

DOWNTOWN BROOKLYN



A Report by Regional Plan Association

PREFACE

A dozen years ago, an impressive coalition of City officials and business leaders launched a redevelopment plan for Downtown Brooklyn. By 1975, implementation had progressed enough that Ada Louise Huxtable could write in *The New York Times* of "the blooming of Downtown Brooklyn," with "enough visible accomplishment in terms of design, development and the creation and reinforcement of community and amenity for a dozen other cities."

The City's financial crisis and the nation's recessions slowed the progress, however, and the resurgence of the City economy after 1977 did not spread outside Manhattan. So a new team of City officials and Brooklyn business leaders asked Regional Plan Association to review Downtown Brooklyn's prospects once again. The project was initiated by Brooklyn Borough President Howard Golden and sponsored by the Downtown Brooklyn Development Association, with financing from the City's Office of Economic Development, 18 business organizations and Regional Plan Association.

Regional Plan Association undertook this project in support of its overall plan for the tri-state New York Urban Region. Four regional planning principles are at stake: (1) keeping activities in downtowns, to support public transit and, with it, the mobility of those who cannot drive; (2) keeping places where all races and income groups gather, where opportunities are within reach of all; (3) preserving and using existing investment; (4) keeping development compact, which saves energy, air and water quality and open land.

In this new review, Regional Plan arrived at much the same conclusions as the 1969 Brooklyn plan. The main issue is not what to build, but how to attract the investment. This report recommends a number of implementation steps and a process to mobilize the whole Brooklyn community in support of a new wave of Downtown vitality and growth.

John P. Keith
President
Regional Plan Association

RECOMMENDATIONS

WHAT TO DO

1. Publicize Downtown Brooklyn's Assets

Downtown Brooklyn should be seen as the third node of the Manhattan Central Business District—closer to Lower Manhattan than Midtown is—yet it retains a small-city ambience. It has all of the qualities that attract people and jobs to cities, but these qualities tend to be overlooked by many businesses and individuals. Our first recommendation—which this project will begin to implement—is to publicize Downtown Brooklyn's assets:

Accessibility.

- Proximity to Manhattan;
- One of the densest networks of public transit in the United States, including subways, buses, and the Long Island Rail Road (LIRR);
- Easy auto access and ample parking.

Strong foundations to build on.

- A solid white collar base, with 40,000 office jobs—including five City department headquarters—and 3,000 jobs in the Courts;
- 25 banks, a Business Library and other business services;

- Over 70 restaurants and 400 retail stores—with \$1¼ million in sales every day;
- Five higher education institutions Downtown;
- Health services, including two teaching hospitals, clinics, and plans for an Executive Fitness Program;
- Sites available for new construction, including 18 vacant acres, publicly-owned, on and around the LIRR Terminal.

An enjoyable place to be.

- Pleasant areas, enhanced by architectural landmarks, Borough Hall Park and the edge of Brooklyn Heights, with a strong sense of community;
- Culture and entertainment of high quality.

Labor force.

- A large white collar labor force readily available, including some 300,000 Manhattan workers who live in Brooklyn and 50-75,000 more from suburban Nassau County who can reach Downtown Brooklyn more easily than Manhattan;
- High quality neighborhoods for additional

- executives, professionals and managers whose jobs move to Downtown Brooklyn;
- Trainable workers to compensate for projected decreases in the number of entry-level workers.

Support for investors.

- Public and private organizations ready to facilitate projects;
- An assurance of continued progress on Downtown improvements, based on large public investments over the past dozen years, fulfilling urban renewal commitments.

Credit for corporate social responsibility.

- The firm that leads a corporate move into Downtown Brooklyn will long be identified with Brooklyn's renaissance.

2. Change the Appearance of Four Entryways to Downtown Brooklyn

Just publicizing Downtown Brooklyn's assets is not enough. The assets are currently undervalued because Brooklyn has an image of decline, which is reinforced by the appearance of four entryways to the Downtown area. Improving these entryways should be a top priority for City economic development efforts:

a. Fulton Mall to the LIRR Terminal. The City should continue to press its efforts to develop office buildings on the 18 vacant acres around the LIRR Terminal and at the Brooklyn Center site on Flatbush Avenue between Fulton and Lafayette. (A Cooper-Ekstut study of a proposed development is available at the City's Public Development Corporation.)

b. The Polytechnic Area. The City and Polytechnic Institute are working together to build a high-technology center, MetroTech, to accommodate high-tech jobs which could benefit from proximity to Polytechnic. MetroTech has been selected by New York State as the primary telecommunications center for the State. MetroTech would strengthen the whole Region's economy by linking its scientific resources with engineering and entrepreneurial resources, and at the same time renovate the appearance of an important entryway to Downtown Brooklyn.

c. South of Fulton Mall. A substantial housing development on vacant land in this area would add thousands of consumers and give Fulton Mall a more attractive backdrop than the parking lots that fill that area now. The New York City Partnership plan for some 170 units of housing on 1½ blocks of the roughly 20-block area between Fulton Mall and Atlantic Avenue is a splendid beginning, but

there is additional vacant land in the area which could accommodate housing—and every additional unit would strengthen Downtown.

d. Subway stations. Two-thirds of the people who come to Downtown Brooklyn arrive by subway or LIRR, so their first impression is created underground. The City is already renovating six of Downtown Brooklyn's subway stations, but more could be done—especially to connect the underground area more closely with the surface, in some places by opening stations to more light and air.

3. Improve Retailing in Downtown Brooklyn

Adding 5,000 housing units in and near Downtown and 40,000 office workers would increase retail sales in Downtown Brooklyn by over 10 percent, but there are a number of things that the retailers themselves could do to enhance sales, including:

- Adjusting the merchandise mix in consultation with surrounding neighborhoods;
- Improving the appearance of stores, especially on Fulton Mall and around the corners from the Mall;
- Advertising more;
- Adding non-retail events, such as a series of neighborhood exhibitions and performances Downtown;
- Developing ways to reassure people wary of Downtown;
- Seeking another department store comparable to A&S.

Downtown merchants should meet with neighborhood organizations, who are eager to discuss what would attract more neighborhood shoppers to Downtown stores.

4. Strengthen Other Downtown Activities

Good downtowns offer more than offices and retailing, and strengthening the links among various activities can help them benefit from each other. Brooklyn has strong higher education institutions, for example, which could contribute more to a dynamic Downtown—and benefit from some of the 150,000 people who come Downtown every day. Closer links could also be established between Downtown and nearby cultural institutions, such as the Brooklyn Museum, the Library and the Botanic Garden. Better entertainment offerings would strengthen the Downtown area, as would a new hotel.

5. Implement and Publicize an Anti-Crime Program

Police statistics for Downtown Brooklyn are not frightening by big city standards, but crime is

on many people's minds. In a recent survey of near-Downtown residents, better security was the Downtown improvement requested by the largest number (30 percent) and crime was mentioned as a source of dissatisfaction with the neighborhood by a quarter of the residents. A highly-publicized anti-crime program would help to reassure people and bring Downtown Brooklyn's image closer in line with reality.

6. Involve the Surrounding Neighborhoods in Downtown's Renewal

The neighborhoods surrounding Downtown Brooklyn have not needed a dynamic Downtown to attract residents; the stunning architecture and convenience to Manhattan have been enough. When polled, residents say they like their neighborhoods. Neighborhood organizations have strong, energetic leadership and seem to be imbued with a spirit of renewal. They have been assisted substantially by the local business community.

These well-organized neighborhoods should be an enormous resource for the Downtown area. Though many brownstoners are currently indifferent to Downtown—being more oriented to Manhattan and their own neighborhoods—they would benefit in many ways from a stronger Downtown. Efforts should therefore be made to convince them of their stake in Downtown renewal and to enlist their help in attracting businesses and other activities to Brooklyn.

7. Spread Neighborhood Revival

The dramatic revival of neighborhoods around Downtown Brooklyn over the past decade or two has strengthened the spirit as well as the economic and social well-being of the Borough; and there are many more valuable vacant housing units suitable for rehabilitation. A survey of near-Downtown residents found that seven out of eight households like living there. By identifying deteriorating areas that have the location, design and architecture to attract new residents—and then mobilizing government programs to initiate revival—the City would strengthen its labor force and tax base and at the same time relieve some of the pressures on housing prices in neighborhoods that have already been revived.

HOW TO DO IT

Negotiated Investment Strategy

Investors considering any of the four deterring entryways to Downtown Brooklyn seem to be discouraged by conditions in the other three. To succeed with plans for each will quite probably require

commitments to complete them all. A process is needed to elicit those commitments simultaneously. Such a process was proposed by Regional Plan in 1971. A similar process was instituted by The Netherlands government and tested by the Kettering Foundation in three American cities under the title of Negotiated Investment Strategy. The details vary, even in the three Kettering experiments, but the essence is the same: (1) the local area proposes what it wants, to be modified by the negotiation process; (2) private enterprises and all levels of government make simultaneous commitments to take complementary actions that probably would not have been done separately; and (3) the agreements are subject to joint periodic review to ensure progress. This strategy would precede the six-month public review by the Community Planning Board, the City Planning Commission and the Board of Estimate. What the Strategy provides is a picture of what Downtown Brooklyn will be like if several steps are taken together.

In Brooklyn's situation, Regional Plan might start the process by identifying private sector participants willing to consider a Downtown investment or business location. They will identify the conditions they need to put employees or investment Downtown. Then public and civic sector teams can be set up and the formal process begun. Public commitments of the kind that might win private commitments:

- the advance commitment of the City and/or State to occupy a significant portion of new office space;
- tax and other incentives to bring in private buildings at rents of about \$20 a square foot;
- reconstruction of the Nevins Street subway station in conjunction with a new building there;
- Urban Development Action Grants from the federal government to pay for landscaping, subway improvements and other amenities;
- rehabilitation of the other vacant and deteriorating buildings in the area, primarily housing.

In return, private firms would make commitments to occupy, say, three million square feet of offices. Some developers might commit to building housing and others to a hotel. Still other firms would sign onto MetroTech. Merchants along Fulton Mall would be asked for actions appropriate to the extra shopping dollars the projects would bring in. The higher education and cultural institutions would seek funds to expand activities linked to Downtown. Financial organizations with a stake in Downtown would participate as well as other sources of investment.

In the Kettering experiment in St. Paul, an agreement on major redevelopment programs was

negotiated among a federal team from nine agencies, a State team from six agencies, and a City team that included not only the Mayor and other City staff but also bankers and other investors. The federal team promised unanimous support for a series of federal grants from several agencies, including Urban Development Action Grants, street and highway improvements, and housing subsidies; transfer of a Post Office; and housing mortgage guarantees. They promised specific public improvements and funds for land acquisition. The State promised funds for a bikeway, a piece of land from the State Fair grounds, assistance in solving a river pollution issue and prompt review of the proposed solution. The Port Authority also pledged site acquisition and development funds. A corporate land-owner promised cooperation in solving the pollution problem on its site, which was needed for development. The official regional planning agency was involved to assure prompt federally-required reviews.

A subcommittee of the Committee for Economic Development (CED), a national business leadership group, reviewed the three Negotiated Investment Strategy (NIS) experiments in St. Paul, Gary and Columbus, Ohio. They saw the process as likely to attract private investment because it demonstrated that the public sector could relieve "uncertainty about public priorities and the investment climate in the city" and reduce the risks involved in "deciding that a particular locality shows promise as an investment location." Some CED reviewers were worried about the process being captured by a few interests or being too cumbersome, but "overall, the general reaction of Subcommittee members to the Negotiated Investment Strategy approach was favorable. It was seen to be addressed to an important set of concerns that have not been resolved by traditional efforts at coordination."

Another observer of the St. Paul process said, "When the private sector saw the public was getting its act together and making commitments, they made commitments that had been held back." In fact, private support was such that when one private investor dropped out of an NIS project, another quickly stepped in. Furthermore, broad community support kept the projects moving through changes of administration at some levels.

In regard to Brooklyn, one of the principal advisors to this project said: "What I see coming out of this more than anything else is a structured way of building dialogue. I for one don't have a better alternative. We've talked about some of these problems for years, but we haven't talked about them together."

Negotiations of this type also help to minimize the incentives needed to attract private investment.

With negotiation, one can establish how much subsidy is necessary to get the private pieces into the project. And if commitments can be obtained for several new activities at once, public and private, less public incentive is necessary.

Who Should Do What?

One of Brooklyn's assets is the positive activity going on. Even as we developed these recommendations, programs to accomplish many of them were initiated or expanded.

1. The Negotiated Investment Strategy public-private-civic partnership should be initiated when there is sufficient interest from the private sector. **Regional Plan Association** should take the initiative to sound out corporations and identify those willing to participate in such a negotiation. Then, the **Brooklyn Borough President, Deputy Mayor for Finance and Economic Development and Chairman of the City Planning Commission** should help establish the negotiating group.

This is a promising time for a public-private-civic partnership because the City and State have some leverage—the possible outmovement from Manhattan of their own office jobs and the program to refurbish subway stations. The negotiations should consider first the packages needed to make Metro-Tech succeed and to attract substantial private office development; the housing program should be the next priority. By identifying what private investors need to put jobs and money into Downtown Brooklyn and focusing public policies on those needs, this one recommendation will lead to many improvements.

2. **The Mayor** should reiterate the City policy of strengthening the borough downtowns as major centers and continue to energetically "sell" the LIRR Terminal and Brooklyn Center sites for offices. The City should be prepared to offer substantial incentives now to bring in new activities because these can be expected to create a new image and magnetism that will continue to attract without subsidies. The costs of letting Downtown Brooklyn decline will be far greater than the subsidies needed to generate growth.

3. **The City Department of Housing Preservation and Development, the New York City Partnership and Urban Development Corporation** should move ahead with their plans for housing between Fulton Mall and Atlantic Avenue.

4. **The Fulton Mall Improvement Association and Downtown Brooklyn Development Association** of the Chamber of Commerce, with **Regional Plan Association**, should bring together the surrounding neighborhood associations to discuss merchandise and conditions that would attract more shoppers

from those neighborhoods. After discussing merchandise, these groups might discuss other services they want Downtown.

5. **This triumvirate** also should seek out retail outlets that do not duplicate those in Brooklyn neighborhood shopping strips, e.g., a cluster of well-known discount stores, another department store.

6. **The Fulton Mall Improvement Association** should, in addition: (1) organize meetings like those described in 4 above with Downtown employees, by professional association (e.g., lawyers) or by building (e.g., Con Ed, City Fire Department); (2) consider expanding its membership to merchants near the Mall on side streets clearly linked to the Mall's success; (3) keep high on its agenda joint advertising campaigns and improving the appearance of stores, shopwindows and signs, in keeping with the appearance of the Mall itself; (4) promote Downtown events; (5) expand publicity on parking and how to reach it easily.

7. **The Brooklyn Educational and Cultural Alliance (BECA)**, with **Regional Plan Association**, should reassemble high-level spokesmen for all the higher education institutions to discuss ways in which they can contribute even more to Brooklyn's economy and ways in which the City and business community can strengthen these institutions.

8. **BECA** should reconsider its proposed Downtown arts center, expanded in concept to include lectures and courses. At the same time, they should consider ways to attract more Downtown workers and shoppers to their institutions, e.g., by further publicizing their events Downtown and timing them at the end of the working/shopping day.

9. **The Downtown Brooklyn Development Association** should seek added leadership from among surrounding neighborhoods. This could grow out of the Regional Plan-Fulton Mall meetings described in 4, above.

