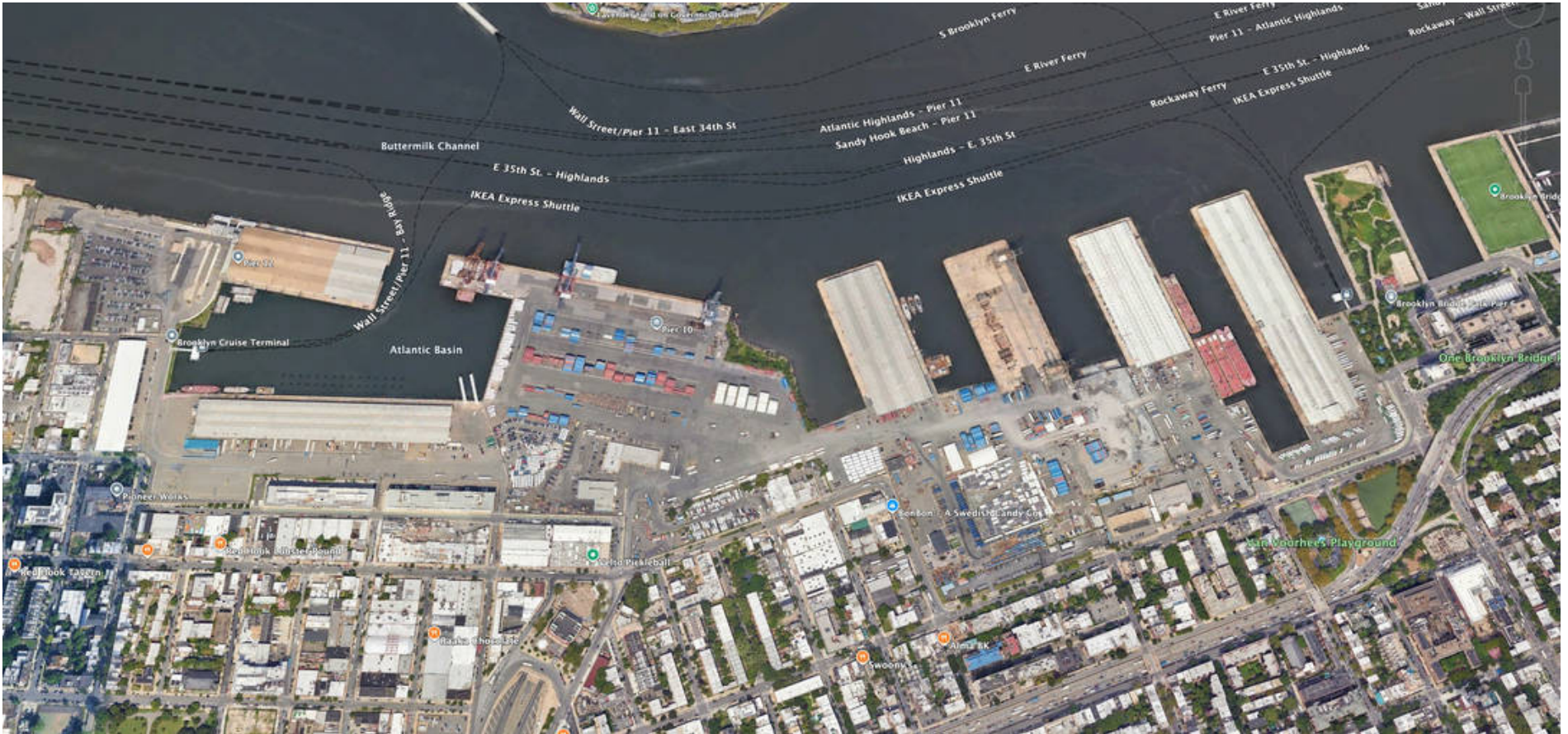


Blue Highway Hub at BMT



Updated Vision

All-Maritime Alternative for BMT Redevelopment



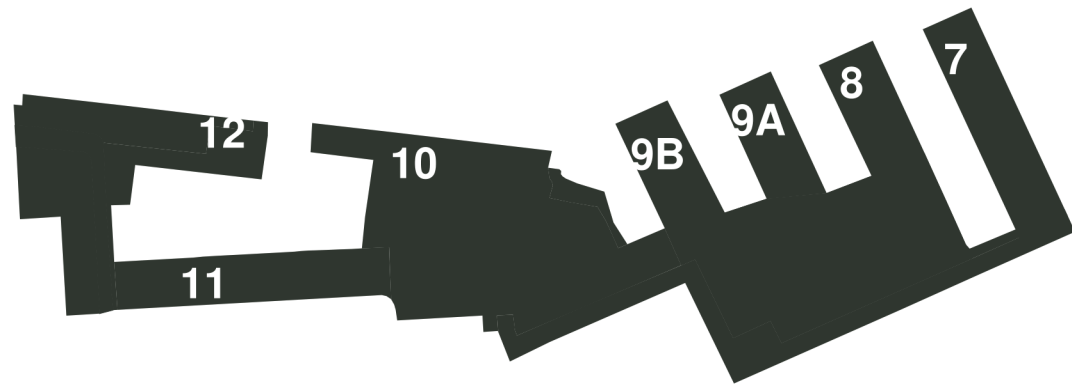
Brooklyn Marine Terminal and Red Hook. Aerial imagery: Google Maps.

October 14, 2026

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BMT Pier Numbers



Overview



In April 2024, the New York City Economic Development Corporation (EDC) executed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PA) giving the City control of Brooklyn Marine Terminal [\[1\]](#).

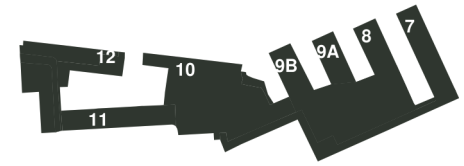
EDC determined that an all-maritime use of BMT was not economically viable and residential development was required to subsidize public improvements to the port. In September 2024, EDC established the Brooklyn Marine Terminal Task Force and announced the use of a New York State General Project Plan (GPP) to facilitate the redevelopment. [\[2\]](#) In September 2025, the New York City Economic Development Corporation (EDC) announced a \$3.5 billion vision plan to redevelop the 122-acre Brooklyn Marine Terminal (BMT) into a modern, all-electric maritime port and mixed-use community. [\[3\]](#)

In October 2025, EDC released a Blue Highway Action Plan [\[4\]](#) to distribute freight and packages on our waterways to ensure the City's continued growth, reduce the impact of trucks on bridges and roadway infrastructure, ease congestion, and improve safety, air quality and the quality of life on City

streets. Blue Highway plans often focus on freight movement from New Jersey ports and warehouses directly to Manhattan. If it were an independent city, Brooklyn would rank as the fourth-largest in the United States. BMT is an ideal location to address this 21st-century transportation innovation at the scale required.

Local community organizations, businesses and elected officials support the retention and expansion of the port and requested that EDC develop an all-maritime vision for comparison. On February 9, 2026, the City Club of New York (Club) released "Creating a Blue Highway Hub at Brooklyn Marine Terminal" (BHH) [\[5\]](#), an all-maritime vision for redevelopment, following a year of consultation with adjacent community organizations and maritime, environment, logistics, transport, planning, energy, and resiliency professionals to develop a viable all-maritime vision for BMT. This is a companion document that updates our February BHH proposal.

