Demographics of a Changing New York:  
Challenges for Land Use Policy

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Municipal Art Society Summit  
October 21, 2010
Demographic changes pose two main challenges for New York City

- How to ensure that livability is equitably distributed among the different racial and ethnic groups that make up our diverse city?
- How to ensure that our land use decisions promote, rather than hinder, livability for the changing population?
Total Foreign-born by PUMA
New York City, 2006-2008

New York City Total = 3,051,480

Foreign-born
- 90,000 or more (5 PUMAs)
- 60,000 to 89,999 (15)
- 45,000 to 59,999 (12)
- 30,000 to 44,999 (16)
- Under 30,000 (7)

Source: American Community Survey (2006-2008), Public Use Microdata
Population Division- New York City Department of City Planning
Those immigrant neighborhoods have many strengths, but face some livability challenges

- On average, the eight CDs where a majority of residents are foreign-born enjoy lower rates of crime, tax delinquencies, foreclosures, and poverty.

- However, immigrant New Yorkers also have lower median incomes, lower rates of educational attainment, and higher rates of crowded living environments than native-born residents.

Source: American Community Survey (2008)
Minority households, regardless of nativity, by community district

Source: American Community Survey (2008)
Those New Yorkers, and their neighborhoods, face many livability challenges.

**Poverty Rate**

- White Non-Hispanic: 10%
- Black: 20%
- Hispanic: 25%
- Asian: 15%

**Mean Travel Time to Work (minutes)**

- White Non-Hispanic: 35 minutes
- Black: 45 minutes
- Hispanic: 40 minutes
- Asian: 30 minutes

Source: American Community Survey (2009)
Minority neighborhoods are bearing the brunt of the foreclosure crisis

Source: American Community Survey, Public Data Corporation (2009)
Immigrants and native born racial and ethnic minorities face severe housing challenges

- Among renters, 26% of foreign born New Yorkers are severely rent-burdened (paying more than 50% of their income on rent), compared to 21% of native-born households.

- Both rent burden and severe crowding is considerably higher for racial and ethnic minorities, regardless of country of origin, than for white renters.

- Immigrant neighborhoods, with the exception of Flushing/Whitestone, saw below average rates of new construction in the boom years

Source: Furman Center calculations using data from Housing Vacancy Survey (2005)
Are we directing growth to higher opportunity neighborhoods?

Source: Furman Center calculations, See “Building Environmentally Sustainable Communities: A Framework for Inclusivity”
Are we directing growth to enhance livability?

Source: Furman Center calculations, See: “How Have Recent Rezonings Affected the City’s Ability to Grow?”
For more on the City’s rezonings, visit www.furmancenter.org

How Have Recent Rezonings Affected the City’s Ability to Grow?

In October 2009, the Bloomberg Administration celebrated its 100th rezoning, a significant milestone for a massive and unprecedented rezoning agenda that has affected more than one-fifth of the City and has significant implications for the City’s development landscape. These rezonings reflect a wide range of goals advancing the City’s economic development agenda, accommodating expected population growth (PlanNYC 2030 estimates the City will grow by one million new New Yorkers by 2030 over its 2010 population), and responding to the varied needs and preferences of the City’s diverse neighborhoods.

Some of these rezonings apply only to a few blocks, while others cover large swatches of land and have major implications for development at a neighborhood and even borough level. As individual rezonings were proposed and debated, each faced scrutiny, and sometimes a great deal of controversy, within the communities they would affect. Yet despite the close attention local stakeholders paid to each rezoning, there has been no comprehensive analysis of the net impact these land use decisions have had on the City’s overall ability to accommodate new growth, or on how the outcomes of these rezoning actions square with the City’s stated development, environmental and transportation goals. The Furman Center has filled this gap by conducting its first statistical analysis of the cumulative impact of New York City’s recent rezonings. We set out to answer several key questions:

- How have the rezonings changed the City’s capacity for new residential development?
- Where has new residential capacity been added? Where has existing capacity been lost?
- What are the characteristics of communities that gained capacity? Of those that lost capacity?
- How does the location of new/lost capacity relate to the City’s public transportation infrastructure?
- Does the location of new/lost capacity correspond to market demand and population growth?
- How likely is it that new capacity will be developed for residential use?

This policy brief summarizes our findings for each of these questions, and identifies areas where researchers and policymakers ought to explore these issues in greater detail.