table to provide direct community oversight of the use of these funds.

The current NYS legislation requires the appointment of two representatives from community-based organizations to represent the entire state. The proposal lacks clarity on which low income communities and communities of color would be represented, the process in appointing or electing the individuals, or transparency on their interests as they will be an important decision-making body and how much power they yield is critical to the decision making process.

The studio recommends that MOM advocate that all funds for the purposes of marijuana legalizations are overseen with the direct participation from the communities and individuals most negatively impacted by the War on Drugs. Additionally, the NYC Marijuana Fund can be utilized by the already established city-wide participatory budgeting process that has shown great success in allowing residents to decide how city money is spent in their neighborhoods.23 The studio also recommends that funds be distributed locally through credit unions (like the community credit union proposed in Recommendation 1.1) in order to continue the growth of local wealth.

Finally, and most importantly, all stipulations must be written in to policy to ensure the legitimacy and longevity of planning and the associated just transition of cannabis.

**Steps to Implementation:**

MOM could consider working with NY Renews as an advisor. Their success with the Climate and Community Protection act is a best practice for building social justice components in to law and may provide opportunities to incorporate here. Additionally, MOM could build upon its existing partnership with CUNY Law School and build other relationships with civil rights lawyers, like the Urban Justice Center, to consult on the legality of the proposed funding mechanisms to guarantee money from cannabis is recirculated back into CD 6.

**Case Studies and Resources:** See Appendix 4.2

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**Current Taxes on Adult-Use Marijuana Sales, by State**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Year of adult-use Legalization</th>
<th>Excise/Producer Tax</th>
<th>Sales/Retail Excise Tax</th>
<th>State Sales Tax</th>
<th>Local Sales Tax</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>up to 8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaska</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>$50/oz.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td></td>
<td>up to 3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>Leaves: $2.25/oz.</td>
<td>Flowers: $9.25/oz.</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>7-10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>10.75%</td>
<td>6.25%</td>
<td>up to 3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 4.6 Current Taxes on Adult-Use Marijuana Sales, by State*


**Estimated Tax Revenues from Adult-Use Marijuana Sales**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Market Size</th>
<th>Excise Tax</th>
<th>Sales Tax</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New York State</td>
<td>$3,111</td>
<td>$311.2</td>
<td>$124.5</td>
<td>$435.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York City</td>
<td>$1,140</td>
<td>$285.1</td>
<td>$51.3</td>
<td>$336.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 4.6 Estimated Tax Revenues from Adult-Use Marijuana Sales*


NOTE: 10% State excise tax; 25% City excise tax.
4.3 Create a women and minority-owned cannabis business incubator and cooperative

Mid term  $  Medium cost

Over 92% of CD 6 residents are people of color. Currently, women and minorities own a small proportion of cannabis businesses. Women hold less than 25% of leadership positions and only 19% of cannabis-based businesses are owned by a person of color.  

Bronx CD 6 has a historically strong small business sector with over 2,200 registered small businesses. With their entrepreneurial spirit, CD 6 residents have the opportunity to utilize this asset to strengthen the economic vitality of their community through further business development. The Cannabis Business Incubator and Cooperative would provide training and support for employment and ownership opportunities in the cannabis industry, specifically for MWBEs in CD 6 and the surrounding area. The purpose of the program is to open doors to the cannabis industry by providing technical assistance, access to capital, up-to-code space, expedition of licenses, and mentorship resources for new small companies to compete.

In the Incubator, individuals targeted by the War on Drugs, individuals from ethnically diverse communities, or those living below the poverty line would be able to access free training, business development programming, and affordable rental space to support potential cannabis services, and manufacturing ventures. The incubator would offer the following services:

• Provide financial, technical and legal assistance, business development, leadership development, networking opportunities, media and marketing, and skills training

• Support for new cannabis businesses and growers to access necessary licenses/permits, identify lawful and up-to-code space for operations, and gain access to necessary start-up capital

• Access to subsidized office or retail space in the new housing developments in relation to Recommendations 1.2 and 1.4- Community Land Trust. Co-locating community facilities on first floor would provide FAR (floor-area-ratio) bonus in terms of zoning regulations

