

# CITY LIVING

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**LONG ISLAND CITY** is bounded on the north and west by the East River; on the east by 31st Street, and New Calvary Cemetery; and on the south by Newtown Creek.



It may look like Brooklyn, but it's actually LIC.

# Long Island City's soaring

## LIC glistens as the face of new Queens

BY LANA BORTOLOTT  
Special to amNewYork

If Queens is ever to enjoy the same panache as its neighboring borough to the south, credit Long Island City for breaking ground. A longtime home to artists seeking space and affordability, LIC has attracted young professionals and families for the same reasons.

Just a five-minute subway ride from Grand Central, the rapidly gentrifying enclave has shifted from heavy industrial to mixed-use as luxury condominium projects have sprouted up among the warehouses and highways. With all the trimmings but not the trappings of Manhattan, residential buildings such as East Coast, the Avalon and Arris Lofts have given a new prestige to living in Queens West. And the magnificent views of midtown are a marketer's dream.

"We're seeing a huge increase in people wanting to come here," says Eric Benaim, CEO and president of ModernSpaces, a realty firm. "Three years ago people really didn't know where [LIC] was. Now on the weekend, lots of tourists from Manhattan are exploring the neighborhood and window-shopping for condos."

And if people come here, they will find a surprising number of quality restaurants and businesses in the



Gantry Plaza State Park preserves the gantries that have become a symbol of the reborn LIC.

(PHOTOS: RJ MICKELSON/AMNY)

### REAL ESTATE

#### For Sale

**\$1.195 mil**

One-bedroom, two-bath luxury loft with home office in the Arris Lofts, 27-28 Thomson Ave., 1350 square feet, plus 769-square-foot terrace.

**\$410,000**

One-bedroom convertible apartment with balcony, 525 square feet. 44-27 Purves St.

#### For Rent

**\$3,200**

One-bedroom, two-bath. 1,163 square feet. 27-28 Thomson Ave. (Arris Lofts).

**\$2,200**

One-bedroom, 1.5-bath apartment with balcony. 738 square feet. 44-27 Purves St.

**\$2,700**

Two-bedroom, one-bath walk-up in a five-family brick building, 1,200 square feet, 300-square-foot deck. 10-15 47th Ave.

**\$6,500**

Three-bedroom, three-bath apartment in Arris Lofts. 1,850 square feet with 300-square-foot terrace. Manhattan views. 27-28 Thomson Ave.



The 5 Pointz warehouse is world-renowned for its graffiti, contributed by many artists.



LIC's low-rise past can be seen on 50th Avenue.

Hunters Point area along Vernon Boulevard, and now, Jackson Avenue.

Talitha Whidbee, proprietor of the wine store Vine, chose her Jackson Avenue location because

of opportunity and history. She operated Ten63, a cafe a few doors down on Jackson, before opening her wine shop.

"Jackson Avenue is a very interesting street

because it bridges Queens and Brooklyn," she said. "The visibility here isn't the same as Hunters Point, but it has good accessibility from other neighborhoods," she said.

### FACT SHEET

■ **Transportation: Subway:** 7 at Vernon Blvd./Jackson Ave., Hunters Point Ave. and 45th Road/Courthouse Sq. stations; G at 21st St. **NY Water Taxi** operates a commuter ferry service on the East River.

■ **Fire station:** FDNY Engine 260, 11-15 37th Ave.

■ **Precinct:** 108th, 5-47th 50th Ave., 718-784-5411

■ **Crime stats:** Reporting for

January 2009: no murders and rapes, 10 robberies, 21 burglaries. Last year's reporting for the same period: no murders and rapes, 16 robberies, 26 burglaries.

■ **Community Board:** 2, 43-22 50th St., 718-533-8773

■ **Libraries:** Court Square, 25-01 Jackson Ave., 718-937-2790; Long Island City, 37-44 21st St., 718-752-3700

■ **Schools:** P.S. 111 Jacob Blackwell School, 37-15 13th St., 718-786-2073; P.S. 112 Dutch Kills School, 25-05 37th Ave., 718-784-5250; P.S. 150, 40-01 43rd Ave., 718-784-2252; P.S. 166 Henry Gradstein School, 33-09 35th Ave., 718-786-6703; P.S. 78, 48-09 Center Blvd. 718-392-5402

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Brownstones grace 45th Avenue.

**TO PLAY**

LIC's local nightlife is happily concentrated in the Vernon Boulevard strip, so you don't have to go far for a draft, fine vintage or a good vibe.

**Dominie's Hoek**

48-17 Vernon Blvd.,  
718-706-6531

Come here for the eclectic Latin-inspired menu, the arty-inspired decor or the long bar and draft beers. It's the only bar in the neighborhood without a TV, encouraging patrons to actually socialize with each other.

**Lounge 47**

47-10 Vernon Blvd.,  
718-937-2044

A hipster bar with a better-than-decent menu. Sip your beverage in the lounge-y window area then order what some say is the best burger in the neighborhood.

**Domaine Bar a Vins**

50-04 Vernon Blvd.,  
718-784-2350

Dark, romantic, chic, it's the consummate date place. As its name suggests, French wines are favored, paired with an elegant tasting menu of artisanal cheeses and charcuterie plates.

**TO SEE**

**P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center**

22-25 Jackson Ave.,  
718-784-2084

The MoMA outpost for



P.S. 1 is a MoMA outpost with a music series and outdoor party in the summer. (PHOTOS: R.J. MICKELSON/AMNY)

emerging, established and experimental art is one of the oldest such venues in the country. During the summertime, check out Warm Up, P.S. 1's critically acclaimed music series and outdoor party.

