

**Calvin T. Brown Statement on Proposed Cypress Hills BID Formation & LIC  
BID Expansion  
Before City Council Finance Committee  
June 20, 2024**

Good morning, Chair Brannan and members of the Finance Committee. I am Calvin T. Brown, Deputy Commissioner of Neighborhood Development at the Department of Small Business Services (SBS). I am joined by Raquel Olivares, Assistant Commissioner of Neighborhood Development and Emily Edwards, Executive Director of BID Development. We are here to testify in support of the formation of the Cypress Hills Fulton Business Improvement District (BID) in Brooklyn and the expansion of the Long Island City BID in Queens.

At SBS, we are working hard to open doors for New Yorkers across the five boroughs – focusing on creating stronger businesses, connecting New Yorkers to good jobs, and fostering thriving neighborhoods. We believe that the vitality of the City’s commercial corridors is a key part of achieving this goal, and BIDs have been valuable and proven partners in small business support, neighborhood revitalization, and economic development across all five boroughs. City services, which by law cannot be reduced because of the existence of a BID, are only supplemented through the BIDs delivery of services and improvements in their respective districts.

In addition to our role overseeing and supporting the City’s existing network of 75 BIDs, SBS also supervises the BID formation and expansion process, serving as an advisor and resource for communities interested in developing or expanding BIDs. We are careful to ensure that each steering committee we work with adheres to our planning process and policies, solicits robust community input, and performs extensive outreach to collect and demonstrate broad-based support across all stakeholder groups.

Moreover, we are cognizant of the unique nature of each community we assist and aim to empower local stakeholders to make determinations on (1) proposed services, (2) boundaries, and (3) budget size that best suit their community’s needs,

appetite, and ability to pay assessments. While we always impart strong planning principles and share our data and best practices from across the BID network when working with any BID formation and expansion effort, we recognize that the power and effectiveness of BIDs rests in their unmatched understanding of local needs and issues.

The Cypress Hills Fulton BID formation effort began in 2020 and involved numerous meetings and consultations with local stakeholders throughout the planning and outreach phases. After an extensive outreach effort and close coordination with all key parties, SBS determined that the documented support among all stakeholder groups – including 50% of the area’s total assessed value – was sufficient to submit their application to City Council.

Even with the major challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Cypress Hills steering committee was able to sustain their outreach efforts in the district. In addition to district-wide mailings, the steering committee was also able to directly connect to major stakeholders through direct phone calls and undertaking one on one meetings, developing an even more personal connection with their constituents in moving this effort forward.

In addition to the Cypress Hills Fulton BID formation, the Long Island City BID is seeking approval to extend its current boundaries. The extension of the Long Island City BID will provide services to a new Eastern Sub-District; this sub-district will encompass the industrial business zone (IBZ) east of Sunnyside Yards, and to additional commercial corridors which has seen a substantial increase in pedestrian traffic as this area has become the 4<sup>th</sup> Central Business District of NYC. The boundaries of the existing North and South Sub-Districts would also be extended as part of this expansion. Expanding the existing BID will ensure supplemental services, streetscape improvements, and marketing and advocacy are reaching greater parts of the neighborhood, as well as areas surrounding the original BID districts.

As required by law, Cypress Hills Fulton and LIC steering committees mailed the summary of the City Council Resolution, no less than 10 days and no more than 30 days before today's hearing, to property owners and tenants of the proposed district.

Furthermore, SBS arranged for the publication of a copy of the summary of the Resolution at least once in the City Record.

Additionally, I would like to acknowledge and thank Council Member Nurse for her support of the Cypress Hills BID formation effort, as well as the support of Council Member Won for the LIC BID Expansion effort.

Lastly, I would like to acknowledge that representatives of the BID formation and expansion efforts are present here today to testify and address any specific questions that I am unable to answer.

At this time, I am happy to take any questions. Thank you.



June 19, 2024

Greetings NYC Council Finance Committee/Councilmembers,

I would like to express my strong support for **Int 0898-2024** A Local Law to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, about the establishment of the Cypress Hills Fulton Street Business Improvement District. As a community resident and stakeholder as Chairman of The Homeowners Association in East New York, I have witnessed firsthand the positive impact the BID has had on local businesses, residents, and visitors in my community.

