

Executive Summary



The Soundview Economic Hub represents a transformative initiative to convert 37,500 square feet of underutilized space beneath the Bruckner Expressway in the South Bronx into a vibrant, multi-functional economic engine. A climate resource and social resiliency hub, “a third space” for the community. It addresses critical needs in our community by creating a central location where local entrepreneurs, businesses, and residents can access

resources, training, and opportunities for economic growth.

Unlike traditional business development centers, we will combine direct services with hands-on learning opportunities, creating pathways to employment and entrepreneurship for community members who have historically faced barriers to economic advancement. Our leadership team brings over 20 years of combined experience in community development, business operations, and nonprofit management.

Led by Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice (YMPJ), this social enterprise will address entrenched economic disparities in the Soundview neighborhood, where approximately 26% of residents live below the poverty line and unemployment rates significantly exceed citywide averages.

The Hub will serve as a catalyst for inclusive growth through five key earned income strategies: a community flea market providing affordable vendor opportunities; food vendors offering culturally diverse dining options; sports courts and training facilities promoting physical wellness; thematic and holiday events celebrating local culture; an urban horticulture center promoting food sovereignty; and vendor stalls generating steady revenue. These phase 1 initiatives would create multiple revenue streams while advancing YMPJ's mission of building and preparing our community to become prophetic voices for peace and justice through leadership and economic equity.

Local data reinforces both the programming vision and the physical infrastructure proposed for the Soundview Economic Hub. New York City's 5,000+ licensed mobile food vendors and 35 million annual street-food transactions demonstrate strong demand for structured vendor

Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice (YMPJ)

spaces, validating the need for modular stalls, utility access, and recurring market programming. Continued public investment in youth sports within underserved neighborhoods supports the Hub's plan for flexible open space designed to host recreational programming and community events. In the Bronx, 18 community gardens engaging more than 3,200 residents annually highlight demand for green infrastructure and sustainability-focused programming, informing the inclusion of urban agriculture components and shaded gathering areas. Together, these indicators confirm that the Hub's proposed infrastructure directly responds to active local markets and community participation

The Hub will be strategically positioned to succeed due to several competitive advantages: its central location in the Bronx; protection from the elements beneath the expressway; low-cost fees making it accessible to emerging entrepreneurs; nonprofit status opening doors to grants and partnerships; strategic partnerships with organizations like NYC/NYS DOT; and YMPJ's 30-year history of trusted community leadership.

Implementation will occur in phases, with short-term initiatives like the flea market, food vendors, sports facilities, and themed events launching first to build momentum and community engagement. Long-term ventures, including the urban horticulture center and sports courts and training facilities, will follow as infrastructure and funding allow. This phased approach will manage risk while generating early revenue and impact.

We project reaching operational sustainability within three years, with first-year revenue of \$242,950 growing to \$269,680 by year three. We are seeking initial funding of \$150,000 to cover startup costs, equipment purchases, and operating expenses until we reach break-even.

The project has already gained significant traction, having raised over \$1.5 million by 2025 in funding from public grants and private foundations. The Hub officially opened in October 2024 with a ribbon-cutting ceremony attended by local leaders, demonstrating strong community support and early success. As it grows, the Hub will expand to include e-commerce support for local vendors, consulting services to replicate the model elsewhere, and comprehensive workforce development programs.

Led by Executive Director David Shuffler and a dedicated team with deep community roots and diverse expertise, the Soundview Economic Hub will transform a neglected space into an economic and cultural anchor. By creating pathways for entrepreneurship, employment, and community connection, the Hub will help break the cycle of disinvestment and unlock the tremendous untapped potential of Soundview and the broader South Bronx community.