

# ***NEWS***

*For immediate release*

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## **PLAN UNVEILED TO ENSURE THE FUTURE ECONOMIC VITALITY OF LONG ISLAND CITY**

### ***First-ever Comprehensive Plan for Long Island City***

Long Island City, NY (November 7, 2016) – To enhance the incredible revitalization of New York City’s fastest-growing neighborhood and position it to capitalize on future opportunities, the Long Island City Partnership (LICP) – the local development organization for LIC, Queens – today released the Phase 1 report of its Comprehensive Plan. The “Long Island City Comprehensive Plan: Phase 1” addresses how to leverage the district’s tremendous market potential and guide public and private-sector investments in LIC to balance growth across sectors. Despite its current development boom and historical economic importance, LIC has never been studied across its full geography and across its many sectors.

“This Comprehensive Plan presents recommendations that aim to inform the neighborhood’s future development to promote an active, mixed-use, economically and culturally vibrant Long Island City,” said **Gary Kesner, Chair of the Long Island City Partnership Board of Directors and Executive Vice President of Silvercup Studios**. “Thoughtful planning is crucial at this key moment to foster the mix of uses that has helped attract investment and to ensure that businesses and organizations across all sectors in LIC, as well as residents and visitors, can take advantage of opportunities on the horizon.”

“Thanks to the hundreds of area businesses and organizations who participated in the development of this report by providing essential input and guidance,” said **Elizabeth Lusskin, President of the Long Island City Partnership**. “Implementing these recommendations will impact all sectors and help to maintain and foster an equitable, mixed-use, culturally-robust, full-service community in LIC. Through targeted interventions and partnerships at the local, City, State and Federal levels, LIC can be a model 21<sup>st</sup> century mixed-use neighborhood for communities in NYC and throughout the country.”

The Partnership, with assistance from Public Works Partners and BJH Advisors, produced a Comprehensive Plan that synthesized information from a variety of sources and stakeholder perspectives, both to validate widely held views about LIC and to discover new information or trends that should inform future policies and actions. This information was gathered from an analysis of the area’s existing characteristics including land use, market conditions and demographics; focus groups with key community stakeholders including businesses, property owners and developers, artists and cultural institutions, Cornell Tech, business-incentive experts and workforce-development providers; and responses from more than 500 businesses and organizations on a survey of neighborhood perceptions and the challenges and opportunities for their growth in LIC. The Summary Report of Phase 1 presents key findings reflecting the most crucial items for action followed by recommendations. To read the full report, visit [www.LICQNS.com/licplan/](http://www.LICQNS.com/licplan/).

The study found that LIC’s location, mixed-use character, cultural vibrancy and the interdependence and collaboration among entities are seen as LIC’s greatest assets. The study also found that LIC’s businesses and organizations are optimistic about their longevity in LIC and want to expand operations here, yet cite affordable and appropriately-configured space as a

concern. The findings also confirmed that movement within the neighborhood needs to be improved to allow residents, workers and visitors to take advantage of LIC's numerous resources including arts and culture. Other findings include that although area income and education levels have increased, pockets of poverty remain and more work needs to be done to link LIC's low-income populations to the economic and cultural opportunities in the neighborhood.

The study highlighted nine recommendations to foster continued and expanded success across sectors in LIC while addressing real neighborhood challenges. They are:

1. Make incentive programs work for businesses that need and want to be in LIC, and explore creative ways to build more space for both industrial and commercial uses.
2. Work with the City to incentivize office construction to meet demand and reduce pressures on industrial and cultural space.
3. Capture and retain growing, entrepreneurial businesses in LIC to anchor local job creation.
4. Increase opportunities for cultural institutions and artists to maintain and operate active, permanent spaces in LIC.
5. Develop a strategy to foster a biotechnology, life sciences and technology-related industries cluster in LIC.
6. Work to relieve commercial parking strain and maintain vehicular flow for efficient business activity.
7. Work with mass transit agencies to update routes and frequencies within LIC.
8. Bridge neighborhood barriers and improve connections between sub-areas of LIC.
9. Maximize economic benefits for LIC residents and businesses.

This report sets the stage for Phase 2 of the Comprehensive Plan, which will implement these recommendations and undertake targeted interventions of particular issues. LICP is working with its partners to begin this process and leveraging the projects and policy ideas already in progress.

