

An aerial satellite view of a city, likely New York City, showing a dense urban grid, a large river (the Hudson River) flowing through the center, and surrounding green spaces. The word "Introduction" is overlaid in large white text across the middle of the image.

Introduction



Four years ago we asked what we want our city to look and feel like in 2030.

A growing population, aging infrastructure, a changing climate, and an evolving economy posed challenges to our city's success and quality of life. But we recognized that we will determine our own future by how we respond to and shape these changes with our own actions.

We created PlANYC as a bold agenda to meet these challenges and build a greener, greater New York.

This effort has yielded tremendous results. In just four years we've added more than 200 acres of parkland while improving our existing parks. We've created or preserved more than 64,000 units of affordable housing. We've provided New Yorkers with more transportation choices. We've enacted ambitious laws to make existing buildings more energy-efficient. And our greenhouse gas emissions have fallen 13% below 2005 levels.

Now we must do more.

Today, we put forward an updated plan that builds upon the progress and lessons of the past four years.

PlANYC complements other City efforts, such as those we are making on crime, poverty, education, public health, or social services.

The Plan focuses on the physical city, and the functionality of its infrastructure in our everyday lives: housing that is too often too expensive, neighborhoods that need more playgrounds, aged water and power systems overdue for upgrade, congested streets and crowded subways. If these challenges remain unaddressed, we will undermine our economy and our quality of life.

Our city's history teaches us that investing in our future is not a luxury, but an imperative. In the 19th century, innovative and ambitious investments in infrastructure like the Croton water system and the Brooklyn Bridge, plus an unprecedented influx of new people, firmly established New York as the nation's leading city. In ensuing decades, the city's dynamism and ability to reinvent itself, exemplified by new investments in subways, skyscrapers, sanitation, and sewers all propelled New York's status as a global leader in infrastructure and innovation.

That's the story of our city, century after century. Times change, but New York City often leads the change. The key to New York's success has always been our leaders' foresight and courage to boldly meet challenges and capitalize on opportunities.

Those are our aims with PlANYC.





Credit: Pablo Fernandez; TF Cornerstone Construction

Our Challenges and Opportunities

For New York to thrive, we must accommodate a growing population, invest in and maintain our infrastructure, enhance our economic competitiveness, and improve the quality of our air and water, while reducing our contributions to climate change and preparing for its effects.

Growth

New York City's population is still growing. By 2030 we project that our population will increase to more than 9 million, some newcomers and some who are already here, along with their children and grandchildren.

This growth, if properly planned for, offers tremendous opportunities. New people bring new ideas and innovation to our economy. Growth can enrich our communities and add to the energy and diversity of our city. But unplanned growth—development in places that don't make sense and that out-strips the capacity of public infrastructure—can burden our city and harm everyone's quality of life.

As we plan for a growing population, we must think not just of our quantitative goals but also of our qualitative desires. While we build more capacity in statistical terms like housing units and subway mileage, we must simultaneously realize our task is to preserve and maintain neighborhoods that people want to live in, or where they can start new businesses. As New York City gets bigger, it's up to us to make sure it gets better as well.

New construction in
Long Island City, Queens

Infrastructure

Serving our people, attracting and supporting innovation and entrepreneurs, and preparing our city for the effects of climate change requires a visionary approach to the design, financing, and maintenance of our shared physical space and infrastructure.

From the subways we ride on, to the pipes that deliver our drinking water, to the power lines that bring electricity into our homes and offices, we rely on an inherited array of invaluable infrastructure to meet our basic needs. The New Yorkers who built these systems looked beyond the short-term and planned for a city that could outlast its challenges and continue to prosper beyond their own lifetimes. We must have equal foresight.

Today, in some respects, we are living on the limits of our inheritance. With ridership at its highest levels in half a century, our subways are increasingly jammed. Our bridges, some over 100 years old, are in need of repair, or even replacement. Our water system, continuously operating since it was first turned on, is leaking and in need of maintenance. Our energy grid, built with the technology and demand assumptions of an earlier era, strains to meet modern needs.

For much of the second half of the 20th century, New York did not take care of what it had inherited. The city was widely believed to be in decline and the City failed to adequately invest in new infrastructure or maintain the existing assets we depend upon. We have learned that prophecies of decline can be self-fulfilling and so, despite the recession, we have chosen to renew our investment in our civic assets in order to increase opportunities and build a greater city now and for the future.