Updated All-Maritime Vision



EDC established the BMT Development Corporation (BMT DC) to refine and implement the vision in December 2025. [6] At a July 14, 2026, public briefing on BMT DC progress, EDC agreed that the Club's vision presented in "Creating a Blue Highway Hub at Brooklyn Marine Terminal" was an appropriate starting point for developing an all-maritime alternative to be assessed in the project's Environmental Impact Statement. [7]

At that time, the Club noted that its BHH vision needed further refinement to be an economically viable, apples-to-apples alternative for assessment in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and that the City's stated maritime priorities, including the Blue Highway, should guide uses in a future port RFP rather than leaving the program entirely to prospective operators. [7]



Fig. 1 LNG-powered Seaboard Verde at Pier 10. Image supplied by Tom Fox.

In September 2026, EDC's Executive Vice President for Planning stated that they were not designing the port component of BMT because they did not want to pretend they knew how to move cargo in and out of BMT and might get it wildly wrong. [8] At the September 2026 EDC Board meeting, EDC authorized funding for BMT was increased by \$4 million, to \$22 million and project work includes "identifying port and maritime uses that are aligned with forward-looking industry, trends, and key stakeholders". [9] The BMT consulting team includes Buro Happold, an engineering firm with significant waterfront planning experience, so EDC's statement is confusing.

The Club has continued working with maritime, transport and logistics experts to update the BHH vision. We have added interim and long-term land uses that capable private-sector experts confirm are financially feasible through a public/private partnership. The updated vision retains the principal functions of the February BHH proposal and maintains the uses for Piers 10, 11 and 12 and Atlantic Basin. Modifications to Piers 7–9B are shown on the updated map and described in the text.

Updated Vision Map

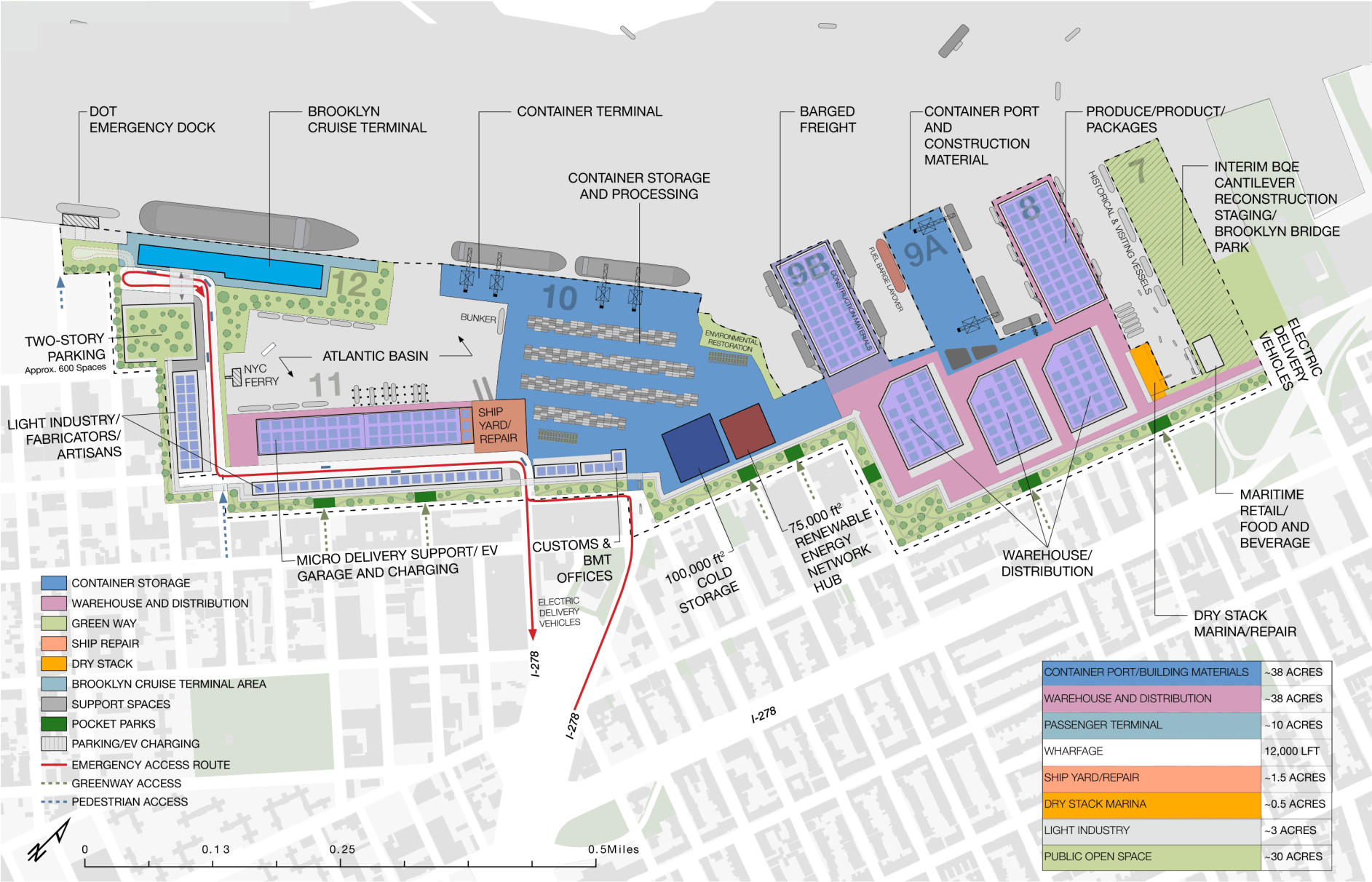
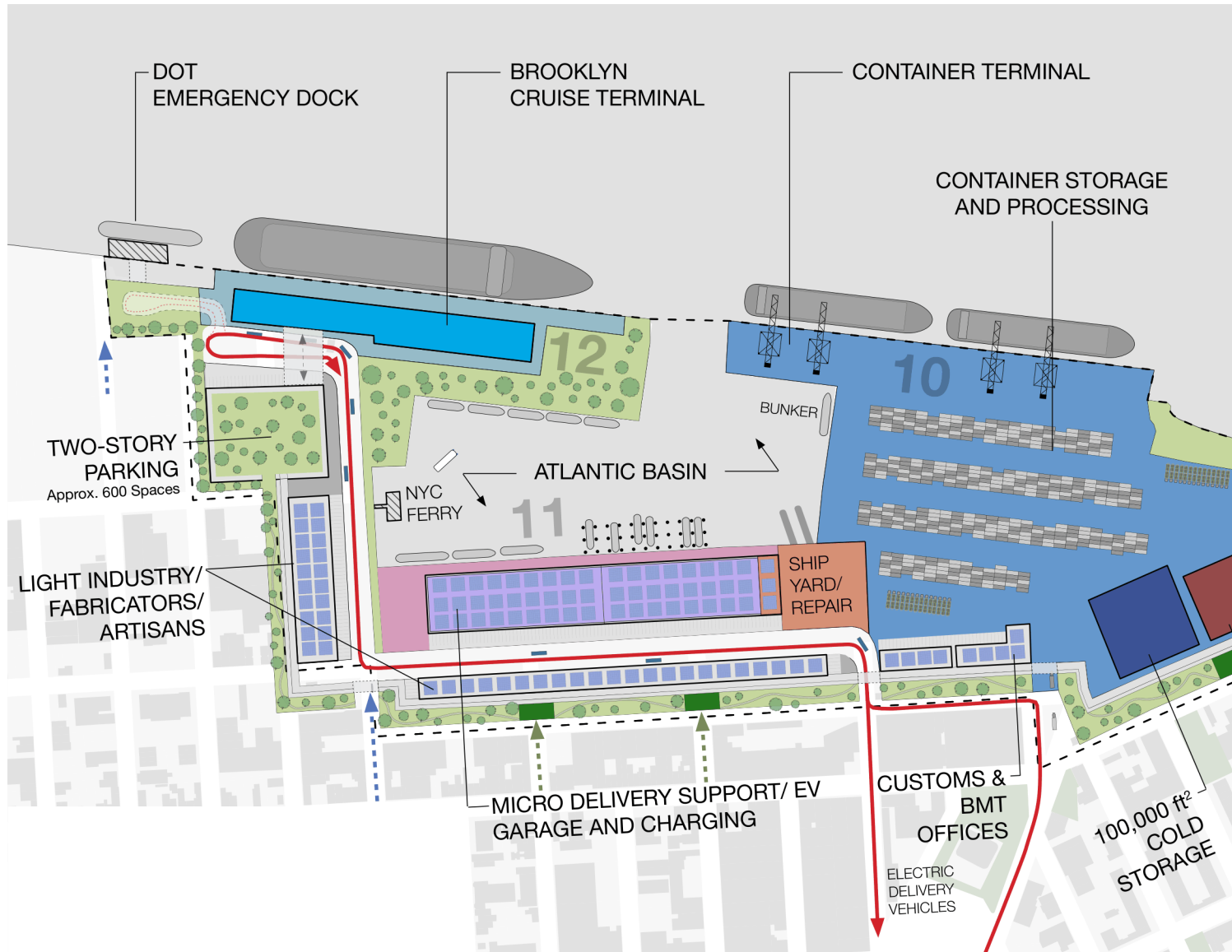


