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CONTACT: Public Affairs Officer -- (212) 720-3471

DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING UNVEILS COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE AND WATERFRONT PLAN FOR GREENPOINT-WILLIAMSBURG

June 18, 2003, New York, NY - Deputy Mayor for Economic Development & Rebuilding Daniel L. Doctoroff and Department of City Planning (DCP) Director Amanda M. Burden today unveiled the Bloomberg Administration's ambitious proposal for the rezoning of Brooklyn's Greenpoint and Williamsburg neighborhoods. Carefully crafted to reflect the unique character of these neighborhoods, the proposal encompasses a 1.6-mile stretch of the Brooklyn Waterfront, and approximately 170 blocks in the Greenpoint-Williamsburg area. The proposed rezoning provides opportunities for the development of housing and neighborhood retail, the creation of much-needed public open space, and the forging of new links between the waterfront and upland communities of Greenpoint and Williamsburg. This proposed rezoning is a result of a collaborative effort with the community that addresses their long-standing desire to achieve access to and along the East River waterfront.

"The rezoning of the Greenpoint-Williamsburg area focuses on two of the Administration's highest priorities - the creation of affordable housing and increasing access to the waterfront," said Deputy Mayor Daniel Doctoroff. "This proposal is a key component of our continuing efforts to create 65,000 new affordable housing units over the next five years as outlined in the Mayor's Housing Plan, and will be a tremendous step forward in reconnecting Brooklynites to the waterfront and creating public access to open space for residents and workers to enjoy for years to come. At the same time, this Administration is sensitive to the fact that manufacturing is an integral part of the character and history of the Greenpoint-Williamsburg community, and our plan is designed to allow light industry and residences to coexist."

"Greenpoint and Williamsburg are truly among New York City's greatest assets - neighborhoods with a distinctive character, a thriving mix of uses, a vibrant cultural life, and a waterfront with extraordinary potential," said DCP Director Amanda Burden. "The plan builds on the strengths of both neighborhoods and is tailored to permit housing development that will leverage new opportunities to revitalize nearly two miles of East River waterfront that have been derelict and inaccessible to the community for decades. We are at the beginning of a very long process and we are committed to working closely with the community to make this proposal a reality."

The detailed urban design plan proposed by the Bloomberg Administration envisions 49 acres of publicly accessible open space along the waterfront including a continuous esplanade along two miles of the East River waterfront. New development would be required to provide a continuous waterfront walkway, sidewalks and streets connecting the waterfront to existing neighborhoods, and additional public spaces to complement existing parks on the waterfront. The plan also embraces NYC2012's Olympic bid plans for beach volleyball and archery venues between North 7th and North 14th Streets on the Williamsburg waterfront.

In addition, the proposed Greenpoint-Williamsburg rezoning calls for new housing in a variety of forms and heights along the waterfront that will provide a compelling skyline, a sensitive transition to the adjoining neighborhoods, and a pedestrian-friendly streetscape. Further inland, the proposal includes a careful mix of zoning districts, which would allow these neighborhoods to fill in and grow at a scale consistent with their established character. City Planning is working closely with the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) and the Housing Development Corporation (HDC) to address the need for affordable housing in Greenpoint Williamsburg. As with its projects elsewhere in the City, at least half of the new units in HPD and HDC-sponsored housing developments would be set-aside to be rented or sold to current residents of the community.

Lastly, the proposed zoning would permit light industry and residences to coexist, recognizing that Greenpoint-Williamsburg's vitality is grounded in these patterns. In areas containing concentrations of industrial activity, including companies like Domino Sugar and the Brooklyn Brewery, the plan calls for the preservation of these manufacturing districts.

Over the next several months, DCP will be reviewing the details of the plan with Community Board 1, business, neighborhood and civic groups, as well as elected officials. A public scoping session for an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be held in September. Once the EIS is complete, the project could be certified for ULURP review by January, beginning the formal, seven-month public review process.

About City Planning

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.