

THE BUSHWICK INITIATIVE: YEAR ONE

Progress Report 2006



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
Michael R. Bloomberg, *Mayor*
Daniel L. Doctoroff, *Deputy Mayor*
for Economic Development and Rebuilding

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING PRESERVATION
AND DEVELOPMENT
Shaun Donovan, *Commissioner*
www.nyc.gov/hpd

City of New York
Department of Housing Preservation
and Development 2006

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
NEW YORK, NY 10007



Neighborhood development relies on the involvement of all members of the community-- business leaders, community-based organizations, government, and most of all, neighborhood residents. One of my administration's innovative strategies is to support neighborhood development through creative collaborations between the public and private sectors. The Bushwick Initiative is celebrating its one-year anniversary, and its achievements demonstrate the transformational power of these partnerships. This project, due to the joint efforts of Assemblyman Vito Lopez, City agencies, non-profit organizations, and community members, has effected positive change in a very short time. Illegal drug activity has been reduced, a sizeable lead abatement project has been completed in sixty-four buildings, and the business community of Bushwick, with the help of the City, is coming together to revive the commercial life of this neighborhood.

I would like to thank Assemblyman Vito Lopez for his assistance with this project, and single out HPD for their leadership and hard work. And I would like to thank the City Council for funding one of the partners, Ridgewood Bushwick Senior Citizen's Council, for this worthwhile program. The Initiative shows how government, working hand-in-hand with community leaders and residents, can make a difference in preserving affordable and safe housing. And this year the project will contain new efforts to improve the quality of life in the neighborhood--a job training program that will be run by the Ridgewood Bushwick Senior Citizens Council, a program to attract more businesses to the community, and an expansion of the anti-predatory lending initiative.

I am proud of the many accomplishments of the Bushwick Initiative thus far and look forward to next year's successes.

MICHAEL R. BLOOMBERG



VITO J. LOPEZ
53rd Assembly District
Kings County

THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

CHAIRMAN
Housing

COMMITTEES
Rules
Commerce, Industry & Economic Development
Social Services

Subcommittee on Mitchell-Lama
Subcommittee on Problems of Elderly Minority
Subcommittee on Affordable Housing



A year ago, my office, in partnership with City agencies, non-profit entities, building owners and residents began the Bushwick Initiative with the aim of improving the lives of many people in my district. During the past year, this innovative project has accomplished several key undertakings.

The New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development worked with the Ridgewood Bushwick Senior Citizens Council and building owners to better the housing conditions of many Bushwick residents. The 83rd Precinct and the Narcotics Control Unit collaborated to make the target area of the Bushwick Initiative a safer place to live. The Department of Health helped to educate Bushwick residents about different health issues such as asthma and lead poisoning. And the Ridgewood Bushwick Senior Citizens Council partnered with the Department of Small Business Services and HPD to start the process of commercial revitalization on Wyckoff and Knickerbocker Avenues.

I am proud of the work that this initiative has achieved to improve the lives of Bushwick residents and I look forward to its future activities in the coming year. It is my hope that the Bushwick Initiative will be an exemplary demonstration of community preservation for others to follow.

VITO J. LOPEZ



SHAUN DONOVAN
Commissioner



City Of New York
DEPARTMENT OF
HOUSING PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT
100 GOLD STREET, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10038

On February 10, 2005, Mayor Bloomberg announced the Bushwick Initiative, a two-year, multi-sector collaboration between the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) and the Ridgewood Bushwick Senior Citizen's Council (RBSCC), the Office of Assemblyman Vito Lopez, the New York City Police Department (NYPD), the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), the New York City Department of Small Business Services (SBS), local non-profit organizations, building owners, and community residents. The goal of this innovative project was to address the housing concerns of residents living in the 23-block area neighboring the Maria Hernandez Park, using many of the tools for preservation of homes and neighborhood development available to HPD and its partners.

However, the significance of this cooperative effort may reach beyond Bushwick. As we look forward to the future, preservation remains a keystone of the Mayor's New Ten-Year Housing Marketplace plan. We are now pledging to create and preserve 165,000 units of affordable housing. This \$7.5 billion plan is the largest municipal affordable housing plan in the nation's history and will provide affordable homes for 500,000 New Yorkers by 2013. In order to house New York City's future population, we need to explore new and intensive approaches to preservation as part of neighborhood development. We hope that the Bushwick Initiative, which will be completed next year, will serve as a possible model for future multi-agency housing preservation efforts.

HPD began this cooperative endeavor by conducting a comprehensive survey of every building and lot in the target area - 955 sites in total were visited. Our unprecedented door-to-door outreach has provided us with a solid framework for our work. As a consequence, the number of residential buildings rated in poor condition in the target area has decreased by over 50% in the first year of the initiative. Additionally, lead hazards, which threaten the health and well-being of young children, were addressed through a grant program jointly created by HPD and DOHMH, who together allocated \$750,000 to pay for the cost of lead abatement work in 64 buildings. Our multi-faceted undertaking has a variety of other components, including the effective partnership between HPD's Narcotics Control Unit (NCU) and the NYPD's 83rd Precinct and Narcotics Division: since we began, 63% of the buildings that NCU determined had drug-dealing activity are now free from drug sale occurrences. And the agenda for 2006 encompasses new elements, such as a plan with our partner agency SBS to generate new businesses in the area by utilizing currently vacant commercial space.

All of these efforts are more fully discussed in this report. At HPD we recognize that your home is more than simply four walls – it is also the block, street, and community where you live. An integral part of HPD's mission is to revitalize communities. That is the goal that HPD and its partners will continue to strive towards in the Bushwick Initiative.

SHAUN DONOVAN

THE BUSHWICK INITIATIVE TARGET AREA



Data Source: City of New York. Department of City Planning COGIS r.03c, LION r.04a, HPD
 City of New York. HPD. Preservation Planning and Analysis Unit.

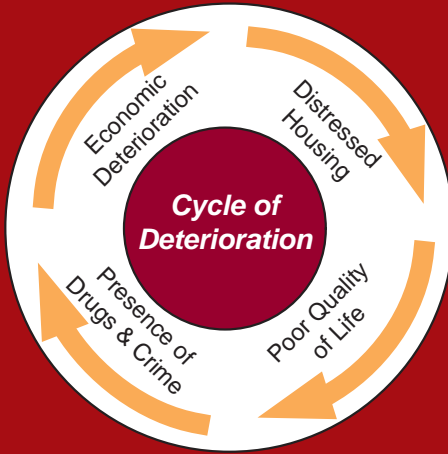


EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Bushwick Initiative is a two-year pilot program spearheaded by the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD), the Ridgewood Bushwick Senior Citizens Council (Ridgewood Bushwick), and the Office of Assemblyman Vito Lopez. The program goal is to improve the lives of Bushwick residents in the 23 square blocks surrounding Maria Hernandez Park through various housing and quality of life programs. This enterprise depends on the collaboration of these three entities, as well as several other City agencies including the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), the Police Department (NYPD) and the Department of Small Business Services (SBS).

