We Stay/Nos Quedamos has received a Capital Grant from New York State to help improve the community gardens in Melrose Commons by providing FREE Solar Power Shelters to strengthen the area’s open space network, community resilience, and sustainability. Nicknamed “Melrose’s Resiliency Hubs,” this opportunity will provide your garden with the installation of a) solar canopies, b) stormwater management systems and c) broadband access.

**What longstanding neighborhood racial and social justice issues will be addressed by the Melrose Resiliency Hubs project?**

- Environmental Justice: Mitigate historic environmental burdens, protect against growing climate vulnerabilities
- Community Resilience: Need for comprehensive community-based approaches to climate action
- Emergency Preparedness & Management: Community preparedness in NYC needs to account not just for extreme weather events like heat waves and hurricanes, but also brace for the threat of emerging infectious diseases
- Community Organizing & Social Justice: We are a part of the community closest and experience the same day-to-day issues and problems faced by the community, and therefore we are closest to the solutions! Let’s build the community power to create the change we want to see in our community—together!
Solar

Solar energy as a key contributor to resilience is that sunlight-generated electricity can be stored and discharged without the need for fuel deliveries, unlike conventional diesel generators, which are the most common source of emergency backup power. And sunlight is an endless source of energy.

Broadband

The installation of wi-fi routers will enable Internet connectivity at the gardens. This will allow garden stewards and community residents access to valuable information extend the capacity for educational programming at the garden, while closing “digital divide” gaps in our region. Important during emergencies.

Water Mitigation

Domestic Rainwater Harvesting (DRWH) systems control storm water runoff. The impact of domestic water runoff mitigation at the urban block scale is an environmentally friendly process, facilitates irrigation and reduces the use of ground water while reducing floods and soil erosion.
Benefits of “solar fabric” Canopies

With these capital enhancements this is what your garden will provide the Melrose community with:

- Solar power: which will provide power for an array of electrical devices
- Enhanced task and security lighting: enhancing the hours of access and safety
- Neighborhood Wi-fi access: providing the garden and neighborhood residents with a new internet access point
- Rainwater harvesting: the garden will have premier infrastructure to and reuse rainwater for planting
- Additional shelter: the garden and the neighborhood will have a new enclosed public spaces for programs and meetings
- Community resilience: the garden will be well positioned to provide vital services (e.g. heating, cooling, food distribution, internet access) during natural and manmade disasters

Solar power canopy structures meet both short and long-term needs while avoiding the costs, environmental damage, and time associated with erecting

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1. Garden members will be trained to use the solar equipment. Pvilion will provide operation manuals, and a support service.
2. Nos Queadamos will also be coordinating community leadership training around community emergency preparedness.
So what can you expect when a Solar Power Shelters is installed:

- A small, 12' x 12' permanent shelter with solar panels on the roof. plug boxes to power cell phones and tablets, lighting, and electric hand tools, fans and pumps.

- Solar powered routers to provide wi-fi internet access.

- The Shelter roofs are sloped to also collect rainwater for garden planting.

- The Shelters also provide enclosable space for garden programs, meetings and classes.
Long Term Care and Maintenance

Are there maintenance requirements, and are there additional costs after installation?

Pvilion’s extended warranty and manufacturing warranties are included in the approved contract. It will cover annual site inspections, and defects in materials for both the Solar Canopies and the Rainwater Collection systems for the first 5 years. This includes replacing solar panels, batteries, rainwater collection equipment and labor for repairs. Also included is a User Manual for the ongoing learning about the systems and maintenance for the Gardeners who will be working directly with the Resiliency Hubs.

First 5 Years
- Extended warranty including annual site inspections, defects in materials – replacement and labor, and normal “wear and tear.” This includes both the Solar Canopies and the Rainwater Collection systems.
- User Manual for the ongoing learning about the systems and maintenance for the Gardeners who will be working directly with the Resiliency Hubs.
- Warranties: 20-year power production warranty for solar panels, 10-year warranty for batteries.
- Cost: included in approved contract amount.

Beyond the First 5 Years
- General technical questions support.
- Normal “wear and tear” cleaning and service.
- Replace light bulbs.
- Solar Canopies maintenance: no maintenance typically required.
- Rainwater Collection equipment maintenance: cleaning leaves out of the Solar Canopies gutters, and keeping the water hose flow clear.
- Cost recommendation: $500/year per garden.

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The Melrose section of the South Bronx has the largest concentration of community gardens and “Casi-tas” in New York City. Nos Quedamos has been at the forefront of providing technical support and assistance to these wonderful cultural community assets for more than 20 years. In 2015, Nos Quedamos commissioned a study in partnership with Pratt Institute entitled “ORGANIZING COMMUNITY GARDENERS - Creating a Garden Coalition in Melrose Commons, South Bronx,” that set the course for our current and longterm green/blue environmental and resiliency work in the region. Today, many of the assumptions and recommendations are steadily moving forward as we look to reclaim and harness our regional assets for the benefit and self-sufficiency of the region’s stakeholders: the people who live, work, and play in our community. The Melrose Resiliency HUBS is the next step in community-led ownership of our resources.
Join and partner with us...

These are still and will always be your gardens!

We hope that you see these Melrose Resiliency Hubs as an opportunity for your gardens to continue to build and support local community power and leadership. Your gardens and this project will be a key focal point for long-term neighborhood preservation and resiliency. By participating and being a leader in this initiative you will provide the resources Melrose residents need to enhance their own individual capacity while also supporting and strengthening their neighborhood and neighbors.

Melrose Resiliency Hubs are intended to be led, managed and supported by community garden leaders, community members, community-based organizations, and/or faith-based groups.

If your garden is interested in participating in the Melrose Resiliency HUBS Program, please contact: Ely Díaz or Carmen DeJesús by phone: 718-585-2323, or by email via ediaz@nosquedamos.org or cdejesus@nosquedamos.org, respectively.

Community garden stewards from the Melrose section of the South Bronx.