

January 24, 2024

AIA New York Testimony to the City Planning Commission on City of Yes for Economic Opportunity Zoning Text Amendment Proposal

Thank you, Chair Garodnick and members of the City Planning Commission, for holding this hearing today. I am Bria Donohue, Government Affairs Manager at AIA New York. We represent more than 5,000 architects and design professionals committed to positively impacting the physical and social qualities of our city.

AIA New York strongly supports Mayor Adams’s proposed citywide zoning text amendment, *City of Yes for Economic Opportunity*. The proposed changes in the amendment make much needed updates to modernize New York City’s zoning regulations to support small businesses, create thriving commercial corridors, and bolster New York City’s economic recovery.

AIANY is particularly supportive of the proposals that would allow for more mixed-use potential in neighborhoods, permit more adaptive reuse, and develop a commercial streetscape framework that is pedestrian friendly.

In recent years, living patterns have shifted such that economic revitalization needs to be distributed throughout the city more evenly than how the city’s economy has existed in the past. *City of Yes for Economic Opportunity* would enable the city to unlock the economic potential in both historically economically significant neighborhoods and historically economically depressed neighborhoods. These proposals are ambitious and will require significant interagency coordination and collaboration as well as sufficient agency staff to be successful.

City of Yes for Economic Opportunity is a commonsense initiative that will make necessary changes to New York City’s antiquated rules that date back to 1961 to create more opportunities for small businesses and commercial corridors to thrive and support the economic growth and innovation that are the cornerstone of the city’s economy. AIA New York urges the City Planning Commission to approve the proposed zoning text amendment.