Currently proposed NYS legislation (MRTA) and the Mayor’s Task Force for Cannabis Legalization creates loan programs for MWBEs entering the cannabis industry, however, these programs must be efficient and supportive of emerging business development, especially to individuals who may have previously sold cannabis illegally and were incarcerated for it. It is imperative that equitable licensing for Bronx residents to access this complex, yet, lucrative industry considering large sectors including the beverage, health and wellness are ready to spring into action at a moments notice. Specifically, women-owned businesses can have a critical role in opening new markets for cannabis products.
• Mentorship and networking opportunities; including connections to other new and expanding markets (like the booming health and wellness industry that is largely driven by women-owned businesses)

Additionally, the Cannabis Business Incubator would support the formation of a worker-owned cannabis cooperative that would allow small cannabis businesses to work together and support one another collectively. The Community Credit Union (Recommendation 1.1) will play a crucial role in helping the cooperative and business members access the capital they need to level the playing field against “Big Weed”.

The cooperative, as well as other small cannabis Bronx-specific businesses, would have the opportunity to opt in to the use of the proposed “Buy Local” Bronx (recommendation 4.4 “CannaBronx”). The CannaBronx label, which will be discussed in full in following section, will be a separate entity funded under The NYS Fund (Recommendation 4.2). The exclusive label can be used as a marketing tool to provide native Bronx cannabis companies a collective identity, attracting consumers and potential donors looking to support local entrepreneurs, women- and minority- owned businesses, and a high-value added products.

**Steps to Implementation:**

MOM can begin the following necessary steps towards implementation of an incubator:

1. Identify stakeholders in community who have an interest to lead the creation of the Cannabis Incubator.

2. Set vision, roles and responsibilities, and organizational model (individual class offerings, cohort model, online classes), budget, and any other key aspects for the group.

3. Identify funding mechanism to support early and long-term stages of group including startup funds line Bronx Cooperative Development Initiative (BCDI), BronXchange, and NYS Marijuana Fund.

4. Long-term funding would be supported by The NYS Marijuana Fund (Recommendation 4.2)

5. Identify space for activities and education, potentially the Mary Mitchell Center for initial planning and course offerings

6. Identify key workshop and class themes, teachers and experts to lead sessions. Reach out to city-wide partners for support such as the Center for Family Life (Sunset Park) or Bronx Cooperative Development Initiative (BCDI).

7. Programming and workshops on marketing, business development, licensing, financial literacy, professional development.

8. Recruit and market community member participants, businesses, entrepreneurs and supporters by establishing a network.

9. Continue to build programming options, events, convenings, and other projects as appropriate to meet the needs of the community and the local cannabis market.

**Case Studies and Resources:** See Appendix 4.3
Create CannaBronx: “Buy Bronx Label” to support Bronx Cannabis businesses

Mid term $ Medium cost

The creation of a “Buy Bronx Label”- aptly named “CannaBronx” for illustrative purposes is a proposed seal to promote and market local products of Bronx cannabis businesses and cooperatives. The label would encourage consumer support of local Bronx, high-value added cannabis businesses.

Small cannabis businesses and cooperatives would have the opportunity to opt in to the use of the CannaBronx label. The CannaBronx label is a marketing tool to provide Bronx cannabis businesses a collective identity that will attract consumers and potential donors looking to support Bronx businesses, women and minority owned enterprise, and access to a high-quality and value-added product.

The exclusive “CannaBronx” label would be facilitated by the staff of the Cannabis Business Incubator and Cooperative in Recommendation 4.3. This badge of honor has the potential to drum up buzz and promote consumer support for those willing to pay a higher price-point, and to participate in the overall just transition of the legalization of marijuana. This studio recommends having dedicated staff to manage the label to create eligibility and guidelines for members of the collective. The label would be a fundraising tool for the NYS Fund (Recommendation 4.2), as another stream of revenue, to support the growth of local cannabis businesses.

**Steps to Implementation:**

MOM can facilitate this label by partnering with local artists and entrepreneurs to convene on design, label qualifications and price points or member fees. Eventually this label could be managed by the incubator staff for efficiency and capturing new business.

