Kingsbridge Armory Redevelopment
The Bronx, New York
May 2, 2025

LR Item 3 Description of Proposal

1. INTRODUCTION

8th Regiment Partners LLC, the selected developer of the Development Site, and the New York City Economic Development Corporation ("NYCEDC") (collectively, the "Applicants") are seeking approval of several discretionary actions (the "Proposed Actions") from the New York City Planning Commission (the "CPC") to facilitate the reuse and redevelopment of the Kingsbridge Armory (the "Armory"), an approximately 6.8 acre site (Bronx Block 3247, Lots 2 and 10) (the "Development Site") in the Kingsbridge Heights neighborhood of Bronx Community District 7. The Department of Citywide Administrative Services ("DCAS") will serve as the applicant for the disposition action only, which is described below.

The Proposed Actions include the following:

1. Disposition of City-owned land (Bronx Block 3247, Lots 2 and 10) pursuant to New York City Charter Section 197-c;
2. Zoning map amendment to rezone the Development Site from C4-4 to M1-4A/R7-2 (MX) to allow manufacturing uses;

3a. Zoning text amendment to ZR Section 123-90 to establish the proposed MX district;

3b. Zoning text amendment to ZR Section 74-182(b) to increase permitted indoor arena capacity from 6,000 to 17,000 persons;

4. Special permit pursuant to ZR Section 74-182(b) to allow an indoor arena with a capacity of up to 17,000 persons and permit modification of signage requirements; and
5. Special permit pursuant to ZR Section 74-195 to allow a public parking garage with a capacity of greater than 150 parking spaces.

The Proposed Actions would facilitate a new approximately 957,127 zoning square foot mixed-use development including approximately 500 affordable dwelling units, a 17,000-person live event venue, community facility, manufacturing, commercial, and entertainment uses (the "Proposed Development"). The Proposed Development will align with the *Together for Kingsbridge* community vision plan for the Development Site and provides a unique opportunity to transform a long-vacant landmark and major City asset into a catalyst for economic development in the local community, the Bronx, and the City as a whole.

2. BACKGROUND

<u>Together for Kingsbridge Vision Plan</u>

In 2023, NYCEDC launched a nine-month community engagement process in partnership with the local New York City Council Member and the Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition, who served as co-chairs of the *Together for Kingsbridge* Community Working Group ("CWG").

The CWG included a broad cross-section of community stakeholders, representing faith-based organizations, cultural groups, local business organizations, educational establishments, labor, and economic development organizations, as well as local elected officials at each level of government. The CWG's guidance was provided through the engagement process, shaping the project team's approach to engagement, providing feedback on outreach materials, identifying critical stakeholders, giving the CWG a platform at community events, lending volunteers for facilitation and outreach activities and, ensuring that their neighbors and communities were part of the process. The CWG met monthly between October 2022 and June 2023 to ensure that the wider community knew about the planning effort, helped to organize and attend small group discussions, and helped review and shape the *Together for Kingsbridge Vision Plan* (the "Vision Plan").

The Vision Plan, which was released in August 2023, summarizes the extensive public engagement process focused on the future of the Armory. The engagement effort reached over 4,000 people, including participants at four public workshops, over 950 survey respondents, over 500 community members who toured the Armory, nine Community Board meetings, 16 small-group discussions, three public information sessions, and feedback from over 75 industry stakeholders. The Vision Plan outlined guiding principles for redevelopment of the Armory, including: prioritize youth, welcome older adults, foster intergenerational relationships; create jobs and wealth for existing workers and communities; grow a regenerative local economy, maximize community ownership, and put the Bronx on the map.

