



FRIENDS OF THE HIGH LINE

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Friends of the High Line

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**MAJOR MILESTONE FOR THE HIGH LINE'S PRESERVATION
AT THE RAIL YARDS**

Department of City Planning will move toward City ownership of the High Line north of 30th Street

This afternoon, the New York City Planning Director Amanda Burden announced that the Department of City Planning will initiate the public review process necessary for the City to take ownership of the historic High Line structure at the West Side Rail Yards.

This announcement signals a critical step by the Bloomberg administration toward the preservation of the entire length of the High Line structure, and a major victory for supporters of the High Line. By acquiring the structure, the City will guarantee that the future of the High Line is decided through a public review process.

The non-profit Friends of the High Line has been advocating for full preservation of the historic High Line structure north of 30th Street, including the 10th Avenue Spur, since the planning process for the redevelopment of this site began several years ago. The group has worked along with the administration of Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, the MTA and the Empire State Development Corporation, the state agencies that own the underlying land, and The Related Companies, the site's developer, to ensure that the entire High Line is included in plans for the site.

The High Line south of 30th Street is already owned by the City of New York. This section was donated by CSX Transportation, Inc. in 2005, following a public review process similar to the one announced today. The southernmost part of the structure opened this past summer as a public park. In the current Western Rail Yards zoning proposal, the section of the High Line running on the perimeter of the West Side Rail Yards is proposed to be improved as open space as part of the site's development; however, the zoning itself does not address the critical issue of ownership.

City acquisition of the High Line requires the City's Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP), a several-month public process which will involve community input, as well as input from Community Board 4, Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer, and a vote by the City Council, all of whom have been highly supportive of the High Line's full preservation. It is expected that the ULURP application will be certified by the end of the year.

Once the ULURP process is complete, the City will be authorized to acquire the High Line north of 30th Street. The City will work with CSX, the railroad company which owns the structure, as well as the MTA and the Empire State Development Corporation, who each own portions of the land over which the High Line passes, to complete the transaction.

On receiving word of the announcement, Friends of the High Line's Co-Founder Robert Hammond said, "This decision by the Department of City Planning is the single most important piece of good news we've heard about the High Line at the rail yards. We are thrilled that the City has taken direction toward preserving this important reminder of New York City's industrial heritage, and we look forward to working with the City, the MTA, and the Related Companies to incorporate this one-of-a-kind park into the rail yards site. While there is still work to be done, this announcement shows what happens when community members rally together for a preservation effort."

About the High Line

The High Line is a public park built on a 1.5-mile elevated freight rail structure. Originally constructed in the 1930s to deliver meat and agricultural goods to the industrial West Side, the High Line connects the west side neighborhoods of the Meatpacking District, West Chelsea, and Clinton/Hell's Kitchen. The section below 30th Street is owned by the City of New York, and is operated under the jurisdiction of the Department of Parks & Recreation, in partnership with the non-profit Friends of the High Line.