New Yorkers deserve to be able to turn the tap and have pure water come out, and flip a switch and be confident the lights will come on. They deserve to ride a frequent, reliable subway, the ability to stroll to a nearby park, or safely walk their children to school without the hazards of traffic. They deserve to live in the greener, greater New York that is the goal of PlaNYC.

The new Willis Avenue Bridge
being transported up the East River





Credit: AP Worldwide Photos/Seth Weng





Credit: NYC Economic Development Corporation

A Global Economy

New York has always been a place of promise and possibility, a place where people go in search of a better life. The millions who come to our city arrive with the capacity for hope and hard work.

And, as a result of their efforts, New York City has become an epicenter of global commerce, attracting the best talent from around the world.

New York can still attract talent and the prosperity that comes with it. But today's mobility of people and capital has created a fierce competition among cities. We're competing for the best ideas and the most capable and highly-trained workforce. To thrive economically, we must create a setting where talented entrepreneurs—and the businesses they grow—want to be.

One of the fundamental prerequisites for creating that business climate is functional, cost-effective infrastructure: a transportation system that gets goods to and from market and commuters to and from work efficiently, and energy systems that businesses and households can rely on.

Another of the fundamentals is quality of life, no longer a vague nicety but a tangible feature that business leaders consider when deciding where to locate or expand: where do talented workers want to live, in an age when they can choose to live anywhere? They don't consider great parks or clean air to be a frill.

The economic implications of sustainability become even more important in periods of dynamic change. As technology changes, energy prices fluctuate, and climate conditions change, economic opportunity will come first to those cities that are leading the way to the adoption and commercialization of new services and infrastructure suitable for new conditions. PlaNYC's emphasis on innovation and the application of new techniques to difficult problems will help keep the city's residents and businesses in the role of global economic leaders.

Waterfront parks
ringing Lower Manhattan

Climate Change

Our climate is changing. Temperatures are increasing, glaciers are receding, oceans are rising, and storms are intensifying. We must acknowledge the risks posed by climate change and accept our responsibility to address them. This includes our own readiness, guided by science.

Climate change poses acute risks to our city. By 2030, average temperatures could rise by as many as three degrees Fahrenheit in New York City. Hotter temperatures will increase public health risks, particularly for vulnerable populations such as the elderly, and place further strains on our infrastructure. Our city is more affected by rising temperatures than the rest of the region because urban infrastructure absorbs and retains heat. This phenomenon, known as the “urban heat island effect,” can cause temperatures in New York City to be seven degrees Fahrenheit warmer than the surrounding suburbs.

As a city with 520 miles of coastline, we are also at risk of increased flooding as sea levels rise and storms become more intense. Our sea levels have already risen a foot in the last 100 years and are projected to rise by up to 10 inches more in the next two decades. Some of our homes, businesses, and infrastructure like streets and power plants will be further exposed to hazards.

The challenge of climate change for New York City is two-fold; we must reduce our contribution to global warming and we must prepare for its inevitable effects. We are taking steps to address both needs.

New York City already has one of the lowest per capita greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions levels among major global cities, one-third the U.S. average, due to our density and reliance on mass transit. In 2007 we set a goal to reduce our GHG emissions by more than 30% by 2030 compared to 2005 levels. A series of actions have yielded significant progress toward this goal. We also launched a comprehensive effort to understand our climate risks and take concrete actions to reduce the vulnerabilities we identify.

