



Staten Island 2020

New York's fastest-growing borough faces serious economic and infrastructure problems, but with better planning and a strategy to build upon longstanding assets, Staten Island can meet these challenges and reach new heights

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STATEN ISLAND 2020

New York's fastest-growing borough faces serious economic and infrastructure problems, but with better planning and a strategy to build upon longstanding assets, Staten Island can meet these challenges and reach new heights

STATEN ISLAND HAS MUCH AT STAKE BETWEEN NOW AND 2020. On the one hand, Staten Island is on the brink of reaching new heights. It is home to several of the city's most attractive neighborhoods, enjoys a high overall quality of life and has an array of somewhat hidden jewels like the St. George Theatre, Midland and South Beaches and Wagner College. The number of jobs in the borough has been on the rise, some long-depressed neighborhoods are poised for a renaissance and Staten Island has ample opportunities to grow and diversify its economy in the years ahead.

At the same time, Staten Island faces profound economic and infrastructure challenges—from an alarming exodus of young people and rising commuting times to stubbornly high vacancy rates in the borough's office buildings and mounting frustration among business owners, urban planners and developers that Staten Island is an impossible place to get anything done. Additionally, while employment numbers are up, most of the industries that are currently growing pay very low wages, a trend that's likely to persist if the retail and health services sectors continue to drive much of the borough's growth. All of these problems will be playing out amidst a near certain spike in the population in the decades ahead: the borough is expected to add another 77,000 people over the next 25 years.¹

By 2020, if left unaddressed, these problems will almost certainly overwhelm the borough, cause it to miss out on golden opportunities for sustainable growth and undermine much of what has long made Staten Island attractive as a place to live and work.

As this report makes clear, 2020 could be a year of triumph for Staten Island. By then, the borough's North Shore waterfront should be a national showcase, instead of an embarrassment; a new, more functional Goethals Bridge will be well on its way; St. George and Stapleton could be mentioned in the same breath as Hoboken and Long Branch as models of transit-oriented development; and the West Shore could be the site of hundreds of new jobs as well as a modern light rail system that, ideally, would link to the PATH train and Manhattan by way of the Bergen-Hudson Light Rail Line.

The latter half of this report includes several suggested principles for growth and a long menu of possible recommendations for the Staten Island Economic Development Corporation (SIEDC) and other leaders in the borough to carry out, several of which are achievable in the immediate future. But the three things most commonly heard among the Staten Islanders we interviewed were quite basic: 1) engage in better planning for the borough's growth; 2) the borough's business, government and civic officials need to pay much closer attention to the borough's economic challenges and demonstrate better leadership; and 3) figure out what Staten Island wants to be when it grows up—a bedroom community or an independent economic entity.

We agree with all three sentiments.

The lack of planning is a big part of why Staten Island faces so many fundamental challenges today. And thoughtful planning is undoubtedly critical to the borough's future. Only by engaging in sensible planning can the borough accommodate the expected population growth in a way that doesn't overtax the infrastructure, undermine the borough's existing assets or leave the island with a significantly higher unemployment rate.

Meanwhile, there have been stunning gaps in leadership on issues affecting the borough's economic future.

"There's no shortage of good ideas for Staten Island," says one economic development expert. "But there is a dramatic lack of leadership." Indeed, well over a dozen of the Staten Islanders interviewed for this report mentioned that the borough's politicians repeatedly fail to put the island's greater good over narrow, parochial concerns. Unfortunately, Staten Island's business, civic and community leaders haven't exactly picked up the slack. In several cases, divisions among the borough's major civic and community institutions have only magnified the leadership vacuum.

The question about Staten Island's identity is also worthy of careful debate and discussion. We believe that Staten Island is largely a bedroom community, and that all future planning and development efforts should keep in mind the importance of maintaining an attractive environment for families and understand that many neighborhoods across the borough must never lose the quiet, suburban charms that have long attracted residents looking for a very different pace of life than Manhattan or Brooklyn.

At the same time, we believe that Staten Island is a bedroom community that has always had—and should continue to have—a strong and diverse local economy. After all, more Staten Islanders go to work in their own borough (86,197) than commute to Manhattan and Brooklyn combined (82,674).² These are important jobs for a community that now has nearly half a million residents and, given the long work commute that many Staten Islanders have to endure, the prospect of more on-island work opportunities should be welcome.

The trick is to hang onto all of the traits that make the borough an attractive bedroom community while not losing sight of the need to bolster and diversify the local job base. In the pages that follow, we attempt to chart a course toward achieving this balancing act.

Background and Methodology

In September 2006, SIEDC commissioned the Center for an Urban Future to undertake an independent study that "provides a critical analysis of the current state of the Staten Island economy and presents a series of specific actions and policy recommendations that will guide Staten Island's business and civic leaders towards the creation of a diverse economy that offers a range of employment opportunities."

Over the next five months, the Center for an Urban Future examined volumes of data and conducted interviews with more than 125 stakeholders and policy experts to get a handle on where Staten Island's economy is heading, what the major challenges are and where there may be opportunities for growth in

the years ahead. The vast majority of the interviews were conducted with Staten Island-based stakeholders—from major business leaders and developers to entrepreneurs, university officials, leaders of cultural institutions, transportation experts, community leaders, workforce development experts and government officials. We held a focus group with several artists who are living on Staten Island. We also conducted several interviews with policy experts and government officials located off the island, including some of New York's top economic development experts and waterfront planners, as well as a number of New Jersey-based planners and municipal officials. (A list of those interviewed is found in Appendix 3 on page 22).

Mounting Problems

Rising housing prices, long commutes and an exodus of young people are just some of the challenges Staten Island must confront in the years ahead

An increasing number of Staten Islanders are giving up on the borough and moving elsewhere.

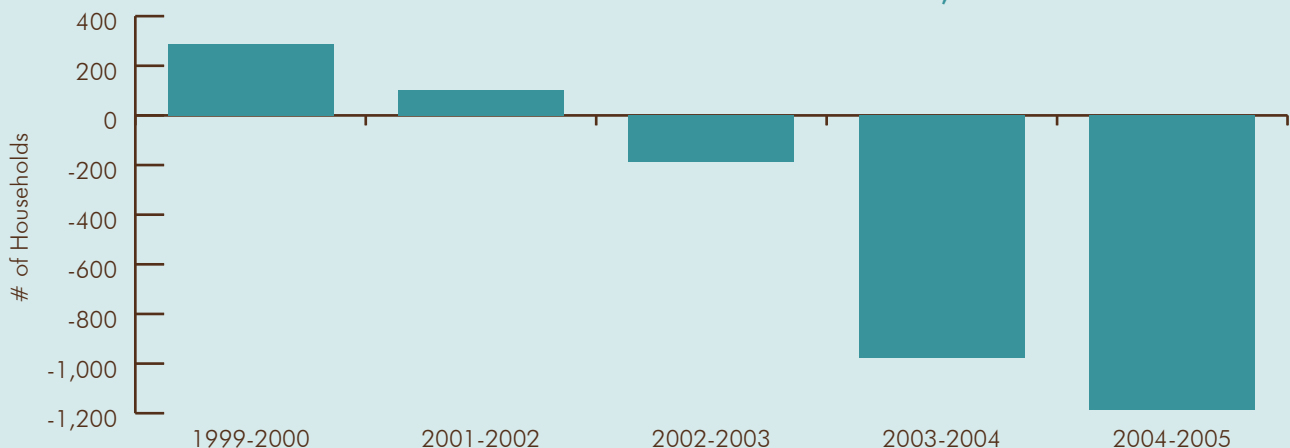
- Staten Island has long had positive domestic migration trends, meaning that more native-born households were moving into the borough than leaving the borough. But that has reversed itself in the past three years. In 2004-2005, the most recent year for which figures are available from the federal government, Staten Island experienced a net out-migration of 1,188 households.³
- The number of Staten Islanders leaving for New Jersey has jumped sharply in recent years. There was a 34 percent increase in the number of Staten Islanders moving to Hudson County between 1999-2000 and 2004-2005; a 26 percent increase in those moving to Ocean County and a 22 percent increase in those moving to Middlesex County.⁴
- Staten Island continues to attract new residents from Brooklyn, a pattern that has held true for decades. But in the past five years, there was actually a 25 percent increase in the number of Staten Islanders moving to Brooklyn.⁵
- "I'm the only person from my neighborhood who still lives on Staten Island," said Assemblyman and life-long Islander Michael J. Cusick in an interview for this report. "They've all moved to New Jersey. It's easier to commute from Middletown, New Jersey to Manhattan than from Staten Island by ferry and subway ride. Staten Island used to be a destination but now it's a landing pad. Young families land here for a little while

from Brooklyn and Queens, then move to New Jersey. Even though there's high property taxes over there, young couples say the schools are better and there are one-family houses spread out, not cookie cutter houses like here. Plus, New Jersey is economically dynamic."

Young adults between 18 and 34 appear to be fleeing the borough, a major problem since young single people and families add vitality and vibrancy to communities.