Major accomplishments of the Bushwick Initiative in its first year include:

- HPD completed exterior condition surveys of all of the 955 properties in the target area and buildings were then given a preliminary condition assessment of good, fair, or poor.
- Interior inspections of each of the 724 occupied residential or mixed-use buildings were then undertaken and the condition ratings were refined based on the inspection findings; 108 buildings were rated poor.
- HPD reached out to all building owners with buildings rated in poor condition.
- 51% of the buildings assessed in poor condition have been improved over the past year and are now rated fair.
- 46 out of the 53 remaining buildings assessed in poor condition are currently being treated by HPD in order to improve building conditions.
- With the cooperation of residential building owners in the area, HPD removed over 6,500 housing violations in the past year.
- Ridgewood Bushwick designed and began implementing a survey to determine the needs of area residents. Through the Initiative, over 300 tenants and 40 building owners have been assisted by Ridgewood Bushwick with a variety of quality of life and housing concerns.
- Sixty-four buildings in the target area underwent \$750,000 worth of lead abatement work, most of which was free to the owners and tenants, and supported by grants from DOHMH and HPD.
- 63% of the buildings targeted by HPD's Narcotics Control Unit (NCU) as sites of illicit drug dealing activity are now free of drug sales.
- DOHMH donated 1,000 rodent-resistant trash cans to Bushwick residential buildings in order to decrease rat infestation in the area.
- DOHMH has established a consistent presence in the target area. It now offers a free six-week fitness class given in Maria Hernandez Park, a series of classes on health topics, and personal visits to the apartment of every newborn in the area to provide advice on maternal and infant health.



GOALS AND PARTNERS

The New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development, the Ridgewood Bushwick Senior Citizens Council and the Office of Assemblyman Vito J. Lopez created the Bushwick Initiative to spur housing preservation and quality of life improvements in the 23-block area in Bushwick bounded by Central Avenue on the west, George Street and Flushing Avenue on the north, Irving Avenue on the east and DeKalb Avenue on the south. With the help of its partners, the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Police Department and Department of Small Business Services, the Bushwick Initiative aims to:

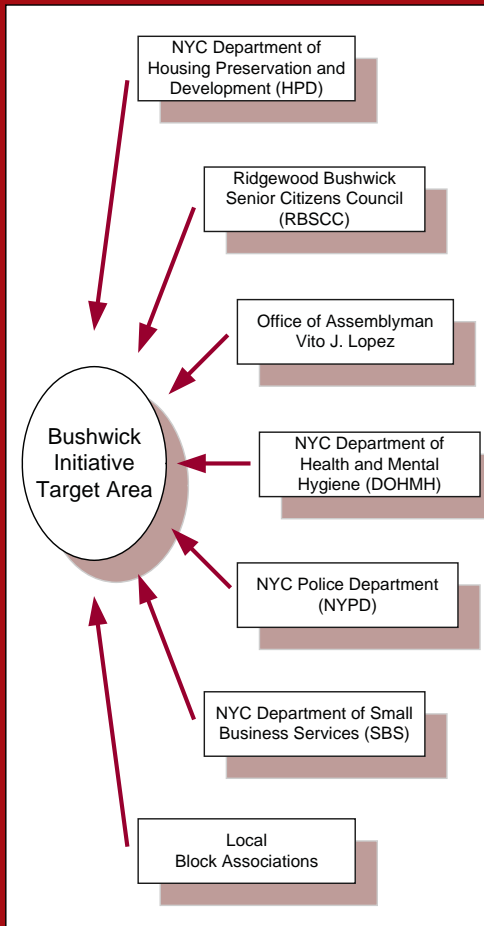
- address deteriorated housing conditions,
- increase economic development opportunities,
- reduce drug dealing activities, and
- enhance the quality of life in the target area.

Bushwick was selected as the site of this unprecedented collaboration because a variety of statistical indicators show that this area is impacted by high rates of poverty and poor housing conditions. Overall housing conditions have remained considerably worse than many other neighborhoods in the City, despite HPD having dedicated programming and funds for improving conditions in the area during previous years. It was thought that a new holistic approach might break the cycle of deterioration and enhance the preservation of housing. This pilot program will help determine if intensive coordination between City agencies and community groups in a targeted area can efficiently improve conditions and quality of life in a neighborhood.

FIRST STEPS

The target area of 23 square blocks surrounding Maria Hernandez Park was selected based on an in-depth analysis of several housing distress indicators, including high violation counts, outstanding emergency repair charges, and unpaid property taxes. HPD then conducted exterior surveys of all 955 properties in the area, 768 of which were residential or mixed-use at the inception of the Initiative. Of these, 724 buildings were occupied at the time.

HPD and Ridgewood Bushwick Senior Citizens Council (Ridgewood Bushwick) immediately contacted both tenants and owners of the occupied residential and mixed-use buildings in the target area. Interior



Partners in the Bushwick Initiative

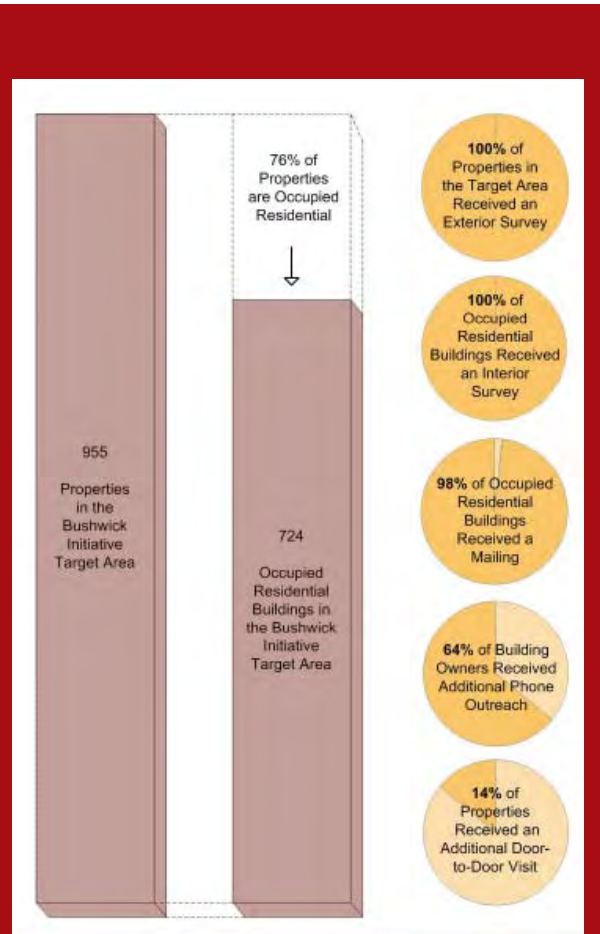
inspections were undertaken of each of these 724 buildings, and assessments of building conditions and tenants' needs were completed. Each of the buildings was given a rating of good, fair, or poor to indicate housing condition and establish priorities for the need for intervention by HPD.

HPD undertook further outreach efforts in order to effect change. Normally, HPD concentrates its outreach efforts towards owners of troubled buildings, but in the Bushwick Initiative all building owners, regardless of the condition of their property, were informed of available services. The combination of door-to-door outreach, mailings, phone calls, and repeated surveys over the past year has established a substantial HPD presence in the 23 blocks of the target area.

Based on results from their tenants' needs survey, Ridgewood Bushwick began to take action for tenants in several areas. They have mediated landlord-tenant disputes, obtained access to food stamps and Medicaid for tenants, and provided tenants with legal representation.

