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CITY PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION ANNOUNCE COMPREHENSIVE CONEY ISLAND REZONING PLAN TO SAFEGUARD AND BUILD ON ITS AMUSEMENT LEGACY
Report Progress on Capital Improvements and Announce Plans to Seek Amusement Operators

November 8, 2007 - City Planning Commissioner Amanda M. Burden and New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) President Robert Lieber today unveiled the administration's comprehensive zoning plan for Coney Island. The plan will safeguard and build on Coney Island's iconic amusement legacy, transforming the area into an affordable, year-round urban amusement and entertainment destination and also bring a critical mass of new residential and retail uses to this prime beachfront location. As announced earlier today by Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg at a meeting of the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce, the much anticipated zoning framework for future development on Coney Island would map the amusement areas as parkland in order to permanently preserve the amusement district and catalyze new indoor and outdoor amusement uses as well as hotels, water parks, entertainment retail and restaurants. The plan also includes zoning changes to foster 4,000 to 5,000 new units of housing outside the amusement area and roughly 500,000 square feet of new neighborhood retail. Integral to this plan are major capital investments in open space, a community center with affordable housing and streetscape improvements. All told, the rezoning plan, coupled with the city investment in capital improvements, is intended to leverage private investment of more than \$2.5 billion over the next decade. The project is expected to create about 20,000 construction jobs and, when fully built out, more than 3,000 permanent jobs. It is estimated that the new development will generate approximately \$6.5 billion in tax revenue for the city over 30 years (\$2 billion NPV). The administration's vision for the area builds on the [strategic plan for Coney Island](#) announced by the Mayor in 2005.

"Coney Island captures the imagination of all New Yorkers and people around the world. Today we take the first steps to ensure that the future of Coney Island does justice to its illustrious past and captures the essence of its enduring appeal," said Commissioner Burden. "By strengthening and expanding the amusements, building new open spaces and fostering new housing and retail, Coney Island will evolve into a truly great neighborhood for visitors and residents alike, creating a new legacy of year-round affordable fun and economic opportunity in one of the City's iconic destinations. We will work side by side with the community and elected officials to incorporate their input as we proceed to enact this important initiative for the future of Coney Island."

"We are investing in Coney Island's future with these important projects which will in turn catalyze significant new private investment to realize the potential of this great beachfront area. By recapturing the dynamism of Coney Island's historic past, we will help create an enviable place to live, a great place to play and provide new economic opportunities for this area of Brooklyn and for the city," said NYCEDC President Lieber. "A critical mass of amusements on 15 acres will provide the focal point of activity as we promote additional complementary entertainment uses, as well as public improvements along the boardwalk, such as Steeplechase Plaza south of the Brooklyn Cyclones' Keyspan ballpark, a reimagined Aquarium, and new nodes of housing and retail carefully located to the north and west of the amusement district."

"Coney Island's unique character has distinguished it in the national imagination since its early days as an amusement epicenter, and I have been thrilled to partner with the Mayor, Council Member Domenic Recchia, the CIDC, EDC and the Department of City Planning in strategizing a way to both preserve that heritage and usher in its bright future as 'America's Favorite Playground' of the 21st Century," said Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz. "A revitalized Coney will boost Brooklyn tourism, as our proud home to everyone from everywhere increasingly plays proud host to everyone from everywhere-while retaining Coney Island's famed freakishness, fun-loving spirit, and charm - Brooklyn style."

"Today is truly an exciting day," said Council Member Domenic M. Recchia, Jr. "For far too long we in the community have watched America's playground deteriorate instead of reaching its full potential. Now, under the leadership of Mayor Michael Bloomberg, we are beginning a process that, with a lot of dedicated work and community involvement, will help to restore Coney Island as one of New York City's resonant icons."

"I am proud to have the opportunity to partner with the Mayor, my colleagues in government and the community to ensure that we have thoughtful, responsible development in Coney Island which features jobs and affordable housing for our residents and working families," said Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny. "We have a great opportunity here to

restore Coney Island to its position as a world class amusement district and we will do so in a way that both moves our community forward and respects the grand history of Coney Island."

"The Coney Island Development Corporation acknowledges and celebrates that Coney Island is in the DNA of all New Yorkers," said CIDC President Lynn Kelly. "We are confident that the City's rezoning framework represents a true 21st century vision for Coney Island and its residents. We look forward to working with the City through this process and welcome the renaissance of Coney Island!"

Rezoning

The zoning plan covers approximately 19 blocks stretching roughly from the New York Aquarium to West 24th Street and from Mermaid Avenue to the boardwalk. Current zoning allows only low density amusement uses in most of the area. The current attractions in Coney Island are seasonal and draw visitors primarily in the summer. The rezoning aims to strengthen the amusements with both indoor and outdoor activities, encourage significant new residential development outside the amusement area, and promote new retail and hotels to serve the expanding neighborhood. The proposal would establish a special zoning district that would define densities and height limits with urban design requirements to preserve views to Coney Island's iconic structures and create appropriate transitions to surrounding blocks. It focuses on three distinct areas: an area north of Surf Avenue and one to the west of Keyspan Park are both envisioned as extensions of existing residential neighborhoods. The third area would encompass a new and enhanced amusement district on the eastern end, building on Coney Island's historic amusement core.