- Staten Island's population grew by 64,751 during the 1990s (a 17 percent increase), yet the number of people between the age of 18 and 34 declined by more than 5,375 (a 5 percent drop) during the same period.⁶
- Staten Islanders between 18 and 34 now account for just 22.6 percent of the borough's population, down from 27.9 percent in 1990 and 28.32 percent in 1980.⁷
- "Young people aren't staying on Staten Island. They can't afford homes. They don't want to spend three hours a day commuting to work."
- "I think we're seeing a flight of young people because there aren't the jobs or interesting neighborhoods or nightlife. There's nothing to keep the younger generation in the borough."
- "I'm afraid we're going to lose the vitality of those younger people. If they're moving out in mid-30s and 40s, they're going to be moving out just when they're most successful."
- A growing number of cities across the country and throughout the world have developed economic develop-

NET MIGRATION FOR RICHMOND COUNTY, 1999-2005



Source: Internal Revenue Service

ment strategies around attracting young, college-educated people.

- Staten Island has no urban downtown and a dearth of the kind of affordable rental units with convenient access to Manhattan that young professionals look for.
- Late night ferry service has increased slightly in recent years but it is still sparse at times when club-goers to Manhattan return home from a night out. The absence of better late-night ferry service remains a deterrent to many young creative people moving to (or remaining in) the borough.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that middle-class seniors are also leaving the borough.

- “Older people are leaving. There’s no senior housing on Staten Island. A lot of people I know have moved to New Jersey or Pennsylvania. They have senior communities. We don’t have anything like that. We only have nursing homes or assisted living facilities.”
- “[Older people] are going to New Jersey right and left. People really want to stay, but they don’t want a nursing home if they don’t need it.”
- “People who are looking for senior housing communities are leaving the island. There’s really none of this on Staten Island. That’s why people are going to New Jersey, where there are huge retirement communities. The upper income folks can choose. There’s nothing for the folks in the middle who don’t qualify for subsidized housing but want to stay on Staten Island.”

The cost of single-family homes on Staten Island is now out-of-reach for many middle-class families.

- The median sale price for single-family homes on Staten Island increased from \$211,500 in 2000 to \$425,000 in 2006, a 101 percent increase.⁸

- The number of Staten Islanders forced into foreclosure increased by 47 percent in 2006, a significantly higher increase than any other borough. Foreclosures rose by 25 percent in Brooklyn, 25 percent in the Bronx and 4 percent in Manhattan. The number of foreclosures in Queens declined by 8 percent.⁹

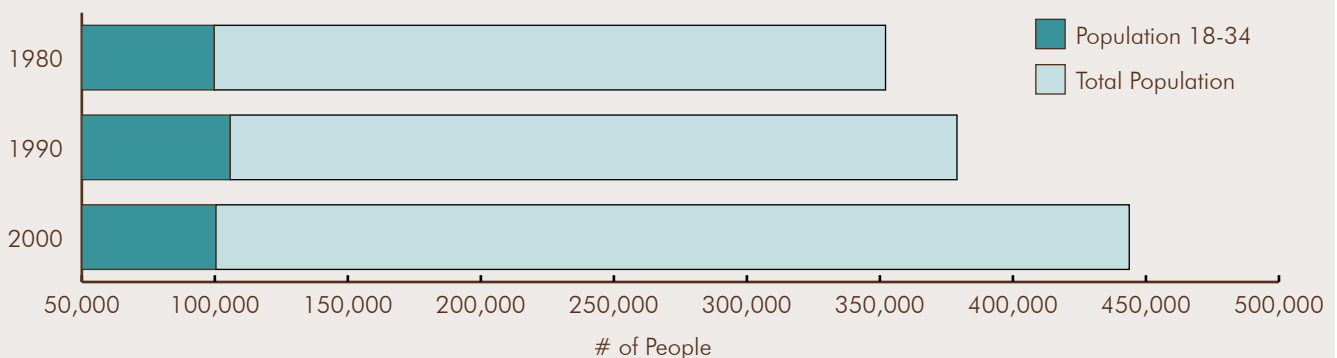
Commuting times have been getting higher.

- Travel-to-work times increased from a mean time of 26.2 minutes in 1980 to 39 minutes in 1990 to 43.9 minutes in 2000.¹⁰
- The continued movement of financial services firms from lower Manhattan to Midtown may mean that the commute won’t be getting any shorter for some time.

No financial services firms or other corporate office tenants are coming to Staten Island, despite large amounts of vacant space and inexpensive commercial real estate prices compared to Manhattan.

- The Teleport is largely vacant and has only a few dozen jobs.
- One of the buildings in the Corporate Park of Staten Island has a 40 percent vacancy rate. “Companies aren’t moving here,” says the owner of the property. “I’ve never seen it as bad as this.”
- The vacancy rate in St. George office buildings is 16 percent, but many of the current tenants are government agencies and nonprofits.¹¹
- In the months after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, several Manhattan-based investment banks and other corporations relocated part of their operations to New Jersey, Brooklyn, Westchester and Connecticut. No major office tenant moved to Staten Island, despite significant efforts by local business leaders and politicians to court these Manhattan firms.

GROWTH IN YOUNG PEOPLE (AGES 18-34) ON STATEN ISLAND VS. GROWTH OF THE BOROUGH'S OVERALL POPULATION, 1980-2000



Source: Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce

MEDIAN SALES PRICE, EXISTING SINGLE-FAMILY HOMES, 2000-2006



Source: New York State Association of Realtors

- SIEDC ran ads for the Corporate Park for roughly two years in *Crain's New York Business*, but it didn't generate new tenants.¹²
- Several of the financial services firms that opened offices at the Corporate Park around 2000 have since left Staten Island, including American Express, Morgan Stanley, Prudential and Charles Schwab. The companies that remain (Merrill Lynch and Salomon Brothers) have relatively few employees on Staten Island.¹³

Staten Island has not been able to accommodate a number of manufacturing companies that would like to grow there.

- Several manufacturers from other parts of the New York City region have expressed interest in relocating to Staten Island, but most, if not all, of these firms have ended up moving to New Jersey or other locales in the region due to a lack of available industrial properties.¹⁴
- One of the borough's largest manufacturers will probably move off Staten Island soon because there are no existing facilities large enough to accommodate its growth and the cost of building new space is significantly cheaper in New Jersey, even with city tax incentives.

Most of the recent job growth on Staten Island has been in industries that pay low wages.

- The industries that produced the largest net job gains between 2000 and 2005 were¹⁵:
 - Social assistance – 731 jobs (average annual wage of \$21,723)
 - Food services & drinking places – 601 jobs (\$14,417)

- Credit intermediation – 517 jobs (\$40,496)
- Grocery stores – 504 jobs (\$20,490)
- Professional, scientific and technical – 400 jobs (\$38,305)
- Health & personal care stores – 392 jobs (\$21,132)

One of Staten Island's strengths is that it's a borough with attractive neighborhoods. But many of these neighborhoods have been marred in recent years by graceless development.

- Developers have often crammed as many poorly designed units built of cheap materials as could fit onto a lot, often next to beautiful old homes that made them look worse by comparison.
- Staten Island is not the only borough that has suffered from knockdowns: the tear-down of large old homes on roomy lots to build multiple townhouses. But it seems to have had more of them than any place in the city. Few of the borough's neighborhoods have escaped the jarring juxtapositions that knockdowns create.
- Many of the newer townhouse developments have no frontage or real backyards. Landscaping is non-existent.
- The Staten Island Growth Management Task Force made some good recommendations to deal with this problem and retain the coherence of many of the borough's attractive and older neighborhoods.
- In reaction to years of shoddy building, many Staten Islanders have turned against all development. This is perhaps the most harmful effect of the housing industry's lack of aesthetics and restraint as it rushed to keep up with the borough's record growth over the past two decades.

Staten Island In 2020

Without a change in direction, the borough could experience an economic decline and a significant deterioration in its quality of life

Unless a broad cross-section of the borough's leaders begins to address many of the issues raised in this report and engage in thoughtful planning that takes into account Staten Island's future housing, employment and infrastructure needs, Staten Island will be a less attractive place in 2020.

While there will be a notable increase in the borough's population, the borough could very well be home to fewer young families and a smaller share of middle-income people of all ages. The borough will have more jobs, but most of the new ones will pay very low wages—making it ever more difficult for many Staten Islanders to earn a decent living or afford to buy a home in the borough. Unless the population growth is steered towards transit centers that can support new retail development, traffic congestion across the borough will become far worse and commuting times for those who work in Manhattan will continue to escalate.

With a declining number of well-paying jobs, long commuting times and a continued lack of vibrant town centers, Staten Island will find it difficult to hang on to young people that are raised on the island and attract

Like the city as a whole, the borough will be home to more immigrants and minorities. During the 1990s, foreign-born individuals accounted for a significant 43 percent of the borough's population growth.¹⁷ But between 2000 and 2005 immigrants made up a whopping 93 percent of the growth—accounting for 19,404 of the 20,802 net increase in residents.¹⁸

Staten Island will likely have more jobs in 2020, largely geared towards serving the borough's expanded population with new retail stores, bank branches and a host of businesses that provide services from legal advice to day care. Home health aides and other positions that provide direct services to the elderly will be among the fastest growing occupations. In addition, the borough will have more jobs that provide social services, English-language courses and job training. The majority of jobs in these growth sectors will pay low wages.

While employment will increase, population gains and an influx of low-skilled workers could also lead to an increase in the borough's unemployment rate.