One of the most critical pieces of the Bushwick Initiative is the strengthened relationship between HPD's Narcotics Control Unit (NCU) and the New York City Police Department's 83rd Precinct and Narcotics Division, who have joined together to reduce the extensive drug dealing operations within the target area. As part of the Initiative, and relying on data obtained by the NYPD, NCU applied assessment tools to increase the knowledge base about drug-dealing activities within the target area. One of the most important tools was the creation of matrices, which visually connect locations of drug arrests to places of residence. These matrices enabled NCU to plot patterns of housing-based drug operations.

As part of its commitment to a holistic approach to neighborhood preservation, at the Initiative kickoff event in February 2005, HPD donated a collection of books on housing and urban issues to the three public libraries in Bushwick. In addition, brochure racks that hold signage promoting the Initiative and brochures on HPD services are maintained at the three neighborhood branch libraries so that local residents have easy access to information regarding available services.

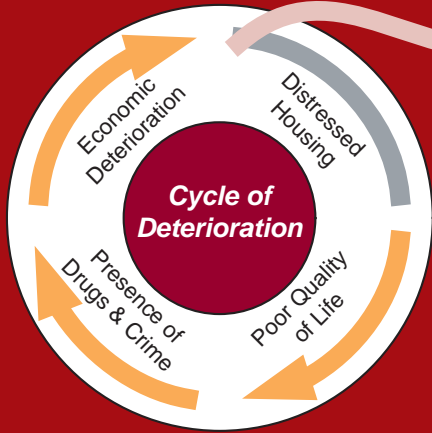


Bushwick Initiative Owner & Tenant Outreach



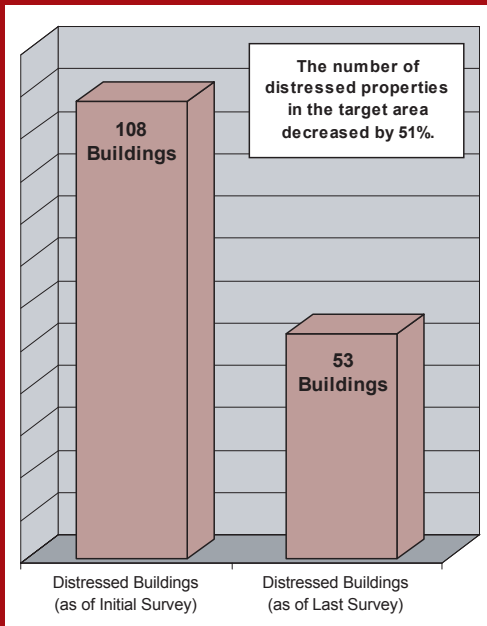
Bi-lingual (English/Spanish) Building Evaluator performing building survey and assessment.

Address Housing Conditions

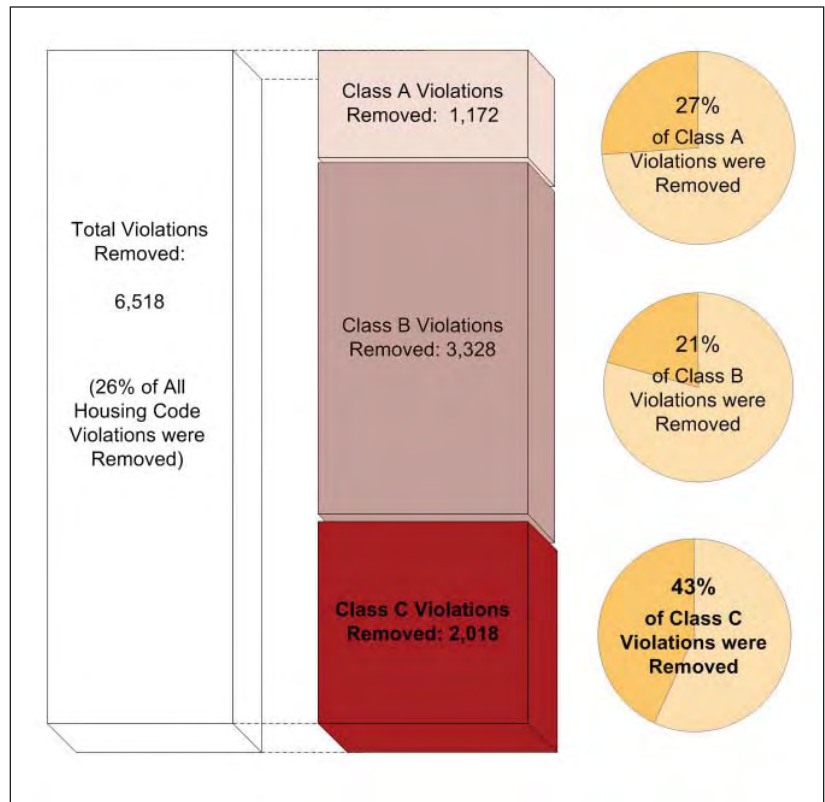


ADDRESSING HOUSING CONDITIONS

Due to the intensive efforts of the Initiative, the number of buildings rated in poor condition in the target area has decreased by 51% in the first year of the Bushwick Initiative. With the cooperation of building owners, Ridgewood Bushwick, and HPD, more than 6,500 housing violations have been removed within the target area.



A Comparison of Building Conditions for Occupied Residential Properties in the Target Area



Housing Maintenance Code violations Removed from the Target Area (FY 2005)

TREATMENTS

After a building is rated in poor condition, HPD commences a series of "treatments" or actions to improve and preserve the property. Lead Hazard Reduction, Voluntary Repair Agreements (VRAs), Loans, Housing Litigation, and referrals to our 7A program are examples of the types of treatments that have been initiated in the target area, and are discussed below.



LEGEND

- = Building Treatments Applied to Occupied Residential & Mixed-Use Properties
- = Distressed Occupied Properties That Have Not Yet Been Treated

% of Distressed Occupied Buildings Being Treated: 87%

- Treatments Include:
- * Voluntary Repair Agreements
 - * Referrals for Inspections
 - * Lead Abatements
 - * Referrals for Violations Removal
 - * 7A Program
 - * Referrals to Housing Education
 - * Housing Litigation Cases
 - * and other Treatments

Date: 02.07.2006
 Scale: 1:3,500
 Author: Preservation Planning and Analysis Unit

Data Source: City of New York, Department of City Planning COGIS r.036, LION r.04a, HPD City of New York, Department of Housing Preservation and Development, Preservation Planning and Analysis Unit.

Treatments Applied to Residential & Mixed-Use Properties in the Bushwick Initiative Target Area

LEAD HAZARD REDUCTION PROGRAM

Because most buildings in the target area in Bushwick were built prior to 1960, many of them contain lead paint, which can peel, chip, or create dust. This puts young children at risk for lead poisoning, which can impair children’s health and negatively affect their behavior. In an effort to reduce lead hazards in buildings, HPD and DOHMH created a grant program focusing on residential buildings in the Bushwick Initiative target area. HPD and Ridgewood Bushwick then blanketed the area with information about the grant program. As a result of this outreach, 64 buildings received lead abatement work worth approximately \$750,000, the vast majority of which was provided at no cost to the owner or tenants. By providing financial assistance to owners who lacked resources but were committed to addressing lead hazards, we took positive action to address hazards that could otherwise result in lead poisoning.

