



**IN THE MATTER OF** an application submitted by the Department of Citywide Administrative Services, pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter, for the site selection of property located at 2556 Bainbridge Avenue (Block 3286, Lot 14) for use as a Computer-based Testing and Application Center, Borough of the Bronx, Community District 7.

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The New York City Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) filed this application for a site selection on April 07, 2021 to facilitate a new Computer-based Testing and Application Center (CTAC) within a City-owned building at 2556 Bainbridge Avenue (Block 3286, Lot 14) in the Fordham neighborhood of Bronx Community District 7.

## **BACKGROUND**

DCAS is seeking site selection approval of City-owned property, located at 2556 Bainbridge Avenue (Block 3286, Lot 14) to facilitate a new Computer-based Testing and Application Center (CTAC) that would provide employment information, training, and computer-based testing services for Civil Service exams that would serve Bronx residents. The proposed site, an existing vacant, two-story building, is located on an approximately 14,168 square-foot, L-shaped lot on a block bounded by East 193rd Street to the north, Marion Avenue to the east, East Fordham Avenue to the south, and Bainbridge Avenue to the west. The site is mostly within a C4-4 zoning district, with a small portion of the northwest corner located within an R7B zoning district. The proposed use complies with the underlying zoning for the site.

Each of the five boroughs has one operational DCAS CTAC facility. The current Bronx CTAC facility, located at 1932 Arthur Avenue, is a temporary facility that opened in December 2018. The proposed Bainbridge Avenue site would be more convenient and accessible by public transportation than the Arthur Avenue facility. The proposed CTAC site would be approximately 5,200 square feet larger than the temporary CTAC facility which has 5,100

square feet in total. This larger space would allow the new CTAC facility to increase its programming and serve more people.

The existing two-story building, within which the new CTAC would be sited, was a former New York Public Library (NYPL), known as Fordham Library Center, that was in operation from 1923 until 2005. In 2006, the Fordham Library was replaced by the new NYPL Bronx Library Center, located approximately 400 feet away at 310 East Kingsbridge Road. The NYPL Fordham Library Center building has been vacant since 2006. While it is not a designated historic landmark, the building is eligible to be listed on the Register of New York State Historic Places.

The area surrounding the project site contains a mix of uses, consisting mainly of residential, commercial, and institutional uses. The northern portion of Block 3286 is occupied by two- to six-story residential buildings. The southern portion of the block is occupied by the Fordham United Methodist Church, a five-story residential building with ground floor retail, and a two-story commercial retail building. Commercial uses are concentrated along the East Fordham Road corridor, a major commercial corridor, lined with two-story commercial and mixed-use buildings. Residential uses in the area are characterized by a mix of one- and two-family residences and multi-family elevator buildings.

Other notable uses in the surrounding area include Fordham University and Fordham Plaza, which is a transportation hub for the Metro-North commuter railroad and multiple bus routes. The area also has large 12- to 14-story office buildings located approximately three blocks east of the proposed CTAC site. Open spaces within the surrounding area include Rose Hill Park, Webster Playground, Bryan Park, Poe Park, and St. James Park. The New York Botanical Garden is located approximately a half-mile to the east.

The project site is well-served by public transportation with multiple city bus routes (BX22, BX9, BX12, BX12-SBS, BX17) and the Westchester County Bee-Line bus routes (Nos. 60, 61, 62) that run along Fordham Road. The IND B and D and IRT No. 4 subway lines are within a quarter mile and half-mile, respectively, to the west of the proposed CTAC site. The Fordham Metro-North Railroad Station is located approximately three blocks east of the project site.

The City intends to convert the second floor of the former library building, approximately 10,200 square-feet, into a new CTAC facility. The CTAC facility would contain an Application Center Area, an Examination Area, and space for training and conferences. The CTAC entrance to the building would be located on Marion Avenue. The ground floor and mezzanine of the building would be reserved for a future use that is expected to provide community services for Bronx residents. The entrance to this future use would be located on the Bainbridge Avenue side of the building.

DCAS would partner with other community organizations, elected officials, and key stakeholders to apprise the community of services that would be available at the new CTAC facility and would offer opportunities to co-host Civil Service-related events with them in the space. The CTAC facility would operate Monday through Saturday between 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM. These hours would be modified on an as-needed basis for certain testing periods. There would be approximately 11 full-time employees at the CTAC facility which is expected to receive approximately 200 daily visitors or approximately 1,200 weekly visitors.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

This application (C 210338 PSX) was reviewed pursuant to the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) and the SEQRA regulations set forth in Volume 6 of the New York Code of Rules and Regulations, Section 617.00 et seq. and the City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Rules of Procedure of 1991 and Executive Order No. 91 of 1977. The lead agency is DCAS. The designated CEQR number is 18CAS001X. After a study of the potential

environmental impact of the proposed actions, a Negative Declaration was issued on April 15, 2021.