In 2020, thanks to continued improvements in telecommunications, more Staten Islanders will work from

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young professionals from elsewhere. Unless there are more retirement communities for older people, many middle- and upper-middle-income elderly residents of the borough will continue to leave for New Jersey and other more dynamic environments.

Specific changes that can be expected include:

In 2020, Staten Island's population will likely be considerably larger, older and more diverse. According to projections by the Department of City Planning, the borough's population will grow from 475,000 in 2005 to 552,000 in 2030, a 16 percent increase. Meanwhile, Staten Island's elderly population will double, from 51,000 in 2000 to 103,000 in 2030—and comprise 18.7 of the borough's population, the highest of any borough and up from 11.6 percent in 2000.¹⁶

home. According to the U.S. Census, the number of Staten Island residents who worked from home grew by 31 percent between 1990 and 2000, from 2,456 to 3,206.¹⁹ Experts project that the number of telecommuters in New York City and Staten Island will continue to increase.

The population increases will also prompt a significant demand for new housing. City officials were unable to project exactly how many new units will be constructed on Staten Island by 2020, but the number could be substantial. For instance, the borough produced 13,238 new housing units between 2000 and 2005, during a time when the population shot up by 20,802.²⁰ With the borough possibly adding 77,000 new residents by 2030, the number of additional housing units could vastly exceed what was built in recent years.

Opportunities for Growth

From making St. George a more vital downtown to growing the maritime industry, Staten Island has a number of achievable opportunities to strengthen its economy and create a more sustainable borough

ST. GEORGE & STAPLETON

The long depressed neighborhoods of St. George and Stapleton are now on the verge of impressive turnarounds, and probably represent the best chance for Staten Island to accommodate significant population growth between now and 2020 and establish the kind of vital downtowns that have emerged in places from Jersey City to Long Branch but which have long eluded Staten Island. Creating dynamic transit villages in St. George and Stapleton would likely help the borough hold onto more of its young people and attract artists and creative people from Manhattan and Brooklyn who want to live in an interesting and diverse urban environment at rents they can afford. It would also almost certainly spur many new businesses—from much-needed restaurants, supermarkets and other shops to architecture firms, graphic design companies and other small- and mid-sized office businesses.

Staten Islanders have held their breath before about the potential for growth in St. George and Stapleton. But this time, the hype is accompanied by considerable private investment in these neighborhoods. Several Staten Island-based developers have poured large sums of money into upgrading their properties and a growing number of entrepreneurs are opening new stores ranging from wine bars and coffee shops to roti restaurants. The majestic St. George Theatre, once left for dead, now routinely draws 600 to 1,000 people to shows that have included the legendary Tony Bennett. Most impressively, developers from off the island like Leib Poretz have sunk tens of millions of dollars into developing hundreds of new condos and apartments in the area—projects that have had no problem attracting long lists of prospective tenants.

The good news is that several of the borough's elected officials have been supportive of efforts to grow these neighborhoods. In his State of the Borough address earlier this year, Borough President James Molinaro said, "One of my chief goals over the next three years is to keep the renaissance of St. George moving forward. My vision for St. George is clear: it should be Staten Island's official 'downtown,' a hub of business, government, cultural and tourist attractions, and a great place to live."

The bad news is that poorly thought-out downzonings pushed by Staten Island officials in recent years as a way to curb teardowns and haphazard development

in low-rise communities have had the unintended consequence of stifling development that was set to occur in these North Shore neighborhoods—particularly St. George. More than just a bad mistake, these blanket downzonings threaten to put an abrupt halt to the much-needed renaissance. While some Staten Island officials have acknowledged the problem, there doesn't appear to be any urgency to restoring the prior zoning in these areas.

"When we enacted new zoning laws, we applied a one size fits all, which was a mistake," says State Senator Diane Savino. "Most people now realize it was a mistake. We downzoned the entire island instead of saying, 'lower density on the South Shore but the North Shore is a different environment, where you can have higher density.' It has stunted development in Stapleton and St. George. If SIEDC wants to be effective, get everyone to the table to get this done. There's only one Staten Island. We need to all be interested in the development of the North Shore."

"No one intended this to have a chilling effect on St. George," adds Council Member James Oddo. "We had very specific projects to stop. DCP [Department of City Planning] has to go back and clear that up."

St. George and Stapleton have some of the best views in New York City of Lower Manhattan, the harbor and the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge. Some density of development is necessary to take advantage of those assets and can be a critical ingredient in creating urban vitality and street life. Consider what might happen if the zoning is not adjusted. Developers who assemble parcels could still put up buildings. But instead of slender structures of some architectural merit with landscaping and on-site parking, they will instead be inclined to maximize their investment by building squat boxes that go lot line to lot line and send car-owning residents out to park in the already overcrowded local streets.

Beyond zoning changes, it will take a comprehensive, well-planned effort to fully realize the potential of St. George and Stapleton. As we have learned from speaking with officials who helped spearhead the revitalization of places like Peekskill, Red Bank, Long Branch and Hoboken, vital urban neighborhoods are not just wealthy people in towers but a mix of young and old, prosperous and striving. A successful strat

egy to create a more vibrant environment in St. George and Stapleton would benefit from a mixture of uses and residents, design guidelines that encourage street life and attractive buildings, an initiative to recruit artists, support for local entrepreneurs to open new businesses and galleries, programs that encourage business owners to make improvements to their facades, ample investments in sanitation and safety services, a commitment to preserve and reuse old buildings, new efforts to link waterfront areas with inland business strips and residential communities, and holding mixers, concerts and other events that bring people into these communities and help convey a sense of excitement and momentum.

Ralph DiBart, who now serves as the executive director of the New Rochelle Business Improvement District and who formerly led a successful initiative to revitalize Peekskill, says that successful downtown revitalizations

The container terminal at Howland Hook has already been a proven job generator on Staten Island during the past decade, but thanks to increasing global trade and limited berth space elsewhere in the region's port, it has the potential for considerable growth in the years ahead.

don't just happen on their own. Rather, he says that they include concerted efforts, usually led by an individual empowered to direct all planning efforts, to attract artists, generate buzz and give the community a cultural identity. "A city must make up its mind to recruit artists and convince them to move, match them with brokers, help with leases, introduce them to building owners, help building owners rehabilitate and get up to code, and create a community by hosting events and activities," says DiBart. "It's a labor intensive activity. Unless you have a huge art anchor or organic demand, there has to be a person or persons in charge of making it happen. The city [of Peekskill] agreed to make a priority of attracting artists to the downtown and rehabbing live/work spaces for artists. We went out and recruited artists to downtown. The city assigned a point person to market this, work with owners and artists, matched them up. Waiting for market demand to take care of it doesn't do it."

St. George and Stapleton have greatly benefited from local leadership in recent years, including the Downtown Staten Island Council and CityZen, a local business that has been holding art shows and other get-togethers in an effort to attract more artists to the North Shore. Meanwhile, the 2005 "Stapleton Reinvestment Plan," a study commissioned by the Independence Community Foundation and the SI Bank & Trust Foundation, provides a valuable blueprint for reviving that neighborhood. Yet, most observers believe that these and other efforts need greater support from top borough officials and business

leaders. Most of all, there needs to be a person in charge of leading and coordinating such efforts.

MARITIME SECTOR

The maritime sector represents one of the best opportunities for Staten Island to create a number of well-paying jobs over the next couple of decades. The container port at Howland Hook has already been a proven job generator on Staten Island during the past decade, but thanks to increasing global trade and limited berth space elsewhere in the region's port, the New York Container Terminal has the potential for considerable growth in the years ahead. Meanwhile, the borough's maritime services industry—which includes everything from tug boat companies and dry dock facilities to dredging firms—could easily experience modest growth as well, thanks to demand created by an overall increase in ship traffic in the

port and the closure of maritime services operations in other parts of the harbor.

The New York Container Terminal has already been producing big dividends for Staten Island. On the verge of collapse as recently as the early 1990s, the facility at Howland Hook has gone from handling 12,214 lifts in 1996 to 326,962 in 2006, an increase of 2,577 percent. While the biggest increases occurred in the early 1990s, after initial investments in the facility, the terminal has continued to demonstrate robust growth numbers in recent years—it handled 26 percent more lifts in 2006 than in 2004.

The facility employed 475 full-time workers in 2006, the vast majority of which are union jobs that pay about \$90,000 a year. "These are not minimum-wage jobs," says Jim Devine, president of the New York Container Terminal. Fully 72 percent of the jobs at the terminal are held by New York City residents, a large share of them from Staten Island—according to Devine, 386 of the 808 full- and part-time employees who worked at the facility in 2006 live on Staten Island.

The best news is that there is significant potential for more growth. The terminal is in the early stage of expanding to a site just north of its current operations, a development that is projected to add numerous new jobs. But with the right support, the facility could grow even more. Devine says that the facility has the potential to handle 1 million lifts a year. That would be a 206 percent increase over current capacity.

While the maritime services sector on Staten Island has received little attention, the borough is currently home to five tug boat companies, two barge companies, three dry dock repair businesses, two dredging firms, three steamship agents and at least five other maritime businesses. While these firms won't be producing the growth numbers of Howland Hook, independent industry experts believe that Staten Island's dry dock companies and other maritime services firms are also likely to experience growth in the coming years. Indeed, a yet-to-be-published study undertaken of the city's maritime industry for the New York City Economic Development Corporation (EDC) is expected to conclude that Staten Island represents the city's true growth opportunity for these firms.

