

What if...
we owned it?





Who We Are

The Bronx Cooperative Development Initiative (BCDI) is a community-led planning and economic development organization. We are growing a network of community and labor organizations, anchor institutions, and small businesses to build an equitable, sustainable, and democratic local economy that creates shared wealth and ownership for low-income people of color.

What We Believe



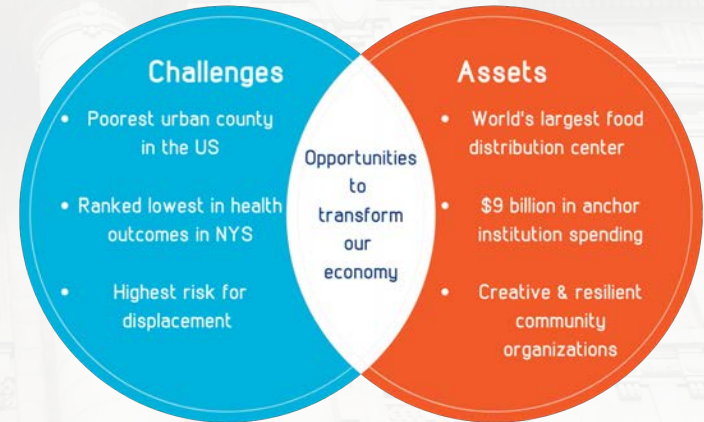
The Bronx is a borough of hopeful contradictions.

The Bronx possesses tremendous assets and resources: it is home to some of the region's top hospitals and universities, the third-largest financial corridor in New York City, the largest food distribution center in the country, and a legacy of artistic and entrepreneurial innovation and deeply-rooted community organizations. Despite this wealth, the Bronx remains the poorest urban county in the US, with high rates of rent burden, widespread threat of displacement, rampant food apartheid, poor health outcomes, and low rates of civic engagement.

Building an equitable economy requires borough-wide coordination and community-led infrastructure to sustain it.

In the face of these contradictions, we believe that the Bronx can be a transformative model for an equitable urban economy. We have the resources and imagination to confront our greatest challenges. To more effectively harness our assets, we need the infrastructure to support planning and development across sectors and borough-wide coordination for economic democracy in the Bronx.

HOPEFUL CONTRADICTIONS



Economic democracy will position Bronx residents as the collective decision-makers and owners of the borough's future.

Economic Democracy is a systems-change framework for shared ownership and democratic governance rooted in values of solidarity, cooperation, and racial justice. For decades, Bronxites have created community-owned workplaces, land, and housing. At scale, economic democracy can disrupt the history of wealth extraction from poor communities, people of color, and women to create an economy that invests in human dignity, fosters community well-being, and supports a larger movement for self-determination. People of color and women must lead that change.

What We Do



The Bronx has the people and tools to advance this vision of economic democracy borough-wide for all 1.4 million Bronxites.

In service of this vision, we have drawn inspiration from histories of black freedom movements and shared wealth initiatives near and far, from Mondragón in Spain to Market Creek Plaza and Evergreen Cooperatives in the US. In order to build shared vision, power, and ownership for people of color generationally in the Bronx, we are building a network of organizations and institutions--community organizations, local businesses, government officials, organized labor, and anchor institutions. We call this a **Community Enterprise Network**. Our current work entails building out the six core infrastructure projects of the Community Enterprise Network, which we are building simultaneously to maximize their integration and mutually reinforcing capacities.

Our Community Transformation Model





DEVELOPING SHARED VISION AND ANALYSIS FOR ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY

Learning is fundamental to the transformation of individuals and organizations. Through popular education methodologies, we expand public consciousness and expertise around the economy rooted in our lived experiences. We work with a diverse set of stakeholders to advance deep leadership development and organizational change towards a shared framework for understanding and realizing our vision for economic democracy. This combination of workshops, curricula, and communities of practice fosters the analysis and skills needed for Bronxites to understand local economies and shape the future of the Bronx. The Economic Democracy Learning Center works to steward our history and captures our learning to share with the world.

For more info, visit bcdi.nyc/EDLC.

DEMOCRATIZING INNOVATION AND PRODUCTION FOR OUR COMMUNITIES

The Bronx is a wellspring of creativity. Women and people of color should be at the center of our innovation economy, addressing real community challenges in the Bronx. For Bronxites to determine the future of the borough, we must democratize modern production and harness innovative and entrepreneurial talent as an engine of shared wealth creation. The Bronx Innovation Factory offers digital fabrication and prototyping workshops and programs for young people, entrepreneurs, local businesses, and community organizations.

Find out more at bcdi.nyc/innovation.



CO-CREATING THE FUTURE OF OUR BOROUGH

Bronxites should determine the borough's future. The Planning and Policy Lab provides local planning capacity by, with, and for the Bronx. We provide partners with research, land use and data analysis and collaborate with community stakeholders in participatory planning, strategy development, and capacity building. We are working with local organizations, residents, businesses, and cross-sectoral stakeholders to co-design and implement a Bronx wide plan as a comprehensive, long-term path for equitable economic development in our borough. The Planning and Policy Lab serves as a coordinating entity setting economic development strategy and vision grounded in community leadership and shared wealth.

Find out more at bcdi.nyc/ppl.

HARNESSING PROCUREMENT FOR LOCAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Billions of dollars leave the borough every year instead of growing our local Bronx economy. By connecting local businesses to our anchor institutions and large nonprofits, we are redirecting wealth created in the Bronx to stay in the Bronx. The BronXchange grows existing local businesses, helps institutions invest in minority and women-owned businesses and advances opportunities for democratic ownership and shared wealth enterprises.

For more info, see bcdi.nyc/bronxchange.



REALIZING OUR CIVIC POWER

Across the borough, community organizations, neighborhood associations, labor unions, coalitions, and other civic engagement groups are organizing Bronx residents around issues of racial and economic justice with few resources and limited coordination to achieve a shared vision. The Civic Action Hub aims to ground these organizations in a shared analysis, coordinate strategies across stakeholders, and ultimately build political will for economic democracy in the Bronx.

For more info, contact us at info@bcdi.nyc.

SUSTAINING AND CAPITALIZING THE NETWORK

The success of the Community Enterprise Network requires strategic and sustained investment. The Bronx Fund will capitalize the core infrastructure of the network, support our community partners, and make investments in shared wealth enterprises and real estate projects that advance an anti-displacement strategy for the borough.

For more info, contact us at info@bcdi.nyc.

Key Partners

Community

Northwest Bronx Community & Clergy Coalition
The Point Community Development Corporation
Mothers on the Move
Northern Manhattan Coalition for Immigrant Rights

Labor

1199 SEIU United Healthcare Workers East
CUNY School of Labor and Urban Studies
(formerly the Murphy Institute)

Anchor Institutions

Bronx Zoo
Montefiore Medical Center
Fordham University
Hostos Community College
Bronx Community College
Lehman College School of Continuing and Professional Studies

Business

SAA / EVI
Mondragon Cooperative Corporation & LKS
The Working World
Spring Bank
B Lab / Best for NYC
Business Outreach Center Network
Futureworks NYC

Academia and Research

MIT Department of Urban Studies and Planning
Rutgers University Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and
Public Policy

Technical Assistance

MIT Community Innovators Lab

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Rockefeller Brothers Fund
Rockefeller Foundation

What if... we built it?

GET INVOLVED!

If you would like more information about BCDI or to explore how you can help us manifest our vision of an economy that works for the people of the Bronx, please contact us at info@bcdi.nyc



Bronx Cooperative Development Initiative



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