Request for Proposals

Shortly after the release of the Vision Plan in August 2023, NYCEDC, acting on behalf of the City, issued a Request for Proposals ("RFP") for financially feasible, mixed-use proposals for the adaptive reuse, redevelopment and operation of the Development Site that achieve the goals identified in RFP, which included: creating a financially feasible, thriving, and mixed-use development; striking a balance between addressing the needs of the local community and creating an economic engine for the wider area; activating the Development Site and enhancing its integration with the neighborhood, promoting more accessibility, transparency, and connection with the surrounding community; serving diverse users, including those from different age groups, ethnic and cultural backgrounds, and income levels; delivering a minimum of 25,000 square feet of space to be subleased to one or more community-based organizations at discounted rates; designing the site to promote sustainability, energy efficiency, and carbon neutrality, while preserving the landmarked exterior; responsibly develop the project by delivering a comprehensive hiring program that supports communities and creates job opportunities, including for economically disadvantaged candidates; and generates returns to the City through lease rent, tax, and payment in lieu of tax revenue.

The RFP indicated that appropriate uses at the Development Site may include commercial, retail, entertainment, recreational, manufacturing, and community facilities. Also, the RFP indicated that proposed uses should expand and enhance the current mix of offerings in the area, and endeavor not to duplicate or directly compete with existing uses. The RFP encouraged respondents to reference the Vision Plan when preparing their proposals. Through the RFP process, NYCEDC selected 8th Regiment Partners LLC as the future ground lessee and developer of the Development Site.

Related Actions

In 2009, the Development Site was the subject of a proposal (C090437ZMX, C090236MMX, C090237MMX, C090438PPX) for a zoning map amendment from R6 to C4-4, City Map amendments involving the elimination, discontinuance, and closing of portions of Reservoir Avenue, West Kingsbridge Road, and West 195th Street, a City Map amendment to map parkland, and disposition of City-owned land. The proposed actions were intended to renovate and adaptively reuse the Armory as a retail complex with approximately 605,000 square feet of retail, cinema, fitness club, restaurant, community facility, and parking. In December 2009, the City Council voted to disapprove the proposal.

The Development Site was also the subject of the 2013 Kingsbridge National Ice Center proposal (C140033ZMX, N140034ZRX, C140035ZSX, C140036PPX), which included a zoning map amendment from R6 to C4-4, a zoning text amendment to allow by special permit an indoor arena with a rated capacity not greater than 6,000 persons, a special permit to allow an indoor arena with a maximum capacity of 5,800 seats, and disposition of City-owned land. The proposed actions were intended to facilitate the adaptive reuse of the Armory as an ice skating facility with approximately 795,000 square feet of space, including nine ice rinks, seating for 5,000 spectators, related program space, concessions and retail space, and community facility space. The application was approved by City Council but development plans did not move forward.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE SURROUNDING AREA

Land Uses

The surrounding area is characterized by a mix of commercial and residential uses. Local retail and service uses are generally located in single-story buildings concentrated along West Kingsbridge Road to the south and Jerome Avenue to the east. The remainder of the surrounding area is predominantly comprised of pre-war residential buildings, with a mixture of two- to three-story detached homes and five- to six-story apartment buildings. With the exception of a 13-story building constructed in 2017 at 2700 Jerome Avenue (Block 3317, Lot 7501), the surrounding area has experienced little new residential development. Institutional uses in the surrounding area include Lehman College and the Bronx Education campus, which consists of three public primary and secondary schools – P.S. 86, P.S. 340, and Walton High School, all of which are located immediately north of the Development Site. Saint James Park is an approximately 11.4 acre public open space located one block south of the Armory.

The surrounding area is well served by public transportation. An elevated Metropolitan Transportation Authority ("MTA")/New York City Transit ("NYCT") rail line runs along Jerome Avenue and the Kingsbridge Road (No. 4) subway station is located immediately east of the Armory. The Kingsbridge Road (B, D) subway station is located three blocks to the east of the

Development Site. Local bus service in the surrounding area includes the BX3, BX9, BX22, BX28, and BX32, which all stop within one block of the Development Site.

