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**DE BLASIO ADMINISTRATION AND BOROUGH PRESIDENT KATZ ANNOUNCE  
NEIGHBORHOOD ACTION PLAN FOR JAMAICA, QUEENS**

*City Unveils Aggressive and Holistic Plan to Stimulate Smart Growth and Improve Livability in Jamaica*

**NEW YORK**—Mayor Bill de Blasio, Queens Borough President Melinda Katz, and Deputy Mayor for Housing and Economic Development Alicia Glen today announced the launch of the Jamaica Now Action Plan, which outlines 21 strategic actions for the revitalization and growth of Jamaica, Queens into a thriving residential and commercial neighborhood.

The Action Plan is a culmination of the Jamaica Now Planning Initiative, a nine month community-wide engagement process consisting of over 30 meetings between residents, businesses, leaders and other stakeholders, and two public conferences. Uniting new initiatives with ongoing projects, the Action Plan seeks to address the challenges that have faced the Jamaica area in recent years by providing workforce training and small business support, initiating new mixed-use development anchored by affordable housing, and improving the livability of the neighborhood through investments in safety measures, green spaces and more. The 21 strategic actions, 16 of which will be launched and implemented in the next three years, represent approximately \$153 million in current public funding.

“Jamaica’s diversity, close-knit neighborhood fabric, and anchor institutions provide a strong foundation for tremendous growth and opportunity,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “Hundreds of residents from the Jamaica neighborhood told us what’s needed to capitalize on the area’s incredible potential, and will work with our elected, community, and private partners to make sure the community becomes home to vibrant commercial corridors, inviting public spaces, improved transit networks, and a diverse economy that provides quality jobs for local residents.”

“Everyone here has long recognized Jamaica’s inherent potential for smart growth,” said **Queens Borough President Katz**. “So we shored up that will and now we finally have a way. The city cannot be clearer about our strong commitment to revitalize Jamaica’s downtown core and make it even more attractive to investors, even more livable for existing residents and businesses. It truly is one of the most strategically positioned, lowest-priced real estate left in town. To have gotten this far is a tribute to the tremendous effort undertaken by countless stakeholders. It’s a focused commitment backed up by real city resources. As we enter the phases of implementation, our success in reaching the Action Plan milestones hinges upon continued engagement from all those involved thus far.”

“Jamaica has so many assets that position it for real growth – this plan is about making the most of those assets to ensure the neighborhood is one of the best in NYC to live, work, and play,” said **Deputy Mayor for Housing and Economic Development Alicia Glen**. “The Jamaica Now Action Plan is the blueprint we have developed hand in hand with the community to dedicate energy and investment on all fronts to realize Jamaica’s tremendous potential.”

In addition to the items outlined in the Action Plan, today Borough President Katz and the de Blasio Administration announced an agreement on the following, designed to augment the Action Plan:

- Commitment of expense dollars for a marketing and branding program specifically for Jamaica
- Inclusion of the Downtown Jamaica Corridor into Phase 1 of LinkNYC Wi-Fi kiosk rollout
- A new program to make Jamaica's cultural institutions "Tourism Ready," drawing increased attention and audiences
- Commitment to obtain necessary capital improvements to activate the southern lawn of King Park in front of King Manor Museum for public and programmatic use, in addition to the improvements already underway
- Commitment to implement capital improvements needed at Brinkerhoff Mall Park in St. Albans, however determined in upcoming visioning and scoping sessions with local stakeholders

The 21-point Action Plan outlines interagency action items for implementation within the next three years. Highlights include:

- Jamaica Avenue Streetscape Improvements – additional seating, increased plantings and improved pedestrian circulation. \$250,000 secured by Mayor de Blasio for a streetscape study commencing in FY16 for DOT to determine the cost and scope
- Jamaica Entrepreneurship – launch a new program to train and jump-start next generation of Jamaica entrepreneurs with an emphasis on catering, quality dining and nightlife options
- Enhanced Public Safety – fund and install additional NYPD security cameras in high-traffic corridors with the 103<sup>rd</sup> and 113<sup>th</sup> Precincts
- Jamaica Arts Alliance – develop common goals among Jamaica's artists and existing arts and culture institutions to strengthen collaboration and create large-scale events and public art projects
- Redevelopment of 168<sup>th</sup> Street Garage – 59,000 square foot development site for mixed-income housing, retail and community center on northeast corner of 93<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and 168<sup>th</sup> Street (formerly an NYPD garage). RFP launched on February 10, 2015, and winning proposal TBD
- New Affordable Homeownership and Rentals – development of affordable one- to four-family homes, condominiums, cooperatives and small affordable rental buildings across approximately 11 city-owned sites in South Jamaica. RFQ launched in December 2014
- Activate Potential in AirTrain/LIRR Transit Hub – incentives for absentee property owners to activate vacant and derelict sites near current AirTrain/LIRR transit hub for development of new housing, retail and business incubator space

The Action Plan, in conjunction with other City investments, will support approximately 3,000 new housing units, 500,000 square feet of retail space and 800 hotel rooms in Jamaica through economic opportunities, cultural amenities and infrastructure. The strategic actions identified through the community engagement process will help transform Jamaica into a more attractive and affordable destination to live, work and visit.