**Case Studies and Resources:** See Appendix 4.4
4.5

Coordinate green manufacturing jobs leveraging the Bathgate IBZ

Mid term $ Medium cost

Manufacturing and industrial jobs account for 15% of New York City’s private sector workforce and have been a critical pathway to the middle class for generations.²⁷

The average salary for an industrial sector job in the city is $60,248²⁸ and people of color makeup over 80% of New York City’s industrial workforce. Manufacturing is an important industry of opportunity in providing jobs with decent pay and benefits to people with less than a college degree. For non-college educated workers, the average wage in manufacturing is 10% higher than in non-manufacturing jobs.²⁹ New York City’s core industrial areas where the bulk of the city’s 530,000 manufacturing and industrial jobs are located are under threat by skyrocketing rents, aging infrastructure, and the encroachment of new hotels, storage facilities, and other retail, residential, and commercial uses. In 2011 Mayor Bloomberg delegated 16 Industrial Business Zones including designating three in the Bronx.

As seen in Figure 4.10, the Bathgate IBZ encompasses approximately five blocks within CD 6, bordered by E. Tremont to the north and the Cross Bronx Expressway to the south, Anthony Avenue to the west and Washington Avenue to the east. This area is intended to preserve manufacturing and build a stronger and more sustainable future for the manufacturing sector. New York City’s IBZ’s also enjoy support in industrial development infrastructure and targeted tax breaks, as well as dedicated service providers to help private companies stay afloat.

Steps to Implementation:

This recommendation is intended to be the connecting piece to ensure previous

Recommendations 2.1 (Resilient Communications), 3.2, 3.3, 3.4 (Clean Energy) and 4.3, 4.4, and 4.5 (Cannabis Incubator, CannaBronx Label and Green Jobs) provide a community-led structure guaranteeing economic development will produce local wealth, as illustrated in figure 4.11. By providing resources and matching them with infrastructure

Figure 4.10 Bronx CD6 Commercial and Industrial Zones
Source: NYC Department of Planning (2019) Land Use and Zoning

Recommendations 2.1 (Resilient Communications), 3.2, 3.3, 3.4 (Clean Energy) and 4.3, 4.4, and 4.5 (Cannabis Incubator, CannaBronx Label and Green Jobs) provide a community-led structure guaranteeing economic development will produce local wealth, as illustrated in figure 4.11. By providing resources and matching them with infrastructure
and the protection of the Bathgate IBZ, all of these recommendations stand a real chance in generating clean energy, a strong social network, and workforce contingent for CD 6. All aspects which can lead to a sustainable future.

SoBRO is the Industrial Business Solutions Provider for all five of the Bronx's Industrial Business Zones, including Bathgate. They assist businesses by securing State tax credits under the Empire Zones Program and provide a wide range of services to companies. Those include real estate assistance, financing, business planning and support with Federal, State and City incentive programs.

This recommendation suggests that MOM and other community stakeholders take efforts to connect the already present local stakeholders to build stronger workforce development pipelines to manufacturing jobs, resilient infrastructure and cooperative incubators in the Bathgate IBZ. This requires coordination among previously mentioned recommendations along with community-based labor, training, education, business, and government leaders to ensure youth and adults are aware of and have access to proposed training programs. The resources and capacity for these programs already exists within CD 6. This work could focus on the following principles:

- In coordination with recommendations 2.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 4.3, 4.4, and 4.5 investment into skilled job training for green manufacturing jobs for residents:
  - Creation or pre-fabrication of solar panels
  - Drone technology with thermal imaging
  - Promote resilient WiFi hotspots
  - Promote the creation of Cannabis Business Incubator and Cooperative

- Job training and placement programs to help manufacturers find local workers and cultivate the right skills while creating pathways into jobs that pay family-supporting wages.

- Promote green worker cooperatives and union membership to foster local economy and workforce

- Encourage job training and reconnection programs for reentering citizens

To begin these efforts, MOM could consider holding a series of a town hall meetings focusing on sustainability and green worker co-ops with employer and manufacturer stakeholders to explore current connections or areas in need of realignment. These efforts can be in partnership or supported by the Bronx Cooperative Development Initiative (BCDI) and/or SoBRO as primary partners. MOM can consider working with outside organizations such as the Pratt Center for Community Development and the Urban Manufacturing Alliance for support and research in this process as well.

In addition, these groups can work to build a stronger relationship with the local workforce center, West Farms Workforce 1 or the NYC Small Business sponsored Apprentice NYC program as they have direct labor market data and relationships with local employers, making them a necessary asset to this project. It is also key that other community-based organizations specializing in childcare, transportation and career counseling continue to be a part of the conversation to provide the necessary wrap-around services. With this coordination, the quality of support will be enhanced to those seeking training but experiencing significant barriers.