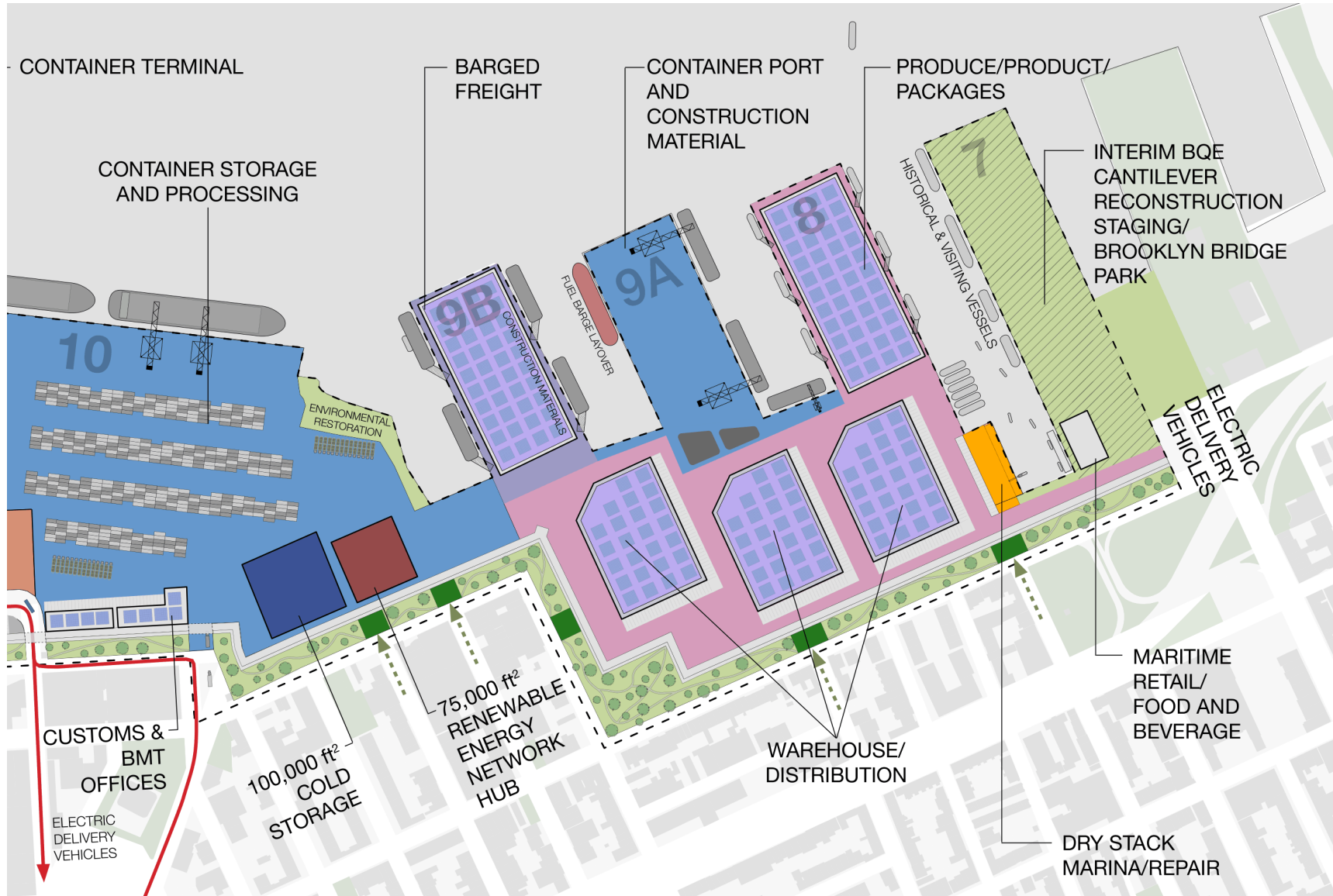
Fig. 2 October 2026 Vision for BMT. [10]

Southern Waterfront Detail



Detail of Fig. 2. Full overview and legend: page 4.

Northern Waterfront Detail



Detail of Fig. 2. Full overview and legend: page 4.

Pier 7

New York City Department of Transportation (DOT) has announced the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway Central Project (BQE CP) to rebuild the BQE triple cantilever and adjacent infrastructure on City property. [11] This project will proceed at the same time as redevelopment of BMT, resulting in cumulative impacts on adjacent neighborhoods.

DOT began scoping in September 2026, with public scoping scheduled for November. Its current schedule anticipates construction starting in 2029 and completion by 2040. [11]

Pier 7 is directly across Atlantic Avenue from the BQE CP and is an ideal location for construction-material and equipment staging and storage during this lengthy reconstruction. Few suitable sites are close to the project. Pier 7 is accessible by

water, and its eastern portion is on land, to accommodate heavy loads.

When the BQE CP is completed, Pier 7 should become part of Brooklyn Bridge Park, while the more than 1,000 linear feet of south-face wharfage remain in maritime use as part of the port. The Brooklyn Bridge Park Corporation should secure the funding required to convert Pier 7 into a park and oversee the design and construction. Pier 62 in Hudson River Park provides an example of a public pier with commercial maritime activity, under the jurisdiction of Chelsea Piers Recreation and Entertainment Center, on the south-facing wharfage. [12, 13]

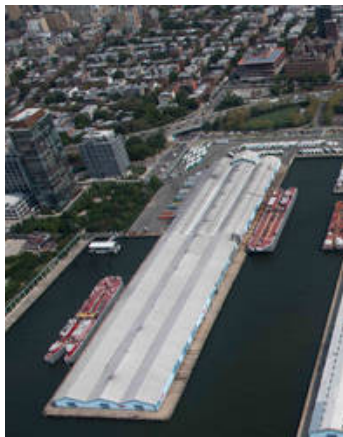
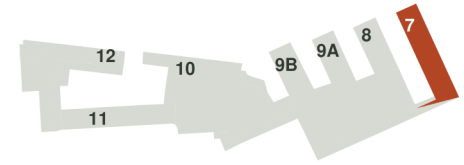


Fig. 3 Pier 7 aerial view September 2021.
Photo: Tom Fox.

