

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CONTACT:**

Rachaele Raynoff / Jennifer Torres (City Planning) (212) 720-3471

**CITY PLANNING BEGINS PUBLIC REVIEW FOR 257 BLOCKS IN  
NORTH FLUSHING, QUEENS TO PROTECT NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER**

*Proposal Creates New Zoning Tool to Prevent Out-of-Scale Single Family Homes*

January 20, 2009 – City Planning Commissioner Amanda M. Burden today announced the beginning of public review to protect 257 blocks of North Flushing, Queens, one of the Bloomberg Administration's largest contextual rezonings. The rezoning was undertaken in response to community concerns that recent developments have been out-of-context with established neighborhood character and built fabric. Concurrently, Commissioner Burden announced the creation of a new contextual zoning district, R1-2A, developed to ensure that new single-family houses are consistent with the prevailing neighborhood scale and fabric. Crafted with close consultation from local elected officials, community board members and local civic associations, the proposal exemplifies the Bloomberg Administration's sustained commitment to protect New York's neighborhoods by updating decades old zoning to reinforce their built character.

"Good planning requires that we recognize and tailor zoning to the unique needs of each one of our neighborhoods. Working closely with the community and Council Members Avella and Liu we have developed a fine-grained rezoning to protect North Flushing, one of the city's most beautiful, low-density communities" said City Planning Commissioner Amanda M. Burden. "Expanding our toolbox, we have developed a new zoning designation, R1-2A, to ensure better protections for the existing building form and context. Today's actions underscore the Bloomberg Administration's commitment to safeguarding our quality of life and to ensuring that future development reflects the character of the city's neighborhoods.

"The North Flushing rezoning proposal will help to restore the quality of life on many blocks in this community" said Council Member Tony Avella. "The construction of multiple homes in place of a single-family house and the construction of 'McMansions' in this quiet community will not be allowed to continue unchecked. This rezoning will help to end all that."

"Years of planning have already gone into this effort to rezone some of our important residential neighborhoods" said Council Member John C. Liu. "As with all rezonings, it is important for all to participate in the public reviews and hearings. Single family homes are the stuff the American dream is often made of and this effort helps to keep that dream alive."

The rezoning area encompasses more than 250 blocks of mostly low scale, one- and two-family homes. It is generally bounded by Union Street to the west; the Clearview Expressway and Francis Lewis Boulevard to the east; 25th Avenue to the north, and Northern Boulevard and Depot Road to the south. This area includes portions of the adjacent Broadway-Flushing, Auburndale and Bayside neighborhoods.

The North Flushing rezoning area's current zoning (R1-2, R2, R3-X, R3-2, R4-1, R4, R5 and R6) allows a variety of housing types and densities ranging from single-family homes to large apartment buildings. In recent years, development trends have resulted in teardowns of one- and two-family houses and the construction of buildings that are considerably taller or denser than adjacent buildings and out-of-character with surrounding contexts.

Championed by Council Members Tony Avella and John Liu, Community Boards 7 and 11 and local civic associations the proposed rezoning would:

- Reinforce existing low-density character and low-rise scale by replacing existing zoning with lower density or contextual zoning districts (R2A, R2, R3X, R3-1, R3-2, R4, R4A, R4-1, R4B, R5B and R5D).
- Establish a new citywide R1-2A zoning designation with tightened floor area exemptions and revised height and setback regulations to prevent out-of-scale development in areas with one-family detached residents on large lots throughout the city.
- Protect the appealing character of 24 blocks in the Broadway/Flushing section of the rezoning area by replacing existing R1-2 zoning with R1-2A. The R1-2A regulations would foster more predictable building patterns by eliminating the lowest floor area exemption if the ground floor contains a garage, requiring the alignment of new front building walls with adjacent houses, and establishing a 25-foot maximum wall height and a 35-foot maximum roof height. The area's current zoning (R1-2) has no firm building height.
- Replace existing C1-2 commercial overlay zones with C1-3 zones and remove or reduce the depths of commercial overlay zones from 150 feet to 100 feet to prevent commercial intrusion onto residential blocks and better reflect the existing commercial uses.

The city's lower-density neighborhoods offer alternatives to dense urban living. The Bloomberg Administration's historic rezoning agenda continues to preserve the character of the city's auto-dependent neighborhoods. The North Flushing rezoning builds upon previous City Planning lower-density and contextual rezonings covering nearly 4,000 blocks throughout Queens, including more than 760 blocks in the adjacent neighborhoods of East Flushing, Whitestone, and Bayside adopted in 2005.

The affected community boards now have 60 days to review the proposals, after which each will go to the Borough President, the City Planning Commission and the City Council as part of the City's Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP). For specifics of the zoning proposals or more details on the [ULURP timeline](#), please visit the DCP website.

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The Department of City Planning is responsible for the City's physical and socioeconomic planning, including land use and environmental review; preparation of plans and policies; and provision of technical assistance and planning information to government agencies, public officials, and community boards.