### **UNIFORM LAND USE REVIEW**

This application (C 210338 PSX) was certified as complete by the Department of City Planning on April 19, 2021, and duly referred to Bronx Community Board 7 and the Bronx Borough President in accordance with Title 62 of the rules of the City of New York, Section 2-02(b).

### **Community Board Public Hearing**

Bronx Community Board 7 held a public hearing on this application (C 210338 PSX) on May 18, 2021, and on that date, by a vote of 27 in favor and none opposed, voted to recommend approval of the application.

### **Borough President Recommendation**

The Bronx Borough President held a public hearing on this application (C 210338 PSX) on June 15, 2021, and recommended approval of the application.

### **City Planning Commission Public Hearing**

On July 28, 2021, the City Planning Commission scheduled August 18, 2021, for a public hearing on this application (Calendar No. 1). The hearing was duly held on August 18, 2021 (Calendar No. 46). One person, A representative from DCAS spoke in favor of the application and no one spoke against

The representative from DCAS presented an overview of the application, including the feasibility of the site, proposed location, and development. The representative explained the design features of proposed development and the services to be provided there.

There were no other speakers, and the hearing was closed.

## **CONSIDERATION**

The City Planning Commission believes that the application of site selection of property located at 2556 Bainbridge Avenue (Block 3286, Lot 14), is appropriate.

This application will facilitate the siting and development of a new CTAC facility and will renovate the former vacant Fordham Library building and replace the existing temporary CTAC facility at 1932 Arthur Avenue. The new CTAC site is more conveniently located and accessible by public transportation than the Arthur Avenue facility. Additionally, the new CTAC site, at approximately 5,200 square feet, is 100 square feet larger than the Arthur Avenue CTAC facility. This larger space will allow the new CTAC to serve more people and better serve Bronx residents.

The Commission notes that DCAS will partner with other community organizations, elected officials, and key stakeholders to educate the community about the services available at the CTAC facility and will offer opportunities to co-host Civil Service-related events with them in the space.

The new CTAC facility will provide training, employment information, and computer-based testing services for Civil Service exams to be given in the Bronx. The facility will allow DCAS to increase its programming and serve more people in a more efficient manner. The Commission applauds the adaptive reuse of the former city-owned Fordham Library building, which will turn into a modern facility that will benefit Bronx residents. Therefore, the Commission believes that this application for the site selection of City-owned property, is appropriate.

## **RESOLUTION**

**RESOLVED**, that having considered the Environmental Assessment Statement, for which a Negative Declaration was issued on April 15, 2021 with respect to this application (CEQR No. 18CAS001X), the City Planning Commission finds that the action described herein will have no significant impact on the environment; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, by the City Planning Commission, pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter, for the site selection of property located at 2556 Bainbridge Avenue (Block 3286, Lot 14) to facilitate a new Computer-based Testing and Application Center (CTAC), Borough of the Bronx, Community District 7, is approved.

The above resolution (C 210338 PSX), duly adopted by the City Planning Commission on September 1, 2021 (Calendar No. 31) is filed with the Office of the Speaker, City Council, and the Borough President, in accordance with the requirements of Section 197-d of the New York City Charter.

**MARISA LAGO, *Chair***  
**KENNETH J. KNUCKLES, Esq., *Vice-Chairman***  
**DAVID J. BURNEY, ALLEN P. CAPPELLI, ALFRED C. CERULLO, III,**  
**JOSEPH DOUEK, RICHARD W. EADDY,**  
**HOPE KNIGHT, ANNA HAYES LEVIN, ORLANDO MARIN,**  
**LARISA ORTIZ, RAJ RAMPERSHAD, *Commissioners***



# COMMUNITY/BOROUGH BOARD RECOMMENDATION

<b>Project Name:</b> The Fordham Building - CTAC Site Selection	
<b>Applicant:</b> DCAS - NYC Department of Citywide Administrative Services	<b>Applicant's Primary Contact:</b> Christian Grove
<b>Application #</b> 210338PSX	<b>Borough:</b>
<b>CEQR Number:</b> 18CAS001X	<b>Validated Community Districts:</b> X07

**Docket Description:**

IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by the Department of Citywide Administrative Services, pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter, for the site selection of property located at 2556 Bainbridge Avenue (Block 3286, Lot 14) for use as a Computer-based Testing and Application Center, Borough of the Bronx, Community District 7.