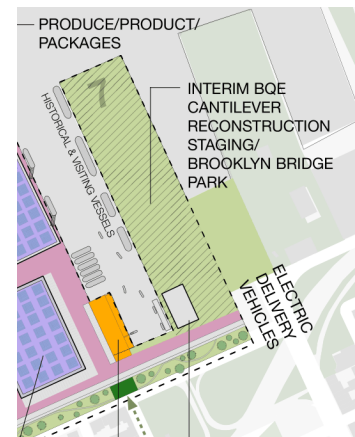


Fig. 4 Pier 7 concept. Full vision map: page 4. [10]

Piers 8, 9A and 9B

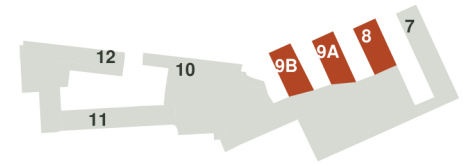
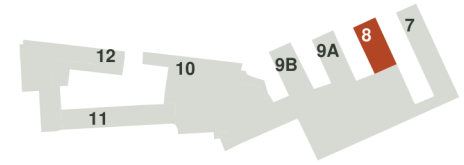


Fig. 5 BMT Piers 8, 9A and 9B, aerial view September 2021. Photo: Tom Fox.

Pier 8



The primary maritime use of Pier 8 should be roll-on/roll-off (ro-ro) vessels. Phase II of the Club's Blue Highway distribution network envisions vessels carrying electric vans and box trucks loaded at BMT logistics facilities and being shipped to four locations on the East River and Lower Harbor. Road access at these locations will support onward deliveries across Brooklyn and Queens. (See Blue Highway Distribution Network, page 17.)

A large portion of this five-acre pier can provide dry storage for construction materials such as lumber, as it has in the recent past. Construction storage, staging and manufacturing on the piers and adjacent upland areas will support the administration's affordable-housing initiative. Moving construction materials by water is more cost-effective and reduces congestion, pollution and roadway deterioration while benefiting the City's quality of life.

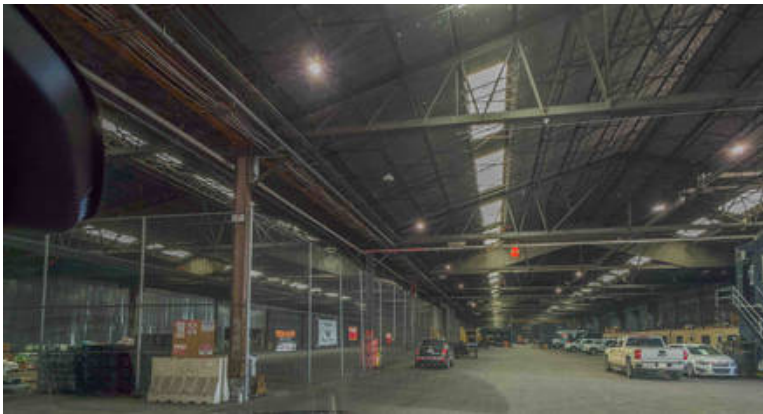


Fig. 6 Pier 8 interior. Photo: Tom Fox.



Fig. 7 Pier 8 and adjoining waterfront uses. October 2026 concept. [10]

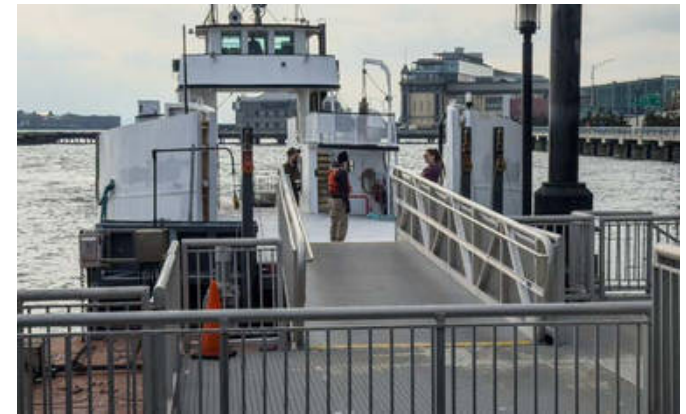


Fig. 8 Roll-on/roll-off vessel at Wall Street/Pier 11. Photo: Tom Fox.

Pier 9A

After years of disinvestment, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PA) decommissioned Piers 9A and 9B in 2023 before transferring the property to EDC. Pier 9A should be rebuilt as the container port it was in 2021, with two container cranes to expand BMT's cargo-handling capacity. This addresses EDC's stated purpose for the redevelopment: to modernize and expand the container port.

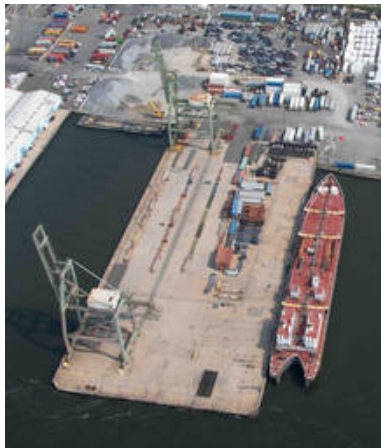


Fig. 9 Pier 9A, September 2021 (detail). Photo: Tom Fox.

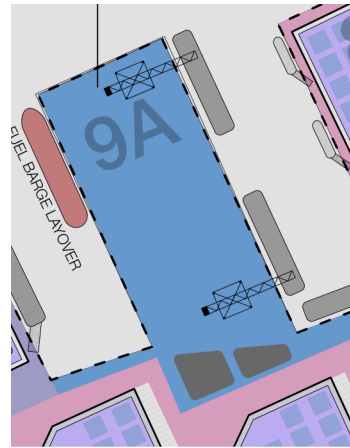
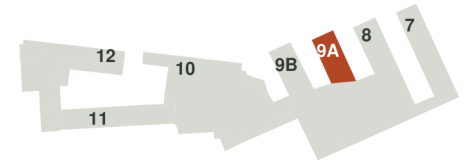


Fig. 10 Pier 9A. October 2026 concept. [10]



Future pier design presents a harbor-wide challenge in adapting to future sea-level rise. Due to projected changes in water levels, traditional piers built to heights appropriate for vessel use in 2030 are not compatible with continued use in 2100. The Club recommends that the City investigate the possibility of building floating docks. (See Resiliency, page 20.)

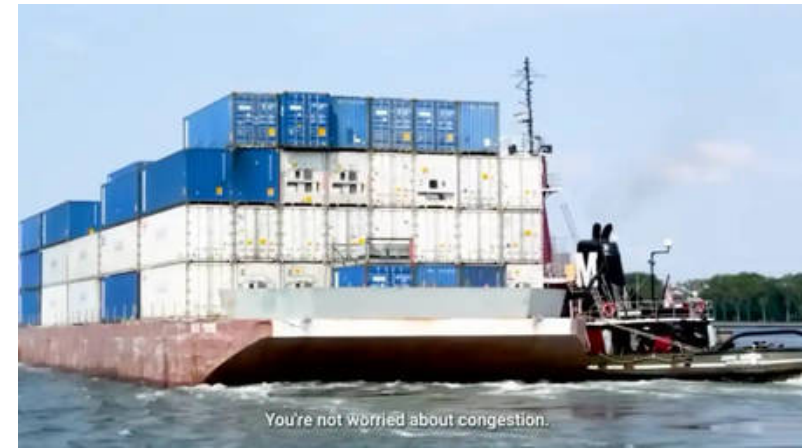


Fig. 11 Container barge at BMT. Source: EDC Blue Highway video.

