

# Exploring the Formation of a Coney Island Business Improvement District (BID)



## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Visit [ConeyIslandBID.org](http://ConeyIslandBID.org) / (718) 594-7895 for more information

### WHAT IS A BID?

A BID is a tool used by many neighborhoods across New York City to increase the vibrancy of commercial corridors by improving quality of life issues for merchants, property owners, and residents. The BID process involves community input and is only successful when everyone is represented in the discussions of the community's needs.

BIDs create vibrant, clean, and safe districts. They deliver services and improvements above and beyond those provided by the City. Working with the City and community, BIDs are a powerful voice for their districts and local businesses.

A BID is an independent non-profit entity governed by a board of local representatives, property owners, merchants, residents, and other community stakeholders, who create and control the budget, services, and hiring of an executive director or management entity. The regular funding is critical to neighborhood planning from one year to the next, and its flexibility to utilize funds to address issues in a way that works for all areas of Coney Island is its greatest benefit. The proposed annual BID budget is at \$1,200,000 to serve a large area of Coney Island; residential properties would pay \$1.00 per year.

### Proposed Coney Island BID Preliminary Boundaries



### WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE ALLIANCE FOR CONEY ISLAND?

The Alliance for Coney Island is providing an opportunity for the community to discuss the merits of BIDs and how we might establish a district to satisfy our local needs. The Alliance conducted a Commercial District Needs Assessment and heard a variety of concerns and ideas from merchants and shoppers that could improve the business environment and quality of life for the community. All this constructive feedback has resulted in the recent meetings to discuss potential BID formation and what a BID could do to address these community issues. The mission statement of the Alliance is to:

- Create an economically and socially sustainable neighborhood;
- Preserve and enhance the retail and neighborhood character.

## WHAT SERVICES AND IMPROVEMENTS CAN A BID PROVIDE?

NYC BIDs in other communities have undertaken supplemental services such as the following:

- Business marketing
- Public safety and sanitation programs
- Snow and graffiti removal
- Streetscape beautification
- Technical assistance with local city
- Traffic management
- Storefront improvements
- Holiday Lights
- Advocacy for the District's needs agencies

A proposed BID Plan is currently being drafted by the Coney Island BID Planning Committee –it is always open to suggestions from stakeholders and the community. **These services & improvements, among others, are in addition to, and NOT a replacement of current City services.**



Mermaid Avenue tree pit before weeding by Alliance supplemental sanitation team



Mermaid Avenue tree pit after weeding by Alliance supplemental sanitation team



Example of holiday lights on Mermaid Avenue corridor

## HOW ARE BIDS FUNDED?

On average, assessments make up 75% of BID budgets. Most BIDs also fundraise, apply for grants, and generate revenue from programs to support the services they provide.

The City collects the BID assessments on behalf of BIDs through a separate bill sent with the real estate tax bills. The City takes no fee for collecting the assessments; every dollar collected is returned to the BID to pay for BID services. The funds go directly to fund BID programs and services which are selected by BID members.<sup>1</sup>

## MERMAID AVENUE QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

### MERMAID AVENUE: WHAT ARE THE ANNUAL BID PAYMENTS PROPOSED FOR MERMAID (NON-RESIDENTIAL) PROPERTIES?

The BID assessments vary by property use, square footage of the commercial space and property assessed value. Currently, the Mermaid Avenue area in the draft BID boundaries total 310 properties (i.e. tax lots), which represents **62%** of all properties in the BID Area.

The annual payment for a Mermaid Avenue property with commercial space ranges from ~\$200 to ~\$5,000 (for a large property with large square footage). The average payment for Mermaid Avenue is approximately \$550 which is ~\$45 month.

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**Note:** Only commercial property owners within the proposed district will be billed the assessment; however, property owners may be able to pass assessments along to their commercial tenants depending upon the terms of individual commercial leases. Fully Residential properties will be assessed an annual, symbolic, amount of \$1.00 per tax lot. Not-for-profit organizations & religious institutions are exempt from an assessment.