Zoning

Zoning in the surrounding area is predominantly comprised of R6 and R8 zoning districts. R6 is a medium-density district that allows all housing types at a maximum FAR of up to 3.9 for qualifying affordable housing and a maximum FAR of up to 4.8 for buildings containing certain community facility uses. Street wall location regulations generally require that residential buildings have at least 70 percent of the aggregate width of street walls located within eight feet of the street line along wide streets and within 10 feet of the street along narrow streets. Qualifying affordable housing has a maximum base height of 65 feet and maximum building height of 95 feet on wide streets. On a narrow street, beyond 100 feet of a wide street, the maximum building height is reduced to 85 feet. A setback with a depth of at least 10 feet on a wide street and at least 15 feet on a narrow street is required. Within the Outer Transit Zone, accessory residential parking is required for 25 percent of standard dwelling units and can be waived if the total number of required parking spaces is 15 or fewer. No accessory parking is required for qualifying affordable housing units.

R8 is a high-density district that allows a maximum FAR of up to 8.64 for qualifying affordable housing and a maximum FAR of up to 6.5 for buildings containing certain community facility uses. Street wall location regulations generally require that residential buildings have at least 70 percent of the aggregate width of street walls located within eight feet of the street line along wide streets and within 10 feet of the street along narrow streets. Qualifying affordable housing has a maximum base height of 105 feet and maximum building height of 145 feet on both wide and narrow streets. A setback with a depth of at least 10 feet on a wide street and at least 15 feet on a narrow street is required. Within the Outer Transit Zone, accessory residential parking is required for 12 percent of standard dwelling units and can be waived if the total number of required parking spaces is 30 or fewer. No accessory parking is required for qualifying affordable housing units.

C1-3 and C2-3 commercial overlays are mapped along West Kingsbridge Road and Jerome Avenue, respectively. C1-3 and C2-3 overlays are typically mapped within residential districts along streets and serve local retail needs. C2 districts permit a slightly wider range of uses (Use Group VI) such as automobile dealers and lumber yards. Within both R6 and R8 districts, the maximum FAR for commercial uses is 2.0. Off-street parking requirements for C1-3 and C2-3 districts vary by use, but are generally require one parking space per 400 square feet of floor area. A waiver is available if 25 or fewer spaces are required.

4. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT SITE

The Development Site consists of two City-owned tax lots (Block 3247, Lots 2 and 10) with a combined lot area of approximately 296,147 square feet (6.8 acres). The site is bounded by West 195th Street to the north, Jerome Avenue to the east, West Kingsbridge Road to the south, and Reservoir Avenue to the west. Jerome Avenue, West Kingsbridge Road, and Reservoir Avenue

are considered wide streets and West 195th Street is considered a narrow street.[1] An elevated MTA/NYCT rail line runs along Jerome Avenue. The Proposed Development is located on a primary transit-adjacent site, subject to the determination of a transit volume pursuant to ZR 66-21.[2]

Lot 2

The northern portion of the Development Site (Lot 2) is an approximately 50,432 square foot parcel with frontage on West 195th Street, Jerome Avenue, and Reservoir Avenue. The lot is improved with two free-standing buildings that are currently occupied by the New York State National Guard. The western building is a one-story, approximately 12,000 square foot garage that was built between 1951 and 1954. Pedestrian and vehicular access to the garage are provided from West 195th Street. A small paved lot used for parking is located to the west of the garage and is accessible from an approximately 16-foot wide curb cut located approximately 20 feet east of Reservoir Avenue. The two-story, 14,000 square foot eastern building was built in 1958 and contains office spaces. The buildings were constructed by the National Guard to expand the operations of the adjacent Armory. The area to the east of the building is vacant land with grass and landscaping. An approximately 20-foot wide curb cut is located approximately 307 feet east of Reservoir Avenue between the two buildings and provides vehicular access to the Armory cellar. The entire lot is enclosed by a metal fence and chain link fencing.