Pier 9B

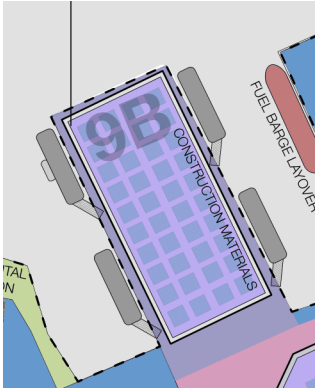
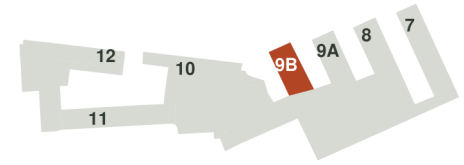


Fig. 12 Pier 9B. October 2026 concept. [10]



Pier 9B's primary maritime use should be barge-carried freight, including 53-foot tractor trailers arriving from ports and logistics facilities in Staten Island and New Jersey. Yard tractors can move trailers into the upland processing and distribution facilities before they return to their origins by barge. Like containerization, this offers another way to move freight at scale. As with Pier 8, the pier will be rebuilt, and part of its large interior space can support construction staging and distribution.

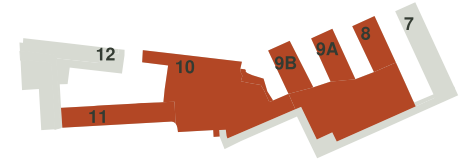


Fig. 13 Trucks crossing the harbor on barges. Photo: Prologis



Fig. 14 Truck unloading from a barge. Photo: Prologis

Blue Highway



The City remains overwhelmingly dependent on trucks, with recent estimates putting the truck mode share of freight movement at over 90%. Freight demand is projected to grow materially over the next two decades; a 2025 City estimate projects approximately 43% growth by 2045 (300M → 430M tons). [14]

NYC freight demand is expanding materially and BMT provides the scale to accommodate that growth while shifting a meaningful portion of freight away from an almost entirely truck-dependent system.

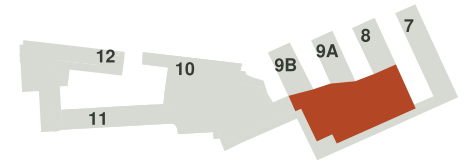
NYC DOT's 2021 truck-management plan reported that more than 120,000 trucks enter and exit New York City each day. [15] In March 2022, New York City received just under 3.6 million deliveries daily, including packages, groceries and prepared food. [16] For high-volume bulk freight, barge transport can offer lower per-ton-mile costs than trucking. [17]

Implementing the Blue Highway will remove trucks from our bridges, highways, and streets, ease congestion and infrastructure deterioration, and enhance air quality and the quality of life. Last year the current port operator shipped 75,000 containers on barges from New Jersey to BMT.



Fig. 15 Trucks spanning the George Washington Bridge, highlighted in orange. Photo: Tom Fox.

Blue Highway Logistics Facilities



The Club had concerns regarding vacancy at LBA's Redhook Logistics Center [18] but understands that multistory logistics facilities developed at, or shortly after, the market's 2022–2023 peak are unsuitable for many users and require higher rents to cover development costs. [19, 20]

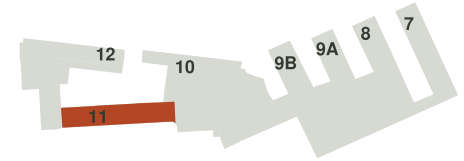
The 750,000 square feet of logistics facilities envisioned at BMT are all-electric, single-story structures with large solar arrays and space to accommodate Blue Highway operations. Piers 8, 9B, 10 and 11 will provide maritime support necessary for the Blue Highway Hub. Construction alone is conservatively estimated to generate thousands of construction jobs. Logistics facility operations will provide over 1,000 permanent direct logistics jobs, with additional employment in maritime operations, dispatch, inventory management, maintenance, electric-vehicle servicing, and engineering.



Fig. 16 Two-story logistics facility on Gowanus with fuel barges in the foreground. Photo: Tom Fox.

The facilities will be capable of operating 24/7, but logistics activities, marine arrivals and freight movements will be managed around defined operating windows to ensure high throughput with predictable operations—not an uncontrolled stream of nighttime movements. The design and operation of these facilities must minimize light and noise impacts on adjacent neighborhoods.

Pier 11 Blue Highway Microdistribution



Pier 11 should be reconstructed to support microdistribution including vessel loading and the storage, charging, servicing and launch of electric tricycles and quads used for microdistribution of packages and products. Phase I of the

Blue Highway network would use existing Manhattan ferry landings, with a proposed service area extending from the northern end of Central Park to the Battery.

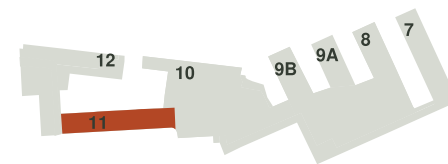


Fig. 17 Pier 11 exterior. Photo: Tom Fox.



Fig. 18 Electric quad delivery vehicle at BMT. Photo: Tom Fox.

Pier 11 Blue Highway Microdistribution



Pier 11 is protected in Atlantic Basin, and improvements have already been made to support bow-loading aluminum catamarans and/or monohulls operating at the pier. Existing New York City Department of Transportation (DOT) ferry docks

have been used for pilot micro-logistics operations, and maritime operators in the harbor have fleets of aluminum high-speed ferries that can be used to implement Phase I of the Blue Highway distribution network. [4]



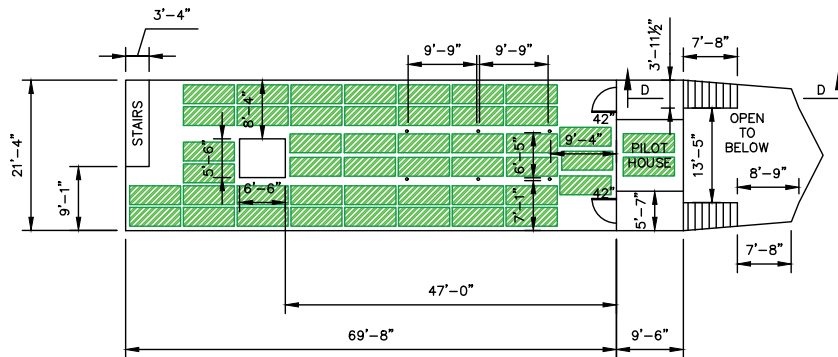
Fig. 19 Cargo tricycle demonstration. Photo: Tom Fox.



Fig. 20 DutchX electric cargo quads waiting to load. Photo: NY Waterway

Pier 11 Vessel Layout

Lower-level alternative: 47 eWalkers



Lower-level alternative: 32 eQuads

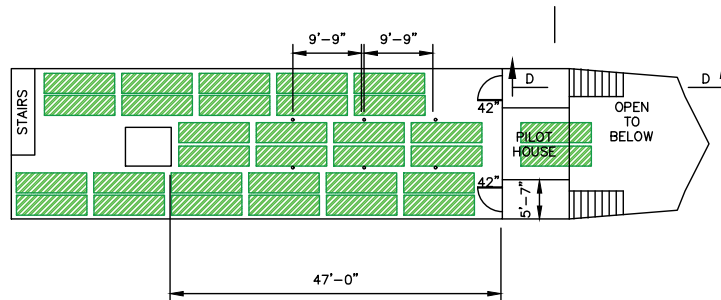


Fig. 21 New York Waterway aluminum monohull conceptual lower-level arrangements: 47 eWalkers (upper) or 32 eQuads (lower). Drawing: Indigo River Architecture and Engineering. Supplied by NY Waterway. Illustrative layouts, subject to engineering and operational review.

