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March 26, 2012

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**NYC Waterfront Revitalization Program (WRP) Begins Public Review**

*For the First Time, City Planning Adds Climate Change Projections to WRP As Litmus Test for Shoreline Projects*

*Changes Advance Goals of Award-Winning [Vision 2020: NYC Comprehensive Waterfront Plan](#)*

March 26, 2012 - One year after the release of the award-winning [Vision 2020: NYC Comprehensive Waterfront Plan](#), City Planning Commissioner Amanda M. Burden today announced the launch of public review for revisions to New York City's Waterfront Revitalization Program (WRP) that will advance the long-term sustainability goals and other priorities laid out in Vision 2020. The WRP is the City's Coastal Zone Management Program, a regulatory review tool that guides agency reviews of projects proposed within the city's mapped Coastal Zone to ensure that they balance numerous interests for the waterfront, including natural resource preservation, economic development and public recreation. The WRP helps the City to make the most of its waterfronts by ensuring that projects that require discretionary actions are reviewed against and found consistent with a set of 10 stated policies. By updating the WRP, the City will change the way that it evaluates and measures such waterfront projects, solidifying New York City's leadership in the area of sustainability and climate resilience planning as one of the first major cities in the U.S. to incorporate climate change considerations into its Coastal Zone Management Program. These new revisions will promote climate resilient designs, encourage soft edges for much of the city's 520 miles of shoreline, promote the necessary infrastructure for boat launches such as ferry boats and kayaks, and increase public access to the waterfront.

Commissioner Burden said, "Embodying the goals set out in *Vision 2020*, the city's new Comprehensive Waterfront Plan, the revised WRP proposes new policies to better address the city's varied waterfront conditions. The revisions aim to improve projects within the coastal zone by promoting climate resilient designs, increasing public access to the waterfront, facilitating economic development while protecting natural areas, and improving interagency coordination to foster a clear, predictable development process."

Each year, between 100 and 200 applications are evaluated for consistency with the WRP to ensure that public and private projects within the coastal zone align with the city's planning goals for the waterfront. Examples of projects subject to WRP review include land use applications, City capital projects, environmental permits, and projects using Federal funds. Through this process, the Department of City Planning (DCP) is able to identify potential conflicts between overlapping regulations and require projects to consider the City's policy goals for the waterfront.

Among the most notable proposed changes to the WRP:

- Require projects to examine the risks associated with climate change based on sea level rise projections, and encourage applicants to take measures to minimize these risks through design strategies that will enhance their ability to withstand and quickly recover from coastal storms. These measures may include such strategies as elevating or waterproofing the lowest floor of potentially vulnerable buildings and choosing salt-water tolerant plants for parks that may face temporary inundation in the event of a storm surge.
- To promote industrial development in concert with ecological preservation along the West Shore of Staten Island, create and map a new designation to be called the Ecologically Significant Maritime and Industrial Area (ESMIA). This area of Staten Island is uniquely positioned with vast wetlands and other natural features, and includes many large undeveloped parcels with close proximity to the Port, and access to highways and freight rail lines.
- Identify smaller sites of ecological significance throughout the five boroughs and promote their restoration by designating and mapping a new category to be called Recognized Ecological Complexes.
- In order to strengthen water-dependent industries and maritime support services, prioritize economically-viable maritime uses over other uses, and encourage maintenance and/or development of the bulkhead infrastructure for future maritime use.
- Promote in-water recreation by including in the WRP criteria for safe and suitable locations for human-powered boat launches.
- Create and map a new designation to be called the Priority Marine Activity Zone (PMAZ) to promote the maintenance of necessary shoreline infrastructure for waterborne transportation such as piers for ferry landings. PMAZs are located throughout the five boroughs and their designation would help streamline the permitting process for such infrastructure.

- Outside of PMAZs, natural shoreline treatments that protect inland areas from flooding and storm surges and provide stormwater filtration, ecosystem habitat, and recreation are preferred. Promote the designs of piers and bulkheads to accommodate a range of vessel types from kayaks to tug boats to historic tall ships.
- Require projects to examine the storage of materials that may pose public-health risks in the event of flooding or storm surge and promote best practices to ensure the safety of workers and residents of adjacent neighborhoods.
- Include design best practices in waterfront public spaces by requiring that projects be reviewed against design principles.
- Encourage all waterfront developments that are publicly funded or on publicly owned land to provide public waterfront access where safe and feasible.

The proposed revisions to the WRP will undergo public review as outlined in section [197-a](#) of the City's charter. The plan will be referred for review by 48 affected community boards (60 days) and all borough presidents and all borough boards (120 days). Visit [nyc.gov/WRP](http://nyc.gov/WRP) for more details on the proposed [WRP revisions](#) or for further information on the public review process.

These revisions will advance and complement the Waterfront Vision and Enhancement Strategy. Launched in March 2011, the Waterfront Vision and Enhancement Strategy is a sustainable blueprint for New York City's waterfront and waterways. To reconnect New Yorkers and visitors to the water and reclaim New York City's standing as a premier waterfront city, the plan will transform the City's waterfront with new parks, new industrial activities and new housing, and it will capitalize on the City's waterways to promote water-borne transportation, recreation, maritime activity and natural habitats. The plan has two components: a three-year action agenda comprised of 130 funded projects, including the development of more than 50 acres of new waterfront parks, creation of 14 new waterfront esplanades and introduction of new commuter ferry service; and *Vision 2020: New York City Comprehensive Waterfront Plan*, a framework for the City's 520 miles of shoreline for the next decade and beyond. The 130 action agenda projects are expected to create 13,000 construction jobs and at least 3,400 permanent maritime and industrial jobs. *Vision 2020* is the first citywide plan for the waterfront in nearly two decades and the first ever comprehensive plan for the waterways themselves.

The WRP Revisions are being prepared for the New York State Department of State with funds provided under Title 11 of the Environmental Protection Fund.

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### **Department of City Planning**

The Department of City Planning (DCP) promotes strategic growth, transit-oriented development, and sustainable communities in the City, in part by initiating comprehensive, consensus-based planning and zoning changes for individual neighborhoods and business districts, as well as establishing policies and zoning regulations applicable citywide. It supports the City Planning Commission and each year reviews more than 500 land use applications for actions such as zoning changes and disposition of City property. The Department assists both government agencies and the public by providing policy analysis and technical assistance relating to housing, transportation, community facilities, demography, waterfront and public space.