



Public Design Commission
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October 14, 2026

Re: Vote No on Metropolitan Park's Preliminary Submission

Dear Commissioners,

We are Queens residents, local community groups and advocates urging you to vote no on Metropolitan Park's Preliminary Submission for the casino and two hotel towers until the public has had a meaningful opportunity to review and comment on the casino's designs.

Our community has organized thousands to take the streets against this unpopular project since 2023 and have witnessed how money, power and influence has been able to manipulate the licensing process. Over the last few months, we have been heartened by your advocacy on behalf of the public.

However, the Public Design Commission's review and public input process has been inadequate.

The Public Design Commission granted preliminary approval with conditions to Metropolitan Park's Master Plan on October 21, 2025 to help developers meet the Gaming Facility Location Board's entitlements deadline of November 17. The approval centered the developers, not the public. During the public testimony portion, only 4 people were able to testify. Public hearings held during working hours with 7 days of notice and only 4 people able to testify against a backdrop of thousands in opposition cannot accurately represent public input.

Metropolitan Park is one of the largest development projects in the history of Queens. It would place a deeply controversial casino and luxury resort on public land in the center

of working class immigrant communities already burdened by a multitude of injustices. The public must be properly heard before the Public Design Commission votes on Metropolitan Park's design plans.

In particular, the proposed project is on a floodplain in the center of disenfranchised communities affected by climate injustice. During intense storms, polluted stormwater and sewage overflow run off into Flushing Bay and into the roads and basements of the surrounding communities. Solutions include modernizing outdated sewage infrastructure, moving development away from low-lying areas and reclaiming waterfronts for climate infrastructure such as restored wetlands and floodable parks.

Instead of building climate infrastructure, the city and state propose to further develop the area, adding a massive casino, entertainment venue, and up to 2,300 hotel rooms, which would further overwhelm our infrastructure. Our communities experienced five historic floods over the last several months from intensifying storms due to climate change. The Metropolitan Park team has not demonstrated to the public how they will mitigate the environmental impacts in this changing reality. The Public Design Commission should use every tool within its jurisdiction to require transparency.

Under Title 57, Sections 1-01 and 1-08, the Public Design Commission has the authority to call for special meetings and require additional materials. Accordingly, we are calling on the Commission to vote no on the casino and two hotel towers, and commit to the following bare minimum asks.

1. Minimum standards for meaningful public review

- **Fair**
 - *Speakers sign up to speak when they arrive. No cutting the line, no swapping speaking numbers, no preferential treatment*
 - *3 minutes of uninterrupted time per speaker*
 - *Speakers must disclose financial, employment or organizational interests in the project*
- **Prior**
 - *90 days notice before the approval hearing*
 - *Complete and final documents available to public 90 days before the hearing, plain language summaries of application materials in English, Chinese, Korean and Spanish.*
- **Accessible**
 - *At least 8 hours of public hearing time, 4 hours outside of working hours.*
 - *Hearing hosted in Queens with remote testimony options*

- *Chinese, Korean and Spanish interpretation during hearing*

If there is meaningful community opposition to the designs, the Public Design Commission must vote down the project and require Metropolitan Park to restart the process.

2. Call for a supplemental Environmental Impact Study due to changing environmental circumstances and require detailed stormwater flow and drainage plans from Metropolitan Park for public input

During the March 23, 2026 committee meeting, Commissioner Hawkinson commented to developers that she “just wants to understand as if I was there. I’m trying to represent the people.” We are the people speaking, and today, we are calling on you to represent the community. Vote no on Metropolitan Park’s Preliminary Submission and commit to a bare minimum review process that centers us, not the developers and their paid support.

Sincerely,
Queens Anti-casino
@nocasinofmcp