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DE BLASIO ADMINISTRATION UNVEILS LONG ISLAND CITY INVESTMENT STRATEGY AND \$180M IN NEW FUNDING

Council Member Van Bramer joins the de Blasio Administration to unveil comprehensive blueprint for neighborhood improvements that will foster sustainable growth

NEW YORK – The de Blasio Administration released the Long Island City Investment Strategy today, a comprehensive approach to support sustainable growth. The strategy outlines the City’s commitment to investing \$180 million in new City funding for infrastructure improvements, including schools, transportation, and open space. The Long Island City Investment Strategy can be downloaded [here](#) and an overview of the plan is available at <http://lic.nyc>.

“The Long Island City Investment Strategy brings improvements in community infrastructure to a neighborhood that has experienced rapid growth,” said **Mayor de Blasio**. “We are investing \$180 million in Long Island City to address the needs of today while preparing for a more sustainable future.”

The Long Island City Investment Strategy is the result of interagency coordination led by NYCEDC and a community outreach process that began in 2015 under the Long Island City Core Neighborhood Plan effort. In June 2018, the Administration worked closely with Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer on a series of listening sessions with local civic leaders. This community engagement informed the strategy, which outlines \$2.2 billion in current investments, and \$180 million in new City actions to ensure sustainable and inclusive growth in this rapidly growing community.

In alignment with the Investment Strategy, a coordinated interagency effort will deliver critical infrastructure improvements in the neighborhood:

- The New York City Department of Environmental Protection will increase current funding commitments to a total of \$95 million for improvements to the area’s sewer system and water mains.
- A \$60 million commitment for the construction of a new school in the Court Square area from the City’s School Construction Authority.
- An additional \$10 million from the City’s Department of Transportation to supplement existing plans and funding for the Hunter’s Point street reconstruction project

- \$15 million in funding from NYC Parks for targeted open space improvements at Queensbridge Baby Park, Old Hickory Playground, Bridge and Tunnel Park and Court Square.

Last week, the Long Island City Ramps project was also approved by the Land Use Committee of the City Council. The project will bring to the neighborhood a new public space under the Queensborough Bridge ramps at Dutch Kills Street, a commitment to fully fund a new UPK-5 grade elementary school, as well as two new residential buildings with 150 permanently affordable apartments.

“Western Queens is home to one New York’s most vibrant and diverse neighborhoods,” said **James Patchett, president and CEO of New York City Economic Development Corporation**. “The Long Island City Investment Strategy, developed in partnership with Council Member Van Bramer and local leaders, outlines \$180M in funding to strengthen infrastructure, spur the creation of good-paying jobs, and ensure that the neighborhood continues to thrive for decades to come.”

“Long Island City is home to an extraordinary cultural community made up of a strong network arts organizations, artists, and other cultural assets that have made this neighborhood a major destination,” said **Cultural Affairs Commissioner Tom Finkelpearl**. “With these new investments, we’ll make sure this local cultural community continues to thrive. From new affordable artist workspace, to better promotion of its unique cultural assets, we’re committed to working with local residents and leaders to sustain and grow LIC’s creative vibrancy.”

“This comprehensive strategy builds on the investments DYCD has made in the community, including afterschool, youth employment, immigration and literacy. We look forward to working with our partners and continuing to provide opportunities for young people and families—empowering them to create an even more vibrant Long Island City,” said **DYCD Commissioner Bill Chong**.

“Long Island City is one of Queens’ fastest growing neighborhoods, but that enormous growth has come with challenges that we are helping meet today,” said **DOT Commissioner Polly Trottenberg**. “Under the LIC Investment Strategy, we have the opportunity to enhance street safety and connectivity as streets get reconstructed, including through pedestrian improvements and a more connected bicycle network. The Department of Transportation is happy to work with our sister agencies to make these critical investments to a burgeoning community.”

“Long Island City is New York’s fastest growing neighborhood. It has seen thousands of new homes, including affordable homes, and jobs spring up over the past decade,” said **Marisa Lago, Director of the Department of City Planning**. “This impressive growth requires a coordinated City strategy for making needed public investments in schools, parks, roads and local arts organizations.”