After initial conversation and research is complete, it is imperative that the community build stronger pipelines from local high schools to trade programs, internships, apprenticeship programs and other youth workforce development programs that introduce residents to the option of well-paying manufacturing jobs at an earlier age. Pipelines to advanced manufacturing training programs at SUNY Occupational community college and other local public institutions of higher education would help to prepare young people for higher paying jobs for a shorter amount of time commitment, while learning trades that achieve a sustainable future.

Case Studies and Resources: See Appendix 4.5

2.1 Resilient Communications
3.2 + 3.3 + 3.4 Clean Energy
4.3 + 4.4 + 4.5 Green Jobs and Cannabis Cooperative

Figure 4.11 Elements for Just Sustainable Development with Studio Recommendations
Source: Fundamentals Studio Spring 2019
CONCLUSION
Mothers on the Move strives to represent the best aspects of its constituency, and works tirelessly to uplift the residents of Bronx Community District 6. The recommendations in this report intend to aid MOM and the Mary Mitchell Family and Youth Center with their efforts in working on behalf of their constituency, and attending to the community’s most pressing needs.

The Recommendations described in Objective 1 of this report were designed to promote financial stability and preserve housing affordability. Within this framework, promoting access and the implementation of community financial institutions like Community Development Credit Unions, lending circles, and municipal banks were discussed. Provided strategies to preserve housing affordability include supporting the creation of a community land trust, a mutual housing association, and partnerships with HDFCs. The final recommendation to establish a housing resource center would underscore these efforts, and create new housing on vacant land would effectively add affordable housing stock to the area.

Recommendations embedded under Objective 2 intend to build social cohesion through networking, art, and open space. This would include building upon existing vacant lots, community gardens and the power of its community based organizations to facilitate social cohesion as it relates to resiliency and gentrification. Creating a community WiFi network and surrounding programming can help bridge the digital divide and increase local employment and wealth. A dedicated youth arts coalition can bring together local arts organizations to promote local artists and provide meaningful programming as a vehicle towards creative careers for more residents of CD 6. Lastly, activating unused open spaces can provide community amenities, improve connectivity, and improve safety and public health.

Recommendations attached to Objective 3 would alleviate environmental and health burdens, and include strategies to increase access to fresh food via interventions with local retailers and the creation of a local food coop. Improving respiratory health through air quality monitoring and mitigation infrastructure was discussed, especially when considering the goal to improve community preparedness for emergency events. In terms of addressing heat vulnerability, it’s recommended that efforts be made to increase access to air conditioning for residents through the implementation of cooling centers, building interventions and weatherization. A study of building weatherization performance, and associated technology could also be a catalyst for the growth of new worker cooperatives and increased local wealth.
APPENDIX
Implementation Resources

1.1 Promote increased access to community financial institutions

Possible Partners:
- Inclusiv
- Mission Asset Fund (MAF)
- NYC Public Bank Coalition

Case Studies:
**Lower East Side People's Federal Credit Union**
Lower East Side People's Federal Credit Union is a non-profit financial cooperative organized in 1986 that promotes economic justice and opportunity in NYC neighborhoods. They are owned by their members and dedicated to providing high-quality financial services and community development investments in low income, immigrant and other underserved communities. LES People's FCU has served more than 30,000 people in neighborhoods such as the Lower East Side, Central Harlem, East Harlem, Port Richmond (SI), Jackson Heights and other places, and reinvested over $100 million in housing, business and consumer loans back into these communities.

**GLS Bank of Germany**
The GLS Bank was the first social-ecological bank in Germany, founded in 1974. GLS stands for "Gemeinschaftsbank für Leihen und Schenken", which translates to a "Bank-Cooperative for loans and donations". Those who bank with GLS know their money supports a variety of projects and businesses like organic farms, institutions for natural health, nursing homes, projects for the unemployed, health food stores, communal housing projects, sustainable businesses, as well as independent schools and kindergartens.