"Staten Island is the place of growth for the maritime business," says Sam Yahalom, a professor at SUNY Maritime and the primary author of the forthcoming study for EDC. "Their facilities are already overbooked. They're looking to expand. It's the only area for the region where there can be growth. Staten Island can become the hub for maritime services for the region."

Dry dock companies may have the most potential, particularly after the recent closure of a major dry dock repair facility in Red Hook. "With the closure of the Red Hook dry dock repair yard, all of the other ship repair yards in the harbor are getting more business," says Roberta Weisbrod, a Brooklyn-based expert on waterborne transportation issues. A city official adds, "The demand for dry dock space in the harbor is not being met." At least one Staten Island dry dock company, Caddell Dry Dock and Repair, has expanded recently.

STATEN ISLAND FERRY

Commuters and tourists flock to the Staten Island Ferry, the borough's pre-eminent symbol and one of New York's global icons. The bright orange boats carry an estimated 19.2 million riders per year.²¹ That's about 47,400 riders on an average weekday and 17,500 riders on the weekend. About 1.8 million of riders each year are tourists. When you add in the 1.1 million non-Staten Island residents who take the boat in a year, some of whom are probably on an excursion, it is not a stretch to say that the number of tourists on the ferry tops 2 million a year, making it one of the city's most visited attractions.

Dozens of people interviewed for this report expressed profound disappointment that Staten Island hasn't been able to capture some of this activity for its economy. Other major transportation hubs—from South Station in Boston to Union Station in Washington, D.C. and Grand Central Station in Manhattan—are also hubs of activity: book sellers, open-air food courts, souvenir shops. When you get off the boat in Staten Island, you

can't even buy a key chain or a coffee mug with an image of the ferry. Let's be frank: there are villages in Peru with a better tourist management policy.

Similarly, there is no meaningful effort to steer tourists to nearby attraction, like "Postcards," the borough's 9/11 memorial, the beautiful waterfront promenade adjacent to the terminal or the magnificent St. George Theatre. It is a vast understatement to say that the ferry is a huge missed opportunity for Staten Island.

"Thousands and thousands of tourists ride the ferry. They get off and what are they greeted with? Blank walls," said one longtime business leader. "We're missing the boat with that ferry terminal. It's a commuter ferry, but it's a world famous ferry that attracts thousands of tourists and visitors every year, and we're not effectively tapping into that market. That could be a tremendous source of income for Staten Island."

To be fair, the Whitehall and St. George Terminals are much better than they were. Some \$320 million in renovations have seen to that. And the addition of three new Kennedy class boats, at a total cost of \$135 million, has been a boon. Even so, it is astonishing that the borough derives practically no economic development benefits from the ferry or the St. George Terminal.

TOURISM

Ask any resident of one of the other four boroughs whether they've ever heard of the Jacques Marchais Museum of Tibetan Art, the New York Chinese Scholar's Garden at Snug Harbor Cultural Center, the St. George Theatre, Staten Island's 9/11 Memorial or South Beach and they're likely to shrug and give you a blank stare. The sad truth is that while Staten Island has a number of wonderful cultural institutions, arts venues and recreational attractions, few people outside of Staten Island know they exist. Even worse, there's been no sustained effort to promote these and other treasures.

To be sure, even with better promotion, it's unrealistic to expect that Staten Island will attract significantly more out-of-town tourists than it does today. Most tourists simply have other priorities during their short stay in the Big Apple, from the Empire State Building and the World Trade Center site to Central Park, MoMA and the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

However, Staten Island certainly could—and should—attract thousands of additional visitors who live throughout the New York metropolitan region. With nearly 8 million people living in the other four boroughs alone, Staten Island is missing a huge opportunity to promote its unique cultural, recreational and culinary assets to this large and growing audience. Attracting more art lovers, beachgoers, pizza connoisseurs and other visitors from the region would pay significant dividends to

Staten Island. These visitors would pump money into the financially strapped cultural institutions, dine at local restaurants and spend dollars at other businesses in the borough. This would lead to new jobs, burnish Staten Island's image and potentially help the borough attract more artists and creative people.

To make all of this happen, it would take a sustained effort to market the borough's unique treasures. Staten Island has attempted some promotional efforts like this in the past, but all of them faltered after a short time, ei-

the borough's cultural institutions, art galleries, restaurants and bars.

There are efforts now underway to create a permanent entity to promote Staten Island's assets and raise its image. Many of the people interviewed for this report expressed strong support for such an initiative, which still needs to raise enough funds to hire an executive director and ensure that it can sustain itself for more than a year.

Beyond a lack of marketing, there are other things preventing the borough from attracting more visitors to

When you get off the ferry in Staten Island, you can't even buy a key chain or a coffee mug with an image of the ferry. Similarly, there is no meaningful effort to steer tourists to nearby attraction, like "Postcards," the borough's 9/11 memorial, the beautiful waterfront promenade adjacent to the terminal or the magnificent St. George Theatre. Let's be frank: there are villages in Peru with a better tourist management policy.

ther because of scarce funds or a lack of leadership and collaboration from the borough's cultural institutions. Indeed, many of those interviewed for this report say that longstanding rifts between leaders of Staten Island's cultural institutions have kept these institutions from coming together and promoting all of the borough's assets. The business community also needs to recognize the economic value of the borough's cultural institutions and should be doing more to aid in efforts to promote these venues. "The culturals and the business leaders are not having conversations with each other," says the head of one Staten Island cultural institution. "They have to get together."

New York's other boroughs are all currently doing sustained marketing campaigns, usually with financial support from the Borough President and their major business organizations. The Queens Economic Development Corporation created a "Discover Queens" unit and website to consistently market that borough's cultural and dining attractions. Meanwhile, the Bronx Borough President helped raise \$200,000 in private money to conduct an advertising campaign to change the public's perception of the borough, started a Tour de Bronx bike ride that attracts residents of the other boroughs, organized a "Taste of the Bronx" food show to promote the borough's restaurants and invited Tim Zagat, owner of the Zagat restaurant handbook, up to the borough as part of a successful effort to convince the publication to include more Bronx restaurants. Meanwhile, the Bronx Council on the Arts created "First Wednesday," a highly successful program that attracts large numbers of people from throughout the city to ride the Bronx Culture Trolley on a loop to

its cultural attractions, beaches and restaurants. One key problem is a lack of signage. This is most noticeable at the St. George Ferry Terminal. When ferry riders disembark in Staten Island, there are no signs advertising any of the borough's major cultural institutions, much less nearby attractions like the St. George Theatre or the 9/11 Memorial. The only visible sign to most ferry riders mentions the Staten Island Yankees ballpark.

There are other missed opportunities when it comes to signage. For example, there is no signage on the Staten Island Expressway or Lighthouse Avenue directing drivers (and bus riders) to the Jacques Marchais Museum of Tibetan Art. This museum is probably Staten Island's most unique cultural attraction—it is one of just two museums in the U.S. dedicated to Tibetan art—and it actually does attract visitors from around the world. Yet, there isn't even a sign nearby the museum that tells drivers or tourists coming by bus where the museum is. Museum officials have long tried to get Department of Transportation officials to place a sign along Lighthouse Avenue, but with no support from local politicians, they have been unsuccessful.

MINORITY AND IMMIGRANT ENTREPRENEURS

Staten Island's growing minority and immigrant populations are likely to be an important source of entrepreneurship and business growth for the borough's economy in the years ahead. These minority and immigrant entrepreneurs are already starting businesses at high rates and have begun to help breathe new life into long-depressed neighborhoods, from Port Richmond to stretches of Victory Boulevard and Bay Street. If demographic trends

continue, these entrepreneurs should be an even more powerful force for the borough in the decade ahead.

During the '90s, Staten Island's overall population grew by 17 percent (64,751) but the foreign-born population grew by 63 percent (28,107). Meanwhile, the borough's share of foreign-born residents catapulted from 11.8 percent in 1990 to 16.4 percent a decade later. Overall, a full quarter of the borough's residents are now minorities.

These demographic trends have already translated into a significant increase in new businesses. The number of foreign-born individuals on Staten Island who are self-employed increased from 3,500 in 1990 to 5,500 in 2000, a 57 percent jump. Overall, more than 10 percent of foreign-born people in the workforce on Staten Island are self-employed, versus 6 percent of all native-born individuals on the island.

Immigrants aren't the only ones starting businesses in increasing numbers. According to the Census Bureau,

fast-growing population over the past two decades suggests that colleges on the island will have no shortage of new applicants. At the same time, the borough's higher education institutions should also benefit from the continued attractiveness of New York City as a place for young people from around the country and across the region to attend college. Wagner College, for instance, already draws a significant share of its students from outside New York.

