



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Kristen Gonzalez

## Long Island City Neighborhood Plan Testimony

KRISTEN GONZALEZ June 18, 2025

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As both an elected representative and resident of Long Island City, I am testifying to emphasize the need for a truly comprehensive vision for community development in LIC as we consider the Department of City Planning's Long Island City Neighborhood Plan. Thank you to CB1 and CB2 for being active participants throughout this process.

Between 2010 and 2020, LIC built over 20,000 new housing units, increasing LIC's population by 78%. As a result, it is true that our neighborhood has struggled with the impacts of development, including traffic, a lack of school seats, a lack of open space, and overtaxed stormwater infrastructure. This plan proposes to increase the number of residential units by 14,700, which is an estimated 30,000 new neighbors in the next 10 years. This is a significant population increase, and as an elected representative of this neighborhood, it is my job to advocate for a Long Island City that works for all of us, and to ensure that any changes do not diminish quality-of-life for new and long-time LIC residents.

We deserve a neighborhood with vast open green space and public recreation sites. We deserve small class sizes, live/workspaces that support the growth of LIC as an arts and culture hub, a fully functioning and accessible public transit system, and freedom from traffic congestion and the negative air quality impacts that come with it.

I am very encouraged that this planning process included community engagement and conversations about a positive vision for this neighborhood. I am also encouraged about the prospect of adding 4,800 units of affordable housing given our housing and affordability crisis. I want to certainly thank every person who has been part of the feedback process. I also want to thank the elected officials involved, including Councilmember Won, who has driven this city planning process, Assemblymembers Zohran Mamdani and Claire Valdez, and Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez. It's truly incredible to see so many of us get involved!

After reviewing the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), I do want to raise some concerns about achieving our positive vision. First, the DEIS notes that there would be no significant impacts to LIC's current stormwater and drainage management. However, I remain concerned by the planned development of permeable waterfront open space for high-density residential below the 50-year flood plain.

Transit and street safety are also essential to quality-of-life for our neighborhood. To accommodate the influx of new neighbors would require an additional two southbound 7 trains, 3 southbound E trains, one southbound F train and two southbound and two northbound G trains.

This proposal would also impact 44 intersections during peak hours and require DOT to implement significant traffic engineering improvements to fully mitigate this impact. Without these mitigations, air quality will remain a significant adverse impact, with an estimated increase in PM 2.5 concentrations at several intersections, including Vernon Boulevard and 44th Drive and 46th Ave.

Finally, this plan is estimated to decrease LIC's total open space ratio per resident by 18.6 percent, even though LIC currently has the 3rd worst open space ratio in the city. To fully realize the potential of this plan and improve quality of life for all LIC residents, we must

better understand the feasibility of these mitigations and secure commitments from private developers, NYCDOT and the MTA that they will see them through.

As a State Senator, my primary role in this city-level process is to advocate for my constituents to ensure that their voices are heard and fully reflected in the final decisions made about the LIC Neighborhood Plan. As both an elected representative and a resident, I want to see Long Island City grow, I want to see affordable housing built, and I want to realize a future where all residents, new and old, have the best experience living in our neighborhood. I certainly look forward to working with everyone here, and across levels of government, toward a positive vision for the future of Long Island City.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kristen Gonzalez", with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Senator Kristen Gonzalez