10. **The City Planning Commission**, with its responsibility for providing the long-range Citywide comprehensive view of policies and the research to support that view, should give more attention to two areas strongly affecting Downtown Brooklyn:

a. **Preserving factory jobs without losing office jobs by trying to steer office jobs into the borough downtowns**, away from factory districts. One policy might be to broaden the requirement imposed in Manhattan on factory building owners to pay relocation costs of a manufacturer displaced by adapting the building for housing. It should be applied outside Manhattan and to displacement of manufacturing for offices as well as for housing. To apply this program to office adaptations would not be simple; it would require a change in the zoning code to distinguish goods handling from office work.

But even if the program must be different, the principle is appropriate. The City Planning Commission should look into it promptly, beginning with M-3 and M-2 zoning districts on the waterfront. The Commission also should study the costs and benefits of allowing the Valley—that portion of Manhattan between Midtown and Downtown—to be used for offices instead of for housing or manufacturing. The Valley seems to be providing office job competition with Downtown Brooklyn.

b. **Getting vacant housing back into use** by (1) identifying as many neighborhoods as possible that are now deteriorating but have the physical potential to attract residents able to pay the full costs of purchasing, rehabilitating and keeping up the housing, (2) stimulating large scale private rehabilitation and (3) using some of the profit to help families already living there. This would moderate upward pressure on housing costs in several parts of Brooklyn.

11. **The Downtown Brooklyn Development Association** and **Fulton Mall Improvement Association** should work out with the police a program to assure people that Downtown Brooklyn is as safe a place as they will find for working, shopping and attending various events. Then the associations should convey the enhanced sense of security to prospective users of Downtown. **Regional Plan Association** and the **Citizens Crime Commission** should carry out their proposed anti-crime project in Downtown Brooklyn. **New York State** should consider adopting the New Jersey State aid to cities for foot patrolmen.

12. The neighborhood association and brownstone committee efforts to sell the whole Borough as a place to live should be augmented. The **Chamber of Commerce** should systematically catalogue these efforts and work with the **Borough President** and groups already publicizing Brooklyn residential areas to expand public information about the residential opportunities in Brooklyn.

13. **Regional Plan Association** should build a Citywide coalition for subway station improvements, with Downtown Brooklyn's a top priority.

14. **The Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce** should take the responsibility for using this Downtown Brooklyn report and the audio-visual materials to be produced in this project's second phase. They should work closely with the **Borough President's office**, **Regional Plan**, and the several **City economic development agencies** to use these materials to enhance Brooklyn's image.

15. **Regional Plan Association** should organize a Borough-wide Conference with **BECA**, the **Chamber of Commerce** and **Borough President's office** to mobilize broad support for Downtown enhancement and begin a comprehensive attack on the obstacles to it.

FINDINGS

THE CASE FOR LOCATING JOBS IN DOWNTOWN BROOKLYN

Regional Plan has identified 17 assets that make Downtown Brooklyn the best office location for firms that have relations with Manhattan and a good location for high technology industry and research and new market rate housing.

Accessibility

1. Proximity to Manhattan. Maps 1 and 2 show the relation of Downtown Brooklyn to the Manhattan Central Business District (CBD). Downtown Brooklyn should be considered a third node of the Manhattan CBD. In fact, it is closer to Lower Manhattan than Midtown is: 10-15 minutes by subway to Lower Manhattan, 20-25 minutes to Midtown. There are some possible office sites closer as the crow flies (e.g., Fulton Ferry, Long Island City), but none as close by subway—the way most trips to and from the CBD are made.

2. Public transit. Downtown Brooklyn has the densest network of public transit in the United States, with the possible exception of 42nd Street. Almost every subway line stops at one or more of its 10 stations, along with bus lines from all directions in Brooklyn and Queens; the Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) ties suburban Long Island to Downtown Brooklyn.

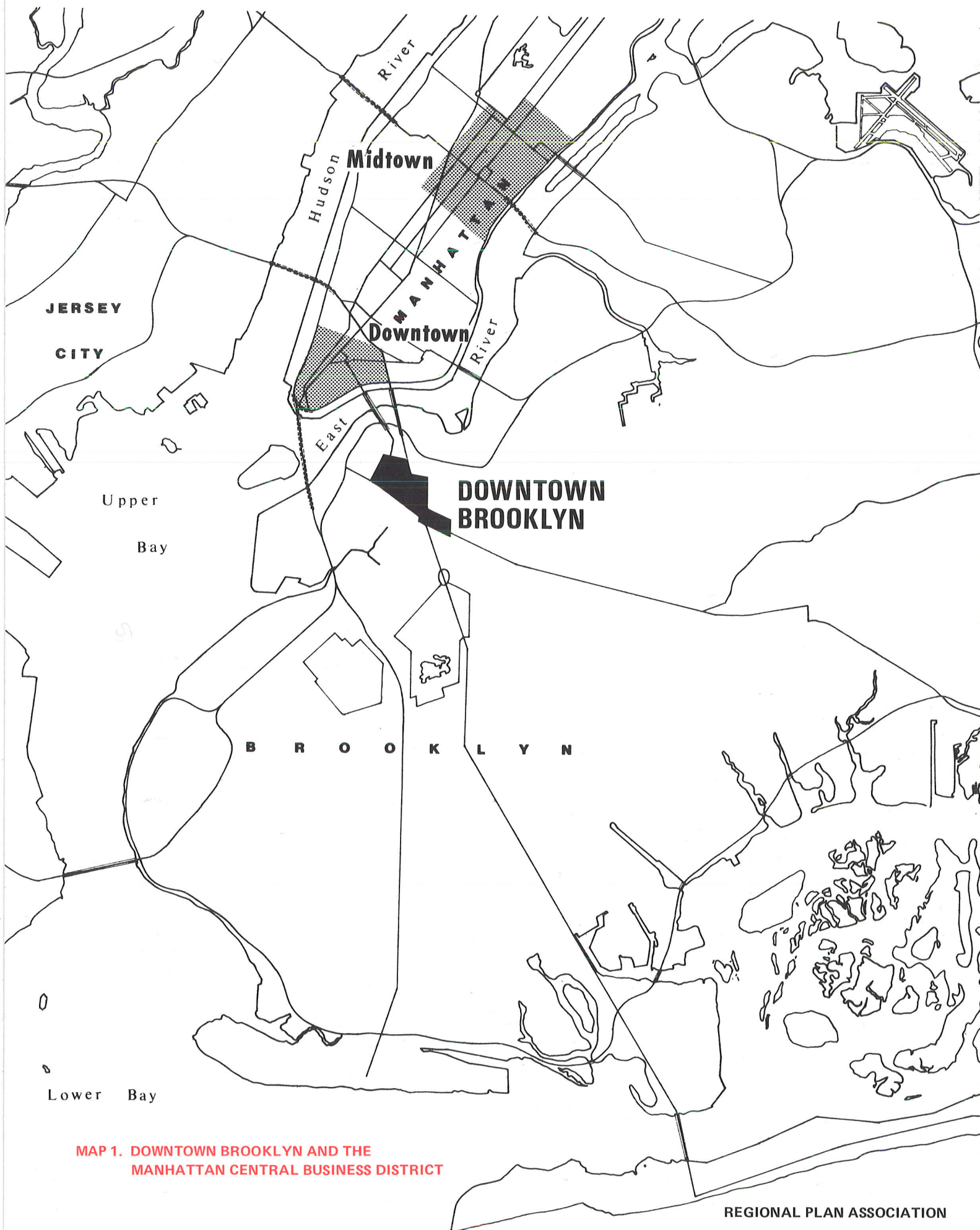
3. Auto access to Downtown Brooklyn is much easier than to Manhattan. Downtown traffic is not heavy, and parking is ample, with more than 10,000 off-street spaces (map 3). The Brooklyn-Queens Expressway links Downtown Brooklyn to Long Island and New Jersey.

Strong Foundations To Build On

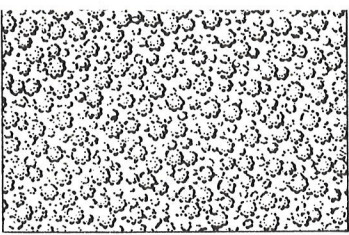
4. A solid white collar base, with over 40,000 office workers and some 3,000 City, State and federal court employees; the headquarters of five City agencies: Finance, Transit, Fire, Education and Youth Board; and the NAACP's new national headquarters (map 4). Downtown Brooklyn is as



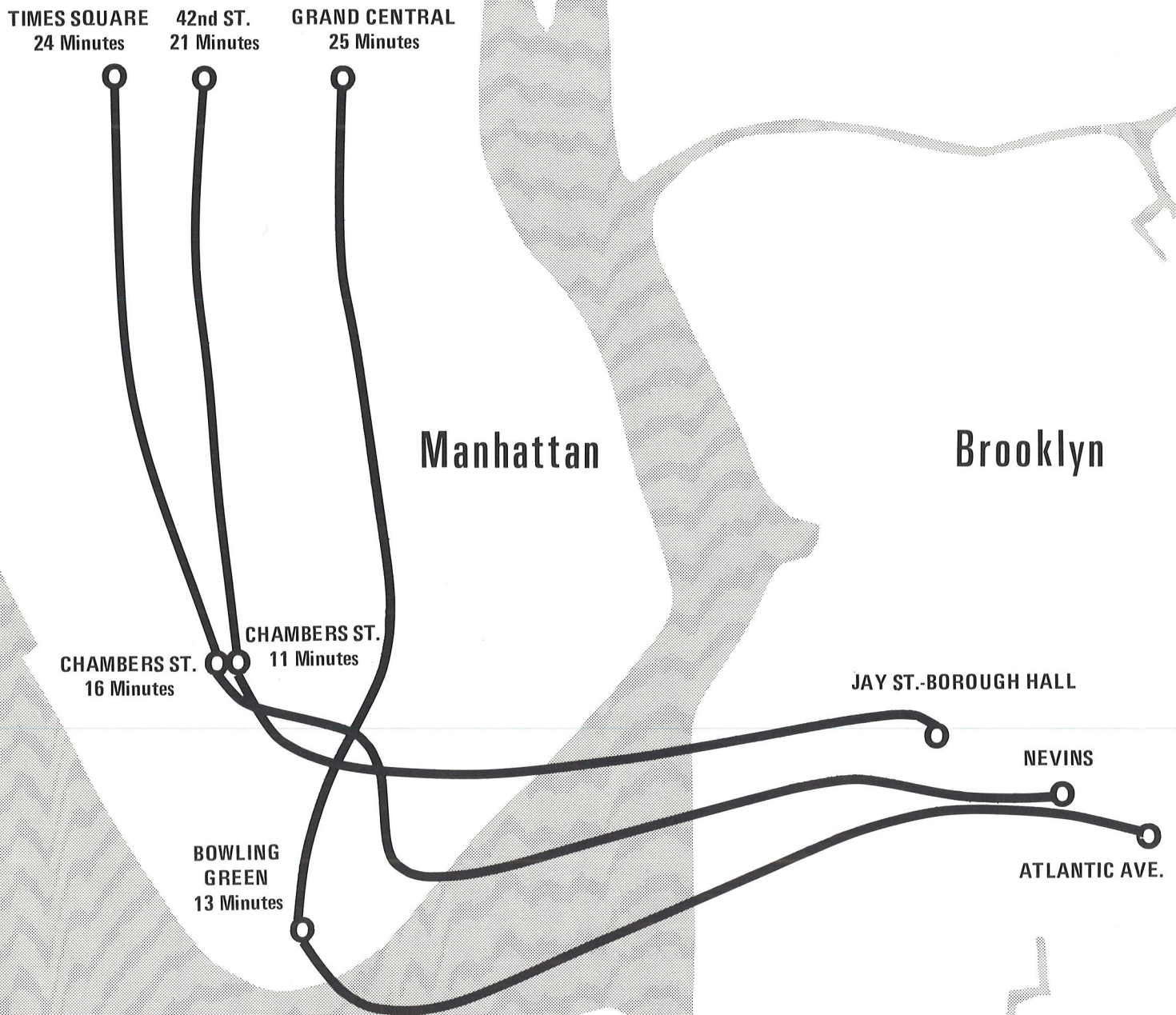
Proximity to Lower Manhattan is one of Downtown Brooklyn's assets as a business center—10 minutes by subway, closer than Lower Manhattan is to Midtown. It should be considered a third node of the Manhattan Central Business District.