Lot 10

The southern portion of the Development Site (Lot 10) has an area of approximately 245,715 square feet with frontage on Jerome Avenue, West Kingsbridge Road, and Reservoir Avenue. The lot is improved with the approximately 588,765 square foot vacant Armory building, a designated New York City Landmark and State and National Registers of Historic Places listed resource that was constructed between 1912 and 1917. The exterior of the building resembles a Romanesque-style fortress and features two large, rounded towers and crenellated parapets that frame the main entrance along West Kingsbridge Road and reach a maximum height of approximately 141 feet. The interior of the building includes an approximately 180,000 square foot column-free drill hall with a roof height of approximately 126 feet, 20,000 square foot balcony mezzanine, 88,000 square foot headhouse, and approximately 279,000 square feet of floor area contained on the basement and cellar levels below the drill hall. The western end of the drill hall features several large garage doors that open onto a paved lot used for vehicle parking. The paved lot is accessible from two approximately 20-foot curb cuts located along Reservoir Avenue. A third curb cut with a width of approximately 15 feet provides access to the West Kingsbridge Road frontage of the Armory. An approximately 15-foot curb cut is located on Jerome Avenue approximately 20 feet north of West Kingsbridge Road. Vehicular access to the Armory cellar is also provided by a ramp located mid-

[1] Pursuant to the definition in ZR Section 12-10, a "wide street" is any street that is 75 feet or more in width. A "narrow street" is any street that is less than 75 feet wide.

[2] The MTA has determined, in consultation with NYC DOT, that a pedestrian circulation improvement in the form of a clear path transit easement is needed on the Development Site. The MTA has an active capital project including ADA improvements to the Kingsbridge Road station. The design concept is expected to include the placement of an elevator and stairwell on the north sidewalk of West Kingsbridge Road to the west of Jerome Avenue. As the Development Site will remain City-owned, this clear path easement will be formalized either by an MOU between DCAS, DOT and MTA, or by providing a transit easement volume pursuant to ZR 66-21 in a separate application.

block on West 195th Street between the two National Guard buildings. The West Kingsbridge Road and Reservoir Avenue frontages are enclosed by metal fencing and/or chain link fencing.

5. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The Proposed Development would introduce a total of approximately 957,127 square feet (3.23 FAR) of new mixed-use development and approximately 64,766square feet of new public open space (including approximately 5,127 sf located in the public right of way).

Residential Development (Lot 2)

Lot 2 would be redeveloped with a 16-story, approximately 389,421 square foot building with approximately 500 affordable dwelling units, 20,751 square feet of local retail, and 80 parking spaces. The building would be set at the street line and rise to a maximum base height of 125 feet before a 10 foot setback. The building would rise to a maximum building height of 165 feet. A three-story (height of 36 feet) section of the building would abut the adjacent Armory. Entrances to the residential and commercial uses would be located along West 195th Street. A mid-block opening in the residential building would provide pedestrian access between West 195th Street and the Armory's northern entrance. Vehicular access to the cellar level parking would be provided by a new approximately 22 foot curb cut located on West 195th Street approximately 153 feet west of Jerome Avenue.

Armory Redevelopment (Lot 10)

The Armory (Lot 10) would be adaptively reused and reprogrammed with approximately 567,706 square feet of new uses, including 95,590 square feet of community facility and cultural uses, 2,000 square feet of light manufacturing[3], 31,308 square feet of commercial office, a 17,000-person live event venue (arena)[4] and 107,631 square feet of other entertainment uses, and 248 public parking spaces. In order to preserve the landmarked exterior of the Armory, there would be no changes to the building's massing or height and only limited changes to the facade for signage, required ingress and egress, and vehicular access. Adaptive reuse of the Armory would involve reconfiguration of the interior spaces including the creation of two new levels above grade within the drill hall. Entrances to the live event venue and other entertainment uses would be located on all four building frontages, while all other uses would primarily be accessed from West Kingsbridge Road. The 17,000-person live event venue would be located on the second and third levels with back of house, venue support space, and concessions located below on the first level. The second level would feature a stage on the western end with fixed seating on the eastern end and a large flat space in the middle for concert attendees. The space would be designed to support multiple uses in addition to concerts and could be repurposed as sports fields or with other recreational uses on non-concert days. Vehicular access to the cellar level parking would be

[3] An additional approximately 92,049 square feet of light manufacturing space would be located on the cellar level but would not meet the ZR Section 12-10 definition of floor area.