The LIC Comprehensive Plan has received pivotal support from public and private funders: NYS Senator Michael Gianaris, NYS Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan, NYC Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, NYC Council Majority Leader Jimmy Van Bramer, Queens Borough President Melinda Katz, Empire State Development, NYC Regional Economic Development Council, NYC Economic Development Corporation, Consolidated Edison Co. of N.Y., Inc., Cornell Tech, Ford Foundation, TD Charitable Foundation and Verizon.

"With our neighborhood growing rapidly, it is important to understand the preferred approaches towards expanding opportunities and continuing success for residents and businesses," said **NYS Senator Michael Gianaris**. "This significant input and information will allow for the correct actions to address challenges impacting our community."

"The LIC Partnership's economic development report is a comprehensive plan for our Long Island City businesses and residents" said **NYS Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan**. "I would like to thank Elizabeth Lusskin and the Long Island City Partnership for starting this conversation so we can advocate for improvements to our neighborhood."

"The Long Island City Comprehensive Plan has the power to transform Long Island City by investing in local institutions and infrastructure, drawing in entrepreneurs, and increasing economic benefits that come back to LIC community members," said **NYC Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito**. "The Council has long recognized that there is a need to support the cultural, creative and industrial sectors of the economy, which help provide jobs to a wide range of New Yorkers. I look forward to continuing my work alongside Council Member Van Bramer to ensure that we realize this vision of equitable development in LIC."

"Thoughtful planning helps ensure that our neighborhoods remain great," said **NYC Council Majority Leader Jimmy Van Bramer**. "The Long Island City Comprehensive Plan promotes a

mixed-use, culturally vibrant community where people want to live, work, and raise a family. I'm proud to help fund this study and look forward to working with the Long Island City Partnership to implement these recommendations."

"Long Island City is on the move and the development of the LIC Comprehensive Plan will help guide the smart growth of the neighborhood," said **Queens Borough President Melinda Katz**. "The release of the Comprehensive Plan is a significant milestone for the area and for the LIC Partnership, which deserves to be commended for all the work it has done to produce this valuable planning tool."

"The framework provided by this Comprehensive Plan will bolster economic productivity, help area residents overcome barriers to economic opportunity and guide Long Island City through future development," said **NYC Regional Economic Development Council Co-Chairs Winston Fisher, Partner at Fisher Brothers, and Cheryl A. Moore, President and COO of the New York Genome Center**. "We applaud the work of the Long Island City Partnership and all of their partners who have helped them complete the first phase of this important project."

"At a time when many communities are resisting forces of change and responding defensively to gentrification, business and community leaders in Long Island City are proactively taking charge of their future with a plan that capitalizes on market forces to achieve inclusive growth," said **Kathryn Wylde, President and CEO of the Partnership for New York City**.

"I commend the LIC Partnership on compiling a comprehensive economic analysis of this vital regional hub, a portion of which is the focus of our own LIC Core neighborhood planning study," said **Carl Weisbrod, Director of the NYC Department of City Planning**. "This study can provide valuable input into any recommendations to update the zoning to support the area's vibrant mixed-use character."

"Long Island City's fusion of community, cultural vibrancy, innovation and commerce make it an ideal neighborhood for businesses and New Yorkers across the city to live, work and play," said **Maria Torres-Springer, President of NYC Economic Development Corporation**. "This Administration is catalyzing Long Island City as an economic hub for the 21<sup>st</sup>-century by continuing to make key investments in transportation, infrastructure, and growing strong middle-class jobs. With valuable input from residents, businesses, our partners in government and local organizations on the ground, the LIC Comprehensive Plan provides a blueprint for the bright future of this community. I thank the Long Island City Partnership for their commitment and advocacy. I look forward to the work ahead."

"Long Island City has tremendous potential to become a thriving destination for tech, and a comprehensive strategy for the community will help plan for and accelerate that," said **Dan Huttenlocher, Dean of Cornell Tech**. "We are pulling tech activity east with the opening of the Cornell Tech campus on Roosevelt Island next summer, and expect our students to be drawn to the neighborhood, with its excellent access to transit, vibrant live-work culture, and stock of commercial and industrial space for spin-out companies."