The centerpiece of the plan is a new 15-acre amusement park located between Keyspan Park and the New York Aquarium. The City plans to map this area as parkland to preserve an amusement park in perpetuity and ensure that Coney Island remains an affordable and accessible destination for people of all ages. Along the boardwalk, indoor and outdoor amusements will celebrate Coney Island's one-of-a-kind character, alongside new 21st century attractions. The amusement park would include rides, open and closed amusements, eateries, performance venues and complementary retail. The amusement park would continue to be anchored by the Cyclone and Wonder Wheel, both functioning rides and City landmarks, as well as the landmark Parachute Jump. The City does not intend to use eminent domain to acquire the property in the amusement park. The City intends to work with each property owner to acquire the land in Coney East in order to realize the vision for its future. Until the City acquires the property the property owners may operate and build amusements under the zoning in place today. NYCEDC announced plans to work with the City Council and local stakeholders to select a developer and operator for the amusement park through an RFP (request for proposals) process.

In addition, the plan would promote the creation of more than one million square feet of new development on Surf Avenue including hotels, water parks, catering facilities, restaurants and entertainment retail such as bowling alleys, movie theaters, and state-of-the-art indoor and outdoor amusements,. With a new streetscape appropriate to the area's colorful atmosphere, a revitalized Coney Island will be a tourist destination that draws on the crowds who flock to its beaches and lures them year-round.

The comprehensive plan would facilitate more than 1,750 housing units in the northern section adjacent to existing residential areas north of Surf Avenue, and about 2,700 units west of the Keyspan ball park along with significant new neighborhood retail. Consistent with the Mayor's PlaNYC 2030 initiative, the new development will be served by the B, D, F and Q trains and will be close to the recently rebuilt Stillwell Avenue subway station as well as within a short walk of the West 8th Street station.

Utilizing the City's Inclusionary zoning program we expect approximately 900 units of affordable housing to be provided. This is an incentive that permits development of additional housing in exchange for making 20 percent of the new housing affordable to households making up to 80 percent of the area media income.

Other highlights include:

- To facilitate the revitalization of Coney Island, the City proposes to demap parkland currently used as parking lots for the Keyspan ball park, parking that would be replaced within the new development. This demapping requires state approval contingent on provision elsewhere of an equivalent amount of replacement park land. The City's plan calls for mapping 715,000 square feet of new park land, nearly 300,000 square feet more than the 420,000 square feet proposed for demapping. In addition to the 15-acre amusement park, a new 1-1/2 acre neighborhood park would be created along the boardwalk between West 22nd and 23rd Streets.
- The comprehensive plan would connect a network of over 50 acres of waterfront recreational open spaces between West 23rd Street to Ocean Parkway. These would include the new Highland View Park, a new Steeplechase Plaza -- planned home for the soon-to-be-restored historic B&B Carousell -- the New York Aquarium and Asser Levy Park.
- The special zoning district would also create new pedestrian, vehicular and visual corridors, breaking up the

superblocks between Surf Avenue and the boardwalk. And it would welcome the larger Coney Island community to the waterfront with new and enhanced tree-lined connections to the beach.

Further details will continue to be developed on the plan as it heads into environmental review in the coming months. Public outreach on the proposal will begin even before the City initiates the formal land use review process (ULURP) in 2008 during which there will also be numerous opportunities for public comment. The City will present the rezoning proposal tonight to the board of the Coney Island Development Corporation (CIDC) at a meeting which is open to the public, and will hold a public information session on November 19. Details on this and future public outreach will be maintained on the [City Planning web page](#), where a description of the ULURP process, the opportunities it offers for public participation, as well as further information on the City's Coney Island plan can also be found.

Capital Improvements

Since the Coney Island Strategic Plan was released in 2005, the City has achieved a number of milestones, including:

- Selection of Coney Island Commons LLC to develop more than 100 units of affordable housing and a 40,000-square-foot community center to be operated by the YMCA of Greater New York in western Coney Island. The "Y" is scheduled to open in 2009.;
- Acquisition of the historic B&B Carousel and issuance of a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a restoration specialist to return the 50-horse carousel to its former grandeur;
- With the support of the Borough President, refurbished and relighted the iconic Parachute Jump;
- Issued RFP for a consultant to design Steeplechase Plaza which will feature a performance green and space for potential activities such as a park or water feature. The inviting new public space will also become home to the restored B&B Carousel. Selection of a consultant for the project will be made in the near future.
- Finalizing designs for various capital improvements including attractive streetscapes, new open spaces, and improved parking and transportation solutions. Over \$100 million in public funds has been committed to the Coney Island area since 2005.

Department of 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.

About NYCEDC

New York City Economic Development Corporation is the City's primary vehicle for promoting economic growth in each of the five boroughs. NYCEDC's mission is to stimulate growth through expansion and redevelopment programs that encourage investment, generate prosperity and strengthen the City's competitive position. NYCEDC serves as an advocate to the business community by building relationships with companies that allow them to take advantage of New York City's many opportunities.