

Your LIC: Economic Empowerment and Career Development Summary Findings (see full text [HERE](#))

This is a summary of key takeaways and recommendations by participants in community engagement activities focused on **Economic Empowerment and Career Development**. This outreach was conducted by the Your LIC team and included meetings with the Queensbridge, Ravenswood, Woodside, and Astoria Houses Tenants Associations as well as [online submissions](#) on this topic by the public at [YourLIC.nyc](#). This outreach culminated in a public workshop with approximately 120 community residents on November 21, 2019 at Jacob A. Riis Neighborhood Settlement.

Next Steps

The Your LIC team will use the takeaways, ideas and recommendations that emerged from these engagement efforts to inform economic empowerment, workforce, and career development strategies for the future waterfront development project. You can read a more detailed compilation of the community's feedback on this topic [HERE](#).

Takeaway 1: Strengthen Community. The Long Island City waterfront should help to address the economic divide in the community and incorporate strategies that connect longtime and newer residents. It should also spur individual economic growth that allows people to be part of the community as it changes, and offer pathways for small businesses and entrepreneurs to expand and prosper.

"People need a chance. Not everyone goes to college or trade school. Even if you were locked up, people make mistakes. We need a place to walk in, explain your skills, where you can be hands-on." - Juanita, Your LIC story

Summary of Residents' Suggested Strategies (see full text [HERE](#))

- **Create Spaces that Bring People Together.** Build multiple indoor and outdoor spaces for the community to gather and share ideas, projects, work and recreation, while creating a sense of safety and security.
- **Provide a Mix of Spaces.** Create a wide range of community spaces, paying specific attention to accessibility and affordability. Spaces should be flexible to serve many constituencies over time, link new development with the existing community, and meet community needs including youth recreation, childcare services, mental health services, the arts, and social interests.

Takeaway 2: Build Vibrant Small Businesses and Entrepreneurs. The Long Island City waterfront should grow a diverse business community from different sectors by providing space for growth, flexibility, and shared services.

“The community needs to come together more. I went to business school and would like to find a way to use my skills to help people in the entire community, like start a food co-op. There has to be more opportunities for the entire community to become one and work together.” - Danielle, LIC resident, 11.21.19 meeting

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- **Create a Diverse Commercial Ecosystem:** Develop a range of affordability in rents and ownership, a wide mix of commercial spaces to accommodate businesses of all sizes, and specialized spaces for non-traditional businesses including studio and maker space, child care, technology companies, and more.
- **Support Entrepreneurs:** Build inviting entrepreneurship spaces that allow for flexibility and growth, shared services, community engagement, and specialized spaces to promote cross-industry collaboration and mentorship programs for entrepreneurs.
- **Give Priority to Small Businesses:** Ensure that priority is given to small businesses by working with government to reconcile different issues for small businesses, including financial elements, licensing, new business opportunities, access to material resources, and more. Physical space throughout the development should be used to promote small businesses and create a community of support.

Takeaway 3: Intertwine Education, Skills Training, and Economic Growth: The Long Island City waterfront should: support life-long career development with a focus on integrating all sectors of the community into appropriate levels of employment, link community-level economic development with economic empowerment at the individual level, calibrate education and training to different populations, and strengthen connections among local organizations and businesses.

“People need to know how they can start a business and take care of a family at the same time.” Daniel, Queensbridge resident, 11.21.19 meeting

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- **Youth:** Ensure the community provides high school and post-secondary vocational training for a diverse population, and provides space in the development to lower the barriers to entry. This training can include a range of life skills and soft skills. It can also prepare youth for careers in sustainability, technology, entrepreneurship, healthcare, and other growing fields. Training programs can help foster robust relationships with businesses in Long Island City to create meaningful internships and career development activities, ensure that education and training works for the non-college bound, and create robust connections with career counselors and meaningful mentors to engage new and long-term residents in growing the community.
- **Adults:** Create a space for an adult learning center to provide financial training and literacy, language training for second language speakers, computer training, coding and

tech literacy for jobs changes and job advancement, entrepreneurship, and training in fields such as nursing, cooking, healthcare, hospitality, construction, and more.

- **Elders:** Include spaces to teach new skills to community's elders with the expectation that the youth can act as both teachers, and, once learned, the seniors can act as mentors to the youth. Educate and engage active older adults with training for employment, mentoring, and volunteering in specific areas in the community.