1.2 Advocate for the creation of community ownership models

Possible Partners:
- NYC Housing Preservation and Development's Neighborhood Pillars program provides low-interest loans and tax exemptions to nonprofits and mission driven organizations to acquire and rehabilitate unregulated or rent stabilized housing for low-to-moderate-income households.
- US Department of Housing and Urban Development provides the HOME Investment Partnerships Program to States in order to provide decent and affordable housing, particularly for low income residents.
- New York City Acquisition Fund LLC - Offers flexible bridge loans for vacant sites or occupied buildings, moderate rehabilitation to developers creating new or preserving existing affordable housing in the City
- University Neighborhood Housing Program and Fordham Bedford Housing Corporation - Works as a developer, community-based lender, and technical assistance provider to create and preserve affordable housing in Northwest Bronx
- HPD’s Tenant Interim Lease (TIL) - The Apartment Purchase Program helps to organize tenant associations in city-owned buildings to develop economically self-sufficient low income cooperatives where tenants maintain and manage the buildings they live in. It also provides training to tenants for building


Case Studies:
Cooper Square Community Land Trust
The Cooper Square Committee created a Community Land Trust (CLT) in 1991, along with a Mutual Housing
Association (MHA) to manage 303 units of multifamily housing and 23 commercial units in 19 buildings.
The CLT was made up of a board of ⅓ tenants and ⅔ community residents or public members. The MHA
worked with NYC’s Department of Housing Preservation and Development to establish this unique model
that separated ownership of the land from the ownership of the buildings, creating a system of checks and
balance between the CLT and MHA.

Lower East Side People’s Mutual Housing Association (LESPMHA)
The LESPMHA is a non-profit organization started in 1990. The association established a Memorandum
of Understanding (MOU) between Manhattan’s CB3 and the New York City’s Department of Housing
Preservation and Development in 1987. This MOU called for the creation of the Cross-Subsidy Program to
provide for housing development on the Lower East Side. The MHA used proceeds from the sale of vacant
land to private developers, to fund the development of 1000 units of low and moderate income housing
through the rehabilitation of city-owned buildings.

1.3 Advocate for the preservation of existing affordable housing stock

Possible Partners:
Potential partners for resource center might include the Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition
(NWBCCC), University Neighborhood Housing Program (UNHP), Fordham Bedford Housing Corporation
(FBHC) and Community Action for Safe Apartments (CASA).

The Legal Aid Society also provides legal experts to work with homeowners and assist them to address their
mortgage, lien and foreclosure issues, and help residents keep their homes. It also provides assistance to
enroll in STAR Program for senior and low-income homeowners to reduce property taxes.

Additionally, the NYC Tenant Support Unit, created by Mayor De Blasio, can provide assistance and referrals
to tenants facing eviction, landlord harassment and poor housing conditions. It also helps to connect the
tenants to other vital city services such as HomeBase and HRA Job Centers.

Case Studies:
Northwest Bronx Resource Center (NWBRC)
University Neighborhood Housing Program launched NWBRC with a collaborative effort of six established
non-profit organizations to provide free financial and affordable housing services. By partnering with
several agencies working in Bronx and citywide, UNHP helped over 1400 low-income Bronx residents file
their taxes for free and access other affordable housing programs.
1.4
Create new affordable housing on vacant /underutilized land

Possible Partners:
Senate Bill S1729, which establishes a right-of-first refusal in the state for federal public land to be transferred, has been introduced and is currently in committee.

Through support from coalitions and nonprofit endeavours, right-of-first refusal legislation has been passed elsewhere, such as in San Francisco and Washington DC, and some useful existing examples of affordable housing acts include:

- The Community Opportunity to Purchase Act and the Small Sites Program in San Francisco
- The Tenants Opportunity to Purchase Act in Washington DC

Case Studies:
Austin Habitat for Humanity
Interboro Community Land Trust

2.1
Create a digital community hub to improve local digital communication

Possible Partners:
The New America/Resilient Communities Digital Stewards Job Program and SoBRO IBZ Service Provider can be useful resources for this objective.

Financial Partners can include:
New America/Resilient Communities
The Citi Foundation Community Progress Makers Fund

Logistical Partners can include:
The Mozilla Hive Network
The Office of NYC Council Rafael Salamanca

Case Studies:
Free Hunts Point WiFi
Red Hook WiFi

There are two examples of community-supported WiFi in New York City that offer examples of what a network might look like in CD6. In Red Hook, the community WiFi was the project of the Red Hook Initiative and used hurricane Sandy as an opportunity to close the digital divide in their community. In Hunts Point, The Point CDC created a WiFi network that not only enabled more people to get online, but also one that would be resilient in times of emergency.
2.2 Coordinate Local Arts and Culture Programming through a Community Art Coalition

Possible Partners:
Building Beats: Provides DJ and music programs that teach entrepreneurial, leadership, and life skills to underserved youth (already present in various Bronx Public Schools).