Additionally, I would like to express that Cypress Hills Fulton Street BID plays a vital role in enhancing the local economic vitality whether it's leading the charge in community cleanups; local beautification projects; or assisting local small businesses to thrive and grow. As a result, there is an increase in foot traffic and attraction of new businesses along this dynamic corridor of small businesses.

Cypress Hills Fulton Street Business Improvement District fosters a vibrant local economy. However, I urge you to continue supporting the BID, as its efforts are essential for the continued growth and prosperity of our community.

Thank you in advance for your attention and consideration.

Albert Scott

Chairman

The Homeowners Association

## **David Brause Testimony, LIC BID Expansion Hearing, June 20, 2024**

Hi, my name is David Brause, and I am the President of Brause Realty Inc., and the Chair of the Long Island City BID. We own one property in the current BID, Brewster LIC at 27-01 Queens Plaza North which serves as the headquarters to Jetblue Airways. We also own The Forge, a 272-unit mixed-use apartment building on Purves Street, in the North proposed BID expansion area.

Our family has owned real estate in Long Island City since 1980, and I have served as the founding Chairman of the LIC BID since its inception in 2005, and this is my third time testifying in front of City Council.

It has been my pleasure serving as BID Chair, participating in all of our amazing roster of activities each year, including planting the tulips each fall and begonias each spring in our many beautiful tree pits in the district. For 20 years, I have moderated our Real Estate Breakfast, and have participated in most of the amazing events that the BID has organized throughout the neighborhood.

As a property owner in the existing and proposed expanded BID, I am here to express my full support for the LIC BID Expansion. Since 2005, I have seen firsthand the impact that the BID services have had on the neighborhood.

The on-street services provided by the BID have had a direct impact on the community's vitality and have drastically improved the quality of life for residents, business owners and employees. Their services include beautification efforts – planting in hanging baskets, tree pits and planters; sanitation services that keep the sidewalks and curbside clean 7 days a week; and through their direct advocacy and connection with the City around specific public safety, quality of life and streetscape improvements.

With the tremendous growth of LIC in the last ten years, the need to expand these services is increasingly necessary. The Forge sits on Purves Street – a street comprised of mixed-use residential buildings with retail components and the famous Sculpture Center Museum that brings daily foot traffic. The use and character of these side streets has changed to bring not only more residents but retail activity as well – resulting in a need for supplemental services. I know firsthand how the BID services enhance and benefit the neighborhood and would like to see these services expanded to match the need of this growing neighborhood.

Thank you.

June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Dear Council Members.

I am here to express my enthusiastic support for the establishment of a Business Improvement District (BID) in the Cypress Hills community. As a local business owner, I believe that the formation of a BID will bring significant benefits to our area, enhancing both the economic vitality and the overall quality of life for everyone involved.

A BID is a powerful tool for community and economic development, offering a structured mechanism through which businesses can collaborate to fund and manage improvements within a Cypress Hills district. The benefits of creating a BID are numerous and far-reaching:

**Enhanced Public Spaces**  
**Improved Safety**  
**Increased Foot Traffic**  
**Community Engagement**

Perhaps one of the most important achievements of a BID is **Economic Development**: With the partnership with the city and through targeted economic development initiatives, a BID can attract new businesses and support existing ones. This might include business support services, facilitating improvement grants, and other incentives that promote investment and growth in the district.

Cypress Hills, Fulton St. Corridor, is in desperate need of this initiative. We have been experiencing building boom since the adoption of the rezoning just a few years ago. With the new construction of multifamily housing so is the addition of hundreds of new families being welcomed into our neighborhood. We need an organized business district to better serve the community.

I believe that with the collective efforts of local businesses, property owners, and the support of the municipality, we can create a dynamic and prosperous environment that benefits everyone. Business prosperity brings wealth to the community and tax revenue to the city. In short: This is a no-brainer.

I urge the council to approve the creation of the Business Improvement District and to support this initiative that promises to bring transformative improvements to our community. Thank you for your attention to this important matter and for your continued dedication to the development and well-being of our area.