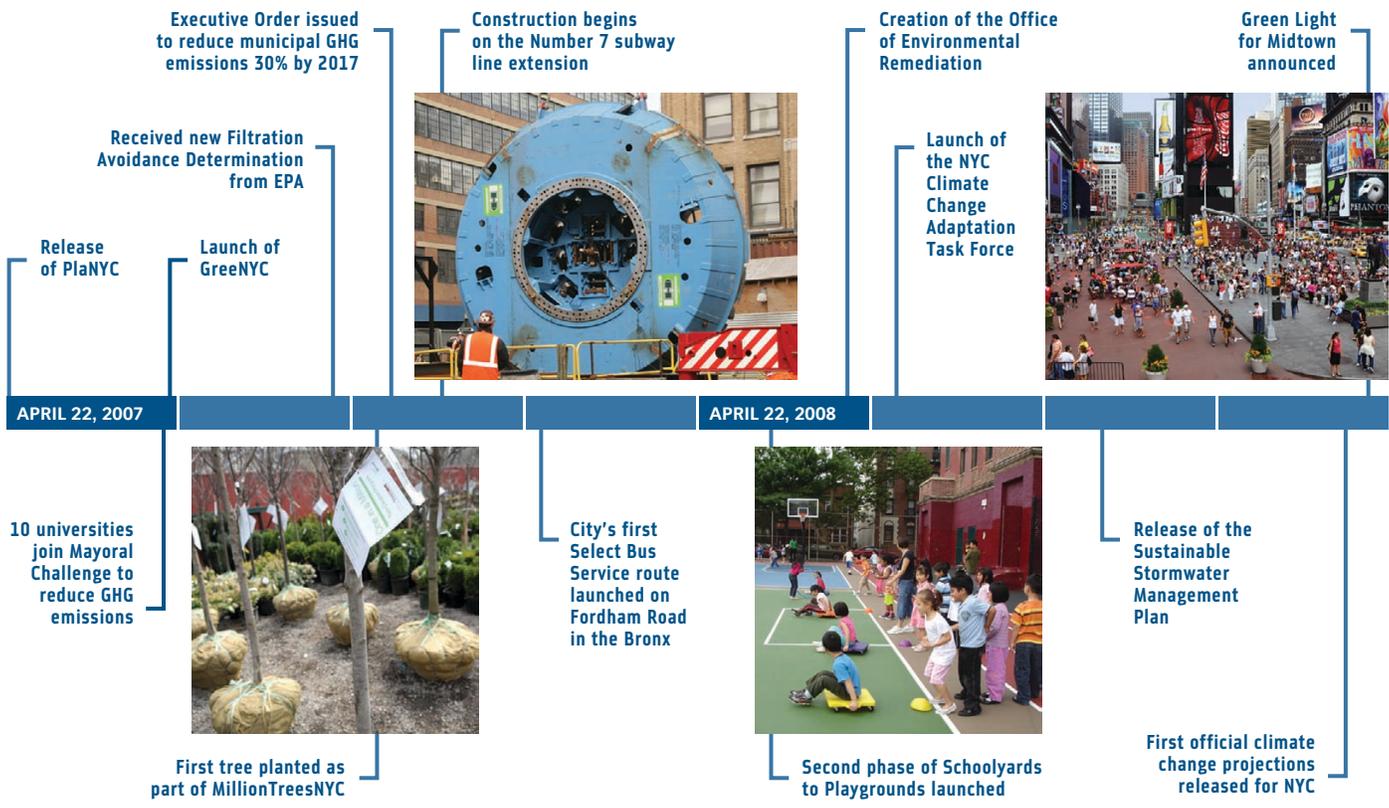
But we must do more if we hope to slow the rate of climate change and protect our city from the changes already occurring.

No city can solve this challenge alone. Nor can any of us afford to wait. New York has always pioneered the development of answers to pressing problems. It is incumbent on us to do so again, rising to the definitive challenge of the 21st century.

Highway flooding from
intense precipitation







Our Progress

Released in 2007, PlaNYC was an unprecedented effort to prepare for one million more residents, strengthen our economy, combat climate change, and enhance the quality of life for all New Yorkers. The Plan brought together over 25 City agencies to work toward the vision of a greener, greater New York. While our long-term goals will not be met for many years, we are on schedule toward most of them and launched 97% of the 127 initiatives in the 2007 Plan, as documented in annual progress reports.

We've made smart and innovative investments in our infrastructure, which will help us accommodate future growth and better meet the needs of present-day New Yorkers. In just four years, we've created or preserved over 64,000 units of housing. We've completed over 20 transit-oriented rezoninings so that more than 87% of new development is transit-accessible. We've embarked on a new era of parks construction, bringing

over 250,000 more New Yorkers within a 10-minute walk of a park. We've launched the city's first bus rapid transit system and committed \$1.5 billion for green infrastructure to clean our waterways. We've planted nearly half a million trees. We're making unprecedented investments in our drinking water supply network.