Groundswell: Brings together artists, youth, and community organizations to use art as a tool for social change.

BRAC Fine Arts & Digital Media Classes: Each art class meets for two hours, once a week, for 10 weeks. All art supplies are provided. Choose subjects from ceramics, graffiti art-muraling, cartooning, printmaking, drawing, digital photography, digital animation and more.

Case Studies:
Arts East NY
Founded in 2009 by East New York resident Catherine Green and its mission is rooted in the idea that inspiring a community through Arts & Culture sets a sustainable pattern of resident-led development. Through community beautification, youth programs, and cross-sector initiatives AENY has a proven track record of bringing out the best in East New York.

2.3 Promote the expansion of the open space system and public programming through activation of underutilized spaces

Possible Partners:
Schoolyards to playgrounds - Training & technical support
NYC Parks - Play streets program - Volunteer training & support
NYC Parks - Mobile recreation van - Resource & equipment support

Living Lots can provide training and implementation support for this recommendation. In terms of funding, IOBY can potentially provide financial and funding support and and the National consortium of creative placemaking can facilitate additional training in organizing and marketing support.

People for bikes
Bike New York

Case Studies:
Jamestown Play Streets
Frank Norris Alley hosted the first Play Street event! A portion of the alley was closed during the school day allowing the students to 'extend' their play yard into the street. Redding Elementary School students were able to cross the street, draw, play soccer, hula hoop, jump rope, and have fun without worrying about cars whizzing by.

Civic Center Mobile Outreach Station
the Mobile Outreach Station is a fun engagement tool that enables people to look at the project area in a new way and offer the chance to learn about the project, offer feedback, and have a little fun.
3.1 Increase Access to Fresh Food

**Case Studies:**
**Park Slope Food Coop**
Park Slope Food Coop was founded in 1973 by a small group of neighbors who wanted to make healthy, affordable food available to everyone who wanted it. It currently has more than 16,000 members, most of whom work once every four weeks in exchange for a 20-40 percent savings on groceries. The coop accepts food stamps, and provides free childcare to children of coop members while their parent or guardian is working and/or shopping at the coop.

**Flatbush Food Cooperative**
Flatbush Food Cooperative is a full-line whole foods grocery store with a strong emphasis on organic products. The coop had secured a vacant 700 sqft. space in 1978, two years after it was established, and now it occupies a 6,300 sqft. retail space—a testament to the coop’s success over the years. This coop was one of many businesses that CAMBA’s Small Business Services program has helped get off the ground.

3.2 Install an air quality monitoring and advocate for mitigation infrastructure

**Possible Partners:**
Fordham University or Queens College  
Community Board 6  
NYC Dept. of Environmental Protection  
NYC Dept. of Health and Mental Hygiene

**Case Studies:**
PurpleAir

3.3 Improve community preparedness during an emergency event

**Possible Partners:**
NYC Emergency Management  
NYC Environmental Justice Alliance  
New York Renew  
GOLES, LES Ready!

**Case Studies:**
LES Ready!  
It is a coalition of community groups and institutions based on the Lower East Side that cooperatively coordinate response, resources, preparedness planning and training in response to Hurricane Sandy and other future disasters.
3.4
Address heat vulnerability in the community

**Possible Partners:**
NYS HEAP Program
NYC Emergency Management
MTA
NYC CoolRoofs
The Hope Program
Sustainable South Bronx
OnForce Solar
Clean Choice Energy
SoBro

4.1
Launch advocacy campaign for Just Cannabis Legalization

**Possible Partners:**
In addition to the suggested steps above, MOM can consider hosting erasure clinics and seeking partners like The Bronx Defenders in providing legal assistance with expungements and rights for CD 6’s residents. It is also recommended that MOM hire expert staff to advocate for the local implications of the inevitable policy changes surrounding the legalization of cannabis. By taking these steps towards fair policy, the Bronx has a real chance in becoming a hub for green jobs and long term employment opportunities supporting residents of CD 6. The following recommendation will go into greater detail on how to leverage the existing infrastructure and innovative strategies to ensure business development in cannabis can become a reality for the South Bronx community.
4.1
Launch advocacy campaign for Just Cannabis Legalization

Case Studies:
We Rise to Legalize Coalition
NYC based coalition calling for the just transition of marijuana legalization. Composed of a diverse group of faith, civil rights, and community leaders, plus grassroots advocates organizing around the emerging debate over the timeline for marijuana legalization in New York State.