*Please use the above application number on all correspondence concerning this application*

<b>RECOMMENDATION: Favorable</b>			
<b># In Favor:</b> 27	<b># Against:</b> 0	<b># Abstaining:</b> 0	<b>Total members appointed to the board:</b> 46
<b>Date of Vote:</b> 5/25/2021 12:00 AM		<b>Vote Location:</b> Zoom meeting ( <a href="https://zoom.us/j/91851378139">https://zoom.us/j/91851378139</a> )	

*Please attach any further explanation of the recommendation on additional sheets as necessary*

<b>Date of Public Hearing:</b>	
<b>Was a quorum present?</b> No	<i>A public hearing requires a quorum of 20% of the appointed members of the board but in no event fewer than seven such members</i>
<b>Public Hearing Location:</b>	

**CONSIDERATION:**

Recommendation submitted by	BX CB7	Date: 7/1/2021 10:46 AM
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# Community/Borough Board Recommendation

Pursuant to the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure

Application #:	Project Name:
CEQR Number:	Borough(s):
	Community District Number(s):

Please use the above application number on all correspondence concerning this application

## SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

- Complete this form and return to the Department of City Planning by one of the following options:
  - EMAIL (recommended):** Send email to [CalendarOffice@planning.nyc.gov](mailto:CalendarOffice@planning.nyc.gov) and include the following subject line: (CB or BP) Recommendation + (6-digit application number), e.g., "CB Recommendation #C10000ZSQ" ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~
  - MAIL:** Calendar Information Office, City Planning Commission, 120 Broadway, 31<sup>st</sup> Floor, New York, NY 10271
  - FAX:** to (212) 720-3488 and note "Attention of the Calendar Office"
- Send one copy of the completed form with any attachments to the applicant's representative at the address listed below, one copy to the Borough President, and one copy to the Borough Board, when applicable.

Docket Description:

Applicant(s):		Applicant's Representative:	
Recommendation submitted by:			
Date of public hearing:		Location:	
Was a quorum present? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>		<i>A public hearing requires a quorum of 20% of the appointed members of the board, but in no event fewer than seven such members.</i>	
Date of Vote:		Location:	
<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Approve		<input type="checkbox"/> Approve With Modifications/Conditions	
<input type="checkbox"/> Disapprove		<input type="checkbox"/> Disapprove With Modifications/Conditions	
<b>Please attach any further explanation of the recommendation on additional sheets, as necessary.</b>			
<b>Voting</b>			
# In Favor:	# Against:	# Abstaining:	Total members appointed to the board:
Name of CB/BB officer completing this form		Title	Date



# BOROUGH PRESIDENT RECOMMENDATION

<b>Project Name:</b> The Fordham Building - CTAC Site Selection	
<b>Applicant:</b> DCAS - NYC Department of Citywide Administrative Services	<b>Applicant's Administrator:</b> Christian Grove
<b>Application #</b> 210338PSX	<b>Borough:</b> Bronx
<b>CEQR Number:</b> 18CAS001X	<b>Validated Community Districts:</b> X07

**Docket Description:**

IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by the Department of Citywide Administrative Services, pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter, for the site selection of property located at 2556 Bainbridge Avenue (Block 3286, Lot 14) for use as a Computer-based Testing and Application Center, Borough of the Bronx, Community District 7.

*Please use the above application number on all correspondence concerning this application*

**RECOMMENDATION:** Favorable

*Please attach any further explanation of the recommendation on additional sheets as necessary*

**CONSIDERATION:**

Recommendation submitted by	BX BP	Date: 7/7/2021 10:31 AM
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**BOROUGH PRESIDENT  
RECOMMENDATION**

**CITY PLANNING COMMISSION  
22 Reade Street, New York, NY 10007  
Fax # (212)720-3356**

**INSTRUCTIONS**

1. Return this completed form with any attachments to the Calendar Information Office, City Planning Commission, Room 2E at the above address.
2. Send one copy with any attachments to the applicant's representative as indicated on the Notice of Certification.

**APPLICATION # C 210338 PSX**

**DOCKET DESCRIPTION**

**PLEASE SEE ATTACHMENT FOR DOCKET DESCRIPTION**

**COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 7**

**BOROUGH: BRONX**

**RECOMMENDATION**

- APPROVE**
- APPROVE WITH MODIFICATIONS/CONDITIONS (List below)**
- DISAPPROVE**

**EXPLANATION OF RECOMMENDATION-MODIFICATION/CONDITIONS (Attach additional sheets if necessary)**

**PLEASE SEE ATTACHMENT FOR BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S RECOMMENDATION**



**BOROUGH PRESIDENT**

July 2, 2021

**DATE**

**BRONX PRESIDENT'S RECOMMENDATION  
ULURP APPLICATION NO: C 210338 PSX  
Fordham Building CTAC Site Selection**

**DOCKET DESCRIPTION**

**IN THE MATTER OF** an application submitted by the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS), pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter, for the site selection of property located at 2556 Bainbridge Avenue (Block 3286, Lot 14) for use as a Computer-based Testing and Application Center, Borough of The Bronx, Community District #7.

