

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

June 25, 2013

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**CITY ANNOUNCES SWEEPING RECOMMENDATIONS TO TRANSFORM THE SHERIDAN EXPRESSWAY,  
ENHANCING TRANSPORTATION AND STRENGTHENING  
NEIGHBORHOODS IN THE SOUTH BRONX**

*Recommendations would remove trucks from residential streets, provide community access to new parks along the Bronx River as Sheridan Expressway-Hunts Point Study Nears Completion  
Details to be presented tonight at community meeting in Bronx River*

June 25, 2013 – The New York City Department of Transportation (DOT), New York City Department of City Planning (DCP), Economic Development Corporation (EDC), Housing Preservation and Development (HPD), the Mayor’s Office of Long-Term Planning and Sustainability (OLTPS) and Deputy Mayor for Economic Development Robert Steel today announced consensus on a far reaching set of recommendations for direct access ramps to the industrial area of Hunts Point—which will keep trucks from using local streets and help promote job growth—and for transforming the northern half of the 1.2-mile Sheridan Expressway into a local boulevard with crosswalks and traffic signals. The proposed changes would greatly reduce the footprint and impact of the expressway on local neighborhoods. When implemented, the recommendations would significantly enhance pedestrian access to Starlight and Concrete Plant waterfront parks and to the Bronx River Greenway, supporting decades of efforts to restore vitality to this section of the South Bronx. Officials and advocates will be working with the state on next steps, including an Environmental Impact Statement, and will be looking to the next mayoral administration to endorse the recommendations.

The recommendations also call for strengthening and connecting communities with new retail and mixed-income housing and job opportunities, as well as protecting the character of residential neighborhoods. The recommendations were developed as part of the [Sheridan Expressway-Hunts Point Land Use and Transportation Study](#), which was initiated in October 2010 with a federal grant and is now nearing completion. They were the product of 10 community working-group meetings and dozens of additional meetings with elected officials, community organizations and other stakeholders hosted by a multi-agency city team. The recommendations enjoy broad agreement from community boards, area businesses and other local groups. The interagency team will present the study’s final recommendations at a public meeting tonight at the Cinema School in Bronx River.

“This in-depth study, which takes into account the thoughts of many stakeholders and community members, has set the table for real improvements to occur in the Bronx,” said Deputy Mayor for Economic Development Robert K. Steel. “The neighborhood near the Sheridan deserves thoughtful planning and resources for improvements, and we are hopeful that the next Mayor will continue our efforts in this area.”

“This unprecedented effort by the City, elected officials and thousands of local residents and business owners has created a historic opportunity to improve the quality of life in the South Bronx,” said DOT Commissioner Janette Sadik-Khan. “By transforming a divisive highway into an accessible neighborhood boulevard, opening the Bronx River waterfront to pedestrians and steering truck traffic off of residential streets, these recommendations will make our city’s streets safer and our transportation network work better for all those who live and work along the Sheridan.”

City Planning Commissioner Amanda M. Burden said, “This robust collaboration among city agencies, communities and elected officials has enabled us to arrive at a consensus on recommendations for a comprehensive package of improvements to local streets, new connections to the waterfront and reconfigured highway ramps that will benefit the diverse stakeholders in the area surrounding the Sheridan. Equally important are the proposed land use strategies devised with community input to enhance transit rich neighborhoods around the Sheridan Expressway with new and affordable housing, open space, improved pedestrian amenities, and strengthened commercial corridors.”

“Providing improved access to the Hunts Point Food Distribution Center is a critical improvement to a key economic engine of the City. It will help support existing businesses in the South Bronx, encourage continued job growth, and make food distribution citywide more efficient and cost-effective,” said New York City Economic Development Corporation President Seth W. Pinsky.

“The recommendations for land use strategies established as part of this process offer an opportunity to continue the City’s efforts to revitalize the community through the development of new affordable housing,” said HPD Commissioner Mathew M. Wambua. “Through a comprehensive effort involving numerous city agencies, local stakeholders and the community’s input we have a plan that will act as a catalyst for opportunity and growth for years to come.”

“Our community is looking forward to concrete next steps for the Sheridan modifications,” said Congressman José E.

Serrano, who helped obtain federal funding for the study. “As the study points out, we need the access to the new parks and green spaces we have built along the Bronx River. We need the traffic and pedestrian safety upgrades. And we must have the air quality improvements that this plan would give us. I stand ready to assist in making this plan and vision into a reality for the Bronx.”

“The State has a rare moment of opportunity to build on work already done and actually save money while addressing long-standing problems to a transportation network of regional importance,” said Assemblyman Marcos Crespo. “Setting aside funds for this purpose in the current year would guarantee momentum at a critical moment and I call upon NYSDOT to work with its colleagues in the City to do so. Moving forward with this plan is a top priority for the Bronx. It is crucial for the livelihood of the area businesses and for the health and well-being of my constituents.”

“As we move the discussion regarding the future of the Sheridan Express forward, we must ensure that all government entities understand that we cannot allow the tremendous effort invested, by so many, to languish on a shelf. The State and our next mayor need to invest capital funding to execute the proposed plan, which must also include an added component of four-way ramps,” said Council Member Maria del Carmen Arroyo.

“The SEHP study’s findings make one thing crystal clear, an overhaul of the Sheridan Expressway corridor and Hunts Point Peninsula is long overdue. Action needs to be taken immediately to alleviate the decades-long impact of poor transportation planning and I will work with my colleagues at all levels of government to make this project a priority. Bronx residents cannot afford inaction,” said Council Member Annabel Palma.

The transportation recommendations include removal of fences, guardrails and median barriers to join the northern section of the Sheridan with existing service roads, while establishing three traffic-signal-controlled crosswalks at Jennings, 172nd and 173rd streets to allow pedestrians to cross. When implemented, two of these crossings would provide direct access to new parks that are not easily accessible by pedestrians from the west side of the expressway. The proposed access ramps into the Hunts Point area at Oak Point and Leggett avenues would encourage truck drivers to use the Sheridan instead of taking routes through residential streets to reach their destinations, which is critical to sustaining Hunts Point Food Distribution Center while minimizing its impact on the surrounding community. The highway and street improvements require funding and approval from state and other authorities, and DOT will continue to work with partner agencies to implement these improvements.

The land use recommendations call for initiating proposed rezoning actions that would allow a mix of uses to create active streetscapes, focus new growth and job opportunities along transit rich corridors, explore decking above the Sheridan Expressway to permit new retail, office or community space, and reinforce the character of adjacent residential areas with proposed zoning tailored to the context of each neighborhood. Building on the changes proposed for the Sheridan Expressway, the land use recommendations call for:

- Closer examination of the zoning and uses along the Bronx River shoreline to foster a vibrant waterfront that will support a rejuvenated Bronx River and connect Starlight Park and Concrete Plant Park.
- Zoning changes on Westchester Avenue near the Whitlock Avenue 6 train station, Southern Boulevard along the elevated 2/5 train, and East Tremont Avenue near the West farms 2/5 train station.

The City will pursue a cooperative agreement to advance the project with the State, which owns the expressway. The land use recommendations will require targeted outreach, analysis and environmental and public review. Visit DCP’s website for more information on this [study](#).

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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.

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