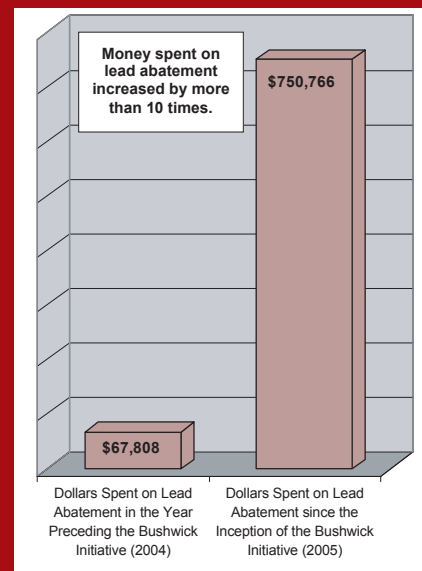
LEAD ABATEMENT TREATMENT

Ms. Tardugno received \$35,294 in lead abatement work on her property at 1483 DeKalb Avenue. After receiving a Commissioner’s Order to Abate Lead Conditions notice from the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Ms. Tardugno visited HPD’s Brooklyn Anti-Abandonment office looking for assistance. Ms. Tardugno took great pride in having maintained her violation-free five-unit building and was thrilled to discover that she qualified for the lead hazard reduction program. Each apartment had lead hazards removed at no cost to her or her tenants.



1483 DeKalb Avenue

HPD’s Code Enforcement inspectors test apartments for lead paint hazard violations. If peeling lead paint is discovered in the apartment, it must be repaired using safe work practices by a trained contractor. If the owner fails to repair the violation, HPD performs the work.



A Comparison of Money Spent on Lead Abatement in the Target Area

SUCCESSFUL DAA INTERVENTIONS/ TREATMENTS



Mr. Wilkinson, the owner, in front of his building at 196 Jefferson Street.

Mr. Wilkinson visited the DAA after being advised that his building had 70 violations, 18 of which were considered immediately hazardous (“C”). After meeting with DAA, Mr. Wilkinson agreed to enter into a VRA. Mr. Wilkinson was referred by HPD to the nearby office of an HPD partner, the Neighborhood Housing Services of Bedford Stuyvesant. He found that he was eligible for the Small Owners Assistance Pilot Program 1% Loan (SOAP) to assist him in replacing the boiler, which had been the source of some of the “C” violations. The loan was disbursed, the work completed, and the Compliance Inspection found him in 100% compliance with the terms of the agreement. The violation count at 196 Jefferson Street is now zero.



Kitchen under construction.



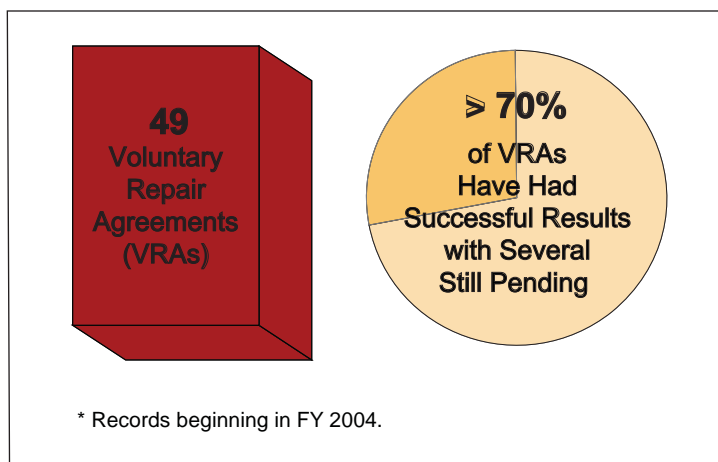
The same kitchen rehabbed as a result of the VRA.

ADDRESSING HOUSING CONDITIONS

VOLUNTARY REPAIR AGREEMENTS

When appropriate, a Voluntary Repair Agreement (VRA) is offered as an incentive to property owners to remove Housing Maintenance Code violations. During the course of the agreement, HPD will monitor and provide technical guidance to the owner or managing agent, and will refrain from initiating litigation against the building as long as satisfactory progress is shown in correcting the violations.

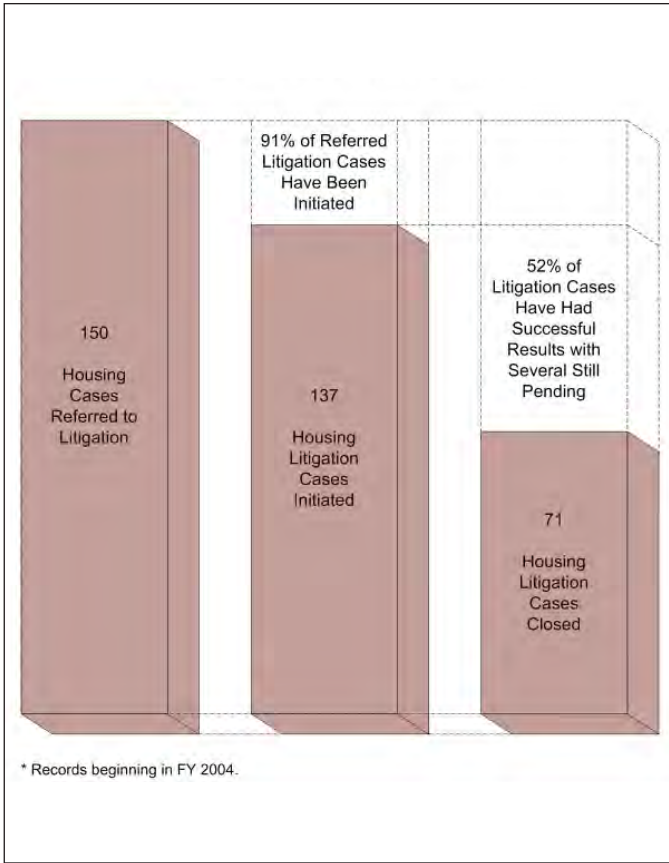
The Brooklyn Borough Office of the Division of Anti-Abandonment (DAA) entered into a total of 49 Voluntary Repair Agreements with property owners from the Bushwick Initiative area. Over 70% of these agreements have had successful results, with 80% of violations being corrected, and many agreements that are still in progress.



Status of Voluntary Repair Agreements

ARTICLE 8A LOANS

During the first year of the Bushwick Initiative, five owners have sought to rehabilitate their buildings by applying for an Article 8A loan. The Article 8A Loan Program provides rehabilitation loans to correct substandard or unsanitary conditions and to prolong the useful life of multiple dwellings in New York City. This loan is used to finance major building rehabilitation including installation of new roofs, heating plants, plumbing, electrical systems, windows, new kitchens, and new bathrooms. Loans are restricted to buildings occupied by low-income tenants. These five loan applications are currently being processed by HPD, which will carefully review the



Status of Housing Litigation Referrals

to comply with court orders directing them to comply with the law, the Housing Litigation division brought them back to court for additional civil penalties and contempt.

7A PROGRAM

HPD's 7A Program provides protection for buildings that are in disrepair and are abandoned by their owners. The 7A program is based on Article 7A of the Real Property Actions and Proceedings Law and provides that management control of a building may be removed from an owner if a building's condition constitutes a danger to life, health and safety. The law permits the Housing Court to appoint competent administrators to manage and maintain such buildings when necessary. Eight buildings in the Bushwick target area, which were litigated against for outstanding housing violations, and were subsequently abandoned by their owners, are being protected through this program.

ADDRESSING HOUSING CONDITIONS

financial situation of the owners and tenants, and the current building conditions.

