

“We need to bring a Community Justice Center to Staten Island. I am committed to doing so and will work with the Center for Court Innovation, DA McMahon, and others to start the outreach process to community leaders so we can demonstrate its value.”

-BP ODDO

**BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S
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HEALTH & WELLNESS **QUALITY OF LIFE** DEVELOPMENT TRANSPORTATION SAFETY JOBS RECREATION EDUCATION TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE

In January 2017, the Borough President and his staff joined with District Attorney McMahon to visit the Red Hook Community Justice Center. The Justice Center, which plays multiple roles, including a court and a community center, is a hub for services to help those who would be better served by counseling and treatment than jail. The Center aims to prevent recidivism by breaking the cycle of criminal behavior.

All in attendance were incredibly impressed by the work being done at the Justice Center. Through the efforts of dedicated community leaders and Presiding Judge Alex Calabrese, the Justice Center has improved police/community relations, lowered crime, and assisted chronic offenders in getting the help they need to stop re-offending.

The Judge has an array of sanctions and services at his disposal, including community restitution projects, short-term psychoeducational groups, and long-term treatment (e.g., drug treatment, mental health treatment, and trauma-focused psychotherapy). The Justice Center features an on-site clinic staffed by social service professionals who assess and connect individuals to appropriate services.

In addition, there are numerous other programs and services offered, including GED training, jobs assistance, and a photography club for area young people. Unlike other centers of justice, residents don't have to be already in the criminal justice system to receive services.

An independent study has shown that adult misdemeanor offenders who go through the Red Hook Community Justice Center are 10% less likely to reoffend than those going through the regular system. During the two year study, the court was found to achieve \$15 million in savings.

We returned to the Center a few months later with community leaders from the North Shore. The result of this visit was a unanimous commitment to bring the model to Staten Island. Even Mayor de Blasio has recently expressed support for bringing a similar center to Staten Island.

Simply put, the model works there, and we are determined to make it work here.



ABOVE: District Attorney Mike McMahon and Borough President Oddo brought community stakeholders to the Red Hook Community Justice Center, resulting in a unanimous commitment to bringing the model to Staten Island.

LEFT: The Red Hook Community Justice Center in Brooklyn (Photos by David Kidd)

Community Justice Center

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