Over 30% of the yellow taxi fleet is now "green," reducing emissions from some of our heaviest-used vehicles. We've enacted regulations to phase out dirty heating fuels, which are responsible for more pollution than all of the cars and trucks on our streets. We've streamlined the process to remediate brownfields, reducing the average time it takes to begin a cleanup of our city's most polluted plots. We've created public plazas for pedestrians, including one in Times Square, the "crossroads of the world," that are attracting tourists and New Yorkers alike. Pedestrian fatalities are down. We've completed over 100 energy efficiency retrofits

Start of \$175 rehabilitation of the St. George Ferry Terminal



250,000th tree planted as part of MillionTreesNYC

Launch of NYC "CoolRoofs"

Greener, Greater Buildings Plan enacted to improve energy efficiency



Launch of NYC Brownfield Cleanup Program

Release of the NYC Green Infrastructure Plan

Ground-breaking on new municipal recycling facility in Sunset Park, Brooklyn

NYC's first energy-aligned commercial lease signed

APRIL 22, 2009

NYPD unveils first hybrid patrol cars

Acquisition of 30-acre parcel for Hunters Point South in Queens



Local law enacted to lower the retirement age of school buses

APRIL 22, 2010

Started \$508 million rehabilitation of Brooklyn Bridge

NYC Green Codes Task Force releases 111 recommendations



Coated one millionth square foot of rooftop white

Introduction of Green Tax Act of 2010 in Congress

on City-owned buildings as part of our commitment to reduce City government greenhouse gas emissions 30% by 2017. Working with the City Council, we've enacted landmark green building legislation that will have the equivalent impact of making a city the size of Oakland, CA carbon neutral. And we've launched one of the most comprehensive efforts of any city in the world to increase our resilience to climate change.

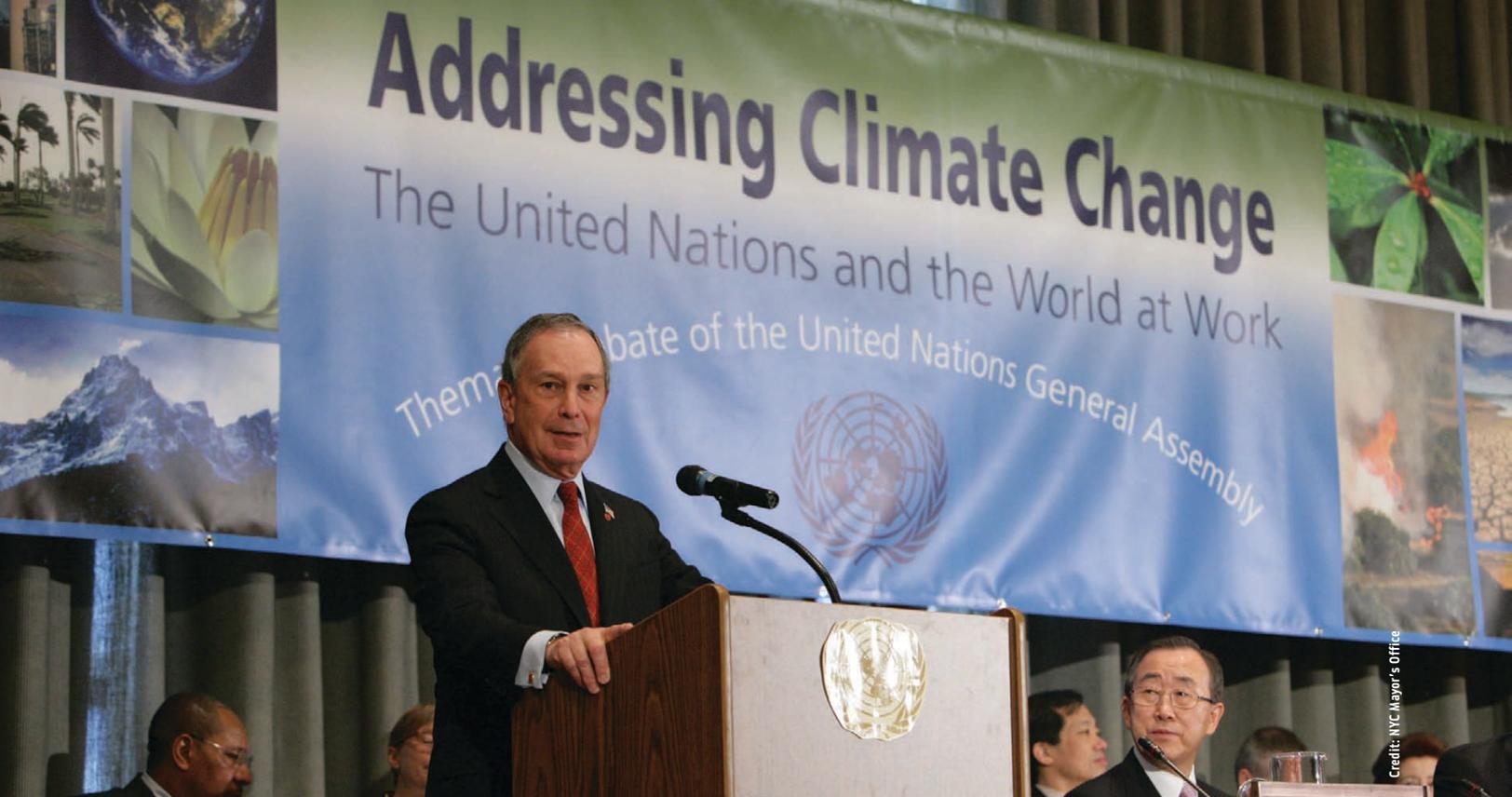
These actions are having a direct positive impact on the lives of New Yorkers, as well as reducing our greenhouse gas emissions.

