



November 4, 2019

Mayor Bill de Blasio  
City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor De Blasio:

We are writing to request meetings with your top advisors on housing, economic development, education, climate resilience, social services, and small business services to discuss Industry City's rezoning proposal. We hope to integrate the Administration into a more comprehensive framework for equitable development in Sunset Park. The Administration's partnership is critical as Sunset Park explores a more comprehensive response to one of the most significant private rezoning proposals of our time.

We request, in writing, your commitment to meet with us prior to Brooklyn Community Board 7's ULURP deadline for approving or rejecting Industry City's proposal, which is December 18th, 2019. We ask for this urgency as we believe that residents and their Community Board cannot adequately assess the impact of Industry City's rezoning without beginning conversations with your Administration about the scale and variety of neighborhood investments that can be part of a more comprehensive alternative.

This request comes one week after the City Planning Commission certified the private rezoning application for a Sunset Park property known as Industry City. Industry City is a 5.3 million square foot complex of 16 buildings in the Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Business Zone (IBZ.) Since purchasing the property in 2013, the current ownership has invested hundreds of millions of dollars into the campus to expand commercial leasing opportunities. The current ownership claims that in six years they have increased the number of businesses on site to over 550, growing jobs from 1,900 to over 7,000. The owners further claim that their proposed rezoning will more than double this number of jobs by unlocking 1.3 million square feet of new floor area and introducing currently prohibited commercial and academic uses.

Industry City's vision to generate thousands of jobs in film, media, design, technology, fashion, and manufacturing is aligned with your 2017 New York Works plan. In the plan, you call for the use of public tools, including land use actions, to create 100,000 jobs by 2027. Importantly, your plan calls for not only job generation, but also for ensuring that every New Yorker has a fair shot at accessing these opportunities. In the plan, you pledge to "put the force of City government behind a new generation of middle-class jobs" by investing in "our workers, in our buildings, in our neighborhoods, and in our companies." This is exactly the kind of public commitment Sunset Park needs as we contemplate the Industry City proposal.

There is no doubt that upzoning 20% of Sunset Park's industrial waterfront property will have dramatic consequences for decades to come, potentially unlocking significant economic benefits for the

neighborhood and New York City generally. But at this moment in our city's history, major upzonings often induce real estate activity that can have devastating impacts on current residential and commercial tenants. Sunset Park is a community that is predominantly working class, immigrant, and majority-minority. We must be extremely vigilant about weighing the local and city-wide benefits of this rezoning with the significant negative consequences on our most vulnerable neighbors.

We know that like us, you believe that our decisions as elected officials and public servants should work to make our city more equitable. It was in that spirit that the Council Member proposed an alternative framework for shaping the future of Industry City: a modified rezoning of the property, direct accountability from the developer to the community, and investments from the City of New York to address the community's serious needs. This final piece is critical, for while the City stands to benefit greatly from new jobs in tech, culture, and manufacturing, the negative impacts will largely be felt locally.

Your administration has rightly paired recent major rezonings with direct public contributions to local housing, workforce, education, and resilience needs. An unprecedented upzoning on the Sunset Park waterfront similarly requires the City's partnership to address critical neighborhood challenges that are directly connected to the proposed changes of Industry City.

So far, our community discussions have yielded the following specific items in need of Mayoral support:

- Supporting an expansion of the Certificate of No Harassment to Brooklyn Community District 7;
- Expanding the Right to Counsel program to zip codes 11220 and 11232;
- Funding a technical high school modeled on the STEAM Center at Brooklyn Navy Yard; and
- Reviewing a legislative package including mandatory job counts by NYCEDC for major rezonings.

In addition to these items, we would like to discuss other major neighborhood concerns with your administration:

- Significant climate and environmental threats to our industrial, working waterfront;
- Widespread housing insecurity among working class and immigrant households;
- Significant underemployment and barriers to quality jobs; and,
- Ongoing deterioration of the Industrial Business Zone with significant conversion to non-industrial/manufacturing uses.

We hope your Administration is able to meet with us to discuss the proposed rezoning and associated investments our community needs. We look forward to hearing from your team and scheduling a conversation to take place before December 18th.

Sincerely,



Cesar Zuniga  
Chair, Brooklyn Community Board 7



Carlos Menchaca  
New York City Council Member, District 38

&

Cc:

Vicki Been, Deputy Mayor for Housing and Economic Development

J. Phillip Thompson, Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy Initiatives

Gregg Bishop, Commissioner, Small Business Services

Richard Carranza, Chancellor, Department of Education

Dr. Heminia Palacio, Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services

Steven Banks, Commissioner, Human Resources Administration

Marisa Lago, Chair, Department of City Planning

James Patchett, President and CEO, NYC Economic Development Corporation

Louise Carroll, Commissioner, Department of Housing Preservation and Development

Dominic Williams, Chief Policy Advisor, Mayor's Office of Planning and Policy

U.S. Congress Member Nydia Velázquez

U.S. Congress Member Jerrold Nadler

New York State Senator Zellnor Myrie

New York State Senator Velmanette Montgomery

New York State Assembly Member Felix Ortiz

Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams