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## INFRASTRUCTURE ON STATEN ISLAND

### Staten Island Business Partnership

Staten Island is a rapidly growing borough both in terms of population and commerce. However, comprehensive planning and associated infrastructure investment are woefully behind pace. Therefore, many sites do not have the appropriate roads, transit, sewers, utilities and resiliency infrastructure to handle proposed development. This has led numerous sites to lay vacant and stall the creation of thousands of jobs.

As a community it is imperative that we push local elected officials and agencies to develop infrastructure based plans within their larger efforts such as the West Shore and North Shore 2030 plans. There are dozens of critical strategies that can be utilized to achieve these goals but more than anything, Staten Island must be known as a borough where infrastructure investment has led to properly phased construction, an ease of development and a clear path for construction.

1. **Roads & Transit:** Staten Islanders are keenly aware of the limitations we experience in terms of roads and transit. Unlike the rest of New York City, we have virtually no road grid system and the main arterial roads are typically meandering paths such as Richmond Terrace, Amboy Road and Arthur Kill Road. There is also a significant need for road infrastructure through wide swaths of land where traffic backups are constant including new service roads along the West Shore Expressway and improved east-west options on the South Shore and Mid-Island. Additionally, transit investment remains a paramount concern for all Staten Island stakeholders. A rapid transit system consisting of the Staten Island Railway, North Shore Bus Rapid Transit and West Shore Light Rail is not just needed – it is essential. Supplemental connections including fast ferry and the Staten Island Gondola to Bayonne are also valuable projects which must be funded and supported.
2. **Sewers:** Perhaps the greatest infrastructure limitation for business growth on Staten Island is sewer access. The borough is significantly behind pace in terms of wastewater, stormwater and Bluebelt infrastructure. This is extremely apparent on the West Shore and South Shore where industrial and commercial development is occurring at a rapid pace. However, building size is limited by wastewater outflow and effective space utilization is compromised by stormwater and flooding issues. A “proof of concept” strategy to address this is the work that SIEDC has undertaken with the West Shore Business Improvement District (BID). The BID has worked with the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to draft a Drainage Plan for the area between the Goethals Bridge and Freshkills Park, completed a Brownfield Opportunity Area study to determine the impact of sea level rise, worked with New York City Economic

Development Corporation (NYCEDC) to restore the Saw Mill Creek wetlands and secured funding to develop a green infrastructure stormwater management plan for the area.

3. **Resiliency:** Staten Island was severely impacted by Hurricane Sandy in 2012. Numerous projects are underway including the East Shore Seawall, Living Breakwaters/Billion Oyster Project and East and South Shore microgrids to address future storm events. However, the complexity, cost and regulations related to these projects will delay actual development for years. It is critical that as a borough we re-examine waterfront zoning, road conditions, low-cost flood prevention and policy efforts such as the College of Staten Island's "Go to High Ground" plan.
  
4. **Utilities:** Utility construction in urban areas is complicated and expensive. National Grid (gas) and Con Edison (electricity) are working diligently to keep pace with demand but major projects – especially on the North Shore – are challenging their bandwidth. The most effective method that we can utilize regarding utilities investment is a long-term planning approach related to neighborhood scale development. Both St. George and the West Shore Business Improvement District (BID) are examples of locations where projects are being built in different stages and at different times which will cause a strain on utilities. A five and ten year vision plan through non-profits and government will allow utilities to plan their resource allocations more effectively.