**Noguchi Museum**

9-01 33rd Rd.,  
718-204-7088

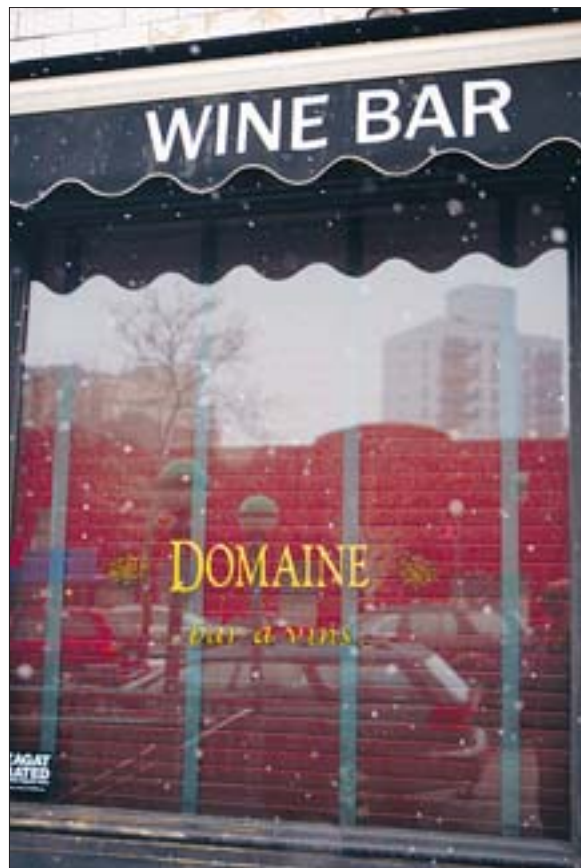
The collected works of Isamu Noguchi, who has

a longtime studio in the neighborhood, are presented in a quiet space off the beaten track. The museum's outdoor garden provides a contemplative space for warm-weather picnics.

**Socrates Sculpture Park**

32-01 Vernon Blvd.,  
718-956-1819

Formerly an abandoned



Domaine Bar a Vins is dark, romantic and chic. It features French wines, artisanal cheeses and charcuterie.

**ESSENTIAL VISIT**

**Gantry Plaza State Park**

50-50 Second St.

Visit this former industrial site that is now an award-winning urban park with the restored gantries as its focal point. Luckily, this spot hasn't lost its sense of history — or its fantastic views of Manhattan.

landfill, this park and exhibition space is open every day of the year. It hosts plenty of exhibitions of lo-

cal Queens artists, as well as warm weather events such as outdoor cinema nights.

**Q&A**

WITH BRIAN ADAMS

Brian Adams is the owner of Delta Force Army Navy and president of the Hunters Point Merchants Association.

**What are some major changes you've seen?**

So many more people are living here and learning more about



Adams

LIC. They appreciate the great mix — shopping, culture, historic places.

**Any concerns about overdevelopment?**

Yes, and we work closely with the community to blend the old and new neighborhood together to prevent losing our mixed-use identity. We're trying to remain a good neighborhood to live in and visit.

**What's your recommendation for a visit here?**

It's a great place for a Sunday afternoon. I recommend the neighborhood walking tour. Visit Gantry Park, have brunch and see galleries.

**The Good Life**

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### NEWLY CONSTRUCTED APARTMENTS FOR RENT

Melrose Commons Site 5 Apartments\* is pleased to announce that applications are now being accepted for 49 affordable housing rental apartments now under construction at 429 East 156th Street in the Melrose section of The Bronx. This building is being constructed through the Housing Trust Fund/Cornerstone Programs of New York City's Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD), the Low Income Marketplace Program (LAMP) of the New York City Housing Development Corporation (HDC), the New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR) and the New York City Housing Partnership. The size, rent and targeted income distribution for the 49 apartments are as follows:

Apartments Available	Apartment Size	Household Size	Monthly Rent **	Total Annual Income Range *** Minimum - Maximum
10	1 Bedroom	1	\$ 782	\$28,934 - \$32,280
		2	\$ 782	\$28,934 - \$36,840
31	2 Bedroom	2	\$ 943	\$34,780 - \$36,840
		3	\$ 943	\$34,780 - \$41,460
		4	\$ 943	\$34,780 - \$46,080
8	3 Bedroom	3	\$1,089	\$40,293 - \$41,460
		4	\$1,089	\$40,293 - \$46,080
		5	\$1,089	\$40,293 - \$49,740
		6	\$1,089	\$40,293 - \$53,460

\* This apartment building has a smoke-free policy.  
\*\* Includes heat and hot water.  
\*\*\* Income guidelines subject to change.

Qualified applicants will be required to meet income guidelines and additional selection criteria to qualify. Applications may be requested by mail from: Melrose Commons Site 5 C/O Blue Sea Development Company, LLC 3 Park Avenue 28th Floor, New York, New York 10016. Please include a self-addressed envelope with your request. Completed applications must be returned by regular mail only (no priority, certified, registered, express or overnight mail will be accepted) to a post office box number, or its equivalent, that will be listed with the application, and must be postmarked by March 10th, 2009. Applications postmarked after March 10th, 2009 will be set aside for possible future consideration. Applications will be selected by lottery; applicants who submit more than one application will be disqualified. Duplicated applications will not