

NEW YORK CITY COMPREHENSIVE WATERFRONT PLAN

Summary of Comments on the Draft Recommendations

During the third phase of the public planning process for Vision 2020, the Department of City Planning reviewed the information collected from the 6 public workshops over the summer and suggestions made online and by email. Based on this review, and from discussions with partnering City agencies, the planning team drafted a set of [Draft Recommendations](#) that were posted online in September. A public meeting was held on October 12th, 2010 to present the Draft Recommendations of *Vision 2020*. [View the presentation](#). At this meeting and via this website, more than 500 comments were received on the draft recommendations, summarized below.

- While many praised the extensive and transparent public outreach process thus far, participants offered a range of specific suggestions to the Dept. of City Planning on how to refine the plan's reach and programmatic recommendations. New areas worthy of examination were suggested, such as Lemon Creek on the South Shore of Staten Island. Several speakers called for existing recommendations to be made more specific, such as waterfront access in Co-op City in the East Bronx.
- Equity was one of the major themes of the evening. Environmental justice advocates urged the City to examine the permitting process for industrial projects in Significant Maritime and Industrial Areas (SMIAs), predominantly located in communities of color, to ensure that policies do not place disproportionate burdens on these neighborhoods. Advocates were concerned with impacts of industrial activities and hazardous materials on public health and the environment, as well as potential implications of storm surges. Speakers recognized these industrial businesses as valuable sources of jobs, but spoke of the need to grow these areas in ways that promote environmental sustainability and meet the needs of local residents, through green jobs, job training, brownfield clean-up, etc.
- Permitting reform was also on the mind of many environmental advocates. These speakers expressed concerns over potential environmental degradation as a result of any efforts to make permitting more transparent and efficient.
- Equitable access to the Blue Network was another major topic. Some spoke of the opportunity for greenways in all five boroughs to unite the city's waterfront, while others spoke of water as a public resource that should be accessible for everyone. There is an incredible diversity of recreational boaters beyond canoes and kayaks, several speakers noted, and all these types of vessels should be recognized by the plan and accommodated in design guidelines for access points and storage. There was a call to create a more equitable distribution of waterfront public access with particular attention to neighborhoods such as the North Shore of Staten Island, the South Bronx, Canarsie, Sunset Park, Red Hook, and others.
- Many comments reiterated that the waterfront should be put to productive uses, providing the housing and jobs a growing city needs. Speakers recommended that the plan consider economic development in a wider lens, with consideration of how to promote cultural events and tourism as a means to grow New York City's economy. In terms of housing, one speaker noted that housing on the waterfront should be affordable and accessible for all New Yorkers.
- The concept of enhancing the use of the Blue Network for recreation, transportation, and more, continues to garner extensive support. Speakers asked for more specific recommendations regarding short-sea shipping (regional freight movement by water), suggested waterborne emergency evacuation plans that include refueling, and suggested new sites for ferry service, such as Roosevelt Island.
- A couple of comments concerned plans for creating climate resilience. One speaker noted the plan should address the causes and effects of climate change, and of the need to identify climate sensitive zones of the city.
- Several spoke of the need for the plan to recognize and protect historic resources on the waterfront, and one speaker urged the plan to consider historic vessels as part of this category.