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## Rezoning of East New York Could Lead to Big Change

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As Mayor Bill de Blasio has settled into office, his plan to increase the volume of affordable housing in New York City is gaining more and more traction. It was announced recently that a major portion of Brooklyn's East New York neighborhood will be rezoned to promote new housing projects. The details of the rezoning are unclear at this point, however, the Mayor plans to develop 200,000 affordable housing units within the next ten years.

According to the city planning report, the bulk of the East New York rezoning will occur within a 25-block span of Atlantic Avenue between Pennsylvania Avenue to the east and Euclid Avenue to the west. This area is particularly desirable for new developments due to its accessibility to public transportation.

This area is largely industrial with auto-repair shops and warehouses lining the streets. This is due in part to the current zoning and lack of retail opportunity. East New York has an abundance of public transportation, most notably Broadway Junction which is second to only Atlantic Terminal in terms of most trafficked railway stations in Brooklyn. Five subway lines converge as well as a busy LIRR stop within the Junction. Perhaps the most important of these lines is the A train, which takes approximately 15 minutes to get to Downtown Brooklyn and less than 20 minutes to get to Downtown Manhattan. Convenient access to Manhattan has always been a major draw to a neighborhood and as Downtown Brooklyn continues to grow as an office and retail hub, proximity to this area has become more desirable.

Additionally, the neighborhoods surrounding East New York, like Bushwick, have seen major change and it is only logical that this change will expand into bordering neighborhoods. Over the last four years Bushwick has flourished into one of the most active neighborhoods in all of New York in terms of development. Many young professionals have found homes in this neighborhood and it is now to a point where expansion is necessary. With East New York just south of Bushwick, and Broadway Junction already servicing lines to both neighborhoods, the movement south has already begun. If this trend of Bushwick residents moving south continues, East New York is very much in need of larger scale residential development and retail, which is currently lacking.

With the addition of housing comes a need for businesses and retail staples. For years, this area of Brooklyn has been filled with small apartment buildings and row houses. Several former ground-floor retail spaces have been converted into residential housing resulting in minimal opportunity for retail growth. Revamping the area's zoning would allow for major retailers to be part of a neighborhood seeking major growth. With many underdeveloped and underused buildings, East New York could benefit tremendously from new retailers which will not only draw people to the area and help the local economy, but it will create jobs for the existing residents. In hopes to promote retail and office space across the entire area, a main corridor should be established much like the Triangle Junction retail project in East Flatbush. This project encouraged many established retailers to open a location near the Junction bringing positive change to the area.

Not only will the rezoning provide new residential and retail opportunities in East New York but it will utilize its space to its maximum potential.

### About Massey Knakal

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