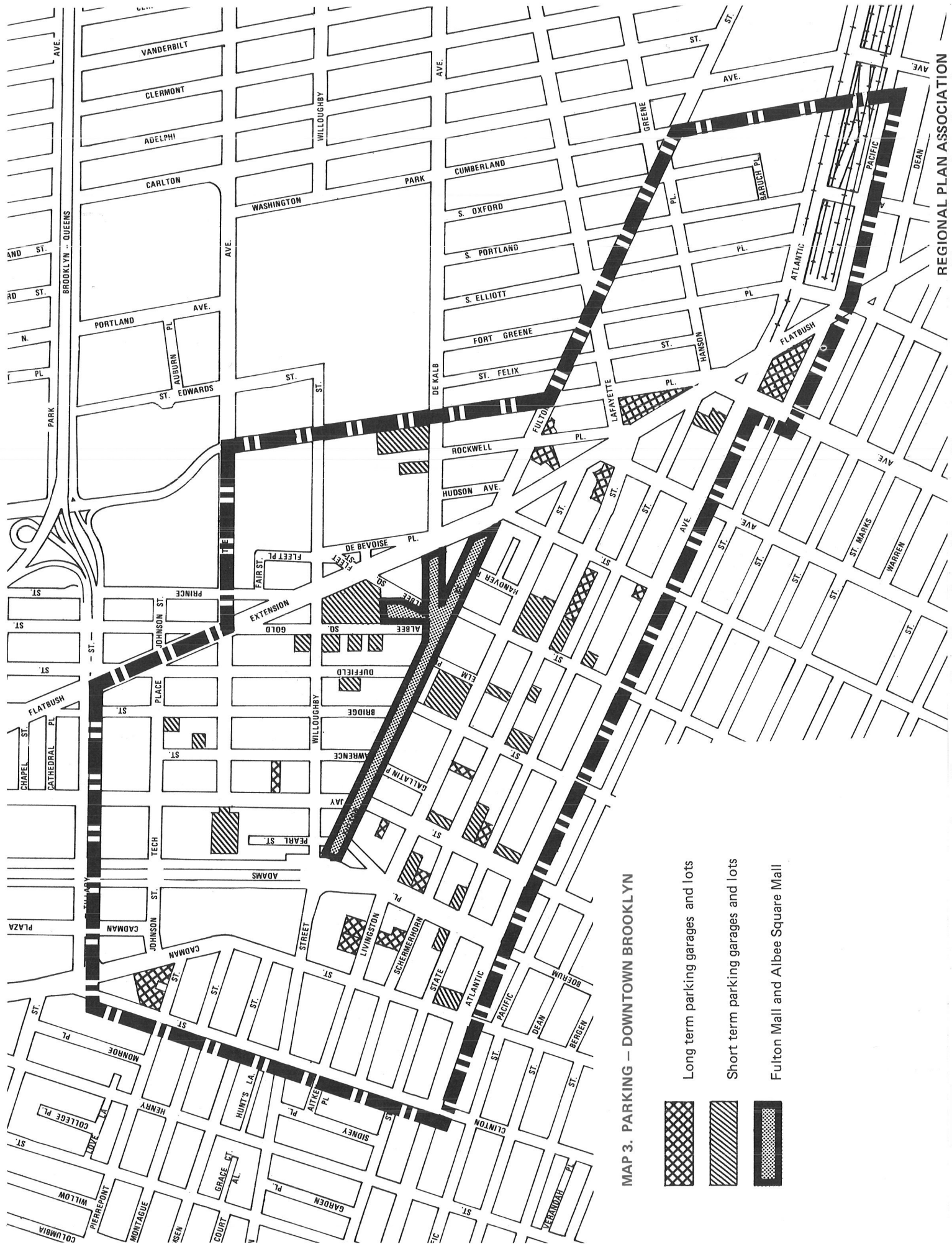


MAP 1. DOWNTOWN BROOKLYN AND THE
MANHATTAN CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT






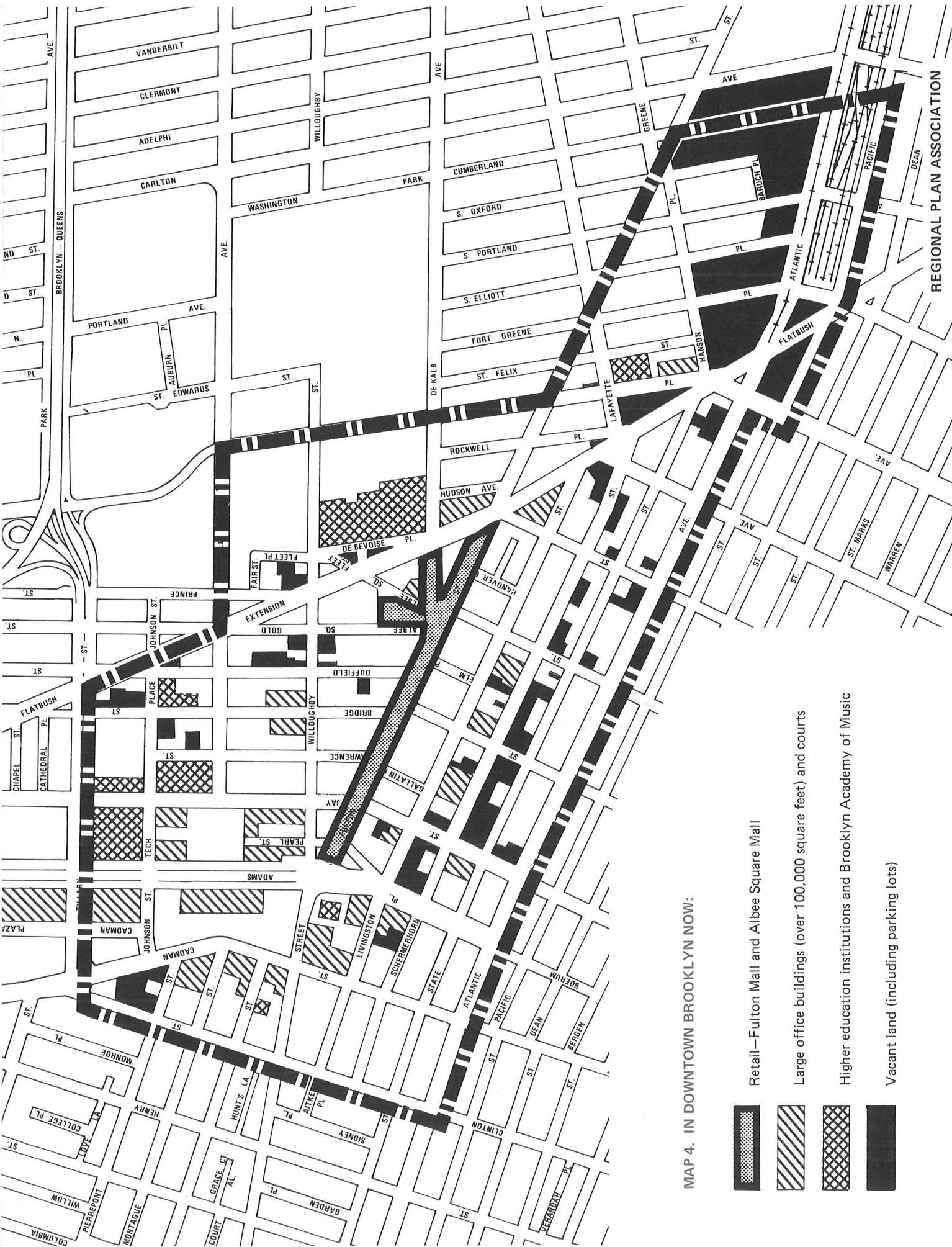
MAP 2. TYPICAL SUBWAY TRAVEL TIMES (Mid-Morning)
FROM DOWNTOWN BROOKLYN









MAP 3. PARKING - DOWNTOWN BROOKLYN

-  Long term parking garages and lots
-  Short term parking garages and lots
-  Fulton Mall and Albee Square Mall



MAP 4. IN DOWNTOWN BROOKLYN NOW:

-  Retail—Fulton Mall and Albee Square Mall
-  Large office buildings (over 100,000 square feet) and courts
-  Higher education institutions and Brooklyn Academy of Music
-  Vacant land (including parking lots)

large as downtown Baltimore in retail space; in office space, 80 percent as large. In this Region, Downtown Brooklyn ranks third in retail and office space, behind Manhattan and Newark.

5. Business services. In addition to 25 banks and a Business Library with 22 newspapers, 1,800 periodicals, 3,000 directories, and 100,000 books, Downtown Brooklyn offers good business services, such as office equipment repair, rental and sales; copying and printing; and office supplies and furniture. Messenger service to Manhattan is readily available at a reasonable cost. So is cab service, though there is more reliance on telephoned car service than in Manhattan. LaGuardia Airport can be reached by car or taxi in 15 minutes, Kennedy in 30 minutes and Newark in about 45. Downtown Brooklyn is about 40 minutes away from Kennedy by the JFK subway express, 20 minutes closer than Midtown Manhattan. LaGuardia can be reached by subway and bus in about an hour, the same as from Midtown; Newark can be reached by subway, PATH and limousine, also in about an hour.

6. Employee services. Downtown Brooklyn has over 75 restaurants, including 22 high quality establishments, 23 coffee shops and middle-priced restaurants, and 28 fast food restaurants. Middle Eastern specialty restaurants (and food stores) are well-known, as are Gage & Tollner and Junior's.

There are 450 retail stores, with sales of \$1¼ million a day. Abraham & Straus' flagship store is on Fulton Mall in a handsomely restored Art Deco building. Fulton and Albee Square Malls have a variety of small shoe, jewelry and clothing stores and familiar stores like Barnes & Noble, The Gap, Strawberry and the Workbench.

7. Five downtown higher education institutions—Long Island University, Polytechnic Institute of New York, Brooklyn Law School, St. Francis and City University Technical College—offer students as part-time employees, faculty for consulting and special projects, special courses for employees and executives, and specialized libraries.

8. Health services. Two teaching hospitals—Brooklyn Hospital on Downtown's edge and Long Island College Hospital a few blocks away—have outpatient clinics and are within two or three minutes of any place Downtown by ambulance. Affiliated with Downstate Medical Center, both are undergoing major upgrading at a total cost of \$125 million. These hospitals bring 6,000-7,000 people to the near-Downtown area every day. Downtown is also a center of doctors' and dentists' offices.

9. Available sites. New York City's Public Development Corporation has identified several office sites on which construction could begin within 18 months. Of prime value are 18 vacant acres, publicly owned, on and around the LIRR Terminal. There are also dozens of meeting places of all sizes available Downtown. A list can be obtained from the Downtown Brooklyn Development Association.

An Enjoyable Place To Be

10. Pleasant surroundings. Though a subway stop or two from Manhattan, Downtown Brooklyn retains the ambience of a small downtown, including a strong sense of community. Heads of the back-offices of Manhattan-based corporations, who would be lost among the top executives and middle managers in Manhattan, are welcomed to community leadership in Brooklyn. Borough Hall Park provides green contrast, with architectural landmarks at each end, Borough Hall and the Post Office. Abraham & Straus preserves the Art Deco of the 1930s; Gage and Tollner preserves the 1890s.

11. Culture and entertainment. The Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM) is an international center of dance and avant-garde music; the distinguished American composer, Lukas Foss, conducts the Brooklyn Philharmonic there. Other performing arts are available at the Brooklyn Arts and Cultural Association (BACA) Downtown Cultural Center and several churches and colleges, as well as outdoor events on Fulton Mall. The Brooklyn Museum and Brooklyn Botanic Garden are world class institutions, about as far from Downtown as the Metropolitan Museum is from Midtown Manhattan. Other attractions include the oldest stained glass windows in America in St. Ann's church; the Long Island Historical Society museum; and paintings and sculpture in the Borough Hall Rotunda Gallery and BACA Downtown Cultural Center.

Labor Force

12. White collar workers readily available. Downtown Brooklyn can draw on a large white collar labor force, including some 300,000 people who live in Brooklyn and work in Manhattan, and another 50-75,000 CBD employees from suburban Nassau County who live within easier reach of Downtown Brooklyn than of their present jobs. In fact, over half of the 6.7 million people who live on Long Island can reach Downtown Brooklyn faster and easier than the Manhattan CBD. More than 40 percent of those residents were employed in 1981. Some examples of LIRR travel times to Downtown Brooklyn: Garden City, 35

minutes; Massapequa, 50; Huntington, 60. Southern Queens residents along the LIRR and the A and CC subway lines can reach Downtown Brooklyn without going to Manhattan.

In the fall of 1982, Long Island University (LIU) conducted a telephone poll of Brooklyn neighborhoods within 20 minutes of Downtown, an area encompassing some 235,000 people. Nearly half of the adults had college degrees, and only 10 percent did not have high school diplomas. Nearly two-thirds of those who were employed held white-collar positions: over one-third were professionals, one-seventh clericals and one-eighth salespersons or paraprofessionals. Only one respondent in 14 worked in Downtown Brooklyn, and 30 percent of those who worked elsewhere would prefer to work Downtown. In addition, one in six households had at least one potential office worker not then employed who would take a job Downtown. Many mothers prefer working closer to home than Manhattan, according to the chief Brooklyn executive of a large corporation, who called clerical-secretarial employees better in Brooklyn than in Manhattan.

13. Neighborhoods for executives, professionals and managers whose jobs move to Downtown Brooklyn. Brooklyn's neighborhoods include suburban-like blocks near subway stations in Bay Ridge, Bensonhurst and Flatbush and the revived and reviving brownstone neighborhoods of Brooklyn Heights, Cobble Hill, Boerum Hill, Carroll Gardens, Sunset Park, Park Slope, Prospect Heights, Clinton Hill and Ft. Greene (map 5). These neighborhoods have strong assets that high quality employees of Downtown enterprises would find attractive, whether scientists and engineers for MetroTech or managers, professionals, and executives for corporations. These assets include:

- Architectural beauty that few cities can match, in and around historic landmark districts.
- Quiet streets, for a city, with residences more separated from commercial traffic than in Manhattan, and by far the lowest vehicle miles driven per capita in the country.
- Subway service within walking distance of half the population and a thick network of bus lines.
- A strong sense of community in well-organized neighborhoods, made up of varied and interesting residents.
- Much lower housing prices and greater sense of spaciousness than Manhattan.
- Easy access to a wide range of higher education institutions and cultural institutions of world quality.
- Prospect Park and several waterfronts; Gateway National Recreation Area with 4½ miles

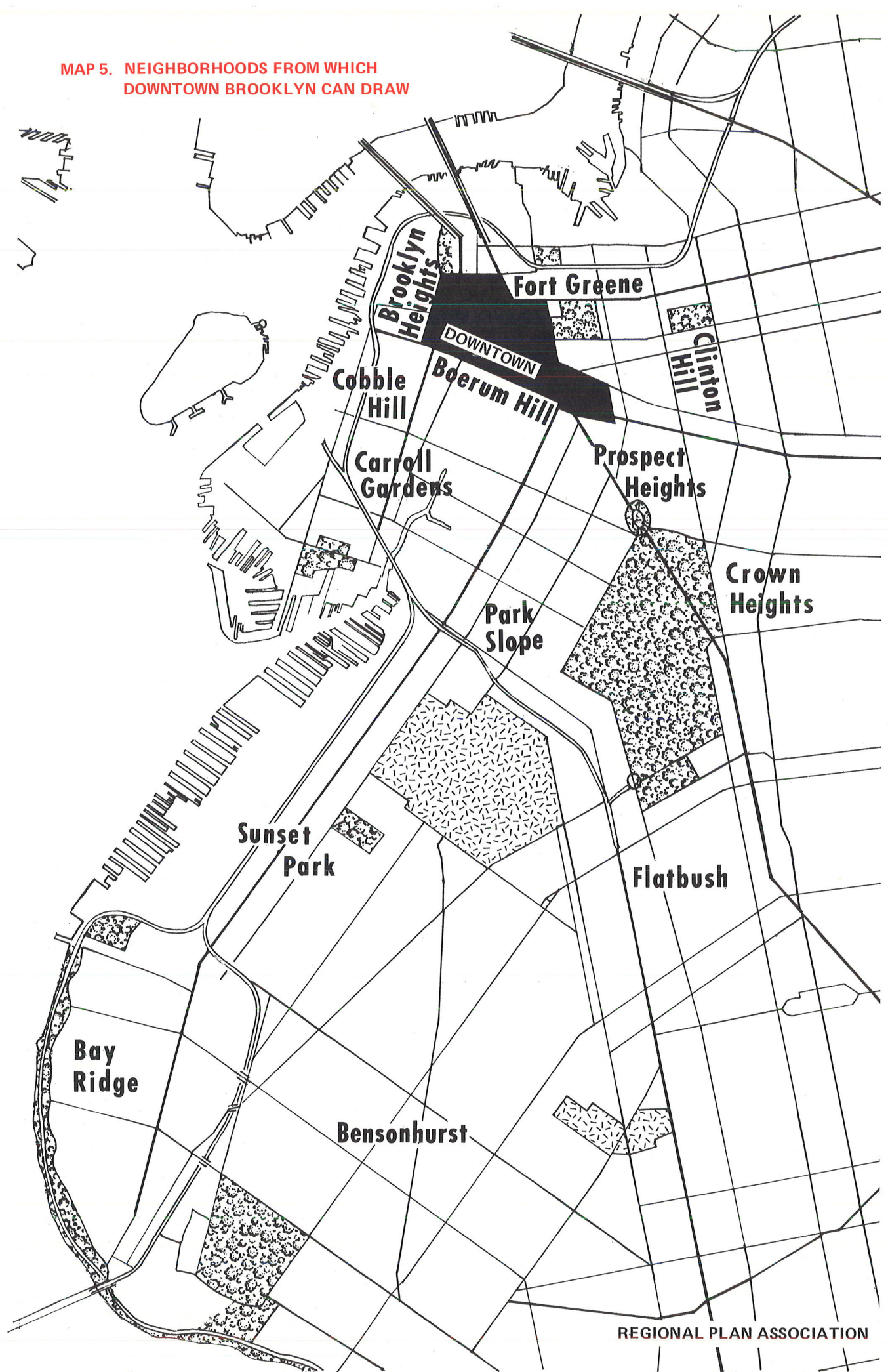


Business services are plentiful in Downtown Brooklyn—including 25 banks and a substantial Business Library.

