



Titan Machine and RXR Realty's LIC project approved by Queens Community Board 2

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Queens, NY Queens Community Board 2 voted to approve Titan Machine and RXR Realty's zoning application for a new, 100% commercial building at 42-11 9th St. in Long Island City. The mixed-use development will feature 70,000 s/f of modern industrial space at the building's base, 270,000 s/f of commercial office space, and 2,900 s/f of ground-level retail.

The project is a partnership between Titan, an elevator manufacturing and repair company, and RXR, a leading real estate company. The project will transform Titan's current 21-employee facility into a mixed-use industrial and office building that preserves and expands the neighborhood's industrial character, creating 1,500 permanent jobs—including up to 300-350 industrial jobs—and strengthening the local economy, both in terms of post-COVID recovery and the sustained growth that will follow.

Community Board review is the first formal stage of the city's public review process, known as the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP). The project certified into ULURP on September 14. The Community Board voted overwhelmingly in support of the mixed-use development while urging the project team to consider ways to ensure industrial rents are affordable. The project will next go before the Queens borough president for review.

The ULURP application seeks to designate the project site as an Industrial Business Incentive Area (IBIA), a mechanism developed by the city to encourage private development of new industrial space. The Titan-RXR project represents a successful model for private development that allows additional commercial floor area to cross-subsidize the building's industrial space, removing the need for public subsidies. This model, which can be replicated throughout the city, delivers the dual benefit of strengthening endangered industrial neighborhoods while creating new commercial office space that expands access to higher paying jobs.

The building's location outside of Manhattan's dense central business districts will create walk- and bike-to-work options for employees that reside in Queens and Brooklyn. The building includes 43 on-site bike parking spaces, is within five blocks of three Citibike stations, and is a short walk from three subway stations served by eight subway lines. The building is in a reverse commuting zone relative to today's public transit patterns, which will help reduce congestion on the subway and other forms of mass transit.

One of the project's key goals is to activate the local streetscape and enhance the pedestrian experience via public realm improvements. The building's design includes significant investments geared towards activating Queens Plaza South and 10th Street and creating connectivity between the building and the surrounding neighborhood:

- 4,500 s/f of landscaped public open space accessible to the local community with a public art installation on the corner of 10th St. and Queens Plaza South;
- 2,900 s/f of ground-floor retail that will serve both the building and local residents, which may include options such as a food and beverage vendor, a retail location for one of the building's manufacturing tenants, or both;
- On-site, underground parking and truck loading to keep cars off local streets and prevent congestion and emissions from idling trucks;
- Five-foot setback along Queens Plaza South to create a 15-ft. wide sidewalk along this corridor;
- Glass cladding and an architectural motif that mirrors the adjacent Queensboro Bridge to create a transparent façade at the ground level and promote openness and connectivity with the neighborhood;
- New tree pits and landscaped planters surrounding the building; and
- Lighting enhancements to brighten the surrounding streets.

"We're fortunate that we found in RXR a partner that shares our goals and values and is just as New York born-and-raised as we are," said Carlos Escobar, president, Titan Machine. "Long Island City is an industrial stronghold in a changing city, and this project will help maintain that character by creating even more industrial space than exists in our building today. Titan will remain invested in this project for the long haul, and we're eager to continue our work with RXR to give back to the community that gave us so much and provide meaningful opportunities for our friends and neighbors in Long Island City."

"We are excited to partner with Titan on a commercial and industrial project that will signal confidence in New York's future, strengthen the local Queens economy, and support its post-COVID-19 recovery," said Jeffrey Nelson, senior vice president, RXR Realty. "We're grateful for the support we've received from Queens Community Board 2, which will help us to not only preserve but expand the space available on site for industrial uses. We look forward to continuing our work with Urban Upbound and LaGuardia Community College, and to forging new relationships with other local organizations to ensure this project benefits the Long Island City community."

"RXR and Titan's commitment to our community is as strong today as it was two years ago when they reached out to discuss an equity partnership for the community," said Bishop Mitchell Taylor,

co-founder and CEO, Urban Upbound. “We are so excited to see investment in our community, especially with a focus on industrial development. This project will serve as one of many projects needed to incite recovery from the devastating impacts of COVID-19. The industrial development will serve as a catalyst to good-paying, skilled jobs for the surrounding community. We look forward to this project coming online.”

“This is a great example of the type of investment that will buoy Queens on its road to recovery,” said Elizabeth Lusskin, president, Long Island City Partnership. “We’ve seen so much manufacturing space disappear over the years, so it’s encouraging to see a project reverse that trend by expanding Long Island City’s industrial building stock and the great jobs that follow – especially at a critical time like this. RXR is a long-time member of the LIC Partnership and Titan has been in the neighborhood for decades, and it’s easy to see that reflected in their efforts to tailor this project to the needs of the local community.”

Titan and RXR have established partnerships with local organizations to create a workforce development program that will connect local residents to the roughly 300 construction jobs that the project will create. Urban Upbound, a Long Island City-based non-profit, will be the lead partner for the first phase of the program. The organization will help identify 100 local residents—with priority given to tenants of the Queensbridge Houses—who will receive Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) 30-hour certification and other training required to enter the construction field.

LaGuardia Community College will then provide 30 participants with intensive, hands-on training in the skilled trades through the College’s Electrical 1 and Plumbing 1 Courses. Students will graduate with credentials from the National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER), including the NCCER Core and Electrical 1 or Plumbing 1 cards.

This program will result in transferrable safety and technical certifications that will qualify participants not only for the 42-11 9th St. project, but to pursue a career in the skilled trades. RXR will also work with its contractors to hire program graduates to ensure that the partnership results in employment opportunities for Long Island City residents on the project team.

Additionally, just as Titan and RXR proactively pursued construction partnerships well in advance of construction, the project team is actively seeking additional partnerships with Queens-based organizations to connect members of the Long Island City community to the 1,500 permanent jobs that the building will accommodate when it opens its doors.