



## **Bloomberg opens new JetBlue headquarters in Long Island City**

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Mayor Michael Bloomberg officially opened the new 200,000 s/f headquarters of JetBlue Airways in the Brewster Building in Long Island City. The new office consolidates JetBlue's regional corporate facilities, expands its footprint in New York City and demonstrates the successful economic revitalization of Long Island City. JetBlue's move to Long Island City was announced in 2010 after New York City won a multi-year competitive review process among cities nationwide. Bloomberg also marked the completion of the larger \$45 million roadway, pedestrian, and bicycle improvement project that has transformed the primary entry point into Queens. The city received more than 600 submissions for its contest to name the new 1.5-acre open space in Queens Plaza, and Bloomberg unveiled the winning name: Dutch Kills Green, submitted by both Harry Charalambides and James Stark, was chosen by a panel made up of city and community representatives. Bloomberg was joined at Queens Plaza North and the new office by JetBlue CEO Dave Barger, senator Charles Schumer, congresswoman Carolyn Maloney, state senator Michael Gianaris, Queens borough president Helen Marshall, council member Jimmy Van Bramer, Port Authority executive director Patrick Foye, New York City Economic Development Corp. president Seth Pinsky, Department of Parks & Recreation commissioner Adrian Benepe and Department of City Planning commissioner Amanda Burden.

"JetBlue has played a huge role in making New York City the nation's number one travel destination," said Bloomberg. "The many reasons why people come to New York as tourists on JetBlue planes also are good reasons why Jet Blue is expanding its corporate headquarters here. We couldn't be prouder that JetBlue has cast a major vote of confidence in Long Island City as a great place to do business."

"Since our start up in New York in 1998 and our first flight from JFK in 2000, JetBlue's home, heart and soul have always remained in New York," said Barger. "Now in our second decade, we are growing jobs with this new office, serving seven Empire State destinations with more daily seats between New York City and upstate than any other airline, and growing the regional economy with competitive fares. JetBlue is proud to stay here in New York, grow here in New York and continue being New York's hometown airline."

JetBlue's new headquarters combines its former Forest Hills office where more than 900 crewmembers and business partners worked, with its Darien, Conn. office where 70 crew members worked. JetBlue's crew members from Darien, who provide transactional financial support for the airline, now work alongside colleagues in Long Island City, bringing 70 jobs to the Empire State. The Brewster Building is owned by Brause Realty, a New York City-based real estate company. JetBlue is subleasing the space from MetLife, who will continue to maintain a presence at the location. The Brewster Building has a proud aviation history. It was built in 1911 and is where the Brewster

Aeronautical Company manufactured the Brewster F2A, also known as The Brewster Buffalo, the first monoplane fighter airplane used by the U.S. Navy in World War II.

The Queens Plaza enhancement project, which broke ground in 2009, includes improvements to the pedestrian and bicyclist environment as well as traffic flow, offering a respite for commuters, workers, residents and cyclists serving an exciting and evolving mixed-use neighborhood. The project area extends along Queens Plaza North and Queens Plaza South from Northern Blvd./Queens Plaza East west to 21st St. This transformative project provides the neighborhood with new crosswalks, sidewalks, countdown pedestrian signals, improved lighting, native trees and plantings - including 489 new trees, landscaped medians, an off-street bikeway, a separate pedestrian walkway, and its open space. Located at the plaza's eastern end, at the site of the former John F. Kennedy commuter parking lot, is the new, sustainably designed 1.5 acre open space - including wetlands, non-invasive and drought-tolerant native plantings and artist-designed benches and interlocking / permeable pavers to direct storm water to these plantings. The project also incorporated the historic millstones which were previously embedded in a traffic island. Preservation of these stones allows the current community to realize and understand Queens' and New York City's agricultural and historical past.

"This is just another example of why Jet Blue is truly New York's hometown airline," said Schumer. "By opening their new headquarters building right here in Long Island City, JetBlue is once again demonstrating their commitment to New York, and I wish them all the best in their new home."

"Today is a great day for the colorful, gorgeous mosaic that is New York City. With this morning's announcement that 'Dutch Kills Green' has been chosen as the name for the new 1.5-acre park in Queens Plaza, we're adding a touch of greenery to our lives - and today's ribbon-cutting for JetBlue's brand-new headquarters is complementing the new park with a touch of blue, an official team color not only for the Mets and the Yankees, but also for New York's hometown airline, now headquartered right in Long Island City," said Maloney.

"JetBlue's move to Long Island City is a thrilling addition to a neighborhood that continues to emerge as a hub for jobs, revenue and economic development," said Gianaris. "Today's announcement is excellent news for job creation in western Queens, which continues to see more large corporations, small businesses and economic development initiatives succeed here. I welcome JetBlue to the neighborhood and look forward to working with them to make our neighborhood that much better."

"It is wonderful to see the changes and improvements that have taken place over the past couple years at Queens Plaza in Long Island City," said assemblywoman Catherine Nolan. "These improvements to our community have not only helped to improve the roadways and pedestrian paths, it has made the area more welcoming to all who come to work or visit."