HOUSING LITIGATION REFERRALS

150 buildings were referred to HPD's Housing Litigation Division (HLD) for action. HLD brought cases to compel the owners of those buildings to correct outstanding violations; to obtain civil penalties for the owners' failure to comply with the Housing Maintenance Code and the Multiple Dwelling Law where appropriate; and to compel those owners who had failed to register with HPD to do so. In addition, in situations where the owners had failed to correct emergency conditions, including lead paint hazards, and had denied HPD's inspectors and contractors access to scope and complete the necessary work to remediate the conditions, the Housing Litigation Division obtained access warrants ordering the owners to allow HPD's inspectors and contractors into the buildings to complete necessary emergency repairs. Finally, when the owners continued to refuse

TARGETED CYCLICAL ENFORCEMENT POLICY (T-CEP)



Owner in front of 251 Jefferson Street.

This building was referred to HPD's Brooklyn Borough Office under the new Targeted Cyclical Enforcement Policy (T-CEP) program. The purpose of the program is to preserve affordable housing by addressing serious housing conditions brought to the agency's attention by City Council members and designated not-for-profit community groups.

After being contacted by the DAA, the owner Mrs. Monteleone was willing to work with them to address the 35 recorded violations and make additional repairs on her property. She met with the Outreach Coordinator and signed a Voluntary Repair Agreement (VRA). Mrs. Monteleone addressed the violations in a timely manner, and upon inspection of the building, she was found to be in 100% compliance with the agreement.

ADDRESSING HOUSING CONDITIONS

NEW HOUSING CONSTRUCTION

St. Leonard's Family Housing sits on the Wilson Avenue block between Melrose and Jefferson. This new 85-unit low income project was sponsored by Progress of Peoples Development Corporation, a subsidiary of Catholic Charities, and is owned by a corporation formed by the sponsor, Wilson Avenue LP. The \$16 million cost of the project was funded by the New York State Housing Trust Fund and low-income housing tax credits.



Early stages of construction



Construction complete

ADDRESSING HOUSING CONDITIONS

HOUSING EDUCATION

A fundamental objective of Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg's housing plan is to invest in the City's neighborhoods for the next generation of New Yorkers. In support of this objective, HPD's Housing Education Services (HES) offers a variety of training courses for owners, property managers, housing professionals, superintendents, and tenants. Over the past year, HES's Housing Education Program (HEP) offered Bushwick residents a wide spectrum of introductory, certificate, and advanced courses in building management and systems maintenance, including Residential Property Management, Water & Energy Conservation, Local Law 1 of 2004 Owner's Compliance, Lead Safe Work Practice, Lead Visual Assessment, and First Time Home Buyers Seminar. During calendar year 2005, 455 residents of the Bushwick community attended Housing Education classes.

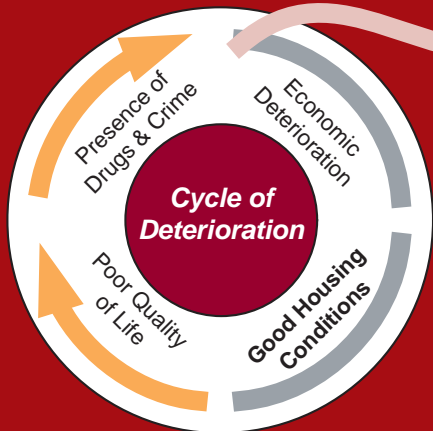
Additional outreach in the target area by HES has included working with the NYPD on National Night Out Against Violence (held on Knickerbocker Avenue), participating in the Pilgrim Church Nurses' First Annual Health Fair in April 2005, and presenting informational materials at the Buena Vida Center in June 2005. And HES has consistently presented information to the public at Community Board 4 meetings over the past year, advising over 1,000 community residents on services offered by HPD and the Lead Education Program (LEP).



(Above) Pedro Velasquez prepares attentive young participants in HPD's Certified Assistant Building Superintendent Course.

(Below) Home Improvement Contractors ask HES staff about lead courses for compliance with new legislation.





INCREASING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Many of the Bushwick Initiative’s efforts towards economic development are focused on revitalizing Knickerbocker Avenue, the primary commercial strip in the area. To begin this task, the Department of Small Business Services (SBS) surveyed 91 businesses on Knickerbocker Avenue to assess the level of business occupancy and diversity of business types, to identify currently vacant and available commercial space, and to provide a general overview of the needs of the Bushwick business community. In addition, Ridgewood Bushwick spoke to business owners in the area about reviving the now-defunct Knickerbocker Avenue Merchant’s Association. Through this organization, Ridgewood Bushwick hopes to utilize SBS’s resources to increase economic opportunities for local business owners in the area.

Further economic development opportunities will be achieved through a new career service program, for which Ridgewood Bushwick received a NYC Works workforce development grant from the New York City Council and the United Way. The NYC Works grant will allow Ridgewood Bushwick to assist the unemployed and underemployed residents of Bushwick in finding and maintaining employment. The Career Services Program will accept any Bushwick Initiative clients from the target area that are in need of job training and job placement, as HPD works to stabilize and improve the lives of these residents.

By June 2006, Ridgewood Bushwick will begin to prepare these residents for short- and long-term success by focusing on the development of job search skills, including resume and cover letter writing, interviewing techniques, and customer service. The program will also offer computer training, job coaching, internships, hard skills training (for example, building maintenance, day care, commercial driver license, and security), and educational services such as GED and ESL classes. In addition to these classes, starting March 2006, HPD will offer free classes on construction and building maintenance through its Housing Education Program.

