



## **Senator Gustavo Rivera's Testimony on the Kingsbridge Armory Redevelopment to the New York City Council Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Sitings, And Dispositions**

Tuesday, September 30, 2025

Thank you, Acting Chairwoman Nurse, for allowing me to share a few words at this hearing. My name is Gustavo Rivera, State Senator for the 33rd District in the Northwest Bronx. I am here today to voice my strong support for the Kingsbridge Armory Redevelopment Project by 8th Regiment Partners.

I want to thank my colleague, Councilmember Pierina Sanchez, for her staunch advocacy for our community. Above all, thank you to my neighbors who demanded opportunities for public input ahead of the ULURP process, through the Together For Kingsbridge Visioning Process that shaped the request for proposals and the selection of the developer.

When I was first elected in 2010, the Armory was part of my district and just two blocks away from where I lived. After the 2023 redistricting, the Armory now sits just across the street from my current Senate District. As their representative, I remain accountable to tens of thousands of Bronxites who deserve to benefit from the Armory's redevelopment. As we near the end of the ULURP process, the aspirations, needs, and concerns of our community must be central to the project's priorities and approval.

We expect this developer to commit to an even stronger Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) than the nationally-renowned agreement that our community won during the previous redevelopment. The previous cba should be considered the standard because it included:

- Local hiring, training, and living wages
- Permanent union jobs
- Sustainability standards
- Community space
- A community benefit fund that dedicates at least 1% of project gross revenues for wealth-building in the Bronx.
- Community governance and oversight

The community is expecting more from this development:

- True community ownership. Thank you to the Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition for securing a Memorandum of Understanding to ensure the manufacturing space is owned and operated by our community.
- Local procurement for our small businesses
- Union jobs for the construction of the Armory, to address the flooded basement and the hole in the roof
- Ensuring local street vendors can continue to make a living

- Multi-bedroom units as part of the affordable housing plan, even if that means less units overall. Those apartments should be for current residents.

We expect the New York City Economic Development Corporation (EDC) to offer a lease agreement that truly benefits the Bronx. After 30 years of passive neglect, the costs of mitigation have ballooned, and the developer will need to spend tens of millions of dollars simply to get the site construction ready. The Bronx receives less services, less funding, and less investment than anywhere else, so the EDC must recognize that this project is a chance at redemption.

I am urging EDC to finalize an agreement where the City breaks even so that the developer and their partners can keep as much revenue as possible for the community fund, union labor, youth and community programming, and other local benefits. This is not a project that should be on EDC's books as a boon to city coffers. The Bronx is owed investment, and the Armory is our chance to get what we are owed. We expect the city to commit to revitalizing our community through:

- Strong anti-displacement measures to protect local businesses, including capital funding access through both loans and grants, legal support, and financial coaching
- Dedicated City and State Opioid Settlement Fund dollars to support community health and safety in the blocks surrounding the Armory, through service delivery, syringe clean up and exchange, and facilities to support these efforts
- Supporting a robust Community Revenue Fund instead of the Citywide public purse

The \$200 million investment from the State and City is just a start. The community has been waiting for 30 years for the Armory to put us on the map, but not at the expense of those waiting 30 years to see it transform. This redevelopment project must be for the Bronx and no one else.

I have worked for years to ensure that our borough sees the benefit from a transformative redevelopment. Time and time again, we have seen only a small percentage of people benefitting from projects like this, leaving out local communities, including small business owners. This cannot happen to our Kingsbridge community.

I will continue to support our community and key stakeholders to ensure this project fulfills its potential, and I will not be afraid to hold anyone accountable for any decisions that do not prioritize our neighbors first. I will have my community behind me to hold all parties accountable.

I've been here through three mayors, two borough presidents, two council members, and two governors, and I'll be here for the ribbon cutting to enjoy this space with my neighbors.

Thank you for listening to my testimony.



## City Council Testimony

**Date:** September 30, 2025

**Re:** LU 0389-2025, App # N 250296 ZRX - Kingsbridge Armory Redevelopment

**From:** Raye Barbieri, Chief Executive Officer

The Kingsbridge Heights Community Center, Inc.