"In recent years, Queens Plaza has undergone unprecedented growth and progress with the addition of new housing, office and retail space that created jobs and a shot in the arm for our local economy. New landscaping, flood abatement systems, signage and traffic improvements have transformed the plaza into a new and much improved entrance to our borough. As the growth and progress continues, I thank the City and all our partners in government and the private sector who have worked together to make all this happen," said Marshall.

"The arrival of Jet Blue and the opening of a new park in Long Island City represent milestones in the ongoing transformation and rebirth of Queens Plaza, the gateway of Queens," said Van Bramer. "With over 1,000 Jet Blue crew members now calling the area home, both residents and workers will be able to enjoy the added green space and improved amenities. As a result of these efforts Dutch

Kills, Queens Plaza and all of Long Island City will be more vibrant, and full of local economic activity."

"The Port Authority's association with JetBlue can be traced all the way back to the airline's very first flight from JFK to Fort Lauderdale in 2000," said Foye. "Today, JetBlue serves nearly 14 million combined annual passengers at all four of our commercial airports. We're proud of this partnership that has delivered great service and thousands of jobs to the region, and applaud JetBlue as it moves into its new New York home."

"Queens Plaza, which was opened over a century ago to create a formal gateway to Queens and later suffered years of under-utilization, has now gone 'back to the future' and once again serves as an inviting entry point to the borough, complete with new open space, improved roadway design, and enhanced pedestrian walkways. The simultaneous addition to Queens Plaza of 1,000 crewmembers in the brand-new JetBlue headquarters points to a bright future for this important neighborhood," said Pinsky.

"The expansion of JetBlue shows that by forging innovative partnerships and improving New York's business climate, even the sky isn't the limit for our ability to create jobs and economic growth," said Empire State Development president, CEO & Commissioner Kenneth Adams. "By aligning JetBlue with the iconic I LOVE NEW YORK brand, this project brings together the best that New York has to offer, leveraging our world-renowned tourism economy with a unique investment opportunity to demonstrate that New York is open for business and travel."

"Queens Plaza has been transformed into a welcoming gateway to Manhattan and Queens with more organized traffic patterns, improved pedestrian crossings, landscaped bike paths and lush green park space. It is ideal timing that we are welcoming our newest business to Queens Plaza, JetBlue Airways, on the very day that the completion of these improvements is being announced," said Gayle Baron, President of the Long Island City Partnership.

This newly finished and reimagined gateway to Queens was made possible by \$25 million in City funds and \$20 million in federal funding through Congresswoman Maloney. The New York City Department of Parks & Recreation will maintain the park, median and streetscape improvements with funding provided by the Long Island City Partnership, NYCEDC, and Met Life. The open space is formally sponsored by MetLife for the next ten years. Margie Ruddick, Marpillero Pollak Architects, Michael Singer Studio were the principal designers of the project, whose design was overseen by the Department of City Planning and the NYCEDC.

"Long Island City is a unique, dynamic neighborhood with enormous potential," Burden said. "The transformation of an asphalt parking lot at Queens Plaza into Dutch Kills Green, a welcoming verdant oasis, will give residents and workers a gorgeous new public open space for respite and enjoyment. As the centerpiece for a renewed Queens Plaza, the new park will offer an important amenity for Long Island City and strengthen it as a premier business district."

"I'd like to thank Mayor Bloomberg, the Economic Development Corporation, and all of our partners in the private sector and city government for making these renovations possible," said Benepe. "Whether you're lingering or just passing through, spending any time in a green space can have a restorative and calming effect, and this improved plaza will make a beautiful complement to Queens' more than 7,000 acres of parkland."

"With clearly defined roadways, new countdown signals and sidewalks and improved bike and pedestrian access, the new Queens Plaza brings something for everybody who lives, works and visits the area," said Transportation commissioner Janette Sadik-Khan. "These efforts will combine

to ease traffic congestion, improve safety and enhance the streetscape of this thriving business district."

"This is an amazing transformation of Queens Plaza and the Gateway to Queens," Community Board 2 chairman Joe Conley said. "We now have open space, pedestrian walkways and a much safer environment crossing Queens Boulevard. This is a major step forward of the overall development and transformation of Long Island City into a Central Business District."

Starting with the rezoning of the district in 2001 to enable high-density, mixed-use development, there have been a number of initiatives focused on realizing Long Island City's full potential as a major central business district and City neighborhood, leveraging its transit assets and proximity to midtown. To revitalize the face of the district's main boulevard, Jackson Avenue, NYCEDC completed a full \$17 million streetscape project in fall 2010 that features a tree-lined median, new lighting and a series of new and enhanced open spaces. At the critical intersection of Queens Plaza and Jackson Avenue, an unsightly municipal garage building was turned into an attractive LEED-certified, 21-story mixed-use tower and new home for the City's Department of Health. The building was completed in 2010 and is the first phase of a larger Gotham Center development.

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