NY Renews
NYC based coalition of more than 150 grassroots, state, and national organizations working on efforts to tackle climate change while protecting workers and lifting up communities. They helped to pass the NYS Climate and Community Protection Act which mandates an economy-wide shift to renewable energy and defines equity provisions. The provisions required that specific funding streams set aside 40% of funds for the use of frontline, environmental justice, and disadvantaged communities.

NY Small Farm Alliance of Cannabis Growers
It is on a mission to achieve regenerative restoration throughout New York's communities and seeks to create a thriving craft farm industry that employs women and people of color. They believe in building a workforce that mirrors the diversity of New York state through cannabis, and the money which will assuredly come from this crop must be used for more than just individual profit. Rather, it can be used to create jobs all across the state, with an emphasis on farming communities and communities that have suffered the most as a result of the criminalization of marijuana against people of color.

Minority Cannabis Business Association
National not for profit business league created specifically to progress the cannabis industry by increasing diversity. Their mission is to create equal access and economic empowerment for cannabis businesses and their patients and consumers, Together they design policy considerations, social programming and outreach initiatives to achieve equity for the communities most affected by the War on Drugs.

4.20
Advocate for the creation of a revised NYS Marijuana Fund

Case Studies:
NY Renews
New York coalition of more than 150 grassroots, state, and national organizations that advocate for and create progressive climate change policies. They are currently pursuing the Climate and Community Protection Act (CCPA) which, among many things, mandates that 40 percent of state funds from Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative Revenue, Clean Energy Fund proceeds, and other climate-related funding streams (including any future market-based mechanisms) prioritize direct benefits to low-income communities and communities of color who have been disproportionately affected by environmental injustices.24
4.3 Create a women and minority-owned cannabis business incubator and cooperative

Possible Partners:
Startup funds
Bronx Cooperative Development Initiative (BCDI), BronXchange, and Bronx Fund. BCDI’s BronXchange allows Bronx organizations to connect with socially impactful local businesses for start-up support and to build community wealth.

Long-term funding would be supported by the NYS Marijuana Fund, the fund established by the equitable legalization policy described in further detail in Recommendation 4.1 and 4.2.

Case Studies:
Growing Talent (California)
Growing Talent is an on demand Social Equity Incubator providing investment capital, compliance training, and licensing support to people of color disproportionately impacted by the war on drugs.

Supernova Women (NYC)
Organization formed by women of color with the goal of utilizing diverse talents to empower people to become self-sufficient shareholders in the cannabis economy. They provide education, training and skills development.

Good Tree (California)
Cannabis equity incubator that empowers social equity applicants with buying power, technology, and scale to compete in California’s cannabis market.

Emerald Grown (California)
Mutual benefit membership corporation composed of Cannabis Cooperative Associations. Emerald Grown serves as a community resource center supporting the formation and management of Cannabis Cooperative Associations. Emerald Grown works to market and brand cooperatively grown cannabis.

4.4 Create CannaBronx: “Buy Bronx Label” to support Bronx cannabis businesses

Possible Partners:
Startup funds
Bronx Cooperative Development Initiative (BCDI), BronXchange- allows Bronx organizations to connect with socially impactful local businesses for start-up support and to build community wealth. NY City Council and NYCEDC can also be additional resources.

Case Studies:
Made in NYC
An initiative of Pratt Center for Community Development, created to support the entrepreneurs and innovators creating high-quality, high-value products made locally by New Yorkers for local and global distribution.

New York Grown and Certified
NYS Certification program that ensures that producers meet certain criteria: produced in NYS, participate in food safety verification, and participate in environmental management program. The website provides an online portal to find NY Grown and Certified products.

