

Planting the Seeds for Change: Cultivating an Inclusive Plan for CD8



Executive Summary

Brooklyn Community District 8 ("CD8") is a community composed of three unique neighborhoods, Prospect Heights, Crown Heights and Weeksville. Graduate students in city planning and historic preservation were charged with developing a plan for the community based on the Comprehensive Community Revitalization Planning method.

Brooklyn CD8 is a diverse population of approximately 100,000 people, about the size of the City of Albany. Twenty-two percent of residents live below the poverty line, a problem that will only be compounded by the current economic climate.

There is a large African American population within the community, representing approximately 80% of the population according to the 2000 U.S. Census.

CD8 is composed of a diverse range of age groups, including a large percentage of baby boomers that face retirement in the near future. There is also a large youth population.

Land Use and Housing

CD8 is primarily a residential district, as 60% of the land is occupied by either 1-2 family or multiple family residences (inhabited primarily by renters). Nearly 5% of land uses are industrial, mostly concentrated along Atlantic Avenue, while another 3% are commercial and office uses. Remaining land is used for right-of-ways, institutions, open space, parking facilities and vacant land.

Sources US Census, 2000 and NYC Pluto Data, 2007.

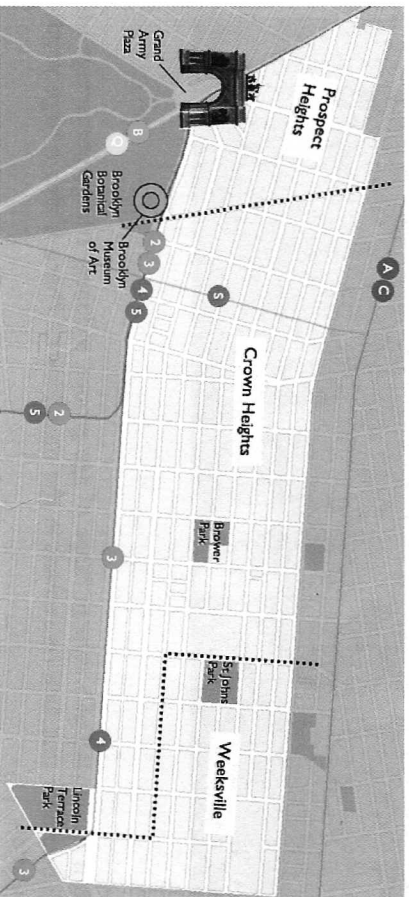
Three Distinct Neighborhoods

CD8, as previously mentioned, is composed of three vastly different neighborhoods, each with their own unique features.

Prospect Heights, at the western end of CD8, is home to recognized cultural institutions such as the Brooklyn Botanic Gardens and the Brooklyn Museum, the second-largest art museum in New York City. This neighborhood has seen the most growth and dramatic demographic shifts over the past 15 years.

Crown Heights, the largest neighborhood in CD8, has a continued legacy of welcoming recent immigrants. Since the 1960s, Crown Heights has become known as the center of the Caribbean-American community. Every Labor Day Weekend an estimated three million people line Eastern Parkway for the annual West Indian Day Parade. The Orthodox Jewish population has long played an important role in the neighborhood's history as well.

Weeksville is located at the eastern-most end of CD8. This neighborhood derives its name from the historic Weeksville settlement, an African American community that began in 1838. Much of the neighborhood has yet to be recognized for its historical and cultural significance.



Why CD8 Now?

We believe that CD8 should be seen as a major cultural destination, worthy of citywide attention and resident pride. CD8 deserves an inclusive plan that builds upon its many assets.

Though times are tough now, we feel that the current slowdown presents an opportunity to look at small solutions for issues that face the entire district. We can plant the seeds now to be cultivated when the economy recovers.

Through the compilation of data and stakeholder interviews, we sought to create a plan that would stimulate the economy, invigorate the public realm, rehabilitate untapped resources, and celebrate the cultural heritage of Community District 8.

Stimulate: The Economy

- Weeksville Industrial Development District
- Affordable Mixed Use (AMU) Zone
- Utica Avenue Community Retail District
- Crown Heights School of Beauty
- Sterling Cinema
- Nostrand Avenue Restaurant Row

Invigorate: The Public Realm

- Pedestrian Protection
- Lots + Lots of Options
- Bergen Bike Path

Rehabilitate: Untapped Resources

- Weeksville Senior Housing and Community Center
- Kingston Lounge
- Housing Above + Beyond Books
- Armory Sports and Recreation Center

Celebrate: CD8's Cultural Heritage

- Past Values
- PS 83 Addition
- Contemporary Community Canvas
- Lincoln Park Terrace Entrance
- Walking this Way

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Professors John Shapiro, Vicki Weiner

Students Michael Amable, Meryl Branch-McTiernan, Melissa Brunette, Marios Drakos, Liz Eisenberg, Delaney Harris-Finch, Tara Kelly, Grace Lee, Karen Mathassen, Melanie Martin, Lauren Peters, Alison Schneider, Ryan Sharp, Matt Sloane, Rachel Thieme