

MAS Outlines Path Forward for Comprehensive Planning in NYC

New Report: "Towards Comprehensive Planning: Moving Beyond Our Comfort Zone"

(December 16, 2021 | New York, NY) The Municipal Art Society of New York (MAS) released a new policy brief outlining ways New York City can advance a collaborative, community-based comprehensive planning framework. [*Towards Comprehensive Planning: Moving Beyond Our Comfort Zone*](#) follows more than a year of debate over City Council Speaker Corey Johnson's [*Planning Together*](#) framework, a proposal which the City Council declined to bring to a vote in the 2021 legislative session.

Currently, New York City does not have a comprehensive plan—a single document that facilitates future decision-making by specifying a municipality's long-term development goals concerning land use, infrastructure, housing, open space, transit, and other types of services, in addition to addressing concerns such as historic preservation, equity, resiliency, and sustainability. With this brief, MAS examines how a comprehensive plan can be a vehicle for confronting and rectifying past inequities while combating the challenges we face today. It frames the debate by defining comprehensive planning, articulating why New York City needs to embrace comprehensive planning at this pivotal moment, providing an overview of lessons learned from other cities, and presenting recommendations the City must take to move New York City towards a comprehensive planning framework.

"This report reinforces how critical a community-based, comprehensive planning framework is to the future of our city," said **Elizabeth Goldstein, President of MAS**. "We are facing a series of historic, interconnected challenges: pandemic recovery, accelerating climate change, aging infrastructure, and a pervasive housing crisis, to name just a few. New York's incoming leadership cannot settle for maintaining the status quo—a piecemeal planning approach that has only served to exacerbate disparities between neighborhoods."

MAS delivered the following recommendations, grounded in more than a year of research and information sharing with other cities:

1. **Convene a City Charter Revision Commission** focusing on comprehensive planning, equity, ULURP, and civic engagement.
2. **Strengthen partnerships and engagement** between new political leaders and Community Boards concerning long-term citywide comprehensive planning to build trust and promote collaboration in the land use process.
3. **Provide increased funding and resources for all Community Boards and Borough President Offices** in the next budget process in order to fully engage in community-based planning.
4. **Utilize the Equitable Development Data Tool** for proactive community planning purposes to identify and invest in rectifying disparities in historically underrepresented neighborhoods concerning access to affordable housing, parks and open space, schools, and transit.

5. **Implement [Intro. 1620-A](#)** in coordination with existing City policies and plans based on robust community outreach to fully address the consequences of climate change.
6. **Identify and prioritize solutions that help facilitate a comprehensive planning framework** that creates a shared, action-oriented citywide vision balancing community and citywide needs.

About the Municipal Art Society of New York

The Municipal Art Society of New York (MAS) lifts up the voices of the people in the debates that shape New York's built environment and leads the way toward a more livable city from sidewalk to skyline. MAS envisions a future in which all New Yorkers share in the richness of city life—where growth is balanced, character endures, and a resilient future is secured. For more information, visit mas.org