

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

November 15, 2002

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**NYC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION AND DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING ANNOUNCE  
SELECTION OF CONSULTANTS FOR  
URBAN DESIGN SERVICES FOR QUEENS PLAZA**

*Development of Streetscape and Landscape Design for Long Island City*

November 15, 2002, New York City -- New York City Economic Development Corporation (EDC) President Andrew M. Alper and New York City Department of City Planning (DCP) Director Amanda M. Burden today announced that a consultant team has been selected to provide design services to assist in the development of a streetscape and landscape design plan for Queens Plaza. The design team, headed by Margie Ruddick Environmental Planning and Design, will provide recommendations regarding the area's public spaces and parkland, including public art, lighting, street furniture, and crosswalk designs.

"Queens Plaza is the gateway to Queens," said EDC President Alper. "As the City moves forward with initiatives to create new central business districts in Long Island City, Downtown Brooklyn and the Far West Side of Manhattan, projects like this have a very high priority. Improving the public spaces and traffic flow of Queens Plaza is important to the millions of people who live or work in the area, or pass through daily on foot, in cars, busses and subways."

The goal of the project is to create a strong image for Queens Plaza and make it more attractive to businesses by developing an overall streetscape plan and park design for the area between the East River and the Thompson Avenue/Van Dam intersection. The RFP was designed to attract a multi-disciplinary team with experience designing complex public streets, plazas and parks who will effectively work with EDC and DCP to develop an artistic and environmentally responsive streetscape and landscape design for Queens Plaza.

Amanda M. Burden, Director of the New York City Department of Planning said, "Long Island City is a unique, vibrant neighborhood with enormous potential. Its assets are legion - from its transportation infrastructure, its culture, its distinctive character, its vast waterfront, its proximity to Manhattan and wealth of developable sites. This area has the potential to be one of the most enviable regional mixed-use districts in New York City and through initiatives such as this, we can foster and catalyze the types of development that everyone would like to see happen here. I am confident that the design team headed by Margie Ruddick and including Michael Sorkin Studios and environmental artist Michael Singer will provide the vision needed to develop a streetscape plan to achieve the area's potential."

"This is a fantastic project, combining greening, infrastructure, stormwater and energy to give new vitality to a remarkable civic structure and space," said Landscape Planner Margie Ruddick. "We are very excited that our multidisciplinary team has been selected."

Margie Ruddick's work in sustainable environmental planning and design brings together high caliber designers, engineers, scientists, and artists. The firm's accomplishments include projects such as the Living Water Park in Chengdu, China, the Shillim Institute for Sustainable Design, an ecological resort and conference center in India; the Rivers and Estuaries Center on the Hudson, and the Generation Bridge at the University of Pennsylvania.

This project represents the second phase of the three-phase *Queens Plaza Bike and Pedestrian Improvement Project*. The first phase involved the development and simulation of a roadway redesign plan for Queens Plaza between Crescent Street and Queens Plaza East to improve traffic flows, create bicycle lanes, widen medians and introduce new crosswalks to improve pedestrian safety and circulation. The design was approved by NYC Department of Transportation in June 2002. The consultants are expected to complete the plan by Spring 2004.

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**About EDC**

The New York City Economic Development Corporation is the City's primary vehicle for promoting economic growth in each of the five boroughs. EDC's mission is to stimulate job growth through expansion and redevelopment programs that encourage investment, generate prosperity and strengthen the City's competitive position. EDC 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.

**About DCP**

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.