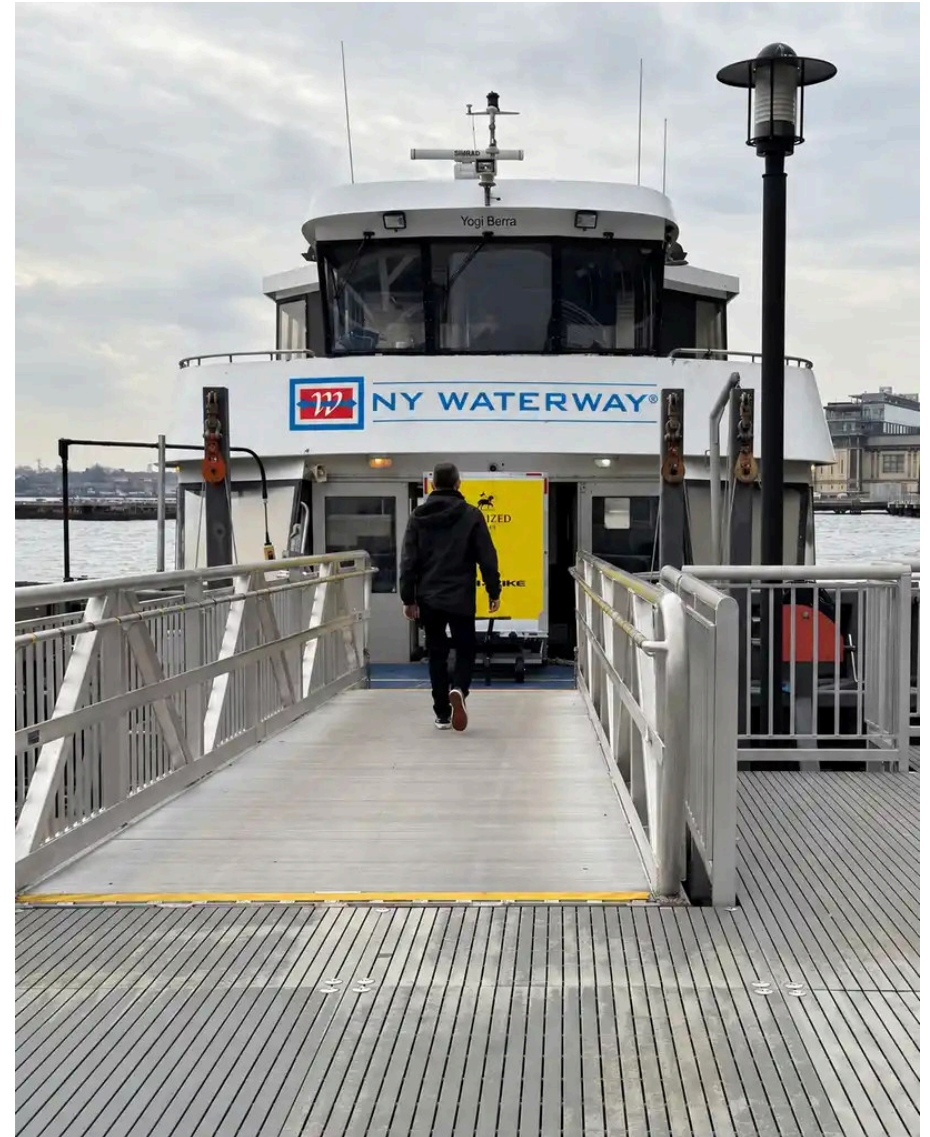


Fig. 22 New York Waterway bow loading. Photo: NY Waterway.

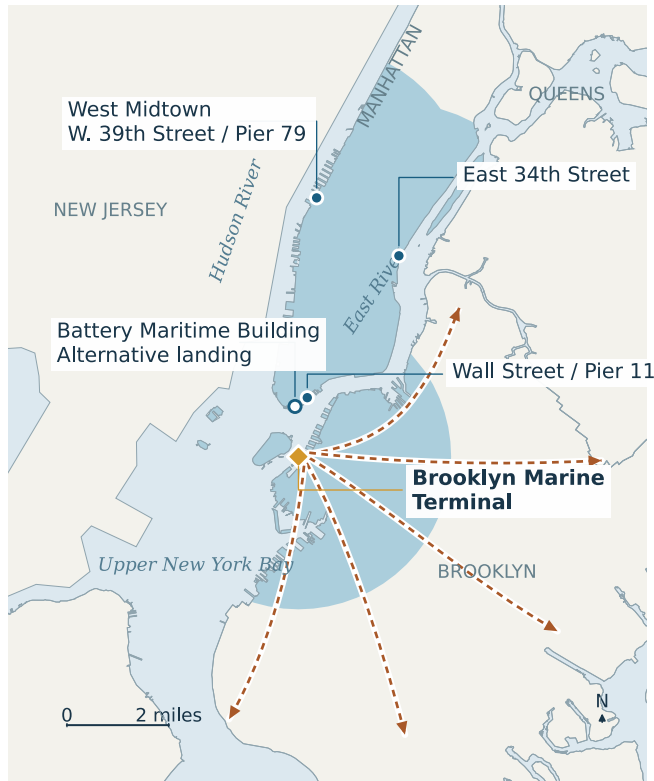
Blue Highway Distribution Network

Proposed waterfront landings and electric local delivery from Brooklyn Marine Terminal

Phase I

Within two years

Existing landings for micro-delivery vehicles



● Phase I landing

◆ Distribution hub

Electric micro-delivery vehicles

Range 3 miles

→ BMT: electric vans and trucks

Shading shows three-mile straight-line distances within each landing's borough. Street access determines delivery routes.

City Club of New York, Creating a Blue Highway Hub at Brooklyn Marine Terminal (2026), pp. 10–11. Shorelines: NYC DCP; U.S. Census Bureau.

Phase II

Within five years

Additional docking facilities, vans and box trucks



■ Phase II landing

● Phase I landing

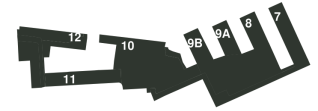
Electric vans and box trucks

Range 20 miles

→ Brooklyn, Queens and east toward Suffolk

Arrows show proposed coverage, not specific routes or a verified 20-mile range. Locations are approximate; phase timing has no specified start date.

Cold Storage & Renewable Energy Network



The Club envisions BMT as energy-independent, able to function during blackouts and natural disasters and linked to critical energy systems in the adjacent neighborhood for resiliency. [21] This is particularly important as BMT plays a major role in emergency waterborne evacuation from lower Manhattan in times of chaotic disruption, such as the attack of 9/11 and subsequent blackouts. [22]

The current Red Hook Terminal imports a significant amount of produce, which is currently stored in refrigerated containers on site. Our updated vision increases the amount of cold-storage capacity at BMT to 100,000 square feet. In June

2025, EDC opened a 60,000-square-foot cold-storage facility at Hunts Point. [23] However, the plan to modernize Hunts Point has proven difficult. [24]

Public funding has been allocated toward construction of a cold-storage facility at BMT. EDC's suggestion of reallocating that funding to Hunts Point was greeted by public outcry. [25] BMT is the appropriate location to put that vision and resources for port modernization into practice and cold storage is a critical need in the Harbor.



Fig. 23 Seaboard refrigerated containers. Photo: Tom Fox.