Instrumental in the creation of the Action Plan include Borough President Katz, Deputy Mayor Glen and NYCEDC; CUNY/York College, the Greater Jamaica Development Corporation and the Regional Plan

Association; Congressman Gregory Meeks, State Senators Leroy Comrie and James Sanders, State Assembly Members Barbara Clark, Vivian Cook, William Scarborough, Michele Titus and David Weprin; Council Members Rory Lancman, I. Daneek Miller, Donovan Richards, Mark Weprin and Ruben Wills; Queens Community Boards 8, 12 and 13; and a consortium of City agencies including the Department of City Planning, Department of Design and Construction, Department of Education, Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Department of Housing Preservation and Development, Department of Parks and Recreation, New York City Police Department, Department of Small Business Services, Taxi and Limousine Commission, Department of Transportation, Department of Youth and Community Development and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

“I want to commend Queens Borough President Katz and the Deputy Mayor of Housing and Economic Development Alicia Glen with the de Blasio Administration for making Jamaica Exhibit A for the city’s place-based, progressive development agenda,” said **Congressman Gregory Meeks**. “We all recognized and have strong interest in the potential future for Jamaica, and providing collective feedback for the Jamaica Now Action Plan ensures fulfilling its potential as a center for mixed-income housing, transit-oriented development, quality jobs, and much needed commercial opportunities while maintaining its diversity and character.”

“I am grateful for this opportunity to elevate the Jamaica community and invest in critical social and economic infrastructure to improve local quality of life. For over 20 years, I have advocated and worked to put an end to many of Jamaica’s frustrations: predatory foreclosure practices, shameful infrastructure maintenance and high unemployment. In the eye of such immense challenges, I am proud to say we still stand strong: Jamaica continues to grow, and under this plan, will improve while staying true to the character of the neighborhood. I look forward to working with my colleagues to ensure that a dynamic, vibrant space is created for all members of the Jamaica community, with a plan that is vigilant in ensuring our neighborhood prospers while remaining affordable for both those who live and work in it,” said **State Senator Leroy Comrie**.

“I am extremely pleased to see the unveiling of the Jamaica Action Plan,” said **Assembly Member William Scarborough**. “This is the result of months of strategic planning for Jamaica’s future by all parties involved, and builds on years of work by Jamaica stakeholders to bring us to this point. This confirms Jamaica as one of New York City’s bright lights of the future.”

“The commitment shown by Mayor de Blasio and Borough President Katz to Jamaica’s future is very exciting to those of us who have worked for years to restore the area to its central role in the economic and community life in Queens and beyond,” said **Greater Jamaica Development Corporation President Carlisle Towery**. “Whether it is business attraction and expansion, creating affordable housing, expanding our cultural footprint or enhancing Jamaica’s livability, today’s action plan presents a series of specific steps the City will take to unleash the potential for the betterment of all who live, work and visit the area.”

“The Jamaica Now Action Plan reflects an exemplary collaboration by the Mayor, the Borough President, civic groups and the community that can restore Jamaica as one of the region’s most affordable and attractive destinations for living, shopping and working,” said **Regional Plan Association Chair Elliot Sander**. “RPA was pleased to be part of this community-planning process, and we believe that it will lead to a brighter future for all who live, work and visit Jamaica.”

“I am excited with the outcome of our many months of community partnership around this important development,” said **York College President Dr. Marcia V. Keizs**. “I salute Mayor de Blasio’s vision and that of Queens Borough President Melinda Katz. York College looks forward to our continued role in bringing this crucial development goal to fruition on behalf of our community, our college, its faculty, staff and more than 8,000 students. Jamaica is a destination point for visitors from across the nation and the world affirms what we already know about Jamaica as a great place to live, work, do business and be educated.”

“The implementation of the Jamaica Now Action Plan will create the growth and revitalization that this community has needed and deserved for so long,” said **Community Board 12 Chair Adrienne Adams**. “By promoting this all-encompassing quality of life project, we are assured that residents, employers and visitors

alike, will embrace our area to sustain it as one of the finest commercial destinations and livable Central Business Districts in the City of New York.”

“Jamaica is a neighborhood with a number of tremendous strengths, and today we officially begin building upon these incredible assets to create quality jobs, support businesses, promote economic development, and improve livability in the area,” said **NYCEDC President Kyle Kimball**. “After extensive discussions with the community, we have devised this plan that will make Jamaica a more critical and revitalized place for all New Yorkers. Thank you to Borough President Katz and all of our partners in this initiative, and I look forward working to make Jamaica an even stronger community for all New Yorkers to enjoy.”