Sincerely,

Diego Rios  
Lic. Real Estate Associate Broker  
Home Global Realty Corp.  
3456 Fulton Street  
Brooklyn NY 11208

June 20th, 2024

Dear Council Members:

My name is Fernando Tapia Owner of the property located at 3456 Fulton Street, Brooklyn NY 11208

As a owner of the property since 1994, I have seen the poor condition of our neighborhood and how difficult has been in all aspects like security, cleaning, lighting, and the garbage collection and street cleaning was improper attention and our area was out of control and I see many rats running on the streets because all neighbors throw garbage on the business corners.

After years of the same situation, someone from the community invited to me to be part of the new project of organizing a Cypress Hills, Fulton Street BID with excellent ideas and hoping for our neighborhood to be change in all aspects and also I want to enroll and meetings with all elected members for our area with hope all together make a big improvement to benefits and also change the images for our area.

I want to continue support as a owner of the property and business person working in this area more the 30 years.

Please I want to make a serious consideration our BID organization received the entire support for the all City Council Members to our goals be true.

Sincerely  
Fernando Tapia  
Property Owner 3456 Fulton Street



Good morning council members

My Name is June Gonzalez I am a member  
of the Bid I am a resident I Live At 3255  
Fulton st brooklyn NY I Am here today to  
support the Bid

I'm am here to testify in favor of the Bid  
and it's continued positive impact on our  
community

Since its inception the Bid has significantly  
improved our neighborhood's economic  
vitality we've seen a marked increase in  
foot traffic and sales which has been  
critical for our local businesses

The bid has implemented various  
community improvement projects such as  
enhanced cleanliness increased security  
and beautification efforts all of which has  
made our neighborhood a more attractive  
place to live work and visit Additionally the  
Bid's marketing initiatives and events have

provided invaluable support to local businesses helping us reach new customers and residents and grow. Personally I have seen the impact that the Bid has had on the community: the trash cans on every corner for cleanliness, the removal of graffiti, the gates, the lighting project that has illuminated dark blocks, and the community engagement that let people know we are becoming a well-lived-together community that cares for one another, owner and residents together as one. The way a community should be. I urge you to continue supporting the Bid as its efforts are essential for the continued growth and prosperity of our community.

Thank you so much for your time and attention to this important matter.

Written testimony in support of the Cypress Hills Fulton BID

Just over 20 years ago in 2003, my wife and I moved into the Cypress Hills community. Over the last twenty years, I have lived a block off the commercial corridor and walked in the district nearly every day since. It is a lovely community full of diverse music and flavors. My sons grew up here and ran errands here as soon as they were able. Unfortunately, we have grieved with our neighbors when tragedy struck as it has far too often. We need to make our neighborhood even better.

A hallmark of the corridor is the deeply rooted neighborhood merchants who work incredible hours to achieve the American dream and make a safe, welcoming environment for all the rest of us. We have very little outside corporate presence here. These are real New Yorkers who make our city great with their daily sweat and tears. More than anything it is their watchful eyes and deep investment that makes us all safer. That is why I am in favor of the BID as a structure for community preservation, because it puts the leadership where it should be, in the hands of local property owners and merchants.

I have had the privilege of participating in the planning of the Cypress Hills Fulton BID and observed first hand, the passion, consistency, and good hearts of the local leaders spearheading the process. I enthusiastically lend my support to their strategic and thoughtful plan.

Lowell J. Herschberger, LMSW



Brooklyn, NY 11207

June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Dear Council Members:

Cypress Hill is perhaps one of the most diverse and multi-language neighborhoods. This neighborhood is also experiencing a construction boom of multifamily buildings which in turn is bringing a population boom. This is mainly due to rezoning approved not too long ago.

I am Margarita Garcia, a business owner on Fulton Street Corridor. Four years ago, as the pandemic was getting started, I opened my business at great expense and effort. The first thing I realized was the lack of business support services in this community. It worried me because I wanted my business to be in a cleaner neighborhood with more lighting and security.

I was invited to participate in a meeting with a group of local business owners who were looking to establish a Business Improvement District on the Fulton Street Corridor in Cypress Hills. I found that the people behind the creation of the BID were very generous with their time, dedication, and effort to get this done for a better place to do business and improve the community. I joined the effort and helped to spread the word, collect signatures, visit business door to door, and outreach the community.