Good afternoon City Council Members,

My name is Raye Barbieri, and I am the Chief Executive Officer at the Kingsbridge Heights Community Center, a 51 year old settlement house with an established track record of providing high-quality, high-impact youth, adult, family and community services in the Kingsbridge Heights and surrounding Bronx communities. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

As a proud member of the Kingsbridge Together Working group, we strongly support both the Kingsbridge Armory Project, as well as a robust and clearly articulated Community Benefit Agreement that lifts up the core tenets that formed the vision and foundation for this project. The City's commitment to this project requires a concurrent commitment to a Community Benefits Agreement that upholds all of the following:

- Building Youth and Community Ownership and Opportunity
- Respecting and Ensuring Public Access
- Centering and Celebrating Bronx Culture, Arts and Music
- Establishing a Community Council and Benefit Fund
- Improving Surrounding Parks and Green Spaces
- Building Affordable Housing
- Creating and Sustaining Jobs for Local Bronxites
- Protecting and Supporting Small Businesses
- Embracing and Engaging Union Labors

The Kingsbridge Armory Redevelopment Project is a historic opportunity for the City to deliver on past promises and establish new parameters and standards for protecting and supporting all sectors of our community that will benefit countless Bronx families for generations to come. As such, we are excited to support the community's vision for the Kingsbridge Armory redevelopment through a Community Benefits Agreement that makes that vision a reality!

Thank you for your time and consideration.

**Kingsbridge Heights Community Center**

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**From:** [Christina C](#)  
**To:** [Testimony; Land Use Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Kingsbridge Armory Redevelopment Testimony  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 30, 2025 2:29:06 PM

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## Christina Callender's Testimony for Kingsbridge Armory Redevelopment

Hello Council,

My name is Christina Callender, and I am from Kingsbridge and a soon-to-be graduate of the nearby Lehman College and have been engaged with this project through NWBCC. I've dedicated my studies and professional life to understanding and alleviating the strains on working-class communities much like the one I'm from.

I'm deeply invested in projects that not only enhance economic prosperity but also improve the lives of the people who live here now. I'm in strong support for this project, however we have the opportunity to ensure that the current project is one that keeps its benefits rooted in The Bronx and a different model of development is exemplified through key efforts. To achieve that, I urge the commitment to a community benefits agreement and for the City and the Developer to commit to the following:

Firstly, there must be an accessible design. The Armory must be welcoming and usable for all residents, including those with disabilities. That means ramps, lifts, wide pathways, and clear signage designed in partnership with the disability community.

Secondly, the project must ensure truly affordable, family-sized housing that prioritizes Bronx residents in leasing. This project cannot rely on inflated AMI. so there must be some measures to counteract this to ensure that "affordability" reflects Bronx incomes, so families here can actually qualify. Units must include two- and three-bedrooms.

Thirdly, the project must emphasize local hiring and contracting. This means that jobs at every stage must go to Bronx residents, and businesses first. Contracts should be awarded to Bronx-based businesses, MWBEs, and worker cooperatives. Additionally, space needs to be made available for existing Bronx vendors to mitigate displacement and ensure that wealth circulates within our borough.

Fourthly, affordable community access to Armory uses should be prioritized. Create pricing and access policies that lower financial barriers for Bronx residents: e.g., resident discounts, sliding-scale memberships, free community hours, and no-cost space allotments for youth, seniors, and local nonprofits so the people who live here can actually benefit from what's inside.

Lastly, the city must ensure that the public infrastructure surrounding the armory matches the

Armory's project's scale. The armory will draw thousands of people and the city must meet the demand. This could be done with increased bus service on the BX9 and BX22, expanded 4, B, & D train service, and safety officers to guide traffic and pedestrians during large events. The surrounding area also needs stronger sanitation services; more frequent pickup, public trash cans, and recycling bins, so the Armory remains an asset, not a burden, to the neighborhood.

This project has the potential to set a new standard for equitable development in New York City, but this will only happen if the project commits to a signed community benefits agreement and holds Bronx residents at the center.

Thank you

Christina Callender

**Christina Callender**



Good morning, my name is Osei Dwomoh, a Sophomore at Lehman College, and a member of the Northwest Bronx. As a native Bronx resident for almost 20 years, I've seen changes in my area, and the decisions we make in the long term would have an impact for years, if not decades, to come. Right now, our community needs help, economically and mentally. To give them a place that can let them shop, let them grow, and let them build stability, and this borough stability. If the Bay Plaza Mall provided these possibilities with just a bus ride away, I figured we could do the same thing here. If we want to reduce unemployment and the unhoused, we have to lay the groundwork. We've been living here since we came here. Let's live with peace of mind. Thank you for listening and understanding.

Osei Dwomoh  
Bronx, NY