Both of the borough's major higher educational institutions—the College of Staten Island and Wagner—are currently exploring growth options. The College of Staten Island is in the process of adding between 600 and 900 dormitory rooms as well as new dining venues—changes that would enable it to increase enrollment. Wagner College is also adding new dorms and, according to university officials, has significant potential to expand its graduate programs in the years ahead. The completion of these expansion projects will be critical to the growth of this

Educational services was the fastest growing sector in the state between 1990 and 2005. It's also been a key source of growth for Staten Island, adding nearly 300 new jobs across the borough between 2000 and 2005, an 11 percent increase. Staten Island's colleges and universities have clear potential for further growth.

the number of African-American-owned businesses on Staten Island increased by 117 percent between 1997 and 2002, from 1,057 to 2,291.

While these entrepreneurs are likely to be increasingly important to the borough's economic future, they will need the support and attention of business development organizations like SIEDC to realize their full potential. Many of them will face significant obstacles in starting and growing a business, from failing to understand regulations to having great difficulty accessing start-up capital.

COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Higher education has been one of the leading job engines for New York and the nation in recent years. In fact, educational services was the fastest growing sector in the state between 1990 and 2005, increasing employment by 45 percent.²² It's also been a key source of new jobs for Staten Island. Indeed, the educational services sector added nearly 300 new jobs across the borough between 2000 and 2005, an 11 percent increase. Citywide, the sector grew by 17 percent.²³

Staten Island's colleges and universities have clear potential for further growth. To begin with, the borough's

part of Staten Island's economy.

As the home to many top scientists and much of the borough's intellectual capital, Staten Island's colleges and universities could also play an important role in fostering the growth of new industries, from the emerging "clean tech" sector to life sciences.

HEALTH CARE

The health care sector is already the biggest employer on Staten Island, with more than 8,000 jobs at the borough's hospitals, nearly 7,000 people employed in ambulatory health care services and roughly 5,100 others working in nursing and residential care.²⁴ However, with the borough's overall population growing and the number of elderly residents expected to explode, this part of Staten Island's economy is all but guaranteed to add a considerable number of new jobs in the years ahead—with much of the growth in home health aides, nurses, nursing assistants and other front-line health services workers.

The sector is likely to experience meaningful job growth regardless of whether it receives considerable support from policymakers. Meanwhile, a significant share of the new jobs will pay low wages.

Yet, the sector faces a number of complicated chal-

would have far-reaching consequences on Staten Island's overall quality of life and economic competitiveness. The problems—which run the gamut from simply meeting the health care needs of an aging population and the mounting financial pressures facing hospitals to the need for more community-based clinics and retirement communities—haven't yet received the attention they deserve from local politicians, business leaders and developers. "Health care is so important to building the economy, yet I think health care is taken for granted on Staten Island,"

sey port area to be 8 million square feet by 2060, nearly three times the warehouse floor space in the port area in 1999.

While cultivating this sector is far from a slam dunk for Staten Island, the borough does have a significant amount of undeveloped space in close proximity to Howland Hook that could be used for port-related warehousing activities. Some of the space is already owned by the New York Container Terminal at Howland Hook, which recently renovated a 212,000 square foot warehouse just

The Port Authority forecasts warehouse demand in the New York/New Jersey port area to be 8 million square feet by 2060, nearly three times the warehouse floor space in the port area in 1999. While cultivating this sector is far from a slam dunk for Staten Island, the borough does have a significant amount of undeveloped space in close proximity to Howland Hook that could be used for port-related warehousing activities.

says Anthony Ferreri, president of the Staten Island University Hospital. "There's a focus on traffic, education and affordable housing. Why not health care?"

WAREHOUSING SECTOR

The continued growth of the Howland Hook container port could create a ripe opportunity for growth in the borough's now-small warehousing sector. Port-related warehousing has been among the fastest-growing parts of the region's economy, generating jobs that pay moderately higher wages than positions in the retail trade and personal services sectors. Thus far, virtually all of the growth in this industry has occurred on the New Jersey side of the harbor, but studies suggest that the region will need to produce considerably more warehousing facilities in the decades ahead to satisfy increasing demand for space. Staten Island could clearly be part of the mix.

Employment in the region's wholesaling/warehousing industry grew from 55,000 in 2000 to 78,000 in 2004, according to a recent report by the New York Shipping Association. A decent chunk of this took place a stone's throw from the container terminals in Northern New Jersey, where the growth in cargo shipments sparked the development of several new technically-sophisticated warehousing centers that optimize just-in-time supply chain principles.

Industry experts believe this is just the beginning of the growth for this new brand of port-related warehousing. Propelled in part by a significant increase in Asian containers shipped directly to the New York/New Jersey port over the next couple of decades, the Port Authority forecasts warehouse demand in the New York/New Jer-

sey port area to be 8 million square feet by 2060, nearly three times the warehouse floor space in the port area in 1999. While cultivating this sector is far from a slam dunk for Staten Island, the borough does have a significant amount of undeveloped space in close proximity to Howland Hook that could be used for port-related warehousing activities. Some of the space is already owned by the New York Container Terminal at Howland Hook, which recently renovated a 212,000 square foot warehouse just

outside of its gates and is currently shopping around for customers. There is potential for a small amount of additional warehousing development adjacent to this property. However, larger spaces located nearby—particularly the 677 acre site owned by the International Speedway Corporation (ISC)—probably offer the best opportunity to accommodate this sector on Staten Island.

Even if part of the ISC site was available for port warehousing activities, it is not yet clear whether enough companies will be willing to occupy warehousing space that requires them to deal with the tolls and traffic associated with trucking their goods over the Goethals Bridge, especially if there is other well-suited space available in New Jersey. Port experts interviewed for this report were cautiously optimistic that Staten Island could attract warehousing operations.

HIGHER-END RETAIL

Staten Island's retail sector has already expanded immensely over the past decade, driven by a precipitous growth in big-box stores. However, a number of people interviewed for this report believe that the borough is suffering from the lack of higher-end retail stores, such as Brooks Brothers, Nordstrom, Lord & Taylor, Saks Fifth Avenue and Tiffany & Co. The absence of these stores, they say, is one reason why so many Staten Islanders choose to do their shopping in New Jersey.

"There are no major prestige stores on Staten Island, yet we have the highest per capita income of the five boroughs," says one prominent Staten Islander. "All Staten Islanders get in their car and go to the Short Hills Mall. There's a lot of wealth on this island to be tapped."

Principles for Growth

Shore up the borough's strengths.

Staten Island can and should grow its economy. But any growth strategy should put a premium on maintaining the borough's longstanding assets, particularly its high overall quality of life, attractive neighborhoods and proximity to Manhattan.

Build on existing assets.

Rather than reinventing itself, Staten Island should pursue an economic growth strategy that harnesses existing assets and capitalizes on positive trends already beginning to occur.

Staten Island needs to plan. Period.

Staten Island's population will almost certainly continue to grow at a rapid clip over the next couple of decades. Staten Island has the capacity to handle this growth, but only if it engages in smart planning to ensure that this growth occurs in areas that have the infrastructure and services to handle an infusion of new residents and that the growth is accompanied by appropriate investments in transportation, schools and other services. Planning will also be essential to ensure the growth of key parts of the borough's economy, like the container port at Howland Hook, and to make the most of underused assets, like the North Shore waterfront. All of this planning should include the input of a broad cross-section of Staten Islanders, including business leaders and entrepreneurs.

Transportation improvements must be a top priority.

A long list of transportation problems—including mounting traffic congestion within Staten Island and rising commuting times to Manhattan—pose a tremendous threat to the borough's quality of life and represent a major obstacle to economic growth. Improving existing transit service, creating new public transportation options and making targeted road improvements should be a top priority for business and government leaders.

Long-term planning is critical, but also focus on achievable short-term goals.

Over the next several years, Staten Islanders undoubtedly need to engage in serious discussions and planning exercises about a number of important long-term projects, from developing new public transportation connections to revitalizing the North Shore waterfront and charting a course for the development of large swaths of land on the West Shore. Yet, while these projects unfold, Staten Island's leaders should also focus on some achievable short-term projects that, when accomplished, would give the borough an important psychological boost.

Many Staten Island neighborhoods simply should not be subjected to major new residential development, but a handful of North Shore neighborhoods actually could benefit from residential development of greater density.

Long-struggling neighborhoods such as St. George and Stapleton are on the brink of a mini-renaissance that Staten Island has waited decades for. But to realize the changes now possible, these neighborhoods desperately need a critical mass of residents that would prompt entrepreneurs to open new restaurants, supermarkets and other basic services the neighborhoods now lack. For this to happen, zoning amendments are needed, and quickly, to allow residential development of greater density along commercial strips and in clusters around transit hubs. Unlike many other parts of the borough, these neighborhoods have the transportation infrastructure to support new development. Such planning has been the foundation of downtown turnarounds from Peekskill to Red Bank, New Jersey, formerly blighted areas that came back after a coordinated effort between government officials and business and civic groups.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are not intended to represent a laundry list of everything SIEDC and the borough's leaders must do between now and 2020. Rather, they are a menu of possible actions that could be taken to put Staten Island's economy on more sound footing over the next several years.

Initiate a master plan for Staten Island's future growth. SIEDC should collaborate with a broad cross-section of the borough's stakeholders to begin laying the groundwork for a major planning initiative that would chart a course for the borough's future growth. "The borough is going to grow," says one official. "We need to identify where it's appropriate for it to grow and ensure that growth is diverted to those areas."