“Investing in housing safeguards affordability in growing areas and creates a foundation of stability for those families who have helped to define the identity of the community. When it is paired with other strategic investments in foreclosure prevention, infrastructure, and business development, you create an extraordinary opportunity to bring new life and sustainable economic growth to this vibrant neighborhood,” said **Housing Preservation and Development Commissioner Vicki Been**. “I thank the Jamaica community and local leadership for their collaboration and contribution, as well as the Mayor, Deputy Mayor Glen, Borough President Katz, NYCEDC President Kimball, HDC President Rodney and all of our partners for working towards a collective vision for the future of this neighborhood.”

“City Planning has been working closely with our sister agencies over the past several years to achieve Jamaica’s potential for growth,” said **Department of City Planning Director and City Planning Commission Chair Carl Weisbrod**. “The Jamaica Now Action Plan is a community-driven blueprint for robust interagency coordination to implement key projects that will support the area’s evolution. We are actively participating with Borough President Katz to bring affordable housing, retail, amenities and economic opportunities to the neighborhood. We look forward to helping catalyze underutilized sites and support Jamaica’s expansion and diversity.”

“As the administration continues its work to strengthen neighborhoods across the city, the Department of Small Business Services is part of a team looking holistically at neighborhoods and how we can best support the people, places, and local businesses that form the fabric of these communities,” said **Small Business Services Commissioner Maria Torres-Springer**. “We are thrilled to be working alongside our partners in Jamaica to ensure that the entire community benefits from the Jamaica Now Action Plan by providing small business support, resources for neighborhood revitalization, and workforce training and connections to jobs for local residents.”

Additional participants in the Jamaica Now Planning Initiative include: 165<sup>th</sup> Street Business Improvement District, 180<sup>th</sup> Street Business Improvement District, Jamaica Center Business Improvement District and Sutphin Boulevard Business Improvement District, A Better Jamaica, A Better Way Family & Community Center, Addisleigh Park Civic Association, Alliance of South Asian American Laborers, America Works, Antioch Baptist Church, Brinkerhoff Action Associates, Inc., Center for Integration & Advancement for New Americans, Center for New York City Neighborhoods, Chhaya Community Development Corporation, Citizens Housing & Planning Council, Community Healthcare Network of New York City, Cultural Collaborative Jamaica, Damian Family Care Center, Edge School of the Art, Exploring the Metropolis, Farmers Boulevard Community Development Corporation, First Presbyterian Church in Jamaica, Fortune Society, Goodwill Industries of Greater New York & New Northern New Jersey, Greater Allen Development Corporation, Greater Triangular Civic Association, Indo Caribbean Alliance, Jamaica Center for Arts & Learning, Jamaica Hospital, Jamaica Muslim Center; Jamaica Performing Arts Center, Jamaica YMCA, King Manor, LaGuardia Community College Adult & Continuing Education, Mutual Housing Association of New York, Neighborhood Housing Services Jamaica, New York Alliance for Careers in Healthcare, Queens College, Queens Council on the Arts, Queens Economic Development Corporation, Queens Hospital, Queens Legal Services, Queens Library; Queens Workforce1 Center, SelfHelp, Sikh Cultural Society, Sunnyside Community Services, Inc., The Jamaica Young Professionals, The Jamaica Youth Leaders, The Tate Group, Upwardly Global, Visiting Nurse Service of New York, and Y-Roads.

The Action Plan includes new initiatives around foreclosure prevention, streetscape improvements and workforce training for community residents, including connecting young people to opportunities at anchor healthcare institutions in the area. The Action Plan incorporates programs initiated by the de Blasio Administration in 2014, and so far in 2015, as well as several developments which are currently underway.

The Action Plan can be viewed in full at [www.nyc.gov/jamaicanow](http://www.nyc.gov/jamaicanow) and [www.queensbp.org/jamaica](http://www.queensbp.org/jamaica).

### **About the Jamaica Now Action Plan Leadership Council**

Borough President Katz's Jamaica Now Action Plan Leadership Council is designed to ensure continuous collaboration with community stakeholders and charged with oversight, administration and evaluation of the Plan's implementation. Borough President Katz's office will accept applications between now through April 29, 2015 from those interested in serving on the Leadership Council. For more information, visit [www.queensbp.org/jamaica](http://www.queensbp.org/jamaica).

### **About Downtown Jamaica**

Downtown Jamaica serves as one of New York City's major regional retail, employment and transportation hubs, home to a large number of educational, governmental and civic facilities including Jamaica Hospital and Queens Hospital Center, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration regional laboratory and Social Security Administration offices, the Queens Family, Civil, and Supreme Courts, and CUNY's York College. In total, the neighborhood study area is home to more than 150,000 residents and provides transportation services to more than 330,000 daily commuters. However, high unemployment, inadequate infrastructure, and limited supportive programs have contributed to economic stagnation in the neighborhood over the last decade, precluding Jamaica from realizing the potential of previous City investments in the area – including the development of the Jamaica AirTrain terminal in 2003 and a 2007 rezoning of 368 blocks in the area aimed at providing a dynamic mix of residential, business, and community opportunities in the heart of the downtown.

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