[4] The total 333,141 zoning square footage of the approximately 17,000 person arena use, reflected in the drawings submitted with this application, is comprised of approximately 104,748 sf of main venue space, 76,095 sf of balcony area, and 152,298 sf of back of house/circulation/support space.

provided by a new approximately 22 foot curb cut located on West 195th Street approximately 186 feet east of Reservoir Avenue. The cellar level would also include a loading dock with three bays accessible by a new approximately 27 foot dedicated curb cut on West 195th Street located approximately 231 feet east of Reservoir Avenue. A dedicated loading dock with four bays for the live event venue would be accessible from a new approximately 27 foot curb cut located on Reservoir Avenue approximately 221 feet south of West 195th Street.

Public open space would be concentrated in the areas immediately west and south of the Armory along Reservoir Avenue and West Kingsbridge Road. The proposed open space would feature a flexible design suitable for both active and passive recreation and would accommodate a variety of programming and users (e.g., farmers' markets, food vendors, concert patrons, and tour groups). The proposed incorporation of a temporary paved pedestrian plaza at the intersection of West Kingsbridge Road and Reservoir Avenue (subject to approval by NYC DOT pursuant to the Plaza Program) would help maximize the available amount of open space.

6. ACTIONS NECESSARY TO FACILITATE THE PROJECT

Several actions are requested in order to facilitate the Proposed Development, including an acquisition of real property by the City, disposition of City-owned land, zoning map amendment, zoning text amendments, special permits, and certification. These actions are described in greater detail below.

1. Disposition of City-owned land pursuant to New York City Charter Section 197-c

   DCAS is seeking disposition approval of Bronx Block 3247 The disposition of City-owned property requires approval through ULURP under the City Charter Section 197-c.

2. A zoning map amendment from C4-4 to M1-4A/R7-2 (MX) to allow manufacturing uses

   The Applicants are requesting a zoning map amendment from C4-4 to M1-4A/R7-2 (Special Mixed Use "MX" District) to allow a wider range of uses, including manufacturing. The proposed M1-4A/R7-2 (MX) district would allow a maximum residential FAR of 5.01 for qualifying affordable housing, 5.0 FAR for commercial and manufacturing uses, and 6.5 FAR for community facility uses. Street wall location regulations generally require that residential buildings have at least 70 percent of the aggregate width of street walls located within eight feet of the street line. M1-4A/R7-2 (MX) allows a maximum base height of 125 feet and a maximum building height of 155 feet. If certain conditions are met pursuant to ZR 123-652(b), the maximum building height can be increased 25 percent to approximately 194 feet. A setback with a depth of at least 10 feet on a wide street and at least 15 feet on a narrow street is required. Within the Outer Transit Zone, accessory residential parking is required for 25 percent of standard dwelling units and can be waived if the total number of required parking spaces is 15 or fewer. No accessory parking is required for qualifying affordable housing units. Parking requirements for commercial and manufacturing uses vary by use.

The Applicants believe that the proposed M1-4A/R7-2 (MX) district would be appropriate. While the current C4-4 zoning district permits mixed residential/commercial development, the proposed zoning map amendment will allow a wider range of uses, including light manufacturing uses, which would complement and be compatible with the proposed residential, community facility, and commercial uses as well as the existing neighborhood context. Additionally, compared to existing C4-4 zoning, the proposed M1-4A/R7-2 district would not result in any increases to the maximum permitted density of 6.5 FAR. The M1-4A/R7-2 would allow an increase in maximum base and building heights that would provide the flexibility needed to ensure the proposed residential building is contextual with the Armory and surrounding neighborhood.