To avoid future questions about the integrity of the process, SIEDC should not unilaterally initiate this effort. Instead, it should work with community and civic leaders, entrepreneurs, higher education officials, health care experts, elected officials, maritime sector leaders, transportation planners, developers, architects and leaders of the borough's minority and immigrant communities to set the parameters, goals and principles for such a planning initiative. There should be a concerted effort to solicit input from segments of the borough that have previously been left out of similar discussions. This process should involve numerous public meetings in different communities across the borough. SIEDC and other local groups should explore hiring independent, outside planners to lead the process. It could start by seeking input from the American Institute of Architects.

Press for an immediate reversal of the recent downzonings along major strips in St. George, Stapleton and other commercial areas that are located along transit centers. SIEDC and other business leaders should vociferously demand a quick rollback of the blanket zoning changes that have unwittingly stifled sensible new development in St. George, Stapleton and a few other commercial strips on the North Shore that have the transit linkages to support higher-density development. The development of these "transit villages"—with enough density to bring a critical mass of people to these areas—will be key to whether Staten Island can grow smartly between now and 2020.

The Department of City Planning, City Hall and the borough's elected officials need to hear from a large contingent of Staten Island's business community on this matter—not just a couple of the usual suspects. One course of action is for SIEDC and the Staten Island Cham-

ber of Commerce to invite City Planning Chair Amanda Burden and Deputy Mayor Dan Doctoroff to a meeting on Staten Island with a large group of business leaders, community leaders and local development officials to discuss the urgency of upzoning these areas. Another option is to press for the reconvening of the Growth Management Task Force, specifically to upzone these areas. This government mechanism is in place and has obviously been successful at changing city zoning. Many of the borough's elected officials expressed strong support for this idea during interviews for this report. One official put it bluntly: "It's incredibly frustrating for developers who come here and see the possibility of urban density here," meaning St. George and other select parts of the North Shore, "and not be able to build it."

As part of this effort, SIEDC and the borough's business community should make it abundantly clear that they support keeping the new downzoning rules in effect for most other neighborhoods across the borough. The reversal of a small part of the recent downzonings should occur only along a limited number of commercial districts where transit linkages support greater densities.

Support efforts already underway to create new public transit options for Staten Islanders. SIEDC should continue to lend its support to ongoing efforts by the borough's elected officials and transportation experts to secure funds for new public transportation connections on Staten Island, including proposals to add light rail or bus service to Bayonne and create a robust Bus Rapid Transit network. It should give serious attention to proposals to develop a rail system that would run through the West Shore of the borough over the Bayonne Bridge to the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail in New Jersey. Such a connection would allow numerous residents to reduce their commuting times, potentially make Staten Island a more attractive site for corporations' back office operations and provide key public transportation linkages to future uses on the West Shore.

Push for a plan to redevelop the old U.S. Gypsum site on Richmond Terrace. While SIEDC should pursue a master plan for the entire North Shore waterfront between the St. George Ferry Terminal and Mariners Harbor, it would be wise to initiate a dialogue about redeveloping the most strategic stretch of that waterfront: the U.S. Gypsum site. The massive site occupies a pivotal parcel on the waterfront between the resplendent waterfront promenade that runs all the way to the ferry terminal and two prized but underused Staten Island

destinations: Snug Harbor and R.H. Tugs restaurant. A redeveloped Gypsum site has the potential to create an inviting pathway for local residents and tourists to walk, bike—or possibly even take a pedicab—from the ferry all the way to Snug Harbor. They could then have a burger or a beer at Tugs, whose incredible waterfront views should be a major draw for New Yorkers from other boroughs.

Any effort to move forward with developing the site must begin by involving the property's owners, who have privately expressed openness to redevelopment. Upon gaining their support, SIEDC ought to work with the West Brighton Community Local Development Corporation (WBCLDC) to push the city to undertake a feasibility plan for the site. (WBCLDC has already sought support for such a study, but was turned down by the city's Department of Small Business Services.) SIEDC also could also kick-start the process by asking architectural and planning students to propose possible reuses for the site or establishing a Gypsum site task force similar to the one that finally broke the paralysis at the Homeport site.

There are many other issues that clearly need to be addressed along the North Shore waterfront. But all of this could take many years; achieving progress at the Gypsum site could be a strategic intermediate step to open up the borough's remarkable but still largely untapped waterfront.

Develop a plan to better support the island's growing population of minority and immigrant entrepreneurs.

SIEDC should look to play a larger role in nurturing the growth of the borough's immigrant and minority businesses, a part of the economy that is already growing and has significant future potential for expansion. These entrepreneurs tend to face obstacles that go beyond what native-born entrepreneurs experience, from simply understanding the rules of doing business in New York to accessing financing. SIEDC can start by aggressively expanding its membership to include more of these businesses and scheduling some of its meetings and events at immigrant- or minority-owned restaurants and catering halls. It also should look to hold business planning seminars and other educational events for business owners in conjunction with groups that have credibility with immigrant and minority entrepreneurs, such as WBCLDC, which now operates the borough's only microfinancing programs for entrepreneurs, as well as several of the borough's existing immigrant-run nonprofits and city-wide microenterprise organizations like ACCION New York and the New York Association of New Americans (NYANA).

Take steps to ensure the future expansion of Howland Hook and the maritime services sector. SIEDC

should continue to demonstrate strong support for the growth of the maritime sector, which represents one of the borough's best opportunities for growth of well-paying, blue-collar jobs. Specifically, SIEDC should become an active participant in the ongoing planning discussions for a new Goethals Bridge. As part of this, it should push to ensure that the new bridge includes direct linkages to the container port that could handle the volume of traffic the facility expects in 2020 and beyond. "It's vitally important that the design and building of the bridge is done mindful of our potential for growth here," says Jim Devine, president of the New York Container Terminal.

SIEDC also ought to help publicize the economic contributions of the borough's maritime services sector, which largely remains under the radar of most borough officials and Staten Islanders but has potential for growth. It also should work with the borough's maritime services companies to ensure that they are included in future planning of the North Shore Light Rail, a proposed project that bisects the properties of some of these businesses.

Commission a study on the prospects for growth in port-related warehousing on Staten Island.

Port-related warehousing has the potential to provide meaningful growth on Staten Island in the coming decades, and could help cushion the blow from the loss of manufacturing jobs. While the industry's growth is near certain, it is not yet apparent whether this would be a good fit for Staten Island. SIEDC should undertake a professional study of whether Staten Island could attract warehousing tenants, what amount of space would be needed to support the sector's growth on Staten Island and what type of infrastructure and transportation improvements would be needed to make use of large sites like the ISC property.

Work with leaders of the borough's colleges and universities to support their growth.

Staten Island's colleges and universities will continue to be among the largest employers on Staten Island and could help stimulate significant job growth between now and 2020. SIEDC should engage the leaders of these institutions and work together to support their expansion.

Tap the economic potential of the Staten Island Ferry.

While everyone agrees that Staten Island is not even beginning to maximize the economic potential of the world-famous Staten Island Ferry and the St. George Ferry Terminal, no one appears to be demonstrating the leadership to take the steps necessary to harness this natural asset. SIEDC can play an important role by pressing for some of the following possible actions:

Set up a Staten Island Tourism Kiosk at the St. George Ferry Terminal that would be open seven days a week, but especially on weekends. The kiosk should not be in the waiting room, since most tourists have already decided to return to Manhattan by the time they have reached the waiting area. Instead, position it so it can't be missed when a rider gets off the boat. The kiosk must be staffed—perhaps with volunteers—and should promote a range of activities, from things that a tourist might do in a few hours, like visit Snug Harbor, or things that someone could do in a half-hour, like visit “Postcards,” the borough's impressive 9/11 memorial, or the St. George Theatre. The kiosk also should promote the “Talking Streets” audio tour of the harbor and St. George and make sure the staffers are adept at showing people how to obtain and use it. Jim DeSimone, a DOT official who runs the ferry, is not averse to the idea of establishing a kiosk in the terminal. “If one of those groups wanted to put in a kiosk, we would work with them,” he said in an interview for this report.

Add new signage at the St. George Ferry Terminal that directs visitors to adjacent destinations like the 9/11 Memorial, the waterfront promenade, the St. George Theatre, Bay Street Landing and the St. George greenmarket. Separately, the terminal ought to include posters or additional information in multiple languages about the borough's museums and cultural institutions.

Establish a Staten Island Visitors Center at the St. George Theatre. Having such an iconic home for a visitors center a short walk from the terminal could draw some tourists out of the ferry terminal and into St. George. The theater, whose owners said they would be supportive of such a proposal when prompted in an interview, could potentially screen a short film about the borough or the harbor.

Hold an occasional concert or other attention-grabbing event at the ferry terminal. Performances at the right times and in the right places would enliven the harbor crossings of commuters and tourists alike, and potentially generate a buzz about St. George and the borough. Advertise such events not only on Staten Island but around the city.

Improve pedestrian access to Bay Street Landing. It would be useful to install a clear, safe and easy passage from the southeast corner of the terminal to the waterfront plaza in front of the U.S. Lighthouse Center and Museum, which is slated for development under the auspices of the NYC Economic Development Corporation. It is likely that the site will gain restaurants, cafes, gift shops and other attractions designed to work with the museum in pulling tourists off the boat. Those tourists must know where to go, and not be obstructed from getting there.

