



HENSON District Knowledge Platform

Vibrant 56th District - Proposal for Development & Engagement

Summary

This proposal requests approval to move forward with the development of the **HENSON¹ District Knowledge Platform** - a conversational AI-powered system built to organize, activate, and deliver critical community resource knowledge to residents of the **56th Assembly District**.

The objective is simple: **Transform fragmented and siloed data into knowledge that residents can actually use.**

The Community Knowledge Problem

Knowledge about what resources are available to District residents for a variety of challenges and opportunities is often inconvenient for neighbors to learn about, if they even know it exists.

The District 56 Office has sought to close that gap by collecting a large volume of valuable information that exists across:

- Digital files
- Printed guides
- Emails
- Google Drive folders
- Staff knowledge

However, to get to the answers they need, constituents must:

- Search manually
- Read long documents
- Navigate unclear pathways to get help

This pattern is common across Government. Even well-designed written resources are often static, difficult to navigate, and not able to be responsive to individual needs.

Forward-thinking efforts like neighborhood chatbots fall short because they:

- Do not personalize

¹ Henson is an internal place holder name. The actual system name should be developed based on guidance from District stakeholders.

- Do not ask follow-up questions
- Do not use real district-level intelligence
- Function more like search than service

The Community Knowledge Opportunity

The District 56 Office already has the necessary ingredients to inform residents of a wide range of information:

- Content
- Staff knowledge
- Community trust
- Real demand from constituents

HENSON will be the system that makes it usable, in real time.

The HENSON Approach

HENSON will not be ‘just a chatbot.’

It will be a **District Knowledge Platform** built on three core capabilities:

1. Make Everything Usable (Multi-Modal Content Ingestion)

All existing materials are converted into structured, usable data:

- Housing guides
- Legal resources
- Government programs
- Flyers, PDFs, documents
- Internal staff knowledge

Nothing is wasted. Everything becomes part of a **living system**.

2. Make It Understandable (AI Intelligence Layer)

Artificial Intelligence tools are used to:

- Categorize information (housing, legal, etc.)
- Extract key actions and eligibility
- Organize content into a usable knowledge base
- Continuously improve as new information is added

3. Make It Easy to Use (Conversational Interface)

A mobile phone-friendly online system where residents can speak or type:

- “I’m being evicted - what can I do?”
- “Who represents me?”
- “Where can I get housing help near me?”

Henson will:

- Ask follow-up questions
- Personalize responses
- Deliver precise, relevant guidance
- Direct users to real resources

HENSON
Vibrant 56TH
DISTRICT KNOWLEDGE PLATFORM

VIBRANT 56 DISTRICT SYSTEM

- Community Assets
- Cultural Projects
- Local Organizations
- Business Ecosystem

HENSON AI ENGINE
INGESTION | CURATION | INTELLIGENCE LAYER

Find youth programs near me

Results

- Bright Futures Youth Center**
65 Tompkins Ave, Bed-Stuy
Open. Mon-Fri: 3:00 PM - 7:00 PM
(718) 879-4567
- Tech Teens Hub**
Quincy Community Center
(718) 912-3456

Sources:
✓ City Youth Services Directory

TRUSTED COMMUNITY DATA → ACTIONABLE INSIGHTS

- ✓ Multilingual Processing
- ✓ Verified Sources
- ✓ Community Signals

Why Henson is Unique

We are not designing a generic tool.

We are building a District-specific intelligence system grounded in the real needs, resources, and geography of the 56th.

Henson will build on and reflect:

- Past and ongoing information curation by the District 56 Office
- Constituent needs and priorities
- A 21st Century example of efficient government in service to community

Henson will foster:

- Greater awareness of available resources
- Contribution of information by community members
- District 56 Staff having more time to focus on constituent needs and priorities
- A 21st Century example of efficient government in service to community

Henson Development Schedule

By leveraging already collected information and building the platform using the Agile software development methodology, Henson can be rolled out to the general public in distinct phases over the course of several months:

April - Foundation & Ingestion

- Collect and digitize initial resource sets (housing, legal, services)
- Stand up ingestion pipeline
- Define user safety guardrails
- Begin structuring district-specific knowledge base

May - Intelligence Layer & Early Prototype

- Implement AI categorization and retrieval system
- Build initial conversational interface
- Begin internal testing with real constituent scenarios

June - MVP (Minimum Viable Product) Public-Facing Release

Early June - Initial Release

- Deploy working system accessible to constituents
- Integrate into local websites via website widgets
- Begin real-world usage with live constituent questions

Late June - Stabilization & Refinement

- Monitor usage and edge cases
- Improve response quality and clarity
- Expand initial dataset based on observed needs

July and Beyond - Expansion & Refinement

- Expand content coverage
- Improve personalization and response quality
- Expand languages supported
- Incorporate staff workflows and feedback loops
- Prepare system for broader visibility and sustained district use

The Henson Experience

A resident visits the District 56 website or a local website hosting a Henson Widget and sees a simple prompt:

“What do you need help with in Bed-Stuy or Crown Heights today?”

They speak or type: “I just got an eviction notice. What can I do?”

The system responds with a follow-up question:

“Are you currently in housing court, or have you just received the notice?”

- Based on the response, Henson:
 - Identifies relevant tenant protections
 - Surfaces local legal assistance organizations
 - Provides clear next steps
 - Links directly to verified resources

The resident does not need to:

- Read a long guide
- Search multiple websites
- Understand complex terminology

Instead, they receive clear, immediate, and relevant guidance-tailored to their situation.

Another Example:

A resident asks: “Who represents me?”

The system asks for or detects location, then returns:

- State Assembly Member (Works on state laws, housing policy, and funding for communities)
- State Senator (Represents the district at the state level alongside the Assembly)
- City Council Member (Handles local issues like sanitation, schools, and neighborhood services)
- Congress Member (Represents the district at the federal level)

And for each representative, provides:

- Contact information
- Office links (including single click to call)
- Relevant services

The Henson Difference

Henson will change how information in the District is actually used.

Instead of:

- Static guides
- Repeated staff responses
- Residents navigating on their own

Henson sets the stage for:

- Residents getting answers immediately
- Staff time being focused on higher-value interactions
- Existing work done by the office becoming directly accessible

It also aligns with how younger and more tech-savvy people already expect to interact with information-by asking questions and getting direct answers.

Henson as a Model

Henson is not just a tool.

It is a reusable model for how Government can serve constituents in the AI era

With potential to expand across:

- Other districts
- Other offices
- Broader civic infrastructure

But it starts here - **The Vibrant 56th District.**

A working system - not a concept - can be in residents' hands by early June.

Next Steps

Approval to:

1. Proceed with MVP
2. Define formal role structure
3. Initiate engagement

Closing

The District already has much of the information. Henson makes it usable.

The HENSON Platform takes what exists today and turns it into something residents can actually interact with - easily, quickly, and in context.

District knowledge, at your fingertips. For District constituents. Built by District constituents.

Ken Granderson

Bed-Stuy Resident

Technologist & Systems Builder