**BACKGROUND**

Approval of this application will facilitate the repurposing the second story of a city-owned building located at 2556 Bainbridge Avenue (Block 3286, Lot 14). Constructed in 1923, this building served as the Fordham branch of the New York Public Library until 2005. At that time preparations were made to relocate this facility to a newly constructed building on Kingsbridge Road. This new building opened in 2006. 2556 Bainbridge Avenue has remained vacant since.

The site, Block 3286, Lot 14, consists of 14,168 square feet. It is bounded by East 193<sup>rd</sup> Street to the north, East Fordham Road to the south, Bainbridge Avenue to the west and Marion Avenue to the east. It is zoned R7B/C4-4. Pending approval of this application the proposed use is Use Group 6. The building occupying this site is two stories in height, (41 feet) approximating 24,200 square feet. Access is provided on Bainbridge Avenue. It is also accessible on Marion Avenue (2545-2555 Marion Avenue).

The applicant proposes to occupy the second story of 2556 Bainbridge Avenue, where a Computer-based Testing and Application Center (CTAC) will be installed. The new facility will approximate 10,200 square feet. ADA compliant access will be through the Marion Avenue entrance.

The CTAC will provide the public with applications for exams potential employees may take as a prerequisite for being hired by the city. A full service application center and examination area will be on site, along with space for conferences and employment training. It will operate Monday-Saturday from 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. A full time staff of 11 employees will be on site. It is anticipated that 200 visitors per day will access this facility Specific functions at the CTAC include:

- 1) An office of Citywide Recruitment Civil Service 101 Sessions as provided by DCAS
- 2) A training and testing room where DCAS can offer training for exam administration
- 3) An application center
- 4) Interpreter and translation center will be available
- 5) Voting registration facilities
- 6) Application center for upcoming exams
- 7) On-line education facilities

- 8) Testing at workstations for 100 candidates
- 9) Examination rooms for post-testing review sessions.

The anticipated investment necessary to retrofit this site for these purposes approximates \$34 million.

The Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) currently occupies a CTAC at 1932 Arthur Avenue. This CTAC location is expected to close.

The ground floor and mezzanine level of this building will be accessed via Bainbridge Avenue. Currently these stories will remain vacant, it is anticipated that a community use facility will be situated here.

Development of the surrounding community is typified by midrise residential multifamily buildings. Within a two-block radius of the Bainbridge Avenue site are East Fordham Road and East Kingsbridge Road. Pedestrian activity on Fordham Road is one of the highest in New York City. Subway access to the "D" train is found on the Grand Concourse at either Fordham Road or Kingsbridge Road. Both stations are approximately four blocks west of the Bainbridge Avenue building. The "4" train is also accessible approximately ½ mile west of the proposed project. Metro North Commuter Railroad services are available at the intersection of Webster Avenue at East Fordham Road, approximately four blocks east of Bainbridge Avenue. Bus transportation operating on East Fordham Road includes the BX 22, BX 9, BX12, BX17, and SBS-BX12. So too, the BEE Line serving Westchester County operates routes 60, 61, and 62 on East Fordham Road. The BX 34 operates on Bainbridge Avenue.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW AND ULURP CERTIFICATION**

This application was reviewed pursuant to CEQR and SEQRA and received a Negative Declaration. The City Planning Commission certified this application as complete on April 19, 2021.

## **BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD PUBLIC HEARING**

Bronx Community District #7 did not submit a recommendation on this matter prior to the deadline of June 28, 2021.

## **BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S PUBLIC HEARING**

A virtual public hearing was convened by the Bronx Borough President on June 15, 2021. Representatives of the applicant participated and spoke in favor of this application. There being no other persons wanting to comment the hearing was closed.

## **BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S RECOMMENDATION**

It has been fifteen years since 2556 Bainbridge Avenue was closed and essentially “mothballed” by the city’s Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS). I am therefore most pleased that DCAS has identified a repurpose for a portion of this building by installing a Computer-based Testing and Application Center (CTAC) on its second story. This will not only place a vacant building back into productive use, but also offers Bronx residents access to employment opportunities that are potentially life-long careers.

Reviewing the details of this application it is clear that 2556 Bainbridge Avenue (the site) is perhaps one of the best locations for those who rely on public transportation. Being so close to Fordham Road which is one of New York’s busiest pedestrian venues, suggests that someone looking to buy something new may wind up working for someone new. As such, I believe this is the ideal location for a computer based testing and application center, (CTAC).

My only additional observation pertains to the yet-to-be-determined purpose for the first and mezzanine stories. I acknowledge that a community use facility is the likely option. While I have no reason to object to this possibility, it would be my hope that whomever the tenant is, that the services offered be compatible with the CTAC. Given the proximity of Fordham University to the Bainbridge Avenue location perhaps it can consider a service that benefits both the university and the community in which this school is located.

I recommend approval of this application.