Make commuter-friendly improvements to the ferry.

SIEDC should push for the implementation of wireless service on the Staten Island Ferry, an enhancement that would improve the commute for many Staten Islanders who spend nearly an hour each day on the ferry and potentially introduce some visitors to the borough's cultural attractions, tourism options and restaurants. The state of Washington is now in the process of installing Wi-Fi on all of its ferries, most of which haul commuters in the Seattle area. In 2004, it added this service on a handful of its ferries with the help of a \$775,000 grant from the Federal Transit Administration. Ferry operators in the state of Washington and local wireless experts who were interviewed for this report believe that the Staten Island Ferry could successfully implement such a system. The city has already added wireless networks to parks across Manhattan; why not the ferry?

SIEDC also could push for DOT to buy faster ferries or contract with a private ferry operator to run more frequent nighttime service.

Promote Staten Island's cultural, recreational and culinary assets.

Policymakers, business leaders and the heads of cultural institutions must come together to create a permanent mechanism for getting the word out about the borough's unique treasures—from major cultural institutions like Snug Harbor and hidden gems such as the Tibetan Museum to the borough's stand-out pizza parlors and suburb golf courses. One such effort is already underway, but still needs financial support that would enable it to hire an executive director and ensure that it can sustain itself for years into the future. To make any such entity work effectively, it should seek input from and work closely with a wide array of the borough's cultural leaders, restaurateurs and business leaders. The borough could also benefit to follow the lead of other boroughs in how to promote themselves as tourist destinations and raise their profile, through concerts, bike races, art events, trolleys and other initiatives.

Support a comprehensive planning initiative to revitalize St. George and Stapleton.

Policymakers and business leaders should support a more comprehensive initiative to make St. George and Stapleton into vibrant downtown areas. Sustainable growth for these neighborhoods is certainly within reach, and it would have enormous benefits for the entire borough—not just the North Shore. Borough leaders should throw their support behind local efforts already underway or proposed by the Downtown Staten Island Council, CityZen and the Stapleton Revitalization Plan, but they would also be wise to provide funds for a multi-year strategic planning initia-

tive that would include everything from recruiting artists, helping local entrepreneurs access microloans and government grants, improving storefront facades and instituting design guidelines that encourage pedestrian-friendly streets, preserve the old building stock and create better linkages between the waterfront and inland business strips.

Host a high-level, attention-grabbing event that brings policy experts from across the country to Staten Island. Staten Island could be the site of a marquee policy conference that attracts national experts and generates media attention. Such an event might be ideal for Staten Island, since the borough is now wrestling with some of the same complicated policy issues that are confounding so many other communities around the country. Possible topics could include: 1) The increasing use of ferries by cities; 2) How cities are redeveloping their

long-underutilized waterfronts; or 3) What cities need to do to recapture brownfields for economic development. Similarly, SIEDC might want to host a Staten Island/New Jersey Summit, a confab that would be more regional in focus but present an opportunity for the borough's leaders to develop a better working relationship with officials from the state with which it is already becoming closely connected on issues ranging from public transit to the port.

Convene a task force about what the aging of Staten Island's population means for the borough's economy and workforce. With Staten Island's elderly population expected to double between 2000 and 2030, SIEDC would be wise to get ahead of the issue by convening a task force or undertaking a study focusing on how this fundamental change will impact the borough's economy and workforce.

ENDNOTES

1 NYC Department of City Planning. (Staten Island's population is expected to grow by 77,000 between 2005 and 2030, from 475,000 to 552,000.)

2 U.S. Census Bureau, County-to-County Worker Flow Files, 2000.

3 U.S. Internal Revenue Service.

4 IRS.

5 IRS.

6 Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce.

7 Census Bureau.

8 New York State Association of Realtors.

9 PropertyShark.

10 Census Bureau.

11 Bob Fitzsimmons, Jr., Gateway Arms Realty.

12 SIEDC.

13 SIEDC.

14 SIEDC.

15 New York State Department of Labor, 2005 and 2000.

16 NYC Department of City Planning.

17 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census.

18 2000 American Community Survey, Supplementary Survey, and 2005 American Community Survey.

19 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census.

20 U.S. Bureau of the Census Building Permit Estimates - U.S., State, and Metropolitan Areas. (Staten Island added 2,667 housing units in 2000, 2,294 in 2001, 1,756 in 2002, 2,598 in 2003, 2,051 in 2004 and 1,872 in 2005.)

21 NYC Department of Transportation.

22 Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities, "Competitiveness, Talent and the Educational Pipeline: Developments and Priorities in New York State," October 12, 2006.

23 New York State Department of Labor, 2005.

24 New York State Department of Labor, 2005.

25 New York State Department of Labor, insured employment by 3-digit NAICS. (Chart includes all 3-digit industries that had at least 500 jobs on Staten Island in 2000 or 2005.)

Appendix 1: Growing and Declining Industries on Staten Island, 2000 - 2005²⁵

	Employment on SI, 2000	Employment on SI, 2005	Change in Employment, 2000-2005	Percent Change, 2000-2005	Average Annual Wage
Social Assistance	4,124	4,855	731	17.7%	\$21,723
Food Services & Drinking Places	5,328	5,929	601	11.3%	\$14,417
Credit Intermediation	1,485	2,002	517	34.8%	\$40,496
Grocery Stores	3,547	4,051	504	14.2%	\$20,490
Professional, Scientific & Technical	3,216	3,616	400	12.4%	\$38,305
Health & Personal Care Stores	1,173	1,565	392	33.4%	\$21,132
Clothing & Accessory Stores	2,146	2,513	367	17.1%	\$15,093
Religious, Civic & Grantmaking	904	1,203	299	33.1%	\$17,456
Educational Services	2,619	2,905	286	10.9%	\$31,350
Water Transportation	688	867	179	26.0%	\$62,288
Nondurable Goods Wholesalers	592	770	178	30.1%	\$46,972
Nursing & Residential Care	4,953	5,121	168	3.4%	\$30,597
Heavy & Civil Engineering Construction	643	782	139	21.6%	\$70,783
Ambulatory Health Care Services	6,780	6,912	132	1.9%	\$48,456
Building Materials & Garden Stores	1,002	1,133	131	13.1%	\$28,005
Specialty Trade Contractors	4,836	4,936	100	2.1%	\$51,938
Personal and Laundry Services	1,443	1,538	95	6.6%	\$17,994
Transit and Ground Passenger Transportation	1,400	1,471	71	5.1%	\$29,818
Amusement, Gambling & Recreation	563	615	52	9.2%	\$15,279
Insurance Carriers and Related	751	788	37	4.9%	\$51,304
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	912	894	(18)	(2.0%)	\$53,906
Publishing Industries	603	572	(31)	(5.1%)	\$52,002
Construction of Buildings	1,229	1,177	(52)	(4.2%)	\$43,382
Durable Goods Wholesalers	724	668	(56)	(7.7%)	\$46,728
Management of Companies	736	667	(69)	(9.4%)	\$72,953
Truck Transportation	566	472	(94)	(16.6%)	\$34,956
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	909	774	(135)	(14.9%)	\$18,618
Repair & Maintenance	1,033	888	(145)	(14.0%)	\$31,649
Real Estate	1,076	926	(150)	(13.9%)	\$30,085
Electronics and Appliances Stores	696	510	(186)	(26.7%)	\$31,169
Support Activities for Transportation	1,225	1,010	(215)	(17.6%)	\$67,706
Hospitals	8,474	8,181	(293)	(3.5%)	\$46,959
General Merchandise Stores	2,681	2,023	(658)	(24.5%)	\$19,404
Administrative and Support Services	3,971	3,259	(712)	(17.9%)	\$25,858
Telecommunications	1,883	642	(1,241)	(66.0%)	\$77,285

Appendix 2: Excerpt From a Focus Group with Staten Island Artists

The following is an excerpt from a focus group of Staten Island artists convened by the Center for an Urban Future on December 21, 2006, which discussed what might be done to attract more artists and creative workers to their borough. The group included writer Jacqueline Goossens, artist Tom Ronse, cultural executive Laura Jean Watters, event producer Ann Marie Selzer, graphic designer Debby Davis and musician Randy Ludacer.

JACQUELINE GOOSSENS

I don't think the distance or the ferry should be a barrier to come to Staten Island. Because think about a lot of other places that people before couldn't even imagine to go there. I was in DUMBO this morning. DUMBO has turned into a village now. I mean, there's a new salon there, a dry cleaner, a hardware store. Everything you need is there. All of a sudden in two or three years, it turned into a village. Okay, a very expensive village, but it's a village. Or look at Williamsburg.

LAURA JEAN WATTERS

Do you guys think you can manufacture an arts community?

RANDY LUDACER

I think that's really the question. But if you were to try to, I think you would have to be really canny about it. You don't want to set it up as being a lesser version of a Manhattan or even a lesser version of Brooklyn. There's got to be something uniquely Staten Island-ish about it, and let that really be the feature that makes it cool. Sort of embrace it.

JACQUELINE GOOSSENS

I think one [problem] is that we now don't have these artists living next to each other, going out, meeting up in the same stores, going to the same restaurants. We don't have that kind of density.