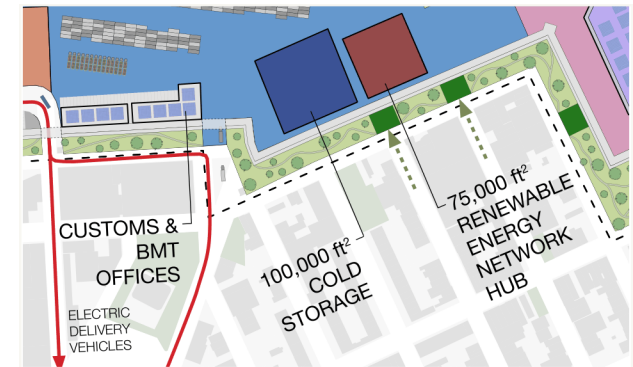


Fig. 24 Cold-storage and renewable-energy areas. October 2026 concept. [10]

Red Hook Community Microgrid

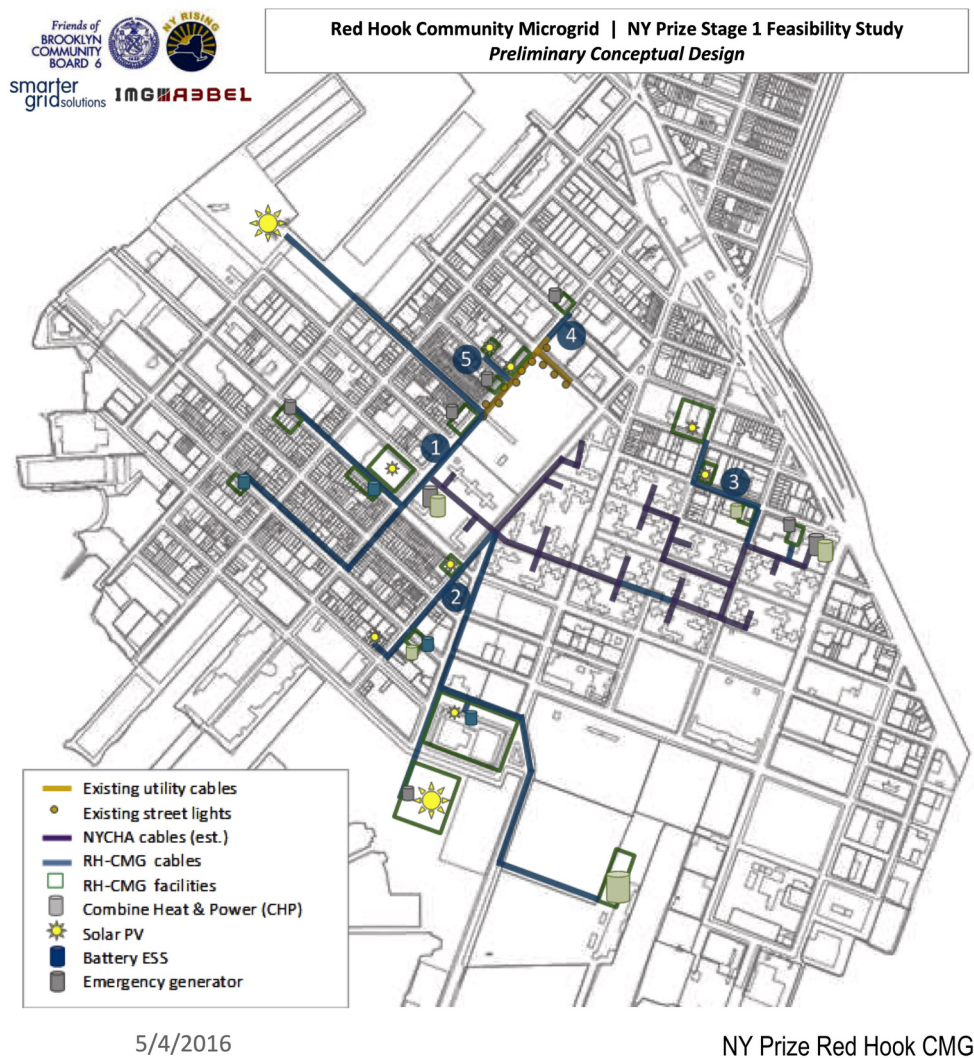


Fig. 25 Red Hook Community Microgrid. NY Prize, NY Rising, 2016 Preliminary conceptual design, May 4, 2016.

Resiliency

The City Club's proposal envisions BMT as a resilient and sustainable Blue Highway Hub for the NYC Metro region. By its very nature as a waterfront site, it must consider present and future flood conditions, and appropriate adaptation options if it is to protect its economic viability and long-term operations. On October 8, 2025, the City Club published an analysis of the site's flood risk. [26]

Regardless of whether this analysis or a new version, commissioned from a qualified engineering company is used as a baseline, BMT's flood risk needs to be considered for any redevelopment for marine, industrial, mixed, or public access use. As the October 8 analysis suggests, a phased resiliency plan could allow implementation and operation of a Blue Highway facility in the near term, without requiring completion of a comprehensive resiliency plan upfront that encompasses all components of the future BMT redevelopment.

Since BMT will serve as an important infrastructure for NYC and the region (including the tidal Hudson Valley beyond Albany), resiliency planning should consider a sequence of planning time horizons including now, the 2050s, 2070s and out to at least the year 2100.



Fig. 26 Ryan J. Sontag Valdez Container Terminal, Alaska. Source: City of Valdez.

Pier 9A needs to be rebuilt and should be designed as a floating structure like the container terminal in Valdez, Alaska [27], to adapt to future sea-level rise. Rotterdam offers similar floating technology for a different application: ZHD's floating cranes provide direct ship-to-ship transshipment. [28]