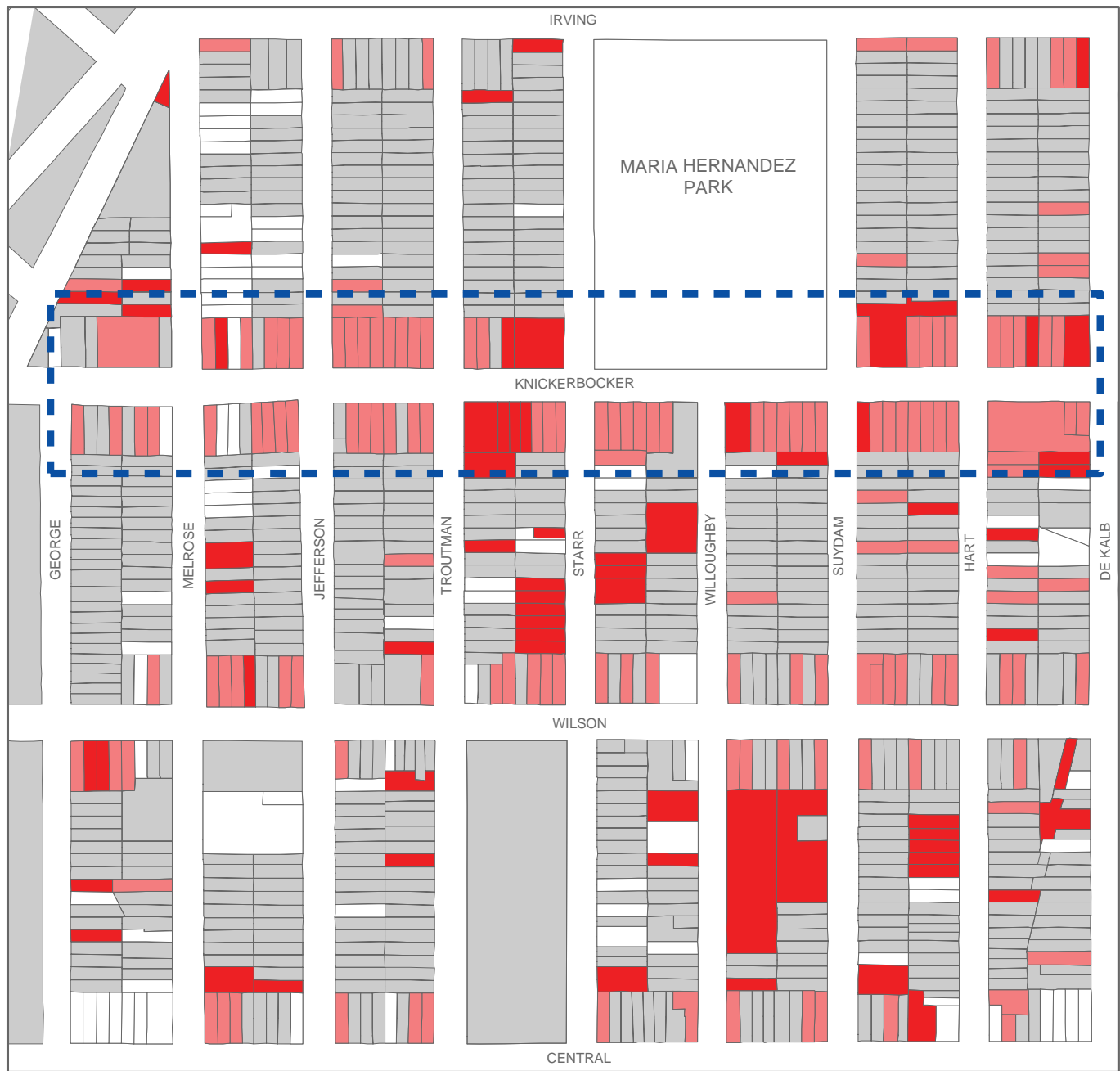
Other SBS efforts in Bushwick have included:

- helping 55 local business owners access its Energy Cost Savings Program, which allows business owners who are relocating or making capital improvements to their facility to benefit from reduced energy costs,
- hosting a Bushwick-based December 2005 forum on community revitalization issues including capacity building and forming a business improvement district, and;
- providing assistance related to storefront improvements in the Bushwick target area.



Storefronts on Knickerbocker Avenue In Bushwick Avenue Initiative Target Area

INCREASING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES



LEGEND

Property Use

- = Commercial Use
- = Mixed-Use with Commercial
- = Main Commercial Corridor

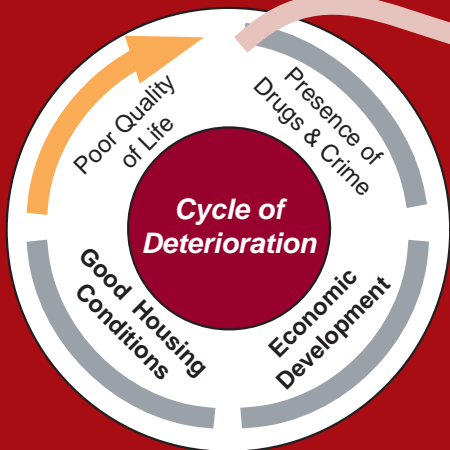


Date: 02.09.2006
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 Author: Preservation Planning and Analysis Unit

Data Source: City of New York. Department of City Planning COGIS r.03c, LION r.04a, HPD
 City of New York. Department of Housing Preservation and Development. Preservation Planning and Analysis Unit.

Commercial Corridors in the Bushwick Initiative Target Area

Reduce Drug Dealing Activity

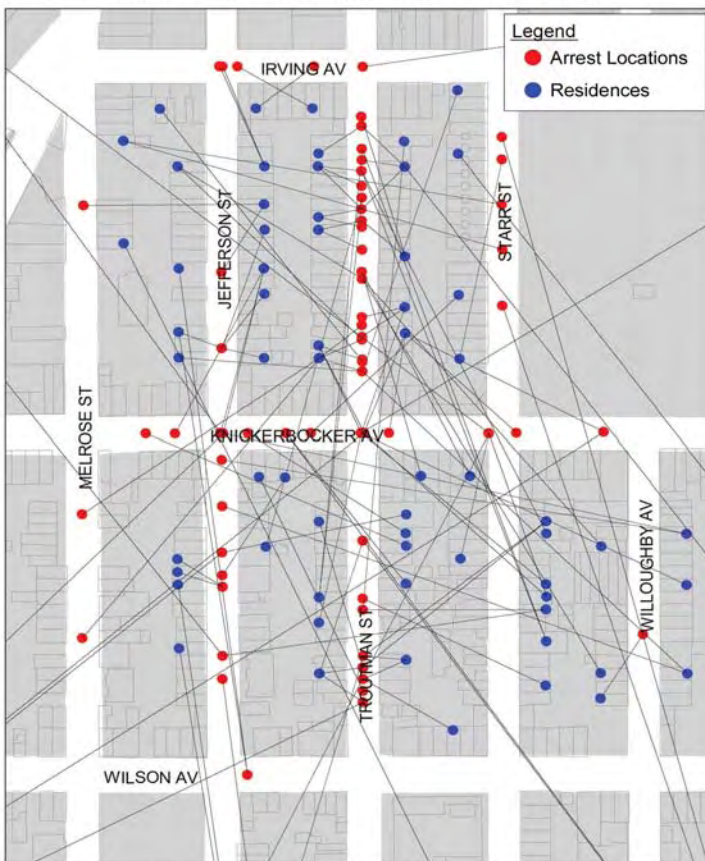


REDUCING DRUG DEALING ACTIVITY

Since the inception of the Bushwick Initiative, there has been a dramatic reduction in drug dealing activity in the target area. This is due to considerable efforts by HPD's Narcotics Control Unit (NCU) and the 83rd Precinct and Narcotics Division of the NYPD. During one four-week period, there were 56 drug related arrests made by both the NYPD Narcotics Division and the 83rd Precinct. Further steps taken to reduce crime have included increasing police presence at night, using new police scooters in the target area, and consistently reporting broken streetlights to 311 (most of which have been repaired).



A multi-pronged operation engaged in drug dealing, prostitution, and the sale of loose cigarettes ("loosies") has been eradicated.



* Map is representational, does not depict actual arrest locations or residences.