LAURA JEAN WATTERS

The artists who live here tend to be, for lack of a better word, somewhat middle class. Because although the rents and prices of houses and housing is reasonable by other standards in New York, it still requires people to have day jobs. You don't have the kind of really scruffy housing and studio spaces that you did in many of the other places that took off, where you get young people whose lives are about being an artist to define the community.

ANN MARIE SELZER

Well, when we moved here, we got a grant from Neighborhood Housing Services, which is working to try to bring people over here. And we're working with four people right now looking for houses here. Two of them are pretty famous artists. Now, if we can get them over here ... the conversation [with the artists/potential Staten Island homebuyers] was: "I've lived in Brooklyn, I've lived there forever, we have a nice space there, I'd love to have a big haunted mansion." And we found them something...A big old haunted mansion in his price range.

RANDY LUDACER

Probably a better yard than you'd get in Brooklyn.

ANN MARIE SELZER

It's like me and my husband. We were thirty-something, married with kids and we needed a house. That's why we moved to Staten Island. I was living in SoHo and couldn't see living there long-term. So we on Staten Island don't want to be Williamsburg. We can be so much better than Williamsburg.

Appendix 3: Interviews conducted for SI 2020 study

Kenneth Adams, The Business Council of New York State
 John Alexander, Northfield Savings Bank
 John Amodeo, Commerce Bank
 Ellen Baer, Tarragon Corporation
 Linda Baran, Staten Island Chamber of Commerce
 Kevin Barry, Downtown Staten Island Council
 Michael Behar, Downtown Staten Island Council
 Laurel Blatchford, NYC HPD
 Marie Bodnar, Staten Island Community Board 3
 Vincent Borello, Moran Tugs
 Michael Botwinick, Hudson River Museum
 Richard Boyle, Victory State Bank
 Greg Brickley, Jersey City Department of Cultural Affairs
 Marshall Brown, WiFi Salon
 Michelle Budenz, Staten Island Museum
 Hon. Edward Burke, Staten Island Deputy Borough President
 Dawn Carpenter, Dawning Real Estate
 Joe Carroll, Staten Island Community Board 1
 Robert Cataldo, Office of State Senator Savino
 Ram Cherukuri, New York Fragrance Inc.
 Cesar Claro, SIEDC
 Carmen Cогnetta, Jr., Office of Councilman McMahon
 Tamara Coombs, Staten Island Ferry Riders Committee
 Bob Cotter, Jersey City Department of City Planning
 Carter Craft, Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance
 Robert Cross, Victory State Bank /Downtown SI Council
 Doreen Cugno, St. George Theater
 Hon. Michael Cusick, Member, New York State Assembly
 Debby Davis, graphic designer
 Ben DeLisle, Jersey City Redevelopment Authority
 Jim DeSimone, NYC Department of Transportation
 Meagan Devereaux, Office of Borough President Molinaro
 Jim Devine, New York Container Terminal
 Ralph DiBart, New Rochelle BID
 Kathy Dodd, Staten Island Community Board 2
 Carol Dunn, Staten Island Interagency Council for Aging, Inc.
 Len Garcia Duran, NYC Department of City Planning
 Elizabeth Egbert, Staten Island Museum
 Eric Feldmann, Sisters of Charity Development Corporation
 Anthony Ferreri, Staten Island University Hospital
 Capt. Bill Ferrie, Sandy Hook Pilots
 Robert Fitzsimmons, Gateway Arms Realty
 Glenn Fleishman, WiFiNetNews.com
 Pat Flinn, Port Authority
 Stanley Friedman, Staten Island Hotel
 Andrew Genn, NYC Economic Development Corporation
 Joe Getz, JGSC Group, LLC
 Chris Gilbride, NYC Department of Transportation
 Steve Gimbelman, Designer Greetings
 Jacqueline Goossens, writer
 Mark Gordon, consultant
 Richard Guarasci, Wagner College
 Hal Hawkins, Ambrose Channel
 Ray Heffernan, R.H. Tugs
 Cary Heller, developer
 Frances X. Paulo Huber, Snug Harbor Cultural Center
 Robert Huber, College of Staten Island
 Hon. Janelle Hyer-Spencer, Member, New York State Assembly
 Brad Ickes, Optical Communications Group
 Bobbi Jacobowitz, Downtown Staten Island Council
 Dorothy E. Julian, Henry Marine Service
 Steve Kalil, Cadell Dry Dock
 Hugo Kigne, College of Staten Island
 Howard Knoll, Arbor E&T (Staten Island One Stop)
 Sandy Krueger, Staten Island Board of Realtors
 Brian Laline, Staten Island Advance
 Randy Lee, Leewood Real Estate Group
 Vincent Lenza, SIEDC
 Randy Ludacer, musician
 Dana Magee, Staten Island Community Board 3
 Pat Mannion, U.S. Coast Guard
 Joe Margolis, Leib Puretz
 Jacob Massaquoi, African Refuge
 Diane Matyas, Staten Island Museum
 Dan McDonough, Staten Island Business Trends
 Hon. Michael McMahon, Member, New York City Council
 Susan Meeker, West Brighton Community LDC
 Hon. James Molinaro, Staten Island Borough President
 Mitchell Moss, New York University
 Jeff Nichols, New York School of Seamanship
 Richard Nicotra, Nicotra Group
 Hon. James Oddo, Member, New York City Council
 Jonathan Peters, College of Staten Island
 Michael J. Petralia, Port Authority
 Dr. Ken Popler, Staten Island Not for Profit Association
 James Prendamano, Cassandra Properties
 Michael Printup, International Speedway Corp.
 Leonard Rampulla, Rampulla Associates Architects
 Bert Reinauer, Reinauer Transportation
 Mike Reynolds, Reynolds Shipyard
 Jerry Roberts, National Lighthouse Museum and Center
 Tom Ronse, artist
 Lynn Rossi, Washington Mutual
 Numa Saisselin, Count Basie Theater
 Henry Salmon, Equity Valuation Associates
 Hon. Diane Savino, Member, New York State Senate
 Adam Schneider, Long Branch, NJ
 Brian Scully, PropertyShark
 Amber Seely, Port Authority
 Brian Selleck, New York School for Seamanship
 Anne Marie Selzer, CityZen
 Joseph Sitt, Massey Knakal Realty
 David Sorkin, Staten Island Jewish Community Center
 Elizabeth Spinnelli, Hudson County EDC
 Marlene Springer, College of Staten Island
 Dan Stessel, New Jersey Transit
 Jim Svetz, The Muddy Cup
 Leo Tallo, Intrepid Development
 John Tavoraro, Army Corps of Engineers
 Allan Treffeisen, Independent Budget Office
 Paul Truban, New Jersey Department of Transportation
 Richard I Truitt, College of Staten Island
 Erin Urban, Noble Maritime Museum
 Meg Ventrudo, Jacques Marchais Museum of Tibetan Art
 Frank Verpoorten, Newhouse Center for Contemporary Art
 Curt Ward, Staten Island Community Board 1
 Laura Jean Watters, COAHSI
 Marjorie Waxman, Staten Island Children's Museum
 Roberta Weisbrod, Partnership for Sustainable Ports
 Sam Yahalom, International Transportation Research Center
 Bob Yaro, Regional Plan Association
 Richard Yu, NYC Economic Development Corporation
 Peter Zantal, Port Authority

"We've got 100,000 people coming [to live here in the next 25 years]. What are you going to do with them? It's obvious: Put them on the North Shore. If you keep putting people on the South Shore, you're enhancing the problem."

–*SI Civic Leader*

"We should stop thinking about the ferry terminal as the end point, and start thinking of it as a conduit to revitalize that neighborhood."

– *NJ Retail Expert*

"There's no smart development on Staten Island. Period. All these building are putting up six townhouses here and there, wherever they can turn a profit. No one's planning anything."

– *SI Civic Leader*

"If you're going to have a functioning container port, you need the tugs and barges and dry dock facilities. We need to take steps to make sure that doesn't get pushed out by residential development."

– *NYC Economic Development Expert*

"New York City has 44 million visitors, but none of them come our way. There are things here, but we haven't marketed it very well. The island needs to convince the rest of New York City that there's something of value here. But we've got to convince ourselves first. Eighty percent of Staten Islanders probably wouldn't know that Tony Bennett played on Staten Island recently. The worst purveyor of the Staten Island image is Staten Islanders. Staten Islanders believe it's an inferior borough."

– *SI Civic Leader*

"I understand there's going to be growth. What I'm against is irrational density. The infrastructure can't withstand that. Where do people park? Where do they send people to school? It should be higher density where it makes sense."

– *SI Elected Official*

"Staten Island has been on automatic pilot. There was no planning done. Unchecked, the people that are here are not appreciative of the development. There's no plan, nothing to say it'll help my neighborhood, my life. That's the crossroads we're at right now. The knee jerk reaction is to start downzoning. But to just downzone without a plan is taking us down the wrong direction. Now is the time to put together a comprehensive plan for economic development."

– *SI Business Owner*

"Stapleton has all the elements of a place that's ready to happen. Now people want to have a downtown experience again."

–*NYC Economic Development Expert*

"It's becoming the borough of 'no.' We can't attract any substantial businesses any more. If you want to open a tomato farm, people will complain about it."

– *SI Real Estate Broker*

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