About \$1¼ million a day is spent in some 450 stores, half on Fulton Mall—a buses-only shopping street for pedestrians—and in the enclosed Albee Square Mall, where shopper surveys show almost unanimous satisfaction.



MAP 5. NEIGHBORHOODS FROM WHICH
DOWNTOWN BROOKLYN CAN DRAW



of well-kept ocean beach and Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, a nationally significant bird flyway right near the subway.

- Easy auto access to Long Island beaches and the New Jersey shore (via Staten Island).

While handsome historic homes sell for upwards of \$250,000, particularly in Park Slope and Brooklyn Heights, many potentially handsome homes are available from about \$75,000—plus rehabilitation costs—in Fort Greene, Boerum Hill, Clinton Hill, southern Park Slope and Carroll Gardens. Less well known is Sunset Park, where some of the housing stock is old and choice but much is simply good and solid, and most are bargains right now. A rapid pace of rehabilitation continues, and there remain literally dozens of blocks worthy of rehabilitation close to blocks that already have been improved. Compared to Manhattan, this is high-quality housing at a low price.

The reviving near-Downtown neighborhoods offer more than housing; for many people, a strong sense of community is an attraction. The qualities demonstrated by local community leaders should be valuable for employers as well. They have learned to deal with all levels of government, banks and other businesses after achieving neighborhood consensus, and they work hard and long for their goals, i.e., rehabilitating their neighborhoods and their own houses. Brownstone neighborhoods seem to attract creative leadership types.

Brooklyn's public schools have been improving dramatically for students of all competences, with sharp increases in the percentage of students reading and doing mathematics at grade level. In the LIU poll, only five percent made negative comments about the schools. Private and parochial schools of high quality are also available in these neighborhoods and Downtown. Three Downtown private schools are regarded as the equal of Manhattan's best—Packer, St. Ann's and Friends; other respected private schools are in residential areas, along with a system of respected parochial schools. In most neighborhoods, parents contribute to school quality with enrichment programs and help with the basics.

In addition, the dedicated students can go ahead in three special kinds of junior high and high schools: (1) "Magnet school" junior highs, including Philippa Schuyler in Bushwick and Mark Twain in Coney Island, which were recently called "New York City's No. 1 and No. 2 junior high schools" by *The New York Times*. (2) Brooklyn's "optional" high schools—Edward R. Murrow, John Dewey and the Medical Science Institute at Midwood—which select a balanced student body from all over the Borough, half with an average school record, a quarter below average, and a quarter above average. The students emerge with high test scores

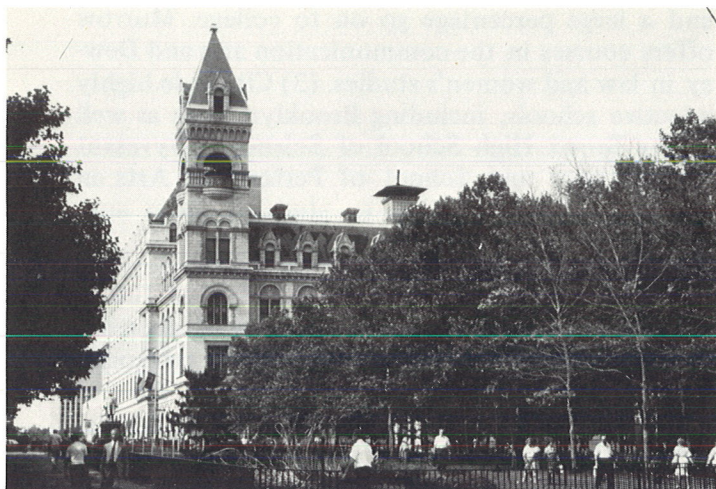
and a large percentage go on to college. Murrow offers courses in the communication arts and Dewey in law and women's studies. (3) Citywide highly selective schools, including Brooklyn Tech as well as the Bronx High School of Science, Stuyvesant High School and School of Performing Arts in Manhattan, are available to students from anywhere in the City.

14. Trainable workers. Projections of future work force composition show a marked decrease in the number of workers in entry-level categories as people from the baby boom mature at the end of the decade. If companies must compete for decreasing numbers of entry-level workers, they will be forced to increase wages or automate. "An alternative," according to a 1982 *Harvard Business Review* article called "The Plight of the Underclass," "would be to find a new source of workers and begin training now to guarantee an uninterrupted supply in the future: unemployed youths in inner-city neighborhoods. Business will be forced to train and hire them within ten years as the market absorbs other sources of labor. The company that learns how to tap this labor market will have a competitive advantage." Brooklyn has institutions interested in working with businesses to do this, including the City University's Technical College (Downtown), Medgar Evers and Kingsborough Community College, the well-thought-of Private Industry Council (PIC), and an organization supported by Brooklyn's businesses, Council on Brooklyn Youth (COBY). IBM's very successful plant in Bedford-Stuyvesant demonstrates that skills can be upgraded in Brooklyn.

Support For Investors

15. Organizations ready to facilitate projects. Firms ready to put funds or employees in Downtown Brooklyn can be confident of support from both public and private organizations. The Brooklyn Borough President's Office and Brooklyn business leadership, represented in the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce, want Downtown expansion and are organized to accomplish it in cooperation with New York City's Public Development Corporation, Office for Economic Development and City Planning Department, all with knowledgeable staff dedicated to Downtown Brooklyn's enhancement. New York Telephone, A&S, Metropolitan Savings Bank, Citibank, Brooklyn Union Gas, Con Ed, and the Dime Savings Bank have long been stalwarts of Downtown Brooklyn leadership. The last four also have substantial home improvement programs throughout the Borough.

16. Progress on downtown improvements. A well-conceived 1969 urban renewal plan is gradu-



ally being carried out with business-Borough-City-civic cooperation. Six subway stations are currently being renovated; an auto-free bus mall is being completed along Fulton Street, the central shopping spine; prospective developers are being shown a distinguished architect's model to attract them to publicly-owned sites between Fulton Mall and the LIRR Terminal; and the City and Polytechnic Institute of New York have created MetroTech to expand Polytechnic's facilities and attract high-technology research and industry to the area north of Fulton Mall.

Among the completed projects are Albee Square Mall, an enclosed shopping center with 80 stores costing \$30 million, and the central section of Fulton Mall—a buses-only pedestrian mall along the main shopping street, half completed and scheduled to be finished from Adams Street to Flatbush Avenue within two years. The LIRR Terminal has been partially rebuilt to improve train movements. BAM and Borough Hall are being refurbished; St. Ann's Church is being rehabilitated. Cadman Plaza housing development has replaced blight (part before 1969, part after). Con Ed and New York Telephone have built new offices along a corridor from Fulton Mall to the LIRR Terminal. The LIRR Terminal area has been cleared for construction. A parking garage with ground floor retail space and underground truck service to Fulton Mall has been constructed.

Credit for Corporate Social Responsibility

17. Identification with Brooklyn's renaissance. This is the moment when a major corporate commitment to Downtown Brooklyn could set off a dramatic revival. For companies considering such a commitment, this is an added incentive. The firm that leads a corporate move into Downtown Brooklyn—as GTE did in Stamford—will long be identified

with Brooklyn's renaissance, and will get credit for contributing to the economic and social strength of the City and Region.

TURNING ASSETS INTO EXPANSION

Improving Brooklyn's Image

Manhattan's recent office growth has pushed enough employment across the East River to fill almost all of Downtown Brooklyn's vacant office space. To catch a share of the next office construction surge, this is the time to prepare for new office buildings. There are obstacles, however, to attracting the big commitments needed to do that. The biggest is Brooklyn's image as perceived from Manhattan. Manhattan business executives seem to know Manhattan and the suburbs but not the other New York boroughs. Brooklyn's negative image seems primarily the result of people overlooking Brooklyn's assets, which easily outweigh the problems. A major objective of this project will therefore be to publicize the assets in an attempt to bring Brooklyn's reputation closer in line with reality.

Brooklyn's problems—pockets of high unemployment and poverty, aging buildings and public facilities, and a financially-burdened City government—are typical of American cities and exist in Manhattan as well. Clearly, they do not discourage office location there. To many employers, the fact that a third of Brooklyn's residents are black and a sixth Hispanic is a deterrent to locating in Downtown Brooklyn. Again, Manhattan's similar minority share does not slow its business growth.

Changing the Appearance in Four Entryways

Showing Downtown Brooklyn to investors may not be enough to overcome its image problem because there are four entryways that perpetuate the



History kept alive: Landmarks like the old Post Office building (far left) have been preserved; Gage & Tollner recreates the decor of the 1890s; St. Ann's Church preserves the oldest stained glass windows in America.

image. (A fifth—from Brooklyn Heights, Court Street and Borough Hall Park in the west—is a welcoming entryway.) In addition, the completed portion of Fulton Mall has not fully achieved its design intent. Development planned for each of these entryways will transform them to attractive places. These four areas deserve the highest priority in economic development efforts: (1) Fulton Mall to the LIRR Terminal; (2) the Polytechnic area; (3) south of Fulton Mall to Atlantic Avenue; (4) subway stations.

1. Offices: Fulton Mall to the Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) Terminal. (Map 6.)

a. Present state. There is extensive deterioration and vacant land adjacent to BAM and the Williamsburg Savings Bank, one of the City's best office buildings. The LIRR Terminal area has 18 vacant acres at one of the best public transit access points in America. From the convergence of Flatbush and Fulton at the end of Fulton Mall, past the Telephone Company and Con Ed buildings, Flatbush Avenue is underused and Fulton Street is a disaster.

b. Plan and progress. The 1969 redevelopment plan for offices all along Flatbush Avenue remains desirable, but the expectation that Baruch College would build a campus on the LIRR Terminal is obsolete, given extremely tight public capital funds, the decline in college-age population and the strong private higher education presence in Downtown Brooklyn. The whole Terminal site should be used for offices. The Fulton Street area from Vanderbilt to the Mall is a target for rehabilitation, mainly housing, but needs a concerted effort to complement the office corridor. The BAM-area Local Development Corporation is rehabilitating the Lafayette Hotel across from BAM, and its adjacent townhouses are being fixed up; one is now a

restaurant. New and rehabilitated housing are on the way across the street from the LIRR Terminal. Plans are being pursued to rebuild two empty theatres for Cable TV and dance rehearsal studios as well as Twyla Tharp's dance company headquarters. A small park will transform a barren triangle. New York State seems inclined to fill the empty YMCA on Hanson Place with State employees now housed in the World Trade Center.

c. LIRR Terminal: how dense a development? From Regional Plan Association's point of view, this corridor—particularly the LIRR Terminal site—should be built to high density, appropriate to the excellent transportation in Downtown Brooklyn. If the Floor Area Ratio averaged 10, for example, more than seven million square feet of office space would house 20,000 to 33,000 employees.

But this prescription depends on attracting that much office activity. New York City's Public Development Corporation is considering a lower density design. There are good reasons for it, primarily the benefit of redeveloping the maximum space possible because a lot of the area needs it. Second, an alternative to Manhattan's very high density could be a selling point. Third, construction costs are lower for lower buildings. Unless a very large package can be put together for this highly accessible site, these are strong arguments. The difficult question comes when a project of, say, half the maximum capacity of the site is proposed. Should it be allowed to cover the whole site and preclude the dramatic symbol of revival that a really large project would convey? That decision has to be made with the project in hand, on the basis of information available then.

If the right steps are taken, we think a high-density office center can be attracted to the LIRR Terminal-BAM area. Regional Plan's projection of

new office space throughout the tri-state New York Urban Region totals 140 million square feet in the 1980s, and that construction pace probably will continue into the 1990s. So far, Manhattan has been getting about five million square feet a year. If that pace continues, 90 million square feet will be built outside Manhattan in the 1980s; we think Brooklyn could attract five million of that and another five million in the 1990s. This Flatbush Avenue corridor would be the best location both for the enterprises and for Downtown as a whole.

The eventual **goal** should therefore be 10 million square feet of office space in the Flatbush corridor, new subway stations integrated with the new structures at Nevins Street and Atlantic Avenue, and reconstruction of the LIRR Terminal into a pleasant environment with shops and services. If only part of that can be committed soon, we would recommend starting at the Fulton Mall end of the corridor and leaving the LIRR Terminal site for a development worthy of its accessibility. Meanwhile, the site need not look like the moon. For as little as \$100,000, grass and trees could make it an asset rather than a liability for business prospects.

d. Selling new office space in Downtown Brooklyn. Only very recently has anyone tried to sell an idea of what this corridor could be. Realtors have not been mobilized to sell space in prospective new buildings, nor have the City or State considered new buildings for their own offices. The City is now showing the Cooper-Eckstut plan for new office space, which makes it easier to imagine the potential, but the City is also selling—with what seems like equal enthusiasm—office parks proposed for Baychester Commons in the Bronx, College Point in Queens and Staten Island and conversions in an active industrial area, Long Island City. These sites are isolated from other offices and services and, except for Long Island City, are auto-oriented. They do not take advantage of the City's basic asset: a lot of activities concentrated in an area served by public transit. Not only Regional Plan Association's *Second Regional Plan* but also the official land-use plan for the Region prepared by the Tri-State Regional Planning Commission and the policies of New York State and New York City all emphasize the benefits of putting offices in centers, particularly in existing city centers with the infrastructure and capacity for more activities—and most particularly in centers where added offices would stimulate the growth of other activities, as they would in Downtown Brooklyn.

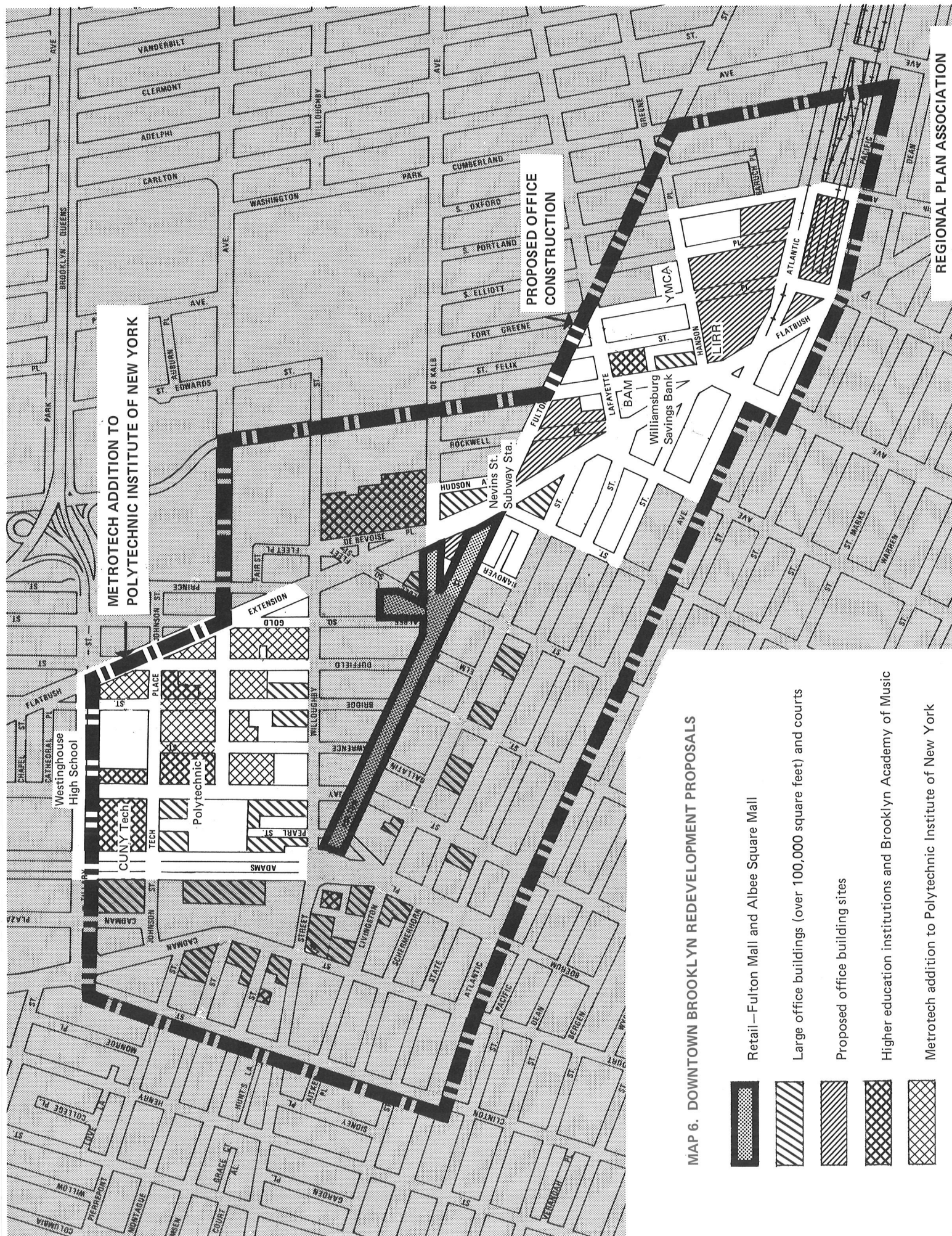
The Public Development Corporation argues that they are offering a range of sites for offices in order to win the attention of locaters. They feel the City can only compete with suburban office locations by offering any kind of environment the

locaters want. The Corporation hopes this will improve the prospects of the borough downtowns simply by getting locaters to think about the boroughs, now usually rejected without serious consideration.






