

## NEW YORK CITY COMPREHENSIVE WATERFRONT PLAN

### Summary of Initial Comments Received

In the first phase of the public planning process for *Vision 2020*, City Planning identified the full scope of goals and issues for the plan to address. The selection was based on the department's survey of existing conditions and resources on the waterfront. The initial set of goals and issues was presented to the public on April 8th, 2010. [See the complete presentation.](#)

The general theme of the evening was the desire for New York City to fully realize its potential as a waterfront city. City Planning received near consensus on the preliminary set of goals and issues, though the department also received many suggestions on how to further refine and expand upon this initial framework. The following is a summary of the comments that were heard that night, as well as comments received through the web and via email during phase 1. Comments are organized around the five functional categories of the waterfront.

#### **The Public Waterfront**

Several spoke of the need to make waterfront public spaces functional, not just aesthetic, and provide access points to the water for a variety of activities, including recreational boating, ferry service, and small human-powered crafts. Public spaces should also accommodate a variety of educational, recreational, and cultural activities that bring people to the waterfront. Many recognized the challenges to funding the creation of new waterfront parks and their ongoing maintenance, which typically have far higher costs than inland parks.

#### **The Natural Waterfront**

Some speakers wanted to see waterfront parks throughout the city accommodate ecological processes and wildlife habitat. Many who submitted comments identified the important connections between the health of the city's waterways and greater public awareness and interaction with the water. Water quality is a key determinant in expanding access to the water for a variety of recreational activities, including boating, swimming, and fishing.

#### **The Working Waterfront**

Speakers spoke with pride of the historic importance of New York City's working waterfront, and how it continues to provide jobs and tax revenue. The supporters of maritime industry discussed the need to promote these economic activities through dredging and infrastructural investments that will prepare the port for the future. Comments also expressed the desire to modernize waterfront industrial practices through sustainable practices and to expand the use of waterborne transportation for industrial and commercial activities.

#### **The Redeveloping Waterfront**

Upland residential, commercial, and retail uses create waterfront destinations with lively public spaces. Speakers commented that such development requires careful planning as to providing adequate infrastructure, such as public transportation, and should allow for the integration of public open space. Speakers added that the preservation of historic structures is important to consider when areas are redeveloped, and that new development should participate in existing programs like inclusionary zoning to expand affordable housing on the waterfront.

#### **The Blue Network**

The question of how to create a more water-centric city has clearly captured the imagination of many New Yorkers. Representatives of the recreational boating community, including "human-powered" boaters such as kayakers and other types of rowers, have advocated for an expanded network of launch points and waterside facilities that can accommodate a diverse range of boats, from small canoes to larger ships, and including historic vessels which have special needs. People also commented on their concern about the potential impacts of climate change on the city's waterfront neighborhoods and coastal ecology.