

# Seward Park Process Info Sheet – May 2011

The Seward Park project includes 10 City-owned sites with the opportunity for up to 1.6 million square feet of mixed use, mixed income development. This info sheet briefly describes the steps that must be taken to allow the project to move forward, focusing on the middle four steps. The general process will be:

- **CB3 Guidelines:** A significant milestone, the Guidelines express CB3's preferences for elements to be included in the project plan
- **Urban Design:** Provides a design framework (building size, siting and uses) that are used as inputs to the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)
- **EIS Scoping:** Determines the goals of the EIS and the factors to be analyzed in the EIS
- **EIS Development:** Analyzes the maximum potential adverse impacts of what may be built
- **ULURP (Uniform Land Use Review Procedure):** Formal City review process required to authorize the actions to implement the project plan
- **RFPs (Requests for Proposals):** The process by which developers are selected to build at the sites according to the plan.



The CB3 guidelines provide the basis for the next steps, including the initial general physical layout. Urban designers Beyer, Blinder, Belle have been hired to assist in determining:

- General massing principles (the size and shape of the buildings)
- Possible size and location of open space
- How the buildings meet the street/sidewalks (known as “streetwalls”)

The urban design process is targeted to continue through end of May 2011. The goal is to have a set of recommended principles (for example, building heights should not exceed X stories). These will be used to inform the upcoming environmental analysis. More specific urban design guidelines are likely to be included as part of the RFPs.



The Seward Park project must follow the City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) law. For a project of this scale, an EIS is required. The EIS is a formal analysis of the potential impacts of a development.

The critical first step is to develop the Scope of Work for what the EIS will study. The Scope of Work includes:

- Purpose of the project;
- Project characteristics and what it is intended to achieve;
- Types of things (known as impact categories) to be analyzed, such as traffic, noise, and neighborhood character.

The EIS will analyze a Reasonable Worst Case Development Scenario (RWCDs), which identifies a development program that captures a reasonable estimate of the maximum environmental consequences which could result from the project. Analysis of the RWCDs will identify which elements

may have adverse impacts, but allows for flexibility in what eventually gets built. For example, if both housing and commercial uses are allowed on a site, whichever use has the potential for the greatest impact will be analyzed, even though that is not necessarily what will be built.

This ensures that the EIS captures all of the reasonable foreseeable potential impacts as discussions around a final program continue. By analyzing the full range of potential actions, the EIS will allow flexibility in implementing the final program.

The EIS Scoping process begins as follows:

- The City releases a Draft Scope of Work to the public.
- The City holds a public hearing to receive comments on the Draft Scope of Work.
- After the hearing, applicable comments are addressed and a Final Scope of Work is released, which forms the basis of the EIS.

The City will work with technical experts to prepare the EIS based on the Final Scope of Work. The EIS will provide key parameters for the desired project vision while still allowing flexibility for future changes in the real estate market and neighborhood conditions and goals. The areas studied in the EIS include, but are not limited to:

- **Proposed land use/zoning actions** such as street mapping, adding commercial ground floor zoning;
- **General development parameters**, such as amount and locations of housing and commercial uses, open space uses, affordable housing, local market conditions, among others;
- **Impact categories, such as :**
  - Land Use and Zoning
  - Traffic
  - Air Quality and Noise
  - Socioeconomic Conditions
  - Community Facilities and Open Space
  - Infrastructure
  - Historic and Cultural Resources
  - Construction
  - Neighborhood Character and Urban Design
  - Alternatives

The EIS will identify any areas which may create a significant adverse impact according to the CEQR regulations, and will include potential mitigation for these impacts. Preparing the EIS will take approximately a year. When the first EIS draft is complete, the City will release the document and prepare to begin the ULURP process.

Upon completion of the draft EIS and ULURP application, the City will begin the ULURP process. It is anticipated that the ULURP application will lay out an overall program, including an illustrative plan that will demonstrate on a site by site basis what could be built. The plan will be specific enough to incorporate the desired outcomes, but flexible enough to allow development to be creatively designed.

ULURP is a 7-month process required to authorize disposition (sale or lease) of City-owned property, street mapping, any zoning changes and other actions that may be needed to allow the master plan to be implemented.

The application is reviewed by:

- Local Community Board (60 days, including public hearing)
- Borough President (30 days, public hearing optional)
- City Planning Commission (60 days, including public hearing where comments are made on both ULURP application and draft EIS)
- City Council (50 days, including public hearing)
- Mayoral Review (5 days)

The EIS is finalized two weeks after the City Planning Commission hearing. After ULURP approval and issuance of the Final EIS (FEIS), the process to develop the sites may begin. The next step will be to release Requests for Proposals that lay out a series of requirements and ask developers to propose how they would develop the sites within those parameters. The RFPs will allow the selection of developers who will carry out the community and City's shared vision for the sites.

Please note that this document is intended as an outline to assist stakeholders better understand the process; it is not a legal document nor does it represent the full legal requirements for each stage of the project. For complete information on the EIS process, please visit the Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination at:

[http://www.nyc.gov/html/oec/html/ceqr/technical\\_manual.shtml](http://www.nyc.gov/html/oec/html/ceqr/technical_manual.shtml)

For complete information about the ULURP process, please visit the Department of City Planning's website at:

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/html/luproc/ulpro.shtml>