At the same time, we have encountered obstacles to achieving some of our goals. Our efforts to maintain, improve, and expand the transit network have been stymied by the lack of a stable, sufficient, and rational funding source. Congestion continues to clog our streets, costing us all money measured in time, wasted fuel, and

dirtier air. The global recession has forced us to reduce our capital budget; and as a result we have delayed some PlaNYC projects. Several initiatives have also been slowed by a lack of state or federal permission, action, or funding. But we remain resolved toward our long-term goals.

While we have made great progress, much work remains.

When PlaNYC was first launched we recognized that we didn't have all the solutions to the challenges we faced. We also knew that the city would face additional challenges in the years ahead. That's why we're updating PlaNYC now, four years after its initial launch. This update is a reaffirmation, not a redirection, that includes modifications and additions that do not significantly alter our overall trajectory.



Our Way Forward

We have been explicit and accountable in stating goals and measuring progress toward them. But truly achieving our goals will require the active engagement and involvement of all New Yorkers, not just City government. Thousands of community-based organizations and individuals are already working to enhance the sustainability of our neighborhoods: the Bronx River Alliance is helping clean up the Bronx River; the Staten Island Greenbelt Conservancy encourages children to engage with nature; and the Brooklyn Waterfront Greenway organization promotes the ability to walk or bike along the harbor.

Neighbors are also coming together to create plans to make their own blocks or neighborhoods more environmentally sustainable, like the Sustainable Flatbush effort in Brooklyn to promote energy efficiency and recycling, or the Lower East Side Ecology Center in Manhattan, which organizes community composting and education. These examples are illustrative of hundreds of other groups with diverse interests and different geographic roots, sharing one thing in common: they care enough to work to create the greener, greater neighborhoods that will compose a greener, greater New York.

We will encourage and support these efforts while inspiring more New Yorkers to join with us.

In the meantime, while we're doing our part in Red Hook and Hamilton Heights, the eyes of Rotterdam and Hong Kong are on us. In November 2010 Mayor Bloomberg was selected as Chair of the C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group, a network of 40 of the largest cities in the world whose leaders are dedicated to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. C40 cities, including 18 smaller, affiliate cities, account for approximately 21% of the global Gross Domestic Product. Nearly one out of every 12 people on Earth lives in or near their city limits. Those cities' selection of our Mayor as the leader of C40 is a recognition of the pace that New York City is now setting. It also represents an opportunity to learn from these sister cities. Ideas about bus service improvements from Curitiba might be put to use in Canarsie, and parks reforestation techniques from Melbourne might be transplanted to Middle Village.

Global challenges and neighborhood challenges truly are linked. We all have a role to play and a responsibility to act. The City of New York takes its responsibility seriously. Just as generations before us rose to the challenges they faced and bequeathed this great city to us, so shall we to the next generation. Striding toward the future, we will create a greener, greater New York.

Our goals for achieving a greener, greater New York



Housing and Neighborhoods

Create homes for almost a million more New Yorkers while making housing and neighborhoods more affordable and sustainable



Parks and Public Space

Ensure all New Yorkers live within a 10-minute walk of a park



Brownfields

Clean up all contaminated land in New York City



Waterways

Improve the quality of our waterways to increase opportunities for recreation and restore coastal ecosystems



Water Supply

Ensure the high quality and reliability of our water supply system



Transportation

Expand sustainable transportation choices and ensure the reliability and high quality of our transportation network



Energy

Reduce energy consumption and make our energy systems cleaner and more reliable



Air Quality

Achieve the cleanest air quality of any big U.S. city



Solid Waste

Divert 75% of our solid waste from landfills



Climate Change

Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by more than 30%

Increase the resilience of our communities, natural systems, and infrastructure to climate risks