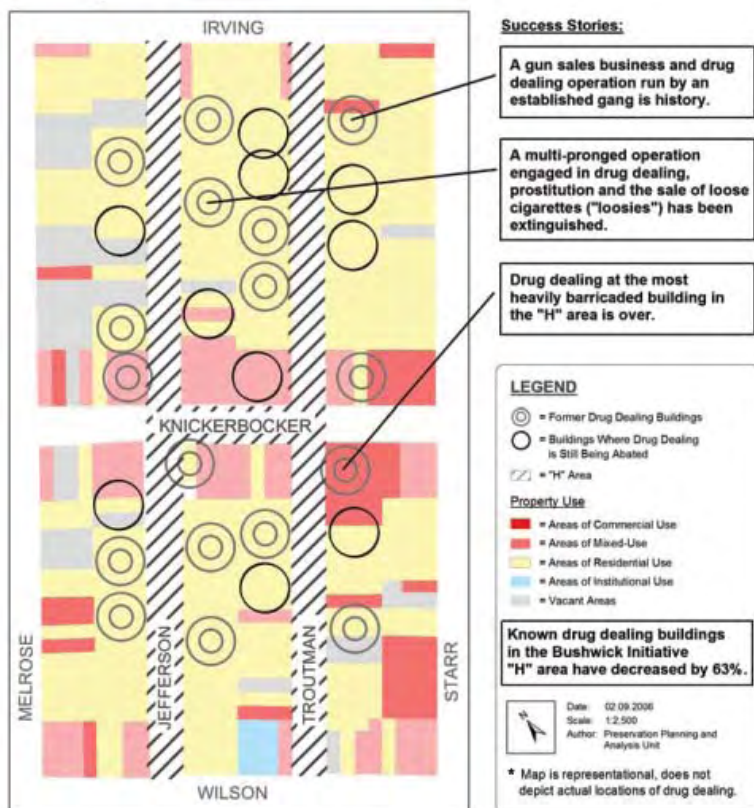
Matrix Tool for Determining Drug Dealing Activity

The most significant achievement by the NYPD and NCU in the Bushwick target area has been the reduction in area drug operations. At the beginning of the Initiative, the heaviest concentration of drug dealing covered an area shaped like an "H", the crossbar of which was Knickerbocker Avenue between Jefferson and Troutman Streets. The legs of the H were Jefferson and Troutman Streets extending north and south of Knickerbocker Avenue (see diagram, right).

REDUCING DRUG DEALING ACTIVITY

During the past year, 27 properties within the “H” area were investigated by NCU. With more than 400 hours of surveillance and 21 full investigations leading to increased patrols and arrests by the NYPD, 63% of the targeted drug buildings in the “H” area are out of business. The “H” is disappearing—its crossbar along Knickerbocker Avenue has virtually vanished, and all four of its vertical legs have weakened. The primary challenges during the upcoming year are to finish the process of removing drug dealing operations from this concentrated area and to extend similar efforts throughout the full borders of the Bushwick Initiative.

While addressing the drug problem remains a priority, the 83rd Precinct has also worked to improve its relationship with community residents. Last year, the Precinct collaborated with Ridgewood Bushwick on a summer program for community youth. Using federal funds from the Summer Youth Program, Ridgewood Bushwick hired the teens, while the Precinct identified sites within the target area where they would undertake graffiti removal.



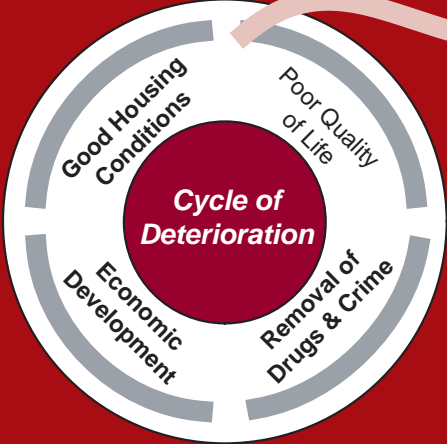
Change in Drug Dealing Activity for Buildings in the Bushwick Initiative “H” Area

A POSITIVE BEGINNING



289 Troutman Avenue

Although the owner of this six-unit building had been in litigation with HPD several times, and was assessed \$600,000 worth of civil penalties, he did not deal with the building’s deteriorating condition and escalating drug activity. The building was raided by the 83rd Precinct and Narcotics Division in a major drug bust, with the help of HPD’s Narcotics Control Unit. While four of the six apartments in the building remained vacant after the police action, tenant complaints from the remaining two occupied apartments were addressed by HPD, which provided emergency repairs including oil deliveries, heat and hot water restoration, restoration of electricity and water, and plumbing repairs through December 2005. Over the past year, HPD and Ridgewood Bushwick worked together to move both families from this deteriorating building into safe housing.



QUALITY OF LIFE INITIATIVES

HEALTH

In addition to DOHMH's lead prevention work, the Bushwick Initiative has benefited from a series of public health programs addressing pest control, infant health, and fitness.

DOHMH spent \$25,000 purchasing 1,000 rodent-resistant trash cans, which were distributed to buildings with a high number of rodent complaints. Educational information in both English and Spanish concerning rodent control was distributed at the same time, and cans were plastered with the flyers reading "CAN IT – Keep Rats Out of Your Community."

Ridgewood Bushwick has recently begun additional pest control efforts to deal with bedbugs, which have become a problem in Bushwick in the past year. To date, 15 buildings have received bedbug exterminations. With the help of the DOHMH, Ridgewood Bushwick made three presentations, which were attended by approximately 135 Bushwick community members, explaining how to prevent and rid an apartment of bedbugs.

DOHMH is also strengthening its presence in the community by visiting every newborn mother in the Initiative target area. These informational visits provide new mothers with tips on maternal and infant health, and include environmental assessments to check for window guards, lead hazards, and fire safety concerns. DOHMH makes referrals to HPD if lead hazards are found. These visits will continue in the next year.

Over the last year, DOHMH supported improved community health with a series of free fitness classes offered to area residents, and training sessions offered to local school employees. For the third summer in a row, DOHMH sponsored a summer family fitness program, Shape Up New York, in Maria Hernandez Park. This six-week session of free fitness classes was offered five days a week, and served 766 area residents. Shape Up New York will continue in Maria Hernandez Park in summer 2006.

DOHMH also trained local physical education teachers in target area elementary schools in an enhanced fitness curriculum, and trained school nurses in a new asthma protocol called Managing Asthma in Schools. And DOHMH conducted an in-depth survey on accessibility to healthy foods; results of the survey will be available in winter 2006.



Rodent-resistant trash cans being distributed to buildings with high numbers of rodent complaints.



DOHMH visits with a mother and her newborns in Bushwick.



Residents participate in DOHMH-sponsored "Shape Up New York" fitness program.

QUALITY OF LIFE INITIATIVES

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Ridgewood Bushwick helped form two new block associations: one on George Street between Wilson and Central Avenues and the other on Jefferson Street between Knickerbocker and Wilson Avenues. Meetings of these new block associations, and the five existing block associations were used as forums for area residents to voice their concerns and interests regarding their community. Ridgewood Bushwick was able to shape its programs in response to these issues.

HPD also held two Owners' Nights in Bushwick, reaching 175 area residents. These events provided information on the availability of low-interest loans, building management and maintenance, owner-tenant relations, help with correcting housing violations and assistance with mortgages and refinancing. HPD's Owner Services Program travels from borough to borough, educating residential property owners about the availability of low-interest loans, free educational classes on subjects such as lead paint, energy conservation and fair housing, and offering free owner counseling. Launched in February 2001, Owner's Nights have drawn more than 7,000 property owners to events across New York City. The two Owner's Nights also included specific information about the Bushwick Initiative.



*Some community activities in Bushwick throughout the year:
(Above) Local resident Johanna Castro of Assemblyman Vito Lopez's office is shown at her parent-teacher meeting with a representative from the 83rd Police Precinct.*

(Below) A group of students from Bushwick participate in a reading project in local schools.