“This administration is taking a comprehensive, coordinated approach to investing in neighborhoods and planning for the future of our city as a whole. This requires us to balance a sense of urgency with a view to the long-term as we work with communities to meet the needs of residents today and advance lasting solutions for future generations of New Yorkers. This significant investment will bring 3,000 new affordable homes to Long Island City, new schools,

major infrastructure improvements, and expand the cultural programming and open spaces that breathe life into communities,” said **HPD Commissioner Maria Torres-Springer**. “I commend the Mayor and Council Member Van Bramer for their leadership and strategic vision for the future of Long Island City and its residents.”

“Once an industrial hub, Long Island City is a growing community that is now attracting families with its stunning, open waterfront,” said **Parks Commissioner Mitchell J. Silver, FAICP**. “Density and open space go hand in hand. This investment will help to improve and make better use of the inland parks in LIC.”

“For Long Island City to continue to be a livable community there must be a massive infusion of infrastructure dollars now. The investments being announced today are necessary and welcome, but they are also just the beginning. I will continue to work with the community and the Administration to fight for more and better transportation, schools, parks and all that the great people of Long Island City deserve,” said **Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer**.

The seven key areas of focus in the LIC Investment Strategy, include:

- **Jobs:** Strengthen the area as a Central Business District by increasing space and support for current and future business; expanding access and worker training for good jobs in diverse fields; and increasing opportunities for small businesses
- **Housing:** Preserve and build a diverse range of housing options to ensure a vibrant, mixed-income neighborhood with live/work opportunities and access to jobs throughout the city and region
- **Transportation:** Catalyze transit improvements to expand capacity, improve reliability, and enhance connectivity; and invest in street improvements to provide safer connections for pedestrians and bicyclists, increase local connectivity, and reduce vehicular congestion.
- **Infrastructure:** Enhance resiliency by improving water and sewer infrastructure
- **Open Space:** Improve and increase park and open space inland and on the waterfront
- **Education:** Accelerate planned school capacity projects to meet current needs while planning for additional population growth
- **Arts & Culture:** Expand and strengthen neighborhood and civic amenities that reflect LIC’s unique identity

Long Island City is one of the fastest growing neighborhoods in the country. Since an area-wide rezoning in 2001, thousands of new residents have moved into the district. This rapid growth has helped the LIC emerge as a vibrant, mixed-use neighborhood, but has also strained local infrastructure. In 2008, the Bloomberg Administration rezoned the Hunters Point South waterfront area for the development of the City’s first large-scale, moderate- and middle-income housing in decades. Since 2015, the City has engaged stakeholders as part of the LIC Core Neighborhood Study, in order to address the dramatic growth experienced over the past decade.

“This investment in our sewers, streets, schools and parks to help address the current needs of this community is very welcome. We have a long way to go to catch up but this is a good beginning,” said **Sheila Lewandowski, Executive Director, The Chocolate Factory Theater**.

“This is an important first step and recognition of the infrastructure needs in Long Island City. There’s still a lot more to be done. We will continue to work closely with the members of city government, local elected officials and community leaders to represent the needs of this neighborhood and the entire district,” said **Denise Keehan-Smith, Chair, Community Board 2** and **Lisa Deller, Chair, Community Board 2 Land Use Committee**.

“I’m so glad that funding is being allocated to restore our Beloved Baby Park. Baby Park used to be a positive and safe place for Parents and their Toddlers to enjoy swings, games, and space to run and play. This is so important to the Queensbridge Community, who have been waiting for this opportunity to restore Baby Park,” said **April Simpson, President, Queensbridge Tenant Association**. “Growing up, I remember attending the "School House" for Pre-Kindergarten, where I learned much to be ready for Kindergarten. We appreciate the dedication to restore Baby Park and look forward to the Community being able to utilize the Baby Park again.”

“The Long Island City BID welcomes the city's investment in essential neighborhood infrastructure improvements. The creation of new schools and parks are so important to the future of our growing mixed-use community. These utility improvements are absolutely necessary to keep pace with our increasing population,” said **David Brause, LIC BID Chair**. “We thank NYC officials for their commitment to responding to our neighborhood issues with such a meaningful investment. The LIC BID looks forward to working with the city to implement all of this amazing work in the most exciting neighborhood in NYC!”