Regional Plan would warn, however, that the biggest obstacle to Downtown growth is the doubt that other investors will follow or that the necessary public investment will be there on time. Unless the City shows strong faith in its downtowns, private firms can be expected to remain skeptical. Second, the City cannot offer the good automobile access or the bucolic settings of the suburbs; its selling point has to be public transit and centrality—a large labor force in every direction. Third, although the City can expect fewer factory jobs and more white collar jobs in the future, prematurely pushing out factory jobs would be a mistake in a City which already has too many unemployed blue collar workers. Replacement of prime factory space with offices should be avoided unless there is a strong payoff in other jobs, another argument for putting the greatest effort into selling borough downtowns for offices. Finally, the City can reasonably show more faith in its borough downtowns because business is changing its negative attitude toward city office locations. National articles on real estate and events in our own Region attest to that. For example, in Newark, two office towers are under construction totalling 870,000 square feet, and there are plans for another new office building alongside each of the two, four in all.

e. The "Valley" vs. Downtown Brooklyn. A large number of offices seeking less expensive space than the prime Manhattan locations seem headed for the Valley between Midtown and Lower Manhattan, where hundreds of thousands of square feet of factory space could be transformed into office space at rents four or five times as high as the factories are paying now and perhaps twice what residents would pay. Factories can be converted into offices with no City approvals because the zoning for industry is the same as for offices, and the requirement that factories displaced by building owners be compensated for their move applies only when factory space is to be used for housing.

In the long run, the City is better off with housing in the Valley and strong downtowns in Brooklyn, Queens and the Bronx, rather than offices in the Valley and weak borough downtowns. The transit system would work better, jobs would be closer to housing, there would be more variety of housing, more people would be attracted to live in New York City *in toto*, and the needed regeneration of the borough downtowns would be more likely. There would be significant short-term costs, however, because the City would have to provide



MAP 6. DOWNTOWN BROOKLYN REDEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

-  Retail—Fulton Mall and Albee Square Mall
-  Large office buildings (over 100,000 square feet) and courts
-  Proposed office building sites
-  Higher education institutions and Brooklyn Academy of Music
-  Metrotech addition to Polytechnic Institute of New York



financial aid or tax breaks for new office construction in the borough downtowns to compete with the Valley rents, especially when most firms would prefer to stay in Manhattan.

2. High Technology: the Polytechnic area.

a. Present condition. The Polytechnic area north of Fulton Mall is bordered by deterioration on three sides. The Myrtle Avenue El was torn down a little more than a decade ago, and the street still looks as it did then; the dinginess is simply more visible. Though some of the stores in the Polytechnic area are very popular, the total visual effect is not attractive.

b. Plan and progress. There is a plan for rebuilding some of these blocks to accommodate high technology jobs that would benefit from proximity to Polytechnic Institute. A joint renewal program of the City and the Institute, the proposed Metropolitan Technology Center, "Metro-Tech," was launched with a "letter of intent" on April 15, 1982. Polytechnic will raise over \$42 million to build a new library and athletic and recreational facilities, and to renovate existing academic space. The City has pledged a minimum of \$16 million for urban renewal, while an additional \$42 million from other government sources will be used for a Conference Center with facilities for 1,000 people and a Telecommunications Teaching and Research Center with 150,000 square feet of seminar, laboratory and classroom space. Commitments to build and occupy 1,744,000 square feet of space for research and development, including a hotel with accommodations for 400 people, are being sought from private firms. With Brooklyn Union Gas, Polytechnic plans to produce dependable and inexpensive power, using waste heat from electric production for heating and air conditioning (Map 6).

Governor Cuomo recently designated Polytechnic and a consortium of other higher-education institutions—including Brooklyn College, New York City Technical College, Medgar Evers' and Queensborough Community College—to be the State's prime center for Telecommunications technology. The Telecommunications Center will be part of MetroTech. The Consortium was selected on the advice of a team from the National Academy of Sciences and the National Academy of Engineering.

c. Resources to achieve the plan. Polytechnic has the largest engineering enrollment (5,000) and awards the most graduate engineering degrees in New York State, fifth in the nation. The Institute's Department of Computer Science, in its fifth year of a major expansion, now awards more advanced degrees than all of the universities in the State of Massachusetts and nearly 70 percent of those in New York State. Engineers are the ele-



The arts Downtown include Borough Hall's Rotunda Gallery (top), Brooklyn Arts and Cultural Association's (BACA) Downtown Cultural Center and the Brooklyn Academy of Music, a major center for the arts—dance companies from all over the world and avant-garde as well as more traditional music.

ment most in demand in high technology industry. In a study for the New York State Science and Technology Foundation, Battelle Columbus Laboratories identified the major locational criterion for attracting and keeping high technology industries as "available professional and technical staff, especially degree engineers . . . The absence of engineering programs detracts from an area's potential participation in the new high-technology industrial development. The absence of any **graduate** degree program carried with it the assumption that little if any significant research is carried out." *Fortune* magazine said recently: "Bell Labs has a better report card in basic research than do the universities, lab officials maintain, because its scientists are in constant contact with development engineers—a critical difference."

The second major locational criterion, according to Battelle, is "proximity to skilled support staff, ranging from tool and die machinists to the highest quality technicians and computer programmers." Polytechnic is across the street from the City University Technical College (CUNY Tech) and next door to Westinghouse Technical High School, which was chosen last year to participate in an experiment in upgrading vocational training because it operates the City's largest vocational program in electronics. In addition, Brooklyn Tech—a Citywide selective high school with a focus on engineering—is only a few blocks away.

d. Further attractions: the proposed setting and university resources. How can Brooklyn attract and keep the top professional and technical staff? "A very pleasant setting," answers the Battelle survey. The MetroTech renewal is aimed at making the immediate area more physically attractive. But physical conditions are not the number one attraction for scientists and engineers, according to a recent survey of firms in "Silicon Valley," the very successful high technology cluster in Santa Clara County, California. According to these firms, the most important element of "an attractive living and working environment" is "university resources. . . A nearby university with strong programs in fields related to high technology can provide companies a continuing source of new employees and opportunities for staff scientists and engineers to attend seminars, participate in research or teach." Firms drawn to MetroTech, in addition to Polytechnic, would have within easy reach such technology institutions as Pratt Institute, Cooper Union, Columbia Engineering School, Stevens Institute, New Jersey Institute of Technology and CCNY Engineering School. For fundamental research, New York City has several world-class biomedical institutions: Rockefeller University, Cornell, Mt. Sinai, Albert Einstein, New York University, Columbia, and Downstate Medical Center.



The Prospect Park facilities: The Brooklyn Botanic Garden (top) is the most popular public facility among residents of near-Downtown neighborhoods, according to a survey conducted by Long Island University for this project. Two-thirds say they go there. Half attend the Brooklyn Museum and enjoy Prospect Park itself.



Brooklyn Hospital, next to Downtown, is being rebuilt; affiliated with Downstate Medical Center, a mile away, it provides emergency, out-patient and preventive as well as in-patient care.

e. Mobilizing the whole Region's resources.

What this Region needs to attract a large share of high technology jobs, according to numerous reports, conferences and personal interviews, is a systematic mobilization of the Region's resources to provide what high technology developers and manufacturers need and to publicize their availability. Polytechnic and the City are committed to provide this through MetroTech. Polytechnic has already organized a consortium of four additional universities to cooperate in the development of an industrial/institutional research center for telecommunications, imaging sciences and office automation.

MetroTech can also provide manufacturing space, and there are many other potential sites nearby:

- along the Flatbush Avenue Extension, next door;
- at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, with its Free Trade Zone, 16 acres of vacant land and a prospective co-generation plant, half a mile away;

- an industrial park at the Rheingold Brewery site about a mile away;
- the huge Brooklyn Army Terminal, a mile or so away.

High technology manufacturing could flourish as far away as the Meadowlands, only a half-dozen miles distant, with extensive manufacturing sites available. "High tech firms prefer to move into an already existing, carefully controlled, light industrial park. Few companies will consider a location in a drab warehouse district," the Silicon Valley report noted. So the immediate area around MetroTech should be transformed to attract such firms. But, in fact, warehouse areas need not be drab, and clearly there is a new attitude not only toward cities generally but even toward old multi-story industrial areas since the Silicon Valley and Boston's Route 128 suburban manufacturing clusters were deemed the standard for high technology industrial areas.

For biotechnology, most experts say that production will be concentrated in the large firms. Again, they are nearby: Pfizer's large Brooklyn plant, Merck, Johnson & Johnson, Hoffman-LaRoche, Exxon, Ciba-Geigy, Stauffer all within the Region.

Finally, the Silicon Valley study said, high tech is looking for "agglomeration," proximity to other high tech firms. This ensures jobs for entrepreneurs while they are organizing their new businesses, suppliers and customers for new firms, a pool of competent employees of all skills and skill levels, intellectual activities and resources, from seminars to trade journals. But agglomeration in Silicon Valley went too far; high tech cannot expand there because housing is tight and has pushed prices beyond what new employees can afford. This Region is large enough to absorb all the growth a new high technology cluster can stimulate without distorting the housing market. There already are 50,000 professional engineers in New York City alone. The City has become a center for industrial research in software and other data processing applications, telecommunications, imaging sciences, printing and media, and technology management.

One-family house neighborhoods are common in Brooklyn—in Bay Ridge, with its sophisticated small town flavor; Bensonhurst; and Flatbush. From Nassau County, commuters can reach Downtown Brooklyn faster and more easily than they can reach Lower Manhattan or much of Midtown.



f. Can Polytechnic provide the high-quality image that will make such a project go? Polytechnic's recent accomplishments give promise that it can. Its Imaging Institute and Digital Systems Center are unique in the United States. They are good examples of industrial concerns promoting and underwriting the expansion of educational capacities for basic and applied research in crucial technological fields. Major private grants have established the new Herman F. Mark Chair in polymer chemistry, a biotechnology fermentation program, and a technology-oriented liberal arts curriculum.

A recent evaluation by four major independent research associations ranked Polytechnic's Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science ahead of every other institution in the Downstate area and 12th nationally.

Enrollment is up nearly 10 percent in the past two years, and 86 percent graduated in the top fifth of their high school classes. Contributions have increased substantially and a major capital fund drive is commencing to fulfill Polytechnic's commitment to expand its Brooklyn facilities and redevelop its environment.

3. Housing: South of Fulton Mall.

a. Present condition. In the southern part of Downtown--within the dozen and a half blocks between Livingston Street and Atlantic Avenue--over a quarter of the land is vacant, mainly used for parking. To the north lie parking garages serving Downtown stores and Fulton Mall. To the south lie typical Boerum Hill attached houses, fixed up and handsome, as well as Atlantic Avenue's antique stores. A substantial housing development is appropriate there. It would give Fulton Mall a much more attractive backdrop, Boerum Hill a more attractive front yard and Downtown more life after dark.

b. Plan for renewal. The goal should be market rate prices and rents for middle- and upper-middle income households except for the share of units required under the urban renewal program to

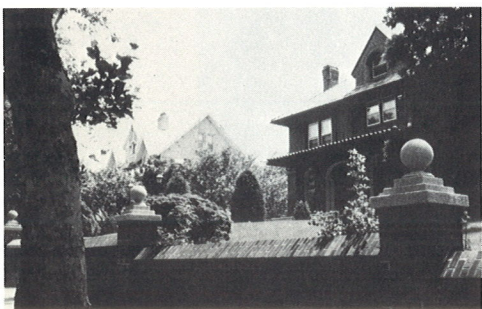
be subsidized for low-income households. But the development probably will have to start with as much subsidy as can be marshalled--free land; syndication of rental units for tax shelter benefits; Sec. 421 real estate tax relief; perhaps Participation Loan Fund interest write-down for some units. Once the area has been transformed from parking lots to a well-landscaped residential community of acclaimed design, rents and/or purchase prices should be able to rise to completely self-supporting levels. The location has many assets: it lies only a few steps from Downtown jobs and shopping; on the edge of an attractive, upwardly mobile neighborhood; near the Atlantic Avenue walk to the Esplanade; an easy walk to every subway line, from which Broadway and Lincoln Center are 20-30 minutes away, the Brooklyn Academy of Music five minutes, Brooklyn Museum and Botanic Garden not more than 10. And bus service in every direction.

With this housing on the south, MetroTech on the north and new office construction and housing rehabilitation to the east, the three repelling gateways to Downtown would be replaced by attractions. There is, however, a fourth general entryway that needs considerable refurbishing--underground.

4. Subway station reconstruction.

a. Present condition. Two-thirds of the people come to Downtown Brooklyn underground, via subway or the LIRR. Several of Brooklyn's subway stations--like others in the City--are forbidding and unpleasant. None relates to the surface in ways that tell the passenger he is in Downtown Brooklyn or where he is in relation to surface activities; and station layouts discourage walking on the sidewalks past Downtown stores in favor of long dreary underground corridors. As in other areas detracting from Brooklyn's image, these problems are surmountable and progress is already underway.