A TENANT ON TROUTMAN STREET:

Ms. Irizorry tried over and over to get the owner of her building to undertake repairs in her apartment and the result was always the same: the owner refused and offered Ms. Irizorry money to move out. Ridgewood Bushwick helped Ms. Irizorry take her landlord to court and, after nearly a year of disputes, get repairs for her apartment.



Judith Irizorry (left) with Shon Morris of the Ridgewood Bushwick Senior Citizens Council.

QUALITY OF LIFE INITIATIVES

COMBATING PREDATORY LENDING

The Preserve Assets and Community Equity (PACE) pilot program, a partnership between HPD, the Parodneck Foundation, South Brooklyn Legal Services and the Neighborhood Economic Development Advocacy, was launched on October 18, 2005. PACE targets three neighborhoods with high foreclosure rates: Bushwick and Bedford Stuyvesant in Brooklyn and Southeastern Queens. In tandem with community-based organizations (CBOs), the program educates and counsels current and future homeowners on predatory lending issues, helps them deal with financial problems such as foreclosure, and guides them towards financial viability. Ridgewood Bushwick is the participating CBO in Bushwick.

PROVIDING SOCIAL SERVICES

Ridgewood Bushwick visited over 100 buildings, contacting more than 300 tenants and 41 owners in the Initiative area. This outreach effort was prioritized by targeting buildings rated in poor condition, with the goal of reaching those in the greatest need first. Interventions included work by the organization's legal team, and by the Child Health Plus project (Medicaid services), the Food Card Access Project, and HomeBase, a homelessness prevention program. Clients were referred to the appropriate government agencies when necessary.

LOOKING FORWARD: YEAR TWO

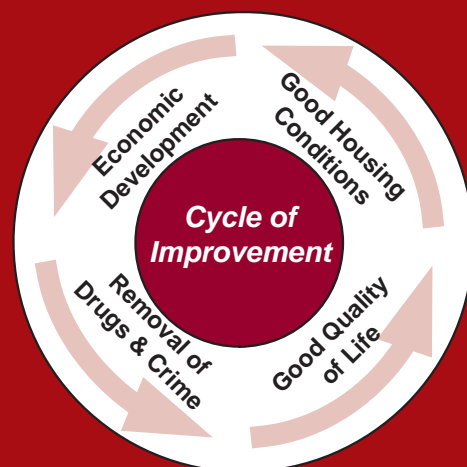
In the first year of the Bushwick Initiative, HPD has focused its efforts on preservation and neighborhood development, using intensive inspections and outreach to the community to preserve and maintain housing. In addition, the Initiative relied on enhancing cooperation between the City agencies, local non-profit organizations, and elected officials who provide public services. By creating strong relationships through daily communication between the partners, we developed a coordinated approach to community preservation which improved housing conditions, increased economic development opportunities, reduced drug dealing activity, and enhanced the quality of life in the target area.

Going forward into our next year, we anticipate building upon the already close relationships established among the partners in the Bushwick Initiative.

These relationships will enable us to undertake several new key initiatives that will positively impact the health, quality of life, and economic well-being of the residents in our target area. Although we are marking only the first anniversary of this project, we anticipate that our collaboration could serve as a model for future multi-agency neighborhood revitalization programs in the future.

Nevertheless, while significant improvements in the area have been made, the Bushwick Initiative recognizes that there is still much work to do. In its second year, the Bushwick Initiative plans to:

- Continue ongoing re-inspections of occupied mixed-use and residential buildings in the area and provide up-to-date assessments of their existing conditions.
- Continue to reduce the number of violations in the target area through increased involvement by HPD's Code Enforcement Division. HPD's Division of Anti-Abandonment will expand this effort to include the 554 buildings originally rated fair, in addition to the 108 buildings initially rated poor.
- Research emerging health issues, particularly bedbug prevention. The current partnership between HPD, DOHMH and Ridgewood Bushwick has the opportunity to investigate the current bedbug problem in Bushwick and reduce instances of bedbugs in the area.
- Leverage the recently secured NYC Works workforce development grant, which will be used to create the Career Services Program at Ridgewood Bushwick Senior Citizens Council, by coordinating those efforts with HPD's Housing Education Program.
- Extend efforts to reduce drug dealing operations beyond the area with the heaviest concentration of drug dealing, to the full borders of the target area.
- Work with DOHMH to expand HIV prevention programs in the area.
- Based on SBS assessments, work with area businesses to explore ways of attracting new businesses to the area that would revitalize currently vacant commercial and retail space.
- Initiate a study of the impact of the Bushwick Initiative on quality of life indicators such as health, employment, or school achievement, and identify successful policies and interventions that could be incorporated into future neighborhood-based initiatives.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development would like to acknowledge the following agencies, organizations and individuals for their work on the Bushwick Initiative. The success of this project stems from the work of many, beginning with Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, whose leadership has been instrumental in shaping new and creative approaches to preserving affordable housing. HPD would also like to thank Assemblyman Vito Lopez for the significant role he has played in this new initiative.

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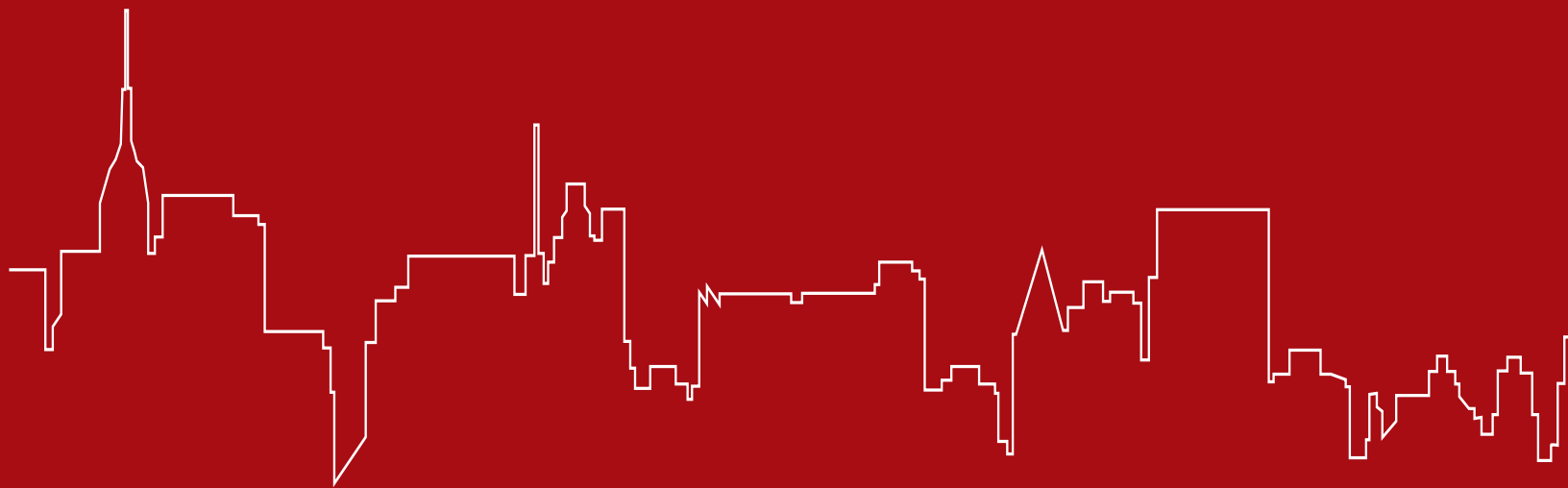
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