



AMB Inside Look: Government Collaboration as a Mutual – Ridgewood Savings Bank

Ridgewood Savings Bank, Queens, New York, an America's Mutual Bank founding member, has been a key driver of economic success in the New York greater metropolitan area since its founding by local business leaders in 1921. Since its inception, Ridgewood Savings has consistently served local businesses and homeowners, creating flourishing local economies, and has helped provide financial literacy and other support to members and depositors.

Despite Ridgewood's exceptional dedication to helping underserved communities across New York, collaboration with the federal and state government can still be a challenge. However, by leveraging state and municipal programs, Ridgewood Savings has been able to better serve unbanked communities.

One prominent example is Ridgewood's collaboration with the State of New York in preserving a branch facility in an underserved community. New York's [Banking Development District \(BDD\) Program](#) encourages banks to open branches in underserved and underbanked communities. The Program is open to all banks whether they are minority depository institutions or not. In Ridgewood's case the Program provided \$10 million in subsidized public deposits, below-market rate deposits, and other benefits to the bank which kept open one particular Bronx branch that was slated to close. Ridgewood's leadership [identified the BDD as a means of continuing to achieve Ridgewood's goal of serving its community](#). The rigorous application process includes garnering significant endorsement from the local community, and outlining a detailed plan for community support. This "buy in" by the community is a powerful force in promoting the success of the branch. Ridgewood's plan includes a suite of affordable financial products, financial literacy courses for individuals and businesses, and a focus on diversity and inclusion. The BDD designation of Ridgewood's Van-Cortlandt branch assures the community will continue to have a traditional banking facility to serve its needs. This is the third Ridgewood branch to secure the BDD designation.

Ridgewood's astute recognition of the benefit and importance of the BDD program demonstrates how mutuals can leverage government programs to better serve their communities.

Doug Faucette
America's Mutual Banks
202 220 6961
701 8th Street, N.W.
Suite 500
Washington D. C. 20001
dfaucette@lockelord.com
www.americasmutualbanks.com