Six stations are presently being rehabilitated: Hoyt Street, DeKalb, Borough Hall, Court Street, Atlantic Avenue and Pacific Street. These renovations will restore old finishes or replace them with new tile; put in new lighting, signs, hardware and



Within 20 minutes of Downtown, there are luxury apartments around Grand Army Plaza, in Park Slope's Historic District and in other brownstone revival neighborhoods, including Boerum Hill, Carroll Gardens, Clinton Hill and Sunset Park, the newest "find" in good Brooklyn neighborhoods at a still reasonable price. The Promenade in Brooklyn Heights is one of the chief attractions of the City. Brownstone tours and neighborhood association slide shows portray the character of these communities to the rest of the world. Seven out of eight households in these neighborhoods told Long Island University interviewers they like where they live.



floor surfaces; and improve passenger circulation. But this is not enough.

b. Regional Plan proposals. The subsurface world should be linked more closely to the surface world. The Nevins Street station and the Atlantic and Pacific Street stations, for example, should be included in the reconstruction being proposed for office buildings above. We think this could be accomplished in a number of inexpensive ways and in a few more expensive ways that would return high value to Downtown's image and increase the sense of security in the subways. (Subways are, in fact, safer from crime than surface streets, but they inspire fear in their current condition.)

Detailed structural changes, small and large, are proposed in a separate Regional Plan report. Highlights are summarized here.

The low-cost recommendations:

- Include the subtitle, "Downtown Brooklyn," on all station names within Downtown's 10 stations. Add "Fulton Mall" to "Hoyt Street."
- Both underground and above ground, display Downtown maps which relate the subway world to the surface. Include bus routes as well as subway.
- Until extensive reconstruction becomes possible, provide central entrances that lead directly to token booths, turnstiles and train platforms, particularly in the Hoyt-Schermerhorn station where pedestrians now must traverse a lengthy prison-like corridor.
- Eliminate some other entrances and exits, such as Elm Place in the Hoyt Street station, in order to consolidate pedestrian flow for security. They should be covered rather than just fenced off.
- Create a more direct passage through Albee Square Mall from Fulton Street to the DeKalb station to encourage walking through the Mall.
- Revise current refurbishing plans to eliminate the wall between the LIRR and the subways in the Atlantic Avenue station. Generally, an open feeling is desirable.

The somewhat more expensive changes—but well worth the cost—involve opening the underground to more light and air by widening entrances and taking the roofs off of corridors. This increases security by bringing more people—on the surface and below the surface—within sight and sound of each other, relieves the underground of trapped smells, makes entering the subway more inviting, orients riders to the above-ground world and pedestrians to subway passages, and advertises Downtown to those who usually ride right through by giving those people spectacular and unusual views of buildings and trees in sunlight. Linking the surface and subway is particularly easy in key

Downtown Brooklyn stations because they are close to the surface. Specifically:

- Remove the thin concrete sidewalk and the roof of the Borough Hall station on Joralemon to make a bridge from the remaining sidewalk to the door of Borough Hall. Pedestrians would see the historic tile walls and a plaque commemorating "The First Subway Uniting the Boroughs of Manhattan and Brooklyn." Subway riders would see historic Borough Hall.
- Also in Borough Hall station, uncover the 150-foot passageway connecting the platform for trains to Manhattan's East Side and the platform for Manhattan's West Side. Replace the ceiling with a clear polymer cap. Underground, people would feel as though they were walking in the park; above, people would get a better sense of the subway geometry.
- The Jay Street-Borough Hall entrance to Fulton Mall should be widened and straightened; the Court Street station corridor to the Borough Hall station should be opened into a plaza of several levels; and the DeKalb entrance at Fulton Mall should be opened, perhaps with a Plexiglas-enclosed atrium.
- The LIRR Terminal also should be redesigned to remove the ground-level floor of the former waiting hall; an open well with stairs and escalators—visible from the sidewalk—should lead directly to the trains; and restaurants, a bank and convenience stores should be provided at several levels.
- The traffic island at Flatbush and Atlantic Avenue should be cleared and planted and a lightwell opened to the IRT southbound platform and extended several feet to the west.
- The Nevins Street and Atlantic Avenue stations should be radically reconstructed in conjunction with the office developments proposed for the sites above them. If high density housing is built over Hoyt-Schermerhorn, reconstruction of the subway station should be included in the project. New York City, unlike Atlanta and Toronto, has not taken advantage of the obvious benefits of building to high densities over subway stations (see Regional Plan Association's *Urban Design Manhattan* [1968] and *Urban Space for Pedestrians* [1975].)

Increasing Retailing

The most important contribution to Downtown retail trade would be the addition of residents and office workers suggested above. An additional 5,000 housing units would be likely to add about six percent to Downtown sales. The addition of some 40,000 more office workers would add another six or seven percent.

The retailers themselves might add further stimulus. The LIU poll showed that most people who live near Downtown Brooklyn shop there at least once a month, but in interviews and neighborhood association meetings, we found few people who said they shop Downtown. Many said they would like to, however. Similarly, we found few office workers in the Court Street area who shopped much on Fulton Mall. Their most common explanation: the stores do not sell our kind of goods. Many of them did not know the stores there and most had not even tried Albee Square Mall. In the LIU poll, 56 percent had never been to Albee Square Mall. But those who did shop Downtown had many examples of not finding what they were looking for—even in A&S. Some said they are deterred by the appearance of stores on Fulton Mall, by the windows covered with blatant sale signs and by the layout of goods in the windows. In many cases, the goods behind the sale signs and the indelicate merchandise displays are known brands.

We suggest six ways that retailers might attract more brownstoners and office workers without losing present shoppers:

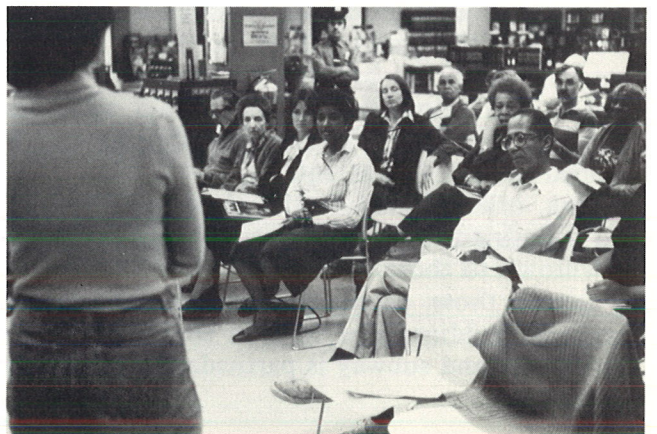
1. Adjusting the merchandise mix.

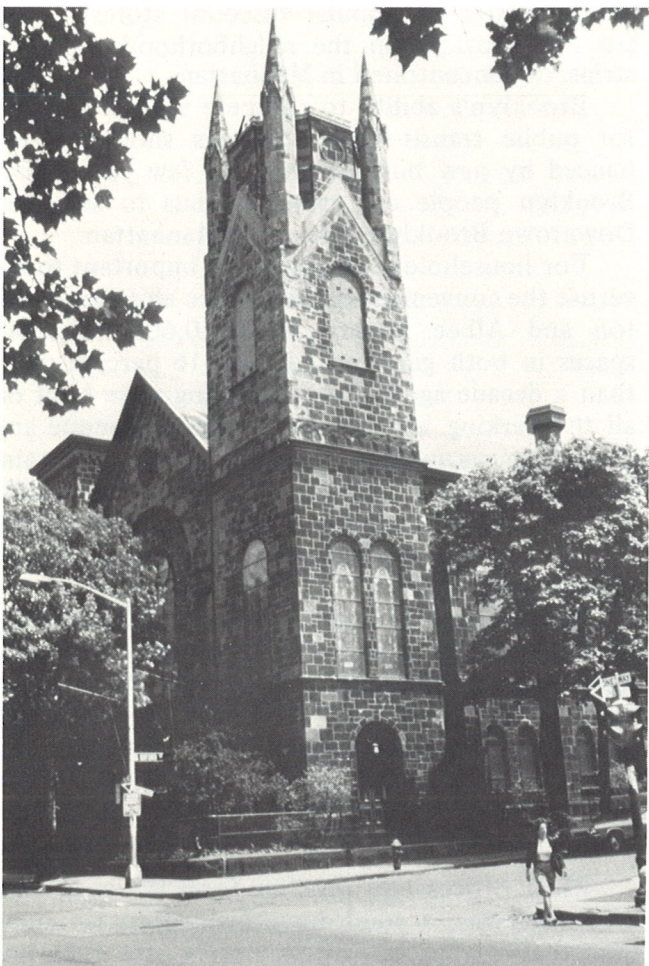
Merchants might meet with neighborhood associations in the surrounding communities and with Downtown office workers either at their place of work or through professional or civic associations to identify what would bring them Downtown. Every neighborhood association told us they would like to do it. If present merchants find it difficult to offer the merchandise they want, the neighborhood associations should approach stores they like and urge them to open branches in Downtown Brooklyn. The people we spoke to mentioned such stores as Wallach's, Herman's, Bon Marche, Conran's and Pottery Barn. Of the shoppers surveyed in A&S last summer, half reported family incomes over \$20,000, a third over \$25,000, six percent over \$50,000. The LIU poll showed six percent had household incomes over \$60,000, 10 percent \$40-60,000, 25 percent \$25-40,000, and only 17 percent below \$10,000.

2. Improving appearance.

The Fulton Mall Improvement Association is in favor of fitting store appearance to the Mall design concept. Its 1979 report said, "Fulton Street shoppers seek high-quality goods and have money to spend on them... Attention to the buildings and storefronts is important... The special zoning rules are designed to create a sense of unity on the Mall. This is being done by regulating signs to reduce visual clutter... as well as providing guidelines for building renovations, new construction and facade improvements." Empty floors above the stores also

There are many more handsome buildings to restore and many institutions willing to help—e.g., Brooklyn Union Gas Company's Cinderella program; Con Edison's Renaissance program; neighborhood coalitions like Pratt Area Community Council; Pratt Institute itself; and local churches; and the Lutheran Medical Center in Sunset Park—all of which have helped to rehabilitate buildings for housing.





mar the appearance of some parts of the Mall; ways should be found of using these floors or covering them more satisfactorily. Moreover, attractiveness should not stop at Fulton Mall. The Fulton Mall Improvement Association should consider enlarging its concern to encompass the side streets feeding into the Mall. As with the other inhibitions to a more prosperous Downtown, the goal of a better looking Fulton Mall and the machinery for achieving it are in place, along with strong interest in achieving the goal among Downtown leaders.

3. Advertising.

The small merchants on Fulton Mall generally depend on advertising by A&S and May's to bring shoppers Downtown. The Fulton Mall Improvement Association has done some joint advertising and is planning to do more. Some relatively inexpensive possibilities: arrange places to post Bargains-of-the-Day around Court Street, the courts and other large office buildings. Newspapers should be used more extensively. Fifty stores could each advertise a few items once a month and twice before Christmas (13 times a year) for about \$3,000 in the New York *Daily News* Kings County edition, or in any number of neighborhood weeklies. Neighborhood loyalty of brownstoners suggests that the neighborhood newspapers be tried first.

4. Adding non-retailing events.

Special events often are effective advertising. The crowds that attend the "Flatbush Frolics" and fill Atlantic Avenue during the "Antics," testify that people will come and spend money. The Fulton Mall Improvement Association has hired a full-time person to plan events. Some suggestions:

- a famous jazz combo drawing office workers to the Mall during lunch hour or on shopping nights;
- a lecture series on Thursday shopping nights;
- week-long celebrations of individual neighborhoods with exhibits of arts and crafts from neighborhood groups, performances by church or school choirs or plays. Groups from those neighborhoods could then be organized to see these presentations, leaving time for shopping afterwards.

Permanent special attractions also could contribute. For example, a crafts center might provide space for potters, leather workers, cabinet makers, glass blowers and blacksmiths to work, teach, sell materials, sell technical assistance and products and perhaps even to rent working space and such tools as looms or wheels and kilns to amateurs. Alexandria, Virginia, has a facility of this kind. There is likely to be a space inexpensive enough for this use above the first floor of Fulton Mall, or in a warehouse, or perhaps at one of the nearby colleges.

5. Drawing in people wary of going Downtown.

Though crime levels are not as bad as many fear, Brooklyn's image doubtless will continue to keep some people away. Organizing group trips to the Downtown area is one solution. These might be initiated as part of the "neighborhood weeks" proposed above and then continued by arranging a regular meeting place for people who want to travel Downtown together. Experience seems to show that really good bargains or lively cultural experiences are enough to lure hordes of people Downtown. And hordes of people mean not only excitement but a sense of safety.

A 1981 *Fortune* article described a number of cities where people who had not used Downtown for years returned to shop in response to festive, well-designed and well-maintained retail complexes, such as Philadelphia's Gallery I and II, Baltimore's Harbor Place, Boston's Quincy Market and Fanueil Hall, and similar projects in St. Louis and Milwaukee. All of these projects were viewed skeptically when first proposed, but they demonstrate that bold initiatives, well-planned and executed, can remagnetize a Downtown like Brooklyn's.

6. Building on the strengths of Downtown.

About half the households in Brooklyn do not own cars. For them, Downtown Brooklyn's main competition lies in Manhattan and in neighborhood "downtowns" and shopping strips. The survey of A&S shoppers showed that most of them shopped primarily at Fulton Mall/Albee Square Mall, but others went most frequently to Manhattan for clothing and to other stores in Brooklyn for housewares, furniture, and appliances. Manhattan and other Brooklyn stores (excluding Kings Plaza) were about tied as second favorite place to shop for shoes, gifts, toys and jewelry. Fulton/Albee Square Malls were not used as much as other Brooklyn stores for drugs, cosmetics, books or records. The LIU survey of nearby neighborhoods showed similar responses.

Many neighborhood retail strips have shops that duplicate Fulton and Albee Square Mall shops. There is little that distinguishes Downtown except the department stores, particularly A&S. Therefore, it seems important to strengthen **department store** offerings. The importance of comparison shopping is well-known to both merchants and shoppers, and A&S really doesn't have a suitable competitor Downtown. Some shoppers said this kept them away from A&S. ("If I can't find what I went for at A&S, there's no place else.") Typically, suburban shopping centers have at least two department store "anchors" selling in the same income/taste spectrum.

From the fact that Korvette's and Martin's were recently replaced with small shops only on

the ground floor, instead of department stores, one might infer that another department store could not be attracted to Downtown. But conditions are changing: 1981 retail sales were estimated to be 20 percent higher than in 1980 because of the opening of Albee Square Mall and the end of disruptive construction at Fulton Mall. Rents on Fulton Mall remain high—\$50 a square foot is mentioned frequently—and there are no vacancies. Vacant office space has been filled with 3,000 additional City office workers, and more State office employees are probably on the way. If office workers and nearby residents continue to increase, another department store ought to be sought Downtown.

An alternative would be an effort to attract a whole cluster of popular discount stores, which are not provided in the neighborhood shopping strips, or concentrated in Manhattan.

Brooklyn's ability to compete with Manhattan for public transit-riding shoppers should be enhanced by new buses in the next few years, since Brooklyn people can travel by bus to stores in Downtown Brooklyn, but not in Manhattan.

For households with cars, it is important to advertise the convenient parking space all around Fulton and Albee Square Malls—10,600 off-street spaces in both garages and lots (16 percent more than a decade ago). Even if housing were built on all the parking lots between Atlantic Avenue and Livingston, more than 8,600 spaces would remain. Parking Downtown requires less walking than parking in a suburban shopping center lot. Though it isn't free, it is considerably cheaper than parking in Manhattan.

Kings Plaza is the only convenient auto-oriented large shopping center for Brooklyn residents. Downtown should be able to provide more choice because it can attract broader patronage—both public transit riders and motorists.

Other Downtown Activities: Strengthening Them and Their Links

While offices and retailing form the backbone of downtowns, a good downtown offers far more than that—higher education, hotels, arts, libraries, health services, entertainment. Each activity benefits from and strengthens the others. By tightening the links among these activities, Downtown Brooklyn can become more useful and attractive.

