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Plan unveiled for future of Long Island City

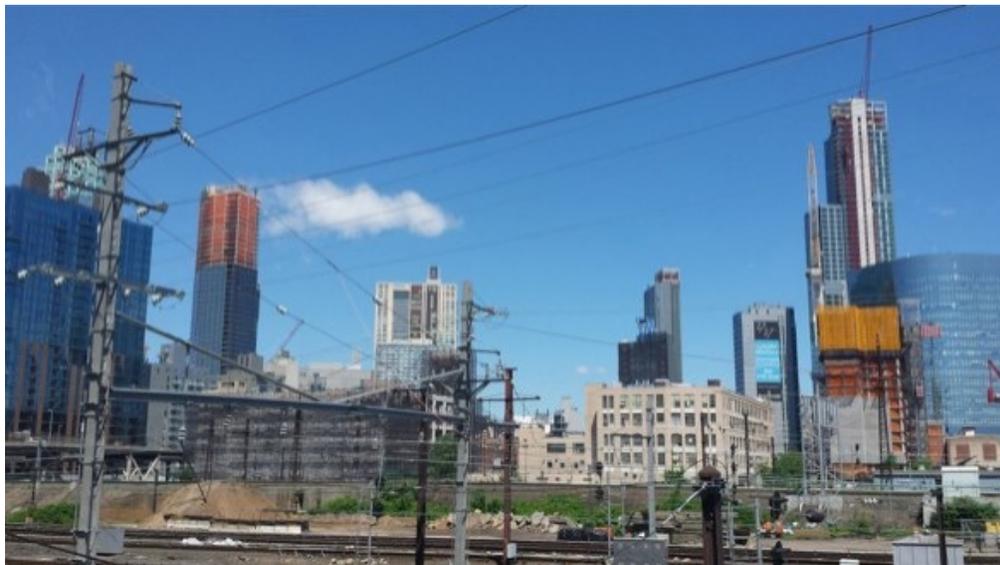


Photo by Bill Parry

The LIC Partnership develops a plan to manage the neighborhood's explosive growth.

By Bill Parry

TimesLedger Newspapers

The unprecedented growth taking place in Long Island City, with 11,000 condominium and rental units built in the last decade with another 22,500 being developed, has been well documented by the LIC Partnership. For nearly a year the development organization has been working on a far-reaching, cross-sector business and organization survey, the first phase of which was released Monday.

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.

"Thanks to the hundreds of area businesses and organizations that participated in the development of this report by providing essential input and guidance," LIC Partnership President Elizabeth Lusskin said. "Implementing these recommendations will impact all sectors and help 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."

The study found that LIC's location, cultural vibrancy and the interdependence and collaboration among entities are seen as the district'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 there, yet cite affordable and properly sized space as a concern.

"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," LaGuardia Community College President Gail O. Mellow said. "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 are looking forward to working with companies throughout LIC to identify and meet their education and training needs."

The study highlighted nine recommendations to foster continued and expanded success while addressing real neighborhood challenges including relieving the commercial parking strain. 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.

"This administration is catalyzing Long Island City as an economic hub for the 21st century by continuing to make key investments in transportation, infrastructure, and growing strong middle-class jobs," New York City Economic Development Corporation President Maria Torres-Springer said. "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."

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