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Long Island City Starts Reinventing Itself

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View of Long Island City, from Queensboro Plaza, on the subway platform looking south. Credit: LICP.

NEW YORK CITY—To enhance the revitalization of what is said to be the city's fastest-growing neighborhood—and position it to capitalize on future opportunities—the Long Island City Partnership has released the phase one report of its comprehensive plan. The blueprint for the buzzy section of Queens addresses how to leverage the district's market potential and guide public and private-sector investments tremendous in LIC to balance growth across sectors.

A study conducted to create the plan found that LIC's location, mixed-use character, cultural vibrancy and the interdependence and collaboration among entities are seen as the area's greatest assets. The research also found that LIC's businesses and organizations are optimistic about their longevity and want to expand operations yet they cite affordable and properly configured space as a concern.

The findings also confirmed that movement within the neighborhood must to be improved to allow residents, workers and visitors to take advantage of LIC's numerous resources including arts and culture.

More specifically, the study highlighted nine recommendations to foster continued and expanded success across sectors in LIC while addressing real neighborhood challenges. They are, 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; work with the city to incentivize office construction to meet demand and reduce pressures on industrial and cultural space; capture and retain growing, entrepreneurial businesses in LIC to anchor local job creation; increase opportunities for cultural institutions and artists to maintain and operate active, permanent spaces in LIC;

Develop a strategy to foster a biotechnology, life sciences and technology-related industries cluster in LIC; work to relieve commercial parking strain and maintain vehicular flow for efficient business activity; work with mass transit agencies to update routes and frequencies within LIC; bridge neighborhood barriers and improve connections between sub-areas of LIC and maximize economic benefits for LIC residents and businesses.

“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,” says Gary Kesner, chair of the Long Island City Partnership board of directors and EVP 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.”

Adds Elizabeth Lusskin, president of LICP, “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 21st century mixed-use neighborhood for communities in NYC and throughout the country.”

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