

GROWTH STRATEGIES

CityWide Growth: Staten Island

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November 5, 2002

Lack of affordable housing is a major factor, if not the major factor, deterring companies from relocating and/or expanding in the New York region. (See McCall Report <http://nysosc3.osc.state.ny.us/osdc/rpt800/rpt800.htm>). The following describes the conclusion of the New York State Comptroller's report,

The development opportunities on Staten Island are diverse and significant. Although Staten Island has traditionally been viewed as a bedroom community, primarily experiencing growth in its residential market, a strong commercial, industrial and office development push has been underway on the island since the mid-nineteen eighties. This growth has helped to establish the island as a work destination and helped to diversify its economic base. The development focus is widespread and includes tourism-related development on the north shore, office development to the West, major industrial development in the northwest and continued growth in residential and commercial development in the south.

North Shore Development

The development of the North Shore centers around the revitalization of the island's main Intermodal Center, the St. George Ferry Terminal. It is the main circulation point for much of the commuter operations on the island and a destination for millions of tourists annually making the journey across New York Harbor to view the Statue of Liberty and other Harbor sites. The goal is to renovate the current utilitarian facility into a state-of-the-art Intermodal center and gateway tourist attraction. With its restoration comes the plan for connecting this captive tourist base and dispersing it to area tourist attractions. The terminal is a 191,000 sf building which will house 20,000 sf of retail space and more than 100,000 square feet of exterior harbor viewing decks. Adjacent to the terminal are three key development sites, all owned by the City of New York and all slated for new development. Directly north of the terminal lies a ___ acre property intended to ultimately house new commercial development anchored by the ** thousand square foot SIIAS Natural History Museum, a design developed by Peter Eisenman. In addition to the museum, the site is a candidate for additional tourism-related development. One site further to the North is a 20-acre site on which the City has just constructed a minor league baseball stadium to house the Single A Staten Island Yankee ball club. In addition to the stadium a waterfront esplanade and bikeway have been developed on the site. There is additional upland acreage that may become attractive for development in the long-term. Directly to the South of the terminal lies an historic site that has been designated as the future home of the national Lighthouse Museum, a national draw for tourists to New York City and all of those interested in the lore of American shipping history. The museum is slated for one of the four major landmark buildings on the site, with the other buildings planned for retail and office use. These major public developments are intended to spur further development in the neighboring government center of Saint George and along the

high-rise residential sites to the south of the terminal. This area is blessed with magnificent harbor views, good nearby housing stock, a critical mass of office space and excellent (by Staten Island standards) mass transit access. However, for the past several decades this area has languished economically and has not lived up to its billing as the central business district for Staten Island. An intended result of the recent public investment is to generate tourist growth that will enhance retail services, which should attract more office tenants to the area. A couple of additional developments that could enhance the activity in the St. George CBD are a recently renovated seven story office tower (the largest office building on the island) and a plan for a new courthouse at the site of a public parking lot one block west of the ferry terminal. The plans in place for tourism include connections to multiple nearby attractions including the Sailors Snug harbor complex, Fort Wadsworth and attractions throughout the island.

Homeport Development

A second major public assemblage that has been the topic of multiple development plans is the decommissioned Naval Homeport located about one mile south of the ferry terminal on the waterfront facing the Bay Ridge area of Brooklyn. This elongated and shallow site was abandoned by the Navy in the late 1980's and has since been targeted for redevelopment for everything from a racetrack to a film studio. Under City ownership and encumbered by poor transportation access and unadaptable naval facilities, recent City plans have sought to parcel up the property and target it for mixed-use development including residential, office and commercial space that would be attracted by the convenience of the nearby ferry and the unmatched views of the Harbor and the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge. The focus on the development of this site is also intended to make it a catalyst for private sector growth in the neighboring town of Stapleton and as a boost to the growing office development along the waterfront south of the Homeport.

Howland Hook / Port Ivory

To bolster jobs and strengthen the area manufacturing base, Staten Island has embarked upon an ambitious industrial expansion anchored by the Howland Hook Marine terminal. The marine terminal, which opened in the mid-1990's is a component of the Port Authority operated Port of New York. The operation is burgeoning and has recently taken over the abandoned Proctor and Gamble site, effectively doubling the size of the operation. In addition, Visy Paper has established a new recycling plant in this area strengthening this area as a major northeast industrial center.

Travis Office Park

In the 1980's, the City of New York assembled a number of corporate office park development sites along a stretch of open assemblages and wetland areas in the neighborhood of Travis. A critical mass was developed attracting technology industries with high tech facilities and moderate rentals. As the parks began to be occupied, new developments, providing high-class office development have begun to fill the additional available lots, expanding the strip into a corporate office park with campus-like facilities within City limits. The park is helping to significantly expand Staten Island's total office square footage.

Charleston

Another large commercially viable site is located at the intersection of Route 440 and Arthur Kill Road in the southern part of the island. This large development site already has been slated for a new public school and further commercial development is envisioned for the site. The site has been a candidate for big box retail, similar to the type of development taking place along the

western section of Forest Avenue, based upon the modification to the NYC Zoning laws concerning the size of retail square footages that would be allowed within City limits.

Mount Loretto

One of the largest remaining tract of private land left on the island is the Mount Loretto site. This large acreage located south of Hylan Boulevard in the Princess Bay section of Staten Island has been targeted as a new location for residential development. Although there is much discussion taking place over the make-up and zone of the residential community, it marks one of the last major new planned developments for the island as it reaches saturation of its available open space usable for residential development. This development is a signature of the end of more than fifty years of residential sprawl that has marked the growth of the southern regions of Staten Island.