1. Higher education.

There is probably no downtown outside of New York with 32,000 higher education students and another 7,600 within walking distance. Altogether, there are 61,000 higher education students in Brooklyn. A number of college officials feel that their institutions could contribute more to a dynamic Downtown and that the 150,000 people

who come Downtown regularly could take greater advantage of the colleges.

Higher education is a tremendous asset, but it is not sufficiently marshalled in Brooklyn. Again, a remedy is in process. Representatives of the 11 higher education institutions met in mid-1982 to begin to consider how they might contribute more to Brooklyn's economy. Some already provide useful services to major businesses and they agreed that they could offer many more. Highlights of their offerings are in an Appendix prepared with this report and available from the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce. Further steps to link colleges and businesses in Brooklyn are proposed for Phase II of this project.

a. Replacing the decrease in high school students. For the rest of this century, high school graduates are projected to drop more precipitously in the New York Region than in the rest of the country. In the 1980s, Regional Plan projects a one-sixth drop in 18-24 year olds, compared to a two-thirds rise in the 1970s. Brooklyn's colleges will dwindle in enrollment unless they can enlarge (1) the area from which they draw their students, (2) their share of collegiate students within their present "student-shed" or (3) the number of older persons they attract. Looking at (1), the area from which they draw, the principal limit is housing. There is so little student-priced housing and dormitory space in Brooklyn and nearby that the great majority of students commute from homes in the Region. Without more student housing, Brooklyn's institutions will not be able to draw enrollment from outside the Region to replace the decrease in the high school graduate pool here. Housing costs and limits also make it difficult for Brooklyn colleges to recruit good young faculty members.

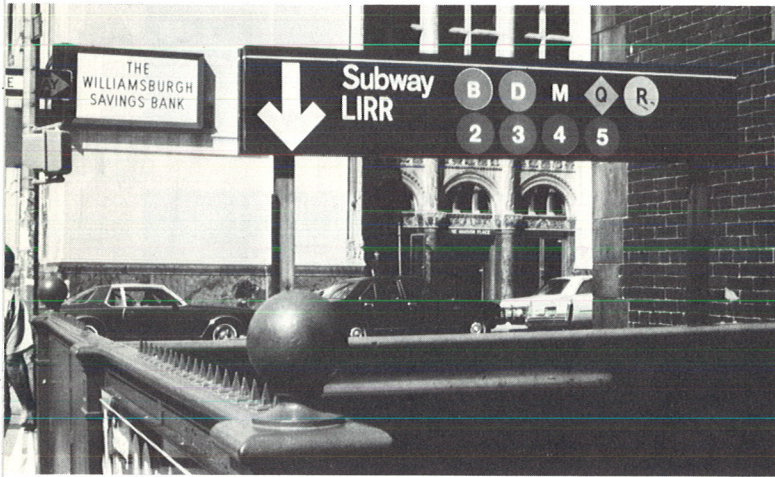
Given the importance of higher education and its potential for strengthening the Brooklyn economy, we feel it would be worth the cost to subsidize student housing serving several institutions in the Downtown Brooklyn area—for example, rehabilitating the Granada Hotel for faculty apartments and graduate student dormitories. It is across from BAM and would be an appropriate part of the BAM-area improvement. While college students are generally thought to have little to spend, they are good part-time employees and are otherwise good neighbors to a Downtown seeking more activity, especially at night.

b. Attaining national reputations of high quality. While only a few of Brooklyn's colleges have a national reputation, success breeds success: as an institution develops a reputation for quality, it attracts better faculty and students. Improving Brooklyn's reputation for excellent higher education—as the MetroTech proposal would do for Polytechnic—would therefore be worth some pump priming right



Higher income households in one-family homes and luxury apartments have worked on restoring deteriorating apartments next door. Rows of them have been rehabilitated. Landlords who did not maintain the property were replaced with tenant leadership and new owners (or co-ops).

On top of the LIRR Terminal and nearly every subway line in the City lie vacant sites totaling about 18 acres, right next to the well-maintained Williamsburg Bank tower and the Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM).



now, as competition for high school graduates intensifies all over the Northeast. How best to prime the pump should be considered by the colleges themselves, together with the guardians of possible funds, such as the City, State, foundations and New York's business leadership.

The MetroTech project and Brooklyn Law School's proposed expansion merit support as important contributions to Downtown improvement.

c. Increasing adult students. College enrollment in Brooklyn has survived the decline in high school graduates much better than expected because older students have been filling the gap. Nearby office workers are the prime prospects. People seem much more likely to attend a course immediately after work than after dinner when they are settled at home in front of the television.

Many employers pay at least part of their employees' tuition. For example, in 1982, Con Ed was paying tuition for students at 15 colleges, including five in Brooklyn. Enlarging the Downtown employer tuition programs merits concerted efforts by those colleges. For the colleges not on the doorstep of Downtown offices, a central higher education-cultural center would provide a showcase and a way of serving students who are not likely to get to their campuses. The Brooklyn Educational and Cultural Alliance (BECA), a coalition of 10 institutions, considered a Downtown cultural center in 1978; they should consider it again, as part of this new effort to enhance Downtown activities. Add-

ing higher education to the cultural center proposal would make it more practical.

In addition to career-oriented courses, Downtown Brooklyn probably would provide a market for New School-type public affairs courses. Considering the strong community feeling in many nearby neighborhoods, a Brooklyn-oriented history or public affairs course might prove popular. For example, Brooklyn College, Pratt, LIU, the Board of Education and the two political parties could join together to offer a course on everything you have to know to take part in controlling your habitat. Poetry readings and film courses are other possibilities. Brief courses could be offered at lunch hours, longer ones at 5:00 or 5:30, and evening classes aimed at nearby residents on nights when stores are open. A&S might make space for them if plenty of time were left for shopping before and after.

2. Links to cultural institutions outside of Downtown.

The physical and psychological links between Downtown Brooklyn and the Prospect Park trio of institutions—the Brooklyn Museum, the Library and the Botanic Gardens—should be enhanced. For example, Flatbush Avenue should be landscaped to invite strolling. The North Flatbush Betterment Committee recently added 17 flowering pear trees to the 33 trees already lining the eight blocks from Atlantic Avenue to Grand Army Plaza, but with

the subway directly under the sidewalk, too little space remained for any more. Future zoning should require generous setback when redevelopment occurs. Second, the banners planned to festoon Fulton Mall should advertise Museum, Library and Botanic Garden events (as well as Academy of Music and Children's Museum events). Third, the institutions should consider ways to draw Downtown workers and shoppers directly to their events, e.g., by starting them directly at 5:30 or 5:45 p.m. and having extra buses available after 5 p.m. Finally, on evenings when an institution is open, restaurants might chip in with special offerings and advertising, as some do now on BAM performance nights.

3. Entertainment.

Though many brownstoners are families with children, oriented to home and neighborhood, over three-fourths of the households in these near-Downtown neighborhoods—45 percent of the total population—are comprised of one or two people. The majority of **potential** households in near-Downtown Brooklyn are likely to be small also. Entertainment outside the home therefore could be important. When brownstone neighborhood associations get together for discussions with merchants, they should consider whether Downtown might provide more entertainment. Many people have suggested more movies in Downtown theatres if the theatres can be better maintained than at present.

4. Hotel.

Feasibility studies by Laventhol and Horvath in 1978 and 1979 found that Downtown Brooklyn could support a hotel of about 350 rooms with banquet and meeting facilities—if it were in the right place, which the report identified as Pierrepont and Cadman Plaza, next to the Business Library. Since then, hotel accommodations have been included in Polytechnic's MetroTech proposal. Eventually MetroTech should generate enough patronage by itself to fill those facilities, so another Downtown hotel would be appropriate. For now, one is all that seems called for, whether on the MetroTech site or on the nearby Pierrepont site. Though some Heights residents and business people favor a hotel on Pierrepont, the Brooklyn Heights Association argues that it will bring traffic and undesirables to their neighborhood. But this is, after all, a Downtown site, not a residential block; and it is unlikely that a good hotel will attract significantly more traffic and undesirables than a parking lot.

Potential use of a Downtown Brooklyn hotel is substantial. Dozens of Brooklyn organizations have to hold dinners and conferences outside Brooklyn for lack of a facility. Visitors to Brooklyn businesses certainly could fill a 350-room hotel. The only

question is whether they would prefer to stay in Manhattan rather than in a dead-after-dark Downtown. Perhaps the solution is to incorporate night life right in the hotel—a movie theatre, an off-Broadway theatre, a bar and a disco, as well as restaurants. While a hotel is more likely to follow than to lead the expansion of other activities, Brooklyn already has a strong potential clientele; the patronage is just absorbed by Manhattan at present. So if a Brooklyn hotel can bring in its own liveliness, it would be a good investment—on the reasonable assumption that growing tourism and international business will continue to fill Manhattan hotels after a Brooklyn hotel has opened.

Crime: the Most Frequently Mentioned Problem

Almost everyone we interviewed identified crime as Brooklyn's number one image problem, and crime often is the reason firms give for avoiding city downtowns. But the people who actually shop in Downtown Brooklyn are not preoccupied with crime. In a 1981 survey, 231 shoppers at Albee Square Mall were asked what they liked and disliked about the Mall. Of the hundreds of comments made by the respondents, only 10 referred to security; and of those 10, eight **praised** the sense of security—only two criticized it. Last summer, when 320 shoppers in A&S were asked what they liked least about Fulton and Albee Square Malls, 118 had no complaints at all. Of more than 200 who did dislike something, only 55 cited security; more mentioned choice and quality of merchandise.



The Hanson Place YMCA (left) is being considered for State agencies moved from Manhattan.



This block is proposed for new office construction. It leads to the new Consolidated Edison and New York Telephone Company buildings that initiated office development in this corridor 12 years ago. Behind them are Fulton and Albee Square Malls.

Nearby deterioration undoubtedly has blocked demand for this highly accessible site, but the BAM-area Local Development Corporation is seeking to rehabilitate the Majestic and Strand theatres for new uses, as well as renovating abandoned housing.



Similarly, in the LIU poll of near-Downtown residents, almost no one mentioned safety as a reason for disliking Albee Square Mall. Of the 30 percent who seldom shop Downtown, only one in eight gave safety as the reason.

Statistically, too, Brooklyn's crime problem is less serious than its image suggests. About 100,000 people are in Downtown Brooklyn at the most crowded period of a typical day, about 150,000 people throughout the day. The odds of being robbed are about one chance every 500 years. Police statistics refer only to reported crimes, but the likelihood of full reporting is high in Downtown Brooklyn. Merchants and residents claim to have a good rapport with the police, so the usual excuse for not reporting crimes—that the police don't care, so why bother?—is not applicable. During the first three months of 1982, there was an average of only one robbery every 2-1/3 days between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., one every 1 1/2 days from 4 p.m. to midnight, and one a week from midnight to 8 a.m.—altogether one robbery a day at the street level and one every five days in the subways. And robbery is the most prevalent crime in Downtown Brooklyn.

Nonetheless, an anti-crime program should be an important part of the effort to achieve growth in Downtown Brooklyn in the next few years. As with other Brooklyn problems, crime is getting more attention. On July 1, 1982, the number of police on foot patrol Downtown was raised from 8 to 11 between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. In addition, the Fulton Mall Improvement Association's night-time security force has been very effective, patrolling the Mall in marked vehicles from 8 p.m. to 6 a.m.

Captain Francis Iula, Commander of the Downtown 84th Precinct, feels that he could cut crime considerably with another 15 policemen. This deserves priority as part of a broad program to change Downtown Brooklyn's image. He praised the Auxiliary Police and said he could use a few more good members. He appreciates citizen block-watchers, whom the precinct trains. The precinct also teaches people how to protect their homes, apartments and businesses and avoid crime on the streets, strengthening police-citizen relations. The City's recent success in bringing down crime in schools and the contribution of police auxiliaries to reducing crime in Prospect Park demonstrate that intense anti-crime campaigns can improve safety in limited areas. New York State should consider emulating a successful program in which New Jersey pays for foot patrolmen in city downtowns.

Regional Plan Association and the Citizens Crime Commission of New York are planning a program with borough downtown leaders to diminish the perception of crime as a barrier to borough downtown growth.

Downtown Activities—a Summing Up

Downtown Brooklyn should function as a third node of the Manhattan CBD. It has almost all of Manhattan's locational advantages, with less traffic and a small city ambience. It is the best place for firms which want to retain links to Manhattan but escape Manhattan's high rents.

An intense effort should be made to bring office jobs to Brooklyn. The City should not dilute this campaign by enticing office jobs to non-downtown locations—which are poorly served by public transit and unlikely to induce further growth—or to manufacturing districts that have a good chance of retaining needed factory jobs.

An equal priority is MetroTech. It locates the tri-state Region's efforts to recruit high-technology industry in a logical place, near available factory space and next to the institution which awards the most engineering degrees in the State.

Downtown housing is also a high priority because of its speedy stimulus to Downtown retailing.

Properly located, all three of these efforts will clean up three deterring entry points to Downtown. The other deterring entrypoints—subway stations—also deserve attention.

All of these steps are going forward.

In addition, sprucing up Fulton Mall and its side streets, building a new hotel, strengthening higher education, and increasing the links between Downtown and Brooklyn's major cultural institutions would contribute magnetism.

SURROUNDING NEIGHBORHOODS

Downtowns need two things from their surrounding neighborhoods: (1) a physical condition that reflects stability and security and, if possible, a nice appearance; (2) the kind of residents who can fill their office jobs, spend money in their stores and take advantage of such special offerings as the arts, higher education and entertainment.

Neighborhoods within 20 minutes of Downtown Brooklyn are improving in both respects: Brooklyn Heights, Cobble Hill, Boerum Hill, Park Slope, Ft. Greene, Clinton Hill, Prospect Heights, Carroll Gardens, and the closer half of Crown Heights. Quoting Mrs. Huxtable's *New York Times* observation again: "The first thing that strikes the visitor is the startling dimensions of the residential renaissance."

Resident attitudes. LIU's random sampling showed that half of the residents of those neighborhoods had moved into their present homes since 1977 and another 15 percent since 1972, but three-quarters of those had moved from elsewhere in Brooklyn.

Nearly all were pleased: 87 percent said they like where they live. When asked why, about half mentioned the mix of people or good friends or social relations; two in five described pleasant conditions like a quiet, clean community; 15 percent cited safety; more than 10 percent, a convenient location. When asked what they disliked most, more than a fifth answered, "nothing." Just over a quarter suggested safety was a cause for concern. One in eight complained of dirt and about the same number, of noise. When asked what changes they would most like to see, safety, again, was the most frequent answer—mentioned by about a third. Only 18 percent said they planned to move, and more than half of those who knew where they were going planned to stay in Brooklyn.

Among the handful who said they did not like where they lived, over a quarter cited crime as the condition they disliked the most and another tenth added crime to some other dislike they mentioned first. The most frequently given reason to stay despite their dissatisfaction was cost, then friends; more than a quarter of the dissatisfied liked the public transit and the social relations.