“Silvercup Studios and Silvercup Properties are so pleased that the City has recognized the positive growth in our area and decided to invest \$180 MM in our part of NYC” said **Alan Suna, Silvercup’s CEO**. “Often infrastructure projects such as new sewer work, street reconstruction and parks are overlooked or not seem as important any as other priorities. We are glad the City is investing, along with private industry, to make LIC a fabulous place to live and work. We look forward to more positive investments by the City as we continue the upward trajectory of one of NYC’s ‘fastest growing’ neighborhoods.”

“The City’s investment in Long Island City demonstrates that they are listening to New Yorkers at the community-level and backing a robust and inclusive future for the area. Thoughtful street and utilities planning will link state-of-the-art schools and beautiful green spaces, resources that are truly priceless to Long Island City residents. This investment ensures the Long Island City families of today will be living in a vibrant area rich in opportunities for decades to come,” said **Meghan Cirrito, Chair, Gantry Parents Association**.

“The Hunters Point neighborhood welcomes this initial engagement with the city and looks forward to participating in a community-based process that addresses the infrastructure challenges brought on by the rapid pace of new development,” said **Tom Paino, Director, Hunters Point Community Coalition**.

“We applaud the City for investing in our local community and in our shared vision for inclusion, innovation, and high-paying jobs in New York City," says **Jukay Hsu, co-founder and CEO of Pursuit**. "We're excited to continue partnering with the City and other stakeholders to advancing our vision to ensure that all New Yorkers are able to thrive."

“LaGuardia Community College is thrilled that the city is prioritizing Long Island City’s infrastructure. These long critical investments in our sewer systems, roads, parks and schools will significantly improve in the quality of life for everyone in the neighborhood,” said **LaGuardia Community College President Gail O. Mellow.**

“We applaud the Mayor for this unprecedented and urgently needed \$180 million investment in LIC, our uniquely mixed-use work/live/innovate/create neighborhood. We cannot continue to be a regional hub of housing, jobs, culture and industry without the significant upgrades to our core infrastructure - including our sewers, parks, schools, culture and jobs - that these investments make possible. This Investment Strategy culminated several years of dialog, but also lays the groundwork for future collective planning,” said **Elizabeth Lusskin, President, LIC Partnership and ED, LIC BID.** “We look forward to working with the Administration, Council Member Van Bramer, Borough President Katz and our State and Federal elected officials to continue to strengthen this essential community.”

“We are grateful for this capital investment in key infrastructure needs in Long Island City as a whole, and the earmarked funds for projects in our rapidly-growing neighborhood. Court Square families will benefit greatly from the forthcoming local school and the additional enhancements to our public realm,” said **Pedro Gomez, President, Court Square Civic Association.**

“As residents and workers here, artists are becoming increasingly alarmed by the rate of development and growth in the neighborhood, especially as it pertains to affordable work spaces. Any investment in Long Island City must address these concerns and include efforts to retain the area's cultural identity,” said **Katie Denny-Horowitz, Co-Chair, LICCA – Long Island City Cultural Alliance.** “Today's promise to secure affordable workspaces for artists is a good start. While setting aside 35 units won't solve the problem, investing in artists alongside schools, streets, and sewers acknowledges the cultural sector as essential infrastructure for our local neighborhoods.”

“As Co-Presidents of CEC 30, we applaud and continue to encourage all efforts to include schools in tandem with all city planning decisions. We thank the City for recognizing the need for schools in Court Square and for pledging their financial support,” said **Deborah Alexander and Valarie Lamour, Co-Presidents, Community Education Council 30.**

The City’s capital investment in Infrastructure is coming at an opportune time in Long Island City’s emergence as the true New York City mixed use community. Schools, parks and utilities are critical to support our burgeoning array of commercial, residential and cultural activities. The Long Island City Partnership is proud to have played a leadership role in this growth,” said **Gary Kesner, Chair of the board, LIC Partnership.**

“I’ve known Council Member Van Bramer for years as a strong advocate for the community and fighter for the Hunters Point South Library. As an 18-year resident and business owner in LIC, I would say that this is fantastic news. From my perspective and the perspectives of the many patients I’ve seen over the years who have mentioned the strained infrastructure in the area, I think it is really good news that the infrastructure will finally start to catch up with the rate of development. It’s a step in the right direction,” said **Dr. Angelo Ippolito, owner of L.I.C. Chiropractic (local small business owner).**

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