Resiliency and the Elevated Greenway

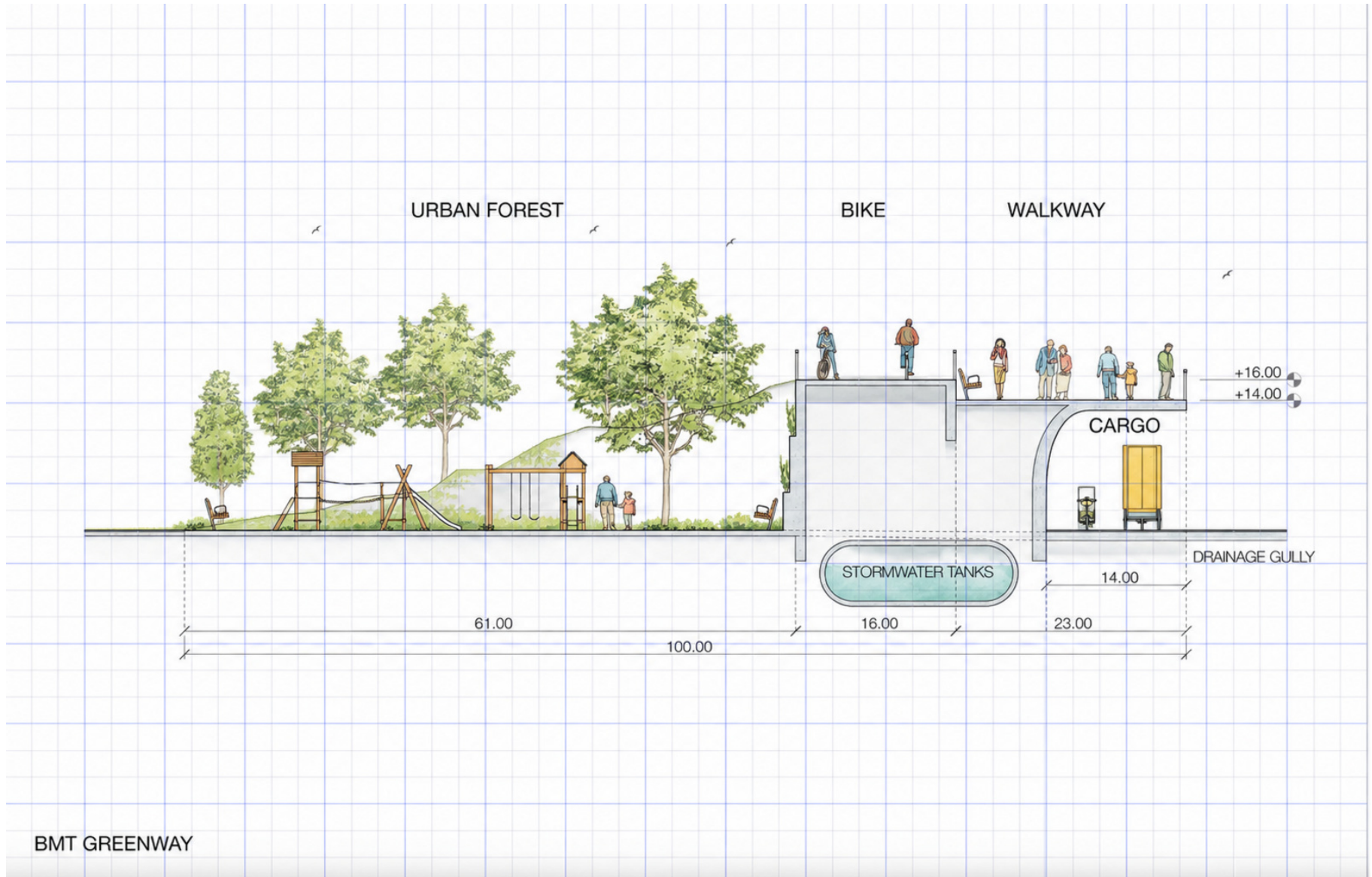


Fig. 27 Proposed elevated greenway, urban forest and stormwater infrastructure. Illustration: City Club of New York, February 9 report.

Environmental Benefits

The all-maritime plan for BMT has significant environmental benefits for the harbor, natural systems, and the City. The Club has determined that BMT can be redeveloped, and the port protected and expanded, without the need to cover or fill 11.17 acres of our waterway or use of a GPP. That will save both time and money.

Since the passage of the Clean Water Act in 1972, we have witnessed a resurgence of fish and wildlife returning to the New York Harbor over the past half century. Open water is

critical for the continued restoration of our harbor's natural ecosystems. This year alone, Gotham Whale has documented the 500th individual humpback whale in local waters [29], a fever (a group) of rays was reported seen in Newtown Creek [30], and Hudson River Park documented a resurgence of native species in its annual fisheries research. [31] Yet there is much more to be done as scientists search for the cause of declining juvenile Atlantic striped bass populations. [32]



Fig. 28 Hudson River Park River Project staff retrieve samples for the Fish Ecology Project. Photo: The Broadsheet.



Fig. 29 The Humpback off Coney Island. From American Princess Whale Watching. Photo: Chris St. Lawrence.

Environmental Benefits

All buildings and equipment operating at BMT should be electrified. All vessels operating at BMT should transition to a greener fuel source over time. [33] The Club's updated all-maritime vision for a Blue Highway Hub at BMT will transport construction materials, products, produce, and packages on our waterways, reducing traffic congestion and air pollution throughout the region.



Fig. 30 ECONcrete tidal pools retain water at low tide, providing shoreline habitat and textured surfaces for marine growth. Photo: Tom Fox.

In addition, the continued manufacturing of products like precast concrete for marine and construction projects significantly reduces truck pollution and congestion caused by these materials being trucked from locations outside the City.



Fig. 31 Rock bags protect underwater cables and can be lifted for access. Photo: Tom Fox.

Environmental Benefits

For example, other than BMT the closest precast manufacturer is located on Long Island, and all materials must be trucked to marine construction sites in the City. [34] This type of manufacturing should be considered in future BMT redevelopment plans.



Fig. 32 Prefabricating concrete structures. Photo: Tom Fox.



Fig. 33 Precast electrical and lighting vaults. Photo: Tom Fox.

Financing

In 2025, New York City accounted for \$4.3 billion of the \$12.7 billion spent by New York State and local governments on economic development, including tax incentives. [35] At the September 2026 EDC Board meeting, EDC authorized funding for BMT was increased by \$4 million, to \$22 million and project work includes “identifying port and maritime uses that are aligned with forward-looking industry, trends, and key stakeholders”. [9]

This summer, EDC stated that it was reaching out to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and other regulatory agencies to ascertain whether their assumptions about the likelihood of receiving a permit to cover 11.17 acres of Buttermilk Channel to create room for residential housing development at BMT North were correct. [36] This should have been considered when EDC’s vision for BMT was being developed, not a year and a half later.

The Club estimates that the BHH project would require approximately \$1.5 billion in private-sector investment, matched by a proposed \$1.5 billion City contribution. The Club believes that New York City Industrial Development Agency (NYCIDA) can support and amplify that private investment. The private-sector investment anticipated in the Club’s updated all-maritime vision would support over 5,000 construction jobs [37] and over 2,500 full-time operating jobs.

A recent Comptroller’s report on NYCIDA recommended making operational policies more transparent, setting clear project-specific benchmarks, and focusing its job creation goal on job quality. [38]

EDC has stated it has \$418 million in City, state and federal funding for public improvements at BMT. That funding includes a \$15 million public contribution towards a cold storage facility and \$403 million for pier construction. With the funding EDC says is available, rebuilding Pier 9A should be a priority to increase container port operations.

Conclusion

BMT is the last large maritime industrial facility east of the Hudson River, designated as a Significant Maritime Industrial Area (SMIA) and within the South Brooklyn Industrial Business Zone (IBZ) and is a strategically located commercial maritime facility in the New York Harbor. EDC has often stated that the purpose of the BMT redevelopment project is to preserve and expand the port.

Given BMT's size and industrial zoning, all the uses proposed by the Club can be built as-of-right. This updated vision expands on our initial proposal and finalizes our vision for a Blue Highway Hub at BMT. It provides a realistic opportunity to develop a meaningful public/private partnership to redevelop this critical maritime industrial site in a cost-effective and expeditious manner.



Fig. 34 Containers unloading at Pier 10. Source: Tom Fox.



Maritime and logistics experts have confirmed that the Club's updated "Blue Highway Hub at BMT" vision is financially feasible in a public/private partnership that benefits the City and creates meaningful job opportunities. There is strong community and professional maritime, logistics, environmental and planning support for an all-maritime alternative.

By eliminating the need to fill or build a platform over 11.17 acres of Buttermilk Channel to expand the container port, the Club's updated vision has a clear path to a quicker environmental review process. The piers can be rebuilt as-of-right, all uses proposed are allowed in industrial business zones (IBZs) and most are currently operating at BMT.

The Club's updated all-maritime vision is economically and environmentally just, expands the container port, creates thousands of short- and long-term jobs, supports the construction of affordable housing citywide and the reconstruction of the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway (BQE) triple cantilever, and catalyzes the creation of a historic Blue Highway system that enhances the quality of life for all New Yorkers.

Author: Tom Fox

Layout and design: Liam Blank

References

- [1] New York City Economic Development Corporation. Brooklyn Marine Terminal Redevelopment Oversight Hearing: Testimony of the New York City Economic Development Corporation. June 12, 2025.
- [2] New York City Economic Development Corporation. NYCEDC Announces Brooklyn Marine Terminal Task Force Appointees to Serve Alongside Rep. Dan Goldman, State Senator Andrew Gounardes, Council Member Alexa Aviles. September 19, 2024.
- [3] New York City Economic Development Corporation. City Announces Passage of Historic \$3.5 Billion Vision Plan to Transform Brooklyn Marine Terminal Into Modern Maritime Port, Create New, Vibrant Mixed-Use Community Along Waterfront. September 22, 2025.
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