Statistical Changes, 1970-80

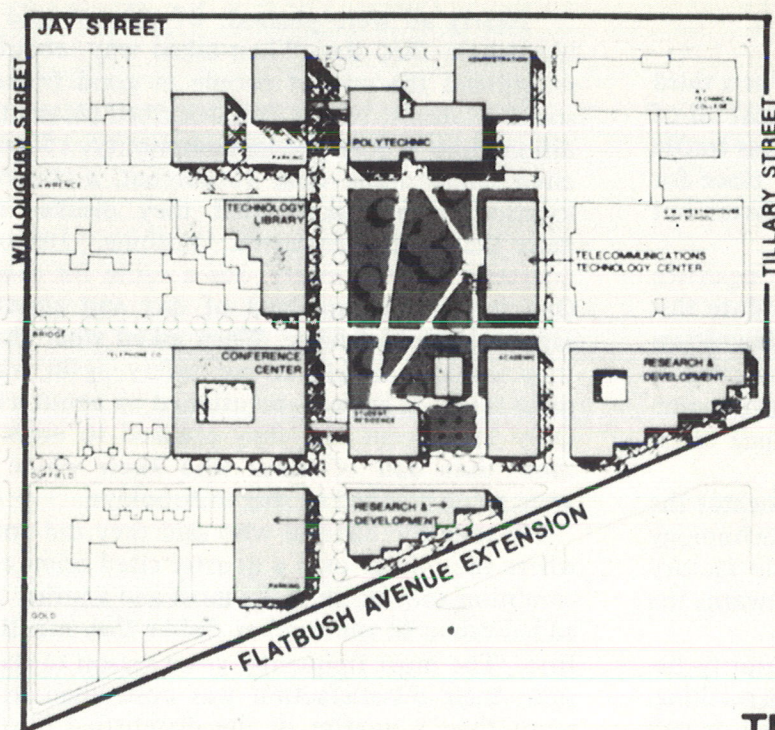
Brooklyn's renaissance was only beginning to register statistically three years ago when the 1980 Census was taken, but it did show.

Housing upgrading. We compared rents in 1970 and 1980. Inflation was just about 100 percent over the decade, so we compared \$120 rents in 1980 to \$60 rents in 1970 (at the lowest level) and rents of over \$300 a month in 1980 with rents over \$150 a month in 1970 (at the highest end of the scale). Every neighborhood had fewer low-rent units in 1980 than in 1970—nearly 50 percent fewer in Cobble Hill, Carroll Gardens, Boerum Hill and Prospect Heights and 40 percent in Park Slope. In all, there were 4,279 fewer low-rent units, a 30 percent decline. By 1980, only Ft. Greene and Carroll Gardens had as much as 15 percent of their units low-rent; Park Slope, Cobble Hill and Boerum Hill had about 10 percent. The rest had a lower share.

Moderate-rent units (\$120-\$199 in 1980) were down by about 32 percent (14,564), with declines sharpest in Park Slope and Prospect Heights.

Units with medium rents (\$200-299 in 1980) went up by 7,485 (36 percent), with sharp gains in Carroll Gardens, Park Slope and Cobble Hill in that order. Only Brooklyn Heights had fewer in 1980 than in 1970 (by 200).

High rent units (over \$300) grew by 3,547 (38 percent), more than doubling in Carroll Gardens and Boerum Hill, almost doubling in Park Slope and Cobble Hill and decreasing only in Clinton Hill (by 300).



METROPOLITAN TECHNOLOGY CENTER

Polytechnic Institute of New York and New York City are working together to develop the deteriorated area around the Institute into a center for high technology research and industry.

In 1980, there were 215 more owner-occupied units valued at about \$100,000 than in 1970—half of the increase in Park Slope—and 269 more valued at \$50-100,000, with two-thirds of the increase in Prospect Heights and Clinton Hill. The balance of rented to owned units shifted slightly toward ownership, with a nearly 20 percent rise in owner-occupied units (2,323 more) and nearly a 10 percent decrease in rental units (-5,947); but rental units still were six times the owner-occupied number in 1980.

Per capita income in those neighborhoods increased by about seven percent in the 1970s, from \$5,820 to \$6,209 (1979 dollars), still only about two-thirds the City average and three-quarters the Brooklyn average. Citywide and Brooklyn per capita income did not increase in dollars of comparable value, however, while that of the near-Downtown neighborhoods did.

Other trends are more difficult to square with the widespread housing improvement that is clearly visible. Though per capita income rose, household “money” income was down because households got smaller. With slight declines in the number of households in those neighborhoods, aggregate “money” income was down from \$2.2 billion to \$1.8 billion (1979 dollars) over the decade. But

this decrease in “money” income masks what may well have been an overall income **increase** because it excludes investment income. Since the share of retirement-age residents went up from less than five percent in 1970 to 15 percent in 1980, a much larger share of the household income in these neighborhoods probably came from savings. Since this income does not show up in the figures available now, we have reason to believe that overall income was up, not down.

Race-ethnic change. In spite of rising housing costs, the black and Hispanic population increased slightly in the neighborhoods in and around Downtown over the 1970s. The number of white non-Hispanics decreased by one-third (49,000), from 60 to 50 percent of the population. None of the neighborhoods had an increase in white non-Hispanic residents.

Neighborhood Organization and Leadership

At least as important as statistical trends, neighborhood organizations are strong and imbued with a clear spirit of renewal. They are likely to provide continuous improvements. Furthermore, the kind of people providing the momentum—i.e., the “urban pioneers”—are dedicated, energetic, creative people

who will support the arts and other Downtown activities. They tend to have positive attitudes about racial and income integration and so are unlikely to refuse to shop Downtown if the merchandise and its presentation suits them.

Though not every part of every neighborhood is well organized, most of the brownstone neighborhoods have effective community groups which are helping to restore and fill empty housing units. In most of these neighborhoods, the higher-income and lower-income residents work together, assisted by businesses and other institutions in their neighborhoods and throughout the Borough. The main targets for restoration are apartments, which led these neighborhoods into deterioration in the first place. Sometimes the residents own the building, sometimes the neighborhood organization itself, sometimes new private owners found by the neighborhood organization to take over poorly maintained or abandoned buildings. The Pratt Area Community Council (PACC), for example, brings together block and neighborhood groups from Fort Greene and Clinton Hill, using the resources of Pratt Institute, whose continued presence in the neighborhood doubtless kept the abandonment-decay process from going too far. After heroic efforts, PACC got approval to rehabilitate the handsome but abandoned Mohawk Hotel for housing. Pratt is also rehabilitating two factories in the area, one for modern manufacturing and the other for housing. The Clinton Hill Society, a component of PACC, prepared a slide show to attract new residents, with technical assistance from the Brooklyn Public Library through the Brooklyn Educational and Cultural Alliance "voucher" program. The Brooklyn Academy of Music has set up a Local Development Corporation, which is rehabilitating housing and two scarcely-used theatres.

In all these neighborhoods, rehabilitation projects have benefitted from the technical assistance and other contributions of Brooklyn Union Gas' Cinderella program and Consolidated Edison's Renaissance program. They have obtained loans from Citibank, Chemical, Dime or Anchor Savings, in many cases subsidized through the City's Participation Loan Program, which uses federal Community Development funds to lower interest rates. Direct federal grants and loans flow to some of these projects, also. The Flatbush Development Corporation has achieved wide acclaim for its extensive apartment rehabilitation program and other neighborhood services. Sunset Park has two neighborhood organizations, one promoting the neighborhood as a place to live, the other sponsoring housing rehabilitation. Both have been aided by Lutheran Medical Center, which moved into a large, unused factory in the neighborhood when it needed to expand and renovated the old hospital for senior

citizen housing. In Prospect Heights, the community supplemented its housing agenda by renovating an old public school into an arts center.

A stronger Downtown would benefit the surrounding neighborhoods by providing better opportunities for residents through improved retailing, a wider variety of jobs close to home, a hotel, and more good restaurants. More jobs and activities Downtown would also strengthen the surrounding neighborhoods in a number of ways:

- by absorbing unemployment, which threatens the entire Borough;
- by buttressing subway service without overcrowding the trains, at least not beyond the Downtown stops;
- by cleaning up the vacant blocks Downtown, which certainly would improve the environment of Boerum Hill, Fort Greene and Park Slope;
- by fulfilling two of the strong interests of the brownstoners: racial integration and building preservation;
- by increasing demand for nearby housing, helping neighborhoods keep existing and prospective units full.

The detachment of the surrounding neighborhoods from Downtown Brooklyn and the Borough as a whole should give way to involvement in Boroughwide and Downtown needs. Since many residents probably are management-executive level corporate employees, they might help change Brooklyn's image in their own corporation and join the efforts of the Borough President, Public Development Corporation, and Chamber of Commerce to persuade firms to locate offices there. The Chamber of Commerce could use the participation of more Brooklyn residents.

Who Should Live Near Downtown Brooklyn?

Brooklyn loyalists do not necessarily agree on how energetically Brooklyn leaders should woo new residents. They worry about rising housing prices driving out present residents. Home owners are now protected from rapid increases in property taxes as housing values rise—so people who own property can be driven out only if they take their profit and leave—but most residents are renters. Even the early pioneers of gentrification worry about being pushed out themselves by wealthier newcomers.

We start with the premise that there is room in Brooklyn for everyone who wants to live there. The problem has been how to attract **more** people to live there. Between 1965 and 1980, Brooklyn lost 17 percent of its population—nearly half a million people. It is perfectly understandable that low-



South of Fulton Mall lie vast stretches of parking. New housing there would strengthen the whole Downtown area. A comprehensive, well-designed development would be a handsome front yard for Boerum Hill and a much more inviting entryway for Downtown.



Six of Downtown Brooklyn's 10 subway stations are being renovated. Regional Plan Association recommends additional improvements; for example, passengers would be able to avoid walking in corridors like this if entrances were provided leading directly to the train platform.

er-income residents resent higher-income households buying them out of the neighborhoods which they have struggled to keep livable, but to thwart new investment could turn the neighborhoods back to the conditions of the 1960s, when almost everyone with money and a good job left the cities to decay. Those who could not move out were kept alive outside the economic mainstream by anti-poverty programs. When higher-income people move out of the City, they frequently take with them the best jobs, education, goods and services, and a lot of civic energy in support of City improvements like public transit. Attracting higher-income residents to deteriorating neighborhoods is therefore a more positive force for the poor than for the rich, who can survive comfortably anywhere; nonetheless, its negative impact on the poor should be mitigated. How to encourage reclamation of abandoned housing by people who can afford to rehabilitate and maintain them while mitigating its negative effects—indeed, how to use the infusion of capital to **improve** living conditions for the poor is a high priority for the City.

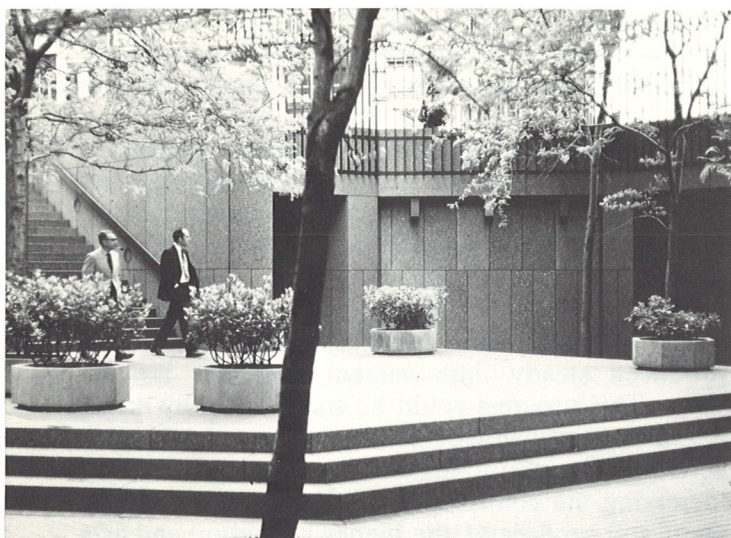
What policy about neighborhood change? Is it possible to keep a neighborhood just attractive enough for one particular income group, but not attractive enough for others to want to bid the prices higher? A more promising tactic would be to encourage neighborhood improvements in as many places as possible in New York City in order to spread out the demand for high-quality housing and take the price pressure off the neighborhoods that are currently upgrading. Every upgraded neigh-

borhood strengthens other neighborhoods by reinforcing the whole City's stability.

The City Planning Commission should identify all the areas in the City where the locations and the architecture are promising but immediate conditions are discouraging. The City's resources should then be made available to encourage the kind of private housing improvements that are already happening at many income levels in other parts of Brooklyn, such as Red Hook and Sunset Park. The Brooklyn section of the City's Department of Housing Preservation and Development is following this strategy; it has identified seven neighborhoods that are ripe for upgrading and encouraged banks to lend homeowners up to \$10,000 at low interest rates, defrayed partially from Urban Development Action Grant funds.

By concentrating more planning attention on targeting particular neighborhoods for upgrading and more development attention on stimulating upgrading to happen, the City will be able to house more people instead of pushing people out. Putting City economic development effort on housing is justified because a larger resident middle-class labor pool would make a strong contribution to economic development.

Then a strategy is needed to assure some of the benefits of improved conditions to those who have been living in neighborhoods that are being upgraded. Formulating such a strategy would require more information than we have now about how many residents are actually displaced—and what happens to them—when private rehabilitation capital pours into their neighborhoods.



The Association also recommends wider openings to the above-ground world in several stations. Other cities, such as San Francisco, have done this.



In New York, the Citicorp center is a good example of well-designed subway entrances.

Surrounding Neighborhoods: A Summing Up

Brooklyn neighborhoods have not needed a dynamic Downtown to attract residents; the stunning architecture and convenience to Manhattan have been enough. Now, Downtown Brooklyn should do more to benefit from these reviving neighborhoods by mobilizing neighborhood leadership on behalf of Downtown development. Many brownstoners are indifferent to Downtown because they are oriented to Manhattan and their own neighbor-

hoods. Moreover, many of them have a prejudice against the large-scale development that Downtown needs; they tend to believe that "small is beautiful." They must be convinced that important issues which affect them directly are dependent on the strength of the Downtown area: whether Brooklyn can be a racially- and income-integrated community with a dynamic economy of its own and good transportation links to the rest of the City and Region.



Fulton Mall has a neat design and is kept clean by the Fulton Mall Improvement Association. But better store signs and windows would contribute to the better impression intended by the Mall.

IN SUM

Brooklyn provides all the qualities that attract people and jobs to cities—handsome buildings, streets, views and spaces; a strong sense of community; cultural activities; and public transportation. Besides its own assets, it provides easy access to Manhattan and to Ocean beaches east, west and south.

But Brooklyn's assets are overlooked by many businesses and individuals—in large part out of ignorance and false impressions, but partly because there are many off-putting places in and near Downtown Brooklyn, particularly the four entryways identified in this report.

Publicizing Brooklyn's assets—while replacing those three surface entryways with offices, Metro-Tech and housing, and rebuilding subway stations in conjunction with the surface redevelopments—

should lead to a dynamic Downtown, providing better opportunities and services for Brooklyn residents and an efficient business center for the Region.

Achieving these goals will require the concerted effort of many different public and private agencies and individuals. The Negotiated Investment Strategy, a process of eliciting simultaneous commitments from many participants, is one way to achieve the necessary cooperation.

Brooklyn's public and business leadership has produced steady improvement over the last 15 years. This progress could be speeded up by drawing into Boroughwide leadership more of those active in successful neighborhood groups and by increasing the contribution to Downtown development and services of the higher education and arts organizations in and near Downtown.

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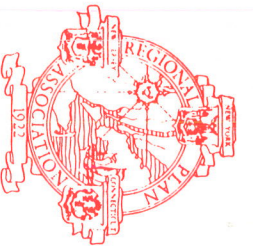
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