The 197-a Plan Process
What is a 197-a Plan?

• Section 197-a of the City Charter authorizes plans for the improvement of the city, its boroughs and communities.

• Adopted 197-a plans provide guidance for future actions of city agencies in the areas addressed.
Who may sponsor a 197-a plan?

- Community Boards
- Borough Boards
- Borough Presidents
- DCP
- The City Planning Commission
- The Mayor
The Importance of 197-a Plans

• Sets forth a community’s shared vision for its neighborhoods

• Promotes consensus-building among various local groups

• Encourages dialogue between the community and city agencies

• Can set the stage for shifts in city policy
How many plans have been adopted and submitted?

- Since 1992, twelve plans have been adopted; one was withdrawn and one was disapproved.

- In April 2008, Brooklyn Community Board 7 submitted a plan that is currently under review.
Department of City Planning’s Role

- Provides technical assistance and information on land use, demographics, housing and community facilities

- Reviews community-based planning options to help community decide whether a 197-a plan is appropriate

- Provides guidance on review process and plan content to address issues identified

- Reviews draft plan before submission to advise on threshold issues and potential policy concerns
Steps in Review Process

1. Letter of Intent/Plan Preparation
2. Plan Submission
3. Threshold Review
4. Threshold Determination
5. Environmental Review & Determination
6. Community/Borough Review
7. City Planning Commission Substantive Review
8. City Council Review
9. Distribution of Adopted Plan
How does a plan meet threshold standards?

**Form and Content**
- Clear language and coherent form
- Documents problems and justifies for recommendations
- Documents public participation

**Sound Planning Policy**
- Considers long-range consequences, including impact on economic and housing opportunities
- Shows understanding of fiscal and practical feasibility of implementing proposals
- Goals and recommendations are within the legal authority of the city to undertake
- Documents consultations with city or state agencies
If meets threshold standards, then environmental review.

Threshold Review

Department of City Planning

If DCP requests revisions

If board submits revisions

If CPC requests revisions

Meets threshold standards, but review may need to be coordinated with related plans.

Threshold Determination

City Planning Commission

If meets threshold standards, then environmental review.
Environmental Review

Public Review And Recommendations

Community Board → Public Hearing → 60 Days
Borough President → Public Hearing → 120 Days
Borough Board → Public Hearing → 120 Days

Department of City Planning
Commission Substantive Review

includes public hearing

City Planning Commission

CPC approves or approves with modifications

CPC disapproves 197-a plan END
City Council Review
includes public hearing

City Council approves 197-a plan

City Council disapproves 197-a plan

Distribution of Adopted Plan

Adopted 197-a Plan provides guidance for future actions of city agencies

City Council approves with modifications

END
Implementation of Adopted 197-a Plans

• Sponsors need to monitor agency implementation of plan recommendations.

• DCP continues to work with the plan’s sponsors to carry out plan recommendations, particularly those related to proposed rezonings.