"LaGuardia Community College partners with businesses throughout Long Island City to help them find the talent they need to grow their businesses," said **Gail Mellow, President of LaGuardia Community College**. "We strongly support LIC Partnership's vision for ensuring that employers can find adequate, reasonably priced commercial and retail space in order to establish and expand their businesses here. This will fuel Long Island City's continued growth as an economic and education hub. With over 50,000 students annually, LaGuardia is a vital part of this thriving ecosystem, and we look forward to working with companies throughout LIC to identify and meet their education and training needs."

"Already one of New York's most dynamic, live-work-play communities, Long Island City is currently experiencing an unprecedented wave of private sector investment in new housing, retail and offices," said **Michelle Adams, Managing Director Global Public Affairs for Tishman Speyer**. "Tishman Speyer is proud to play a role in the LIC Partnership's initiative,

which will help ensure that all of this investment is leveraged to provide maximum benefit to local residents, business and cultural institutions.”

“Long Island City is one of the most promising up-and-coming areas in what is an already vibrant New York tech scene,” said **Richard Windram, Director of State Government Affairs at Verizon**. “Verizon routinely taps into markets like this to help our business grow and evolve with the rapidly-changing technology industry. The LIC Comprehensive Plan will help foster a mutually-beneficial relationship between companies like us and the Long Island City community.”

“This study confirms the vibrancy and diversity of this exciting part of New York City and reinforces the significance of art and culture to its future success,” said **Mary Ceruti, Executive Director and Chief Curator of SculptureCenter**. “I am looking forward to working with the Partnership, our elected officials, and my colleagues across the different sectors represented here to move forward with these recommendations and strengthen the presence of the arts in Long Island City.”

“Long Island City is one of the few truly mixed-use communities in New York City, containing a critical mass of residential, commercial, industrial and cultural and entertainment spaces,” said **Seth Pinsky, Executive Vice President at RXR Realty**. “Maintaining this balance going forward is key not only to the continued desirability of the neighborhood, but also to the future of the City, which depends on the housing units, jobs and key services that the neighborhood provides. The Long Island City Partnership should be commended for its rigorous analysis and thoughtful recommendations on this critical subject.”

“Long Island City is transforming around us,” said **John Hatfield, Executive Director of Socrates Sculpture Park**. “We feel the impact on the Park with dramatic increases in programming participants and general attendance. The Partnership’s comprehensive report arrives at an opportune moment to identify the challenges we all face and introduce creative solutions for a vibrant future for LIC.”

“The comprehensive study is a critical tool to help assess the short and long-term needs of the LIC community,” said **Jonathan White, Executive Vice President of White Coffee Corporation**. “It gives us a ‘deep dive’ into our diverse neighborhood and offers invaluable suggestions to preserve the unique balance of the different and important parts of LIC.”

“As we’ve witnessed in other neighborhoods from SoHo to Williamsburg, the arts often fall victim to a community’s revitalization and growth it helped to advance,” said **Katie Denny Horowitz of the Long Island City Cultural Alliance**. “With this report, the LIC Partnership is taking the first step to interrupt this cycle in Long Island City and to ensure that the artists and arts organizations who make LIC an internationally renowned cultural destination are part of its long-term plan.”

“The Queens Chamber of Commerce fully supports and endorses this first-ever Comprehensive Plan for Long Island City,” said **Thomas Grech, Executive Director of the Queens Chamber of Commerce**. “As the home of the Queens Chamber for many years, Long Island City is uniquely positioned to be transformed while at the same time address the need to continue to be an authentic representation of everything that Queens is: diverse, growing and welcoming. We applaud the work of Liz Lusskin, her team and Borough President Melinda Katz and all elected officials engaged. We are proud of the accomplishments to date and look forward to continuing to be part of the team.”

“LIC is the geographical center of New York City and the center of so many critical opportunities for our city,” said **Jonathan Bowles, Executive Director of the Center for an Urban Future**. “This report does a great job laying out just how important the neighborhood is to the city’s future, and what is needed to harness LIC’s opportunities and make sure it doesn’t lose the attributes that make it so unique.”

### About Long Island City Partnership

The Long Island City Partnership is the local development corporation for Long Island City, Queens. The Partnership's mission is to advocate for economic development that benefits LIC's industrial, commercial, cultural and residential sectors. The goal is to attract new businesses to LIC, retain those already here, welcome new residents and visitors, and promote a vibrant and authentic mixed-use community. The LIC Partnership operates the LIC Business Improvement District and the LIC Industrial Business Zone, among other programs.

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