



December, 9, 2015

Lorraine Grillo  
President & Chief Executive Officer  
New York City School Construction Authority  
30-30 Thomson Avenue  
Long Island City, NY 11101

Dear Ms. Grillo:

Over the last decade, Downtown Brooklyn has experienced a historic and unprecedented amount of development growth. Since the 2004 Downtown Brooklyn rezoning, which served as a catalyst for the recent building boom, \$400 million of public investment has been made in the area which has led to over \$4.2 billion of private investment. This private investment has driven the creation of 6,758 residential apartments, increasing Downtown Brooklyn's residential population from 5,733 in 2004 to over 20,000 today.

With growth comes the inevitable strain on existing resources and the need to create enhanced infrastructure in order to support the demands of a burgeoning neighborhood. As you know well, a resource critical to the sustainability of any healthy neighborhood is the presence of quality elementary schools. Providing enough quality space for our children to learn, grow, and flourish as educated members of our society is a tremendous responsibility that the NYC School Construction Authority (SCA) works hard to achieve each and every day.

Downtown Brooklyn is primarily served by four schools - P.S. 20, P.S. 38, P.S. 261, and P.S. 287. According to the 2014 Enrollment Capacity and Utilization Report issued by NYC Department of Education, two of these schools - P.S. 20 and P.S. 261 - are operating above target capacity (112% and 115% respectively) and two schools - P.S. 38 and P.S. 287 - are operating below target capacity (88% and 58% respectively). Leaving aside the overcrowding at P.S. 20 and P.S. 261, there are 221 seats available at P.S. 38 and P.S. 287 combined.

However, by the 2017/2018 academic year, there will be 4,013 new apartments occupied in Downtown Brooklyn. Based on the SCA projected Brooklyn public school ratio of .29 students per new residential unit built, Downtown Brooklyn is likely to have 1,164 new students by 2017. There is currently no space for these students. Even when adding the 83 available seats at nearby schools outside of Downtown Brooklyn to the 221 seats available within the area, seating capacity is far less than what is required to accommodate the expected number of school children.

Most troubling is the fact that the SCA's projected new housing starts in the next five years for school districts 13 and 15, which encompasses not only Downtown Brooklyn but the surrounding communities,

vastly underestimates the number of new apartments planned for the area. There are an additional 7,790 apartments in the construction pipeline for Downtown Brooklyn set to be in construction by 2020 requiring space for an additional 2,259 students. However, according to the SCA's projections, school districts 13 and 15 will see 9,795 new construction starts by 2020. This would mean that Downtown Brooklyn's contribution alone would represent 80% of all new construction starts. This seems highly unlikely given the geography of districts 13 and 15 cover a wide area of Brooklyn including the rapidly growing waterfront districts. Thus, the potential number of new students expected to be in Downtown Brooklyn in the next five years dramatically exceeds not only the current number of available seats in Downtown Brooklyn and the surrounding communities, but also exceeds the seats that would result from the current capital plan. Unless action is taken now to build new space to address this shortfall, Downtown Brooklyn could be in the midst of a major school capacity crisis.

Thankfully, we all have strong relationships within the real estate development community to help facilitate potential public/private partnerships. Moreover, we have been approached by several developers willing to consider including a school as part of their future development projects. Therefore, we strongly encourage the SCA to announce your desire to site a new elementary school or two, and work with us to utilize our relationships within the real estate community and expertise of the local market place to help identify potential school development sites. Together, we can be proactive in our approach so that that next generation of Downtown Brooklyn children has ample, safe, modern, and efficient space to learn.

Thank you for your continued work on behalf of New York City's children and we look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,



Eric L. Adams  
Brooklyn Borough President



Carlo A. Scissura  
President, Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce



Stephen T. Levin  
Council Member, 33<sup>rd</sup> District of New York City



Tucker Reed  
President, Downtown Brooklyn Partnership