Taste NY
It is the official buy-local, eat local program of NYS. The label is funded by NYS and promotes NYS growers, producers, and processors of agricultural products.
4.5
Coordinate green manufacturing jobs leveraging the Bathgate IBZ

Possible Partners:
SoBRO
Since 1972, SoBRO has dedicated its efforts to enhancing the quality of life in the South Bronx by strengthening businesses and creating innovative economic, housing, educational, and career development programs for youth and adults.

SNAP Employment & Training
US federal funding stream through NYC Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

NYC EDC
The City’s official economic development corporation, promoting economic growth in New York City, especially through real estate development. NYC EDC has shown support for IBZs and cooperative solar and renewable energy models throughout the City.

Made in NYC
Part of the Pratt Center for Community Development, supports over 1,200 of New York City’s entrepreneurs and manufacturers by providing tools to increase sales, create sustainable jobs and advance New York City’s vibrant and diverse economy. Made in NYC fosters entrepreneurial innovation within the five boroughs recognizing the value in high quality, locally made goods.

NYC Small Business Services
(SBS) supports economic potential and create economic security for all New Yorkers by connecting New Yorkers to good jobs, creating stronger businesses, and building thriving neighborhoods across the five boroughs.
Inventory of Vacant Land

Figure 1.18. BX CD6 Vacant land by owner

Source: NYC Open Data, Primary Land Use Tax Lot Output, 2018
Summary of Vacant Land

There are a total of 200 vacant lots in CD 6.
In total, there are 20.03 acres = 872,675 sq/ft of vacant lots in CD 6.

There are 6 different classifications based on ownership:

**C – City Ownership**
31 vacant lots are owned by the city, totaling 2.79 acres = 121,576 sq/ft
15.5 % of vacant lots are city owned
11 vacant lots are owned by DCAS, totaling .049 acres = 2,116 sq/ft
1 vacant lot is owned by the DEP (Department of Environmental Protection), totaling .036 acres = 1,579 sq/ft
1 vacant lot is owned by the FDNY (New York City Fire Department), totaling .09 acres = 3,929 sq/ft
4 vacant lots are owned by Housing Preservation, totaling .339 acres = 14,782 sq/ft
1 vacant lot is owned by Transit, totaling 1.25 acres = 54,423 sq/ft
1 vacant lot is owned by DOT (Department of Transportation), totaling .042 acres = 1,832 sq/ft
1 vacant lot is owned by NYC ACS, totaling .057 acres = 2,500 sq/ft
1 vacant lots are owned by Parks and Recreation, totaling .928 acres = 40,415 sq/ft

**M – Mixed City & Private Ownership**
1 vacant lot, totaling .04 acres = 1,768 sq/ft
0.5 % of vacant lots are mixed city & privately owned

**O – Other (Public Authority, State or Federal Ownership)**
1 vacant lot, totaling .046 acres = 2,000 sq/ft
0.5 % of vacant lots are classified as other

**P – Private Ownership**
107 vacant lots, totaling 10.24 acres = 445,964 sq/ft
53.5 % of vacant lots are privately owned

**X – Mixed.**
Fully tax exempt property that could be owned by the city, state, or federal government; a public authority; or a private institution
4 vacant lots, totaling 1.22 acres = 53,362 sq/ft
2% of vacant lots are fully tax exempt

**Blank – Unknown (Usually Private Ownership)**
56 vacant lots, totaling 5.69 acres = 248,005 sq/ft
28 % of vacant lots are classified under unknown ownership

There is a large quantity of 52 vacant lots concentrated in the West Farms neighborhood of CD 6. This neighborhood is comprised of census tracts: 60, 220, 359, 361 and 363.

**Private ownership** – 164 vacant lots, totaling 15.97 acres = 695,737 sq/ft
82% of vacant lots are privately owned

**Public ownership** – 36 vacant lots, totaling 4.06 acres = 176,938 sq/ft
18% of vacant lots are publically owned

**Fully tax exempt** – 4 vacant lots, totaling 1.22 acres = 53,362 sq/ft
2% of vacant lots are fully tax exempt

**Vacant lots located in residential districts** – 147 vacant lots, totaling 12.92 acres = 562,948 sq/ft
73.5 % of vacant lots are located in a residential district
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**Objective 1.0 Sources**


**Objective 2.0 Sources**


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**Objective 3.0 Sources**


Objective 4.0 Sources


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