The Future of Sunnyside Yard: Green Building and a Transition to a Green Economy

New York Building Congress
February 10, 2020
What is Sunnyside Yard?

• 180-acre active railyard owned by Amtrak (142 acres), MTA (31 acres - City air rights), and small private parcel (7 acres)

• Critical piece of regional rail infrastructure since 1910

• One of the busiest passenger railyards in the nation

• Critical Main Line tracks, train storage, and maintenance facilities for Amtrak’s Northeast Corridor

• Also tracks and servicing for NJT and LIRR trains; Metro-North trains will use Yard in future post-Penn Access
Phases of Sunnyside Yard Master Planning Process

Blue-Sky Listening

- First Public Meeting
  - Oct. 24
  - 400+ Attendees

Workshopping Draft Concepts

- Second Public Meeting
  - Mar. 26
  - 200+ Attendees

- Third Public Meeting
  - Sept. 16
  - 175+ Attendees

Refining the Master Plan

- Digital Town Hall
  - Dec. 4
  - 100+ Attendees

- Plan Release

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<th>2018</th>
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- Sept. 2018 – Feb. 2019
  - 75+ One-on-one stakeholder interviews

- Feb. 2019 – May 2019
  - Stakeholder group interviews

- June 2019 – Aug. 2019
  - Community Events

- Summer 2018 – Winter 2019
  - Quarterly Steering Committee Meetings
The Sunnyside Yard Master Plan is a framework to guide future decision-making, cementing public goods while maintaining flexibility to evolve over time.
The Plan
Open Space and Social Infrastructure

60 acres of open space, distributes across the Yard to ensure connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods.

The “bedrock of civil society” distributed along open space network to cement the Plan in key community resources.
Sunnyside Yard’s position within the regional rail networks gives it potential to connect to the entire Northeast.

Capital investments like Sunnyside Station, BRT, and a new subway line can expand access to economic opportunities.
The Master Plan extends existing commercial hubs in western Queens to support businesses of various sizes.

The Master Plan augments Western Queens’ has a rich landscape of trade and educational organizations with new institutional space.
Queens has a long history of affordable, planned communities.

Sunnyside Yard would be an integrated, inclusive, and affordable part of the western Queens fabric.
Green Buildings and a Transition to a Green Economy
What We’ve Heard

- Sustainability in everything
- Pilot cutting edge technologies at Sunnyside Yard
- Create a job creation pipeline for the future connected to sustainability technologies
- Support local businesses and workforce
- Incubation spaces and the upskilling of for major industries, particularly green industries
- Unions strengthen the sustainability of communities
- Community resilience through initiatives around education, public youth programs, and others that
- Diversity and inclusion of communities that reflect different demographics and income support community resilience
- Encourage more good jobs that lead to careers and workforce development strategies like union jobs, MWBE, local hiring, etc.
Green Building and a Transition to a Green Economy

What does the plan do?

• **Large-scale construction opportunity** that will create almost **20,000 jobs** across **many industries** over **decades**

• Lays out **sustainability and resiliency principles** to **guide all future development**

• Proposes a **strategy** to **grow the green economy**

• Advocates for **workforce development** and **social protections** that will **enable a just transition**
Planning for the Future at Scale

- **140 acres** of new publicly-controlled land that will house a variety of uses

- Constructed in **many phases over decades**

- New buildings, public spaces and neighborhood infrastructure that can employ **cutting edge, sustainable and resilient design**

The Master Plan includes:

- Housing
- Open space
- Social infrastructure
- Office space
- Industrial and “Commdustrial”
- Institutional campus
Environmental Impacts of Construction and Development

Key Considerations

• Embodied Carbon in Materials
• Construction Processes
• Building Emissions
• Future projections of climate impacts
• Resiliency of building systems and infrastructure

Global CO$_2$ Emissions by Sector

- Building Operations: 28%
- Industry: 30%
- Transportation: 22%
- Building Materials and Construction: 11%
- Other: 9%

The Plan Fully Integrates Sustainable and Resilience Planning Concepts

*Draft perspectives are for illustrative purposes only*
Sunnyside Yard must be a carbon neutral neighborhood

Cross-laminated timber construction to significantly reduce embodied carbon impacts and serve as a carbon sink

Highly efficient buildings and integration of renewable energy infrastructure to support City-wide progress toward a fully renewable grid

Support green economy research and development to enable innovation in carbon-light materials and construction methods
Sunnyside Yard must **embrace circularity in urban systems**

Resources like waste heat and water can be **captured and reused**

Local, **circular supply chains** for food and materials can be created
Sunnyside Yard must adapt to the extreme effects of climate change

The Yard can house public amenities and resources in an elevated area away from the flood zone

Decentralized infrastructure and building systems will be designed to withstand climate intensified weather

Affordable housing is key to safeguard against exacerbating inequities and perpetuating environmental injustices
Sunnyside Yard must grow the green economy in NYC

Green design and construction opportunities will be generated at a scale to create jobs across many industries over many decades.

Targeted research and education can build workforce and industry pipelines that will sustain a transformed economy.

Social protections and new business models that support a just transition.
Growing a Green Economy

Workforce development and education programming

Policy advocacy and reform

Master Plan Release

Master Plan Implementation

Workforce development and education programming:
- Workforce development and education programming
- Policy advocacy and reform

Research & education institution established:
- New partnerships for pipeline building and workforce support
- Targeted research, development, and testing

Economic benefits for Queens, NYC, and region:
- Economic benefits for Queens, NYC, and region

New materials, methods, technologies utilized for more sustainable construction at Sunnyside Yard:
- New materials, methods, technologies utilized for more sustainable construction at Sunnyside Yard

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Leverage institutional space to create partnerships

Build a pipeline helping students and professionals enter the green workforce

Workforce Development & Small Business Support

Social Linkages & Protections
Illustrative Concepts for Discussion
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