The proposed M1-4A/R7-2 zoning district is appropriate at this location given the Development Site's frontage on four streets, including three wide streets – Jerome Avenue, West Kingsbridge Road, and Reservoir Avenue – which are equipped to handle the proposed changes in use and bulk. Additionally, the Development Site is well served by public transportation, including the Kingsbridge Road (No. 4) subway station located immediately east of the Armory, as well as the Kingsbridge Road (B, D) subway station three blocks to the east and several local bus routes. The proposed zoning map amendment will facilitate the redevelopment of a long vacant parcel that is well positioned to support new development.

The development of new light manufacturing uses also has the potential to create good jobs and further the economic development of the local Kingsbridge community consistent with the City's goals of bolstering the industrial sector in strategic locations. Given the shortage of vacant and City-owned land available for redevelopment, the Development Site presents a significant opportunity for the creation for new manufacturing uses while also achieving other City and community priorities including the provision of up to 500 units of permanently affordable housing, community facility uses, and commercial uses.

3. <u>Zoning text amendments to ZR Section 74-182(b) to increase permitted indoor arena capacity from 6,000 to 17,000 persons and ZR Section 123-90 to establish the proposed MX district</u>

   The Applicants request a zoning text amendment to increase the capacity of the indoor arena capacity for the zoning special permit pursuant to Zoning Resolution Section 74-182(b). The current zoning special permit allows a capacity of 6,000 persons; however, the live events venue proposed by the Applicants will need a capacity of up to 17,000 persons so this text amendment will facilitate the increase in capacity for the proposed use.

   The requested zoning text amendment to ZR Section 123-90 would establish the proposed M1-4A/R7-2 district as a Special Mixed Use "MX" District within Chapter 3 of the Zoning Resolution and is needed to facilitate the proposed zoning map amendment described above.

4. <u>A special permit pursuant to ZR Section 74-182(b) to allow an indoor arena with a capacity of up to 17,000 persons and permit modification of signage requirements</u>

A special permit is requested pursuant to ZR Section 74-182(b) to (i) allow an indoor arena with a capacity of up to 17,000 persons and (ii) permit modification of signage requirements that would otherwise be prohibited under ZR Sections 32-641 and 32-655. As discussed further in the Statement of Findings, the proposed capacity increase is needed to allow up to 17,000 persons and the proposed signage regulation modifications are to permit signage that exceeds the maximum permitted height and surface area. The total surface area of all signs proposed at the Development Site would exceed the maximum sign area (the maximum permitted is five times the street frontage of the zoning lot (in feet), but in no event more than 500 square feet for interior or through lots or 500 square feet on each frontage for corner lots pursuant to ZR Section 32-641 and the maximum proposed is 4,560 square feet of signage on Jerome Avenue, 4,044 square feet on Reservoir Avenue and 1,801 square feet on West Kingsbridge Road) and height requirements (the maximum height permitted is 40 feet above curb level and the maximum proposed height is 106'-4") under Section 32-655 of the Zoning Resolution and the larger interior signs would exceed the maximum height requirement (the maximum height permitted is 40' and the proposed height is 106'-4") under Section 32-655.

5. A special permit pursuant to ZR Section 74-195 to allow a public parking garage with a capacity of greater than 150 parking spaces

   A special permit is requested pursuant to ZR 74-195 to allow a public parking garage with a capacity of greater than 150 parking spaces. The proposed public parking garage will be accessed by a 22' curb cut on West 195th Street and will contain a maximum of approximately 248 parking spaces and at least 13 reservoir spaces. As discussed further in the Statement of Findings, the proposed parking garage would be located and designed in a manner that would not have an adverse effect on traffic patterns or the surrounding area.

7. CONCLUSION

The Proposed Actions, which include disposition of City-owned land, zoning map amendment, zoning text amendments, and special permits to allow an arena up to 17,000 persons, modified signage and a public parking garage with more than 150 spaces, would facilitate a new approximately 957,127 square foot mixed-use development including approximately 500 affordable dwelling units, a 17,000-person live event venue, community facility, manufacturing, commercial, and entertainment uses. The Proposed Development will transform a long-vacant and highly visible landmark into a true asset to the local Kingsbridge community, the Bronx and the entire City, as envisioned by the *Together for Kingsbridge* community vision plan.