While not established as BID yet, during these 4 years, this group of tireless neighbors gave out workshops to educate business and property owners in matters of finance, accounting, taxes, etc. They have been there with the support of the current local authorities, and some financial support with companies such as Citibank. They rolled up their sleeves in projects such as street cleanups, putting trash cans on the street corner of the corridor, installing decorative lights, trimming the trees, and graffiti removal. They have also engaged the business owners to participate in a lighting contest to beautify the corridor of Fulton Street.

Council members, I urge you to approve the creation of the BID. It would be the conclusion of a tremendous effort put forward by the members of this business community. Your recognition of this BID will help us engage better with city services as a partnership for a promising future.

Sincerely,

Margarita Garcia  
Broker/owner  
Home Global Realty Corp.  
3456 Fulton Street  
Cypress Hills NY 11208  
(718) 210-5018

Shazam Mohammed



Brooklyn NY 11208

June 19th 2024

Committee on Finance,

The area encompassed by the Proposed Cypress Hills Fulton BID is a part of what was once New York City's Infamous Redline district.

Though a few decades removed, the neighborhood is still dealing with many of the lingering effects from that time.

It's a community that is mostly low income, a community of mostly people of color, and a community comprised of a large number of absentee Landlords who view their holdings in the Proposed BID Zone solely as Investment Properties, with no obligation towards the neighborhood or to its residents.

This has led to a lack of advocacy for the the Tenants and Businesses in this Proposed BID Zone.

The Poor Lighting, the Overflowing trash receptacles, the Filthy sidewalks, and the Homeless Encampments every few blocks have been the result that we who live and work here have to deal with every single day.

The work of the Fulton Street BID Steering Committee has been transformative.

Despite not yet being a fully fledged BID - and not having a BID Budget to work with - they have gotten so much done to address the Issues that plague our Neighborhood. I've been here for almost a Decade, and the results of their work have been clear and apparent.

They have gotten Temporary (for now) lighting all across the Proposed Zone, creating a safer and more welcoming environment.

They have spent most of their Grants on Sidewalk and Street Cleaning, as well as on Garbage Removal, which was amazing while it lasted before the grants were exhausted.

They have done a lot of work towards the rehabilitation of the unhoused and Mentally ill in the community.

That is certainly a bigger job than they can handle currently, but I am confident that with a BID in place, they will be able to put their well thought out plans into action, and make an lasting impact.

The community has supported them without fail. It is the community that voted in favor of this BID Proposal. It is the community that volunteers on the clean up days. It is the community that donates their time, effort and money to towards the success of all the endeavors of the BID Steering Committee, because it is us, the community, who live here, work here, have businesses here, and are in need of the services and benefits of Fully Operational, Fully Funded Cypress Hills Fulton BID.

I thank the City Council and the Committee on Finance for their consideration, and look forward to their support in creating a Neighborhood that our children can feel safe in, and be proud of.

Thank you

Shazam Mohammed

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 0906-2024 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 6/20/24

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Calvin T. Brown

Address: 1 Liberty Plaza, 10th Fl, NY, NY 10006

I represent: NYC SBS

Address: "

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 0890-2024 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 6/20/24

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Calvin T. Brown

Address: 1 Liberty Plaza, 10th Fl, NY, NY 10006

I represent: NYC SBS

Address: "

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: JUAN DIAZ 1142

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Cypress Hills Fulton Bx

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 0906 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 6/26/24

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Lauren Rothrock

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Long Island City BID

Address: 2701 Queens Plaza North

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 0890-2024 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: CHIEF SANSALIA

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Cypress Hill Fusion BID

Address: 276 CHESTNUT

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 0890-2024 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 6/20/24

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Michelle Neugebauer

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Cypress Hills Local Development

Address: 625 Jamaica Ave

BIKYN NY 11208

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms



**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

5898

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 1/20/24

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: William Y. Ruiz

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: BID Cypress Hills

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 0700 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 1/20/24

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Walter S. Summerville

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Lady Manufacturers

Address: 43-12 91st St, 2nd Fl. Long Island City NY

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 0898 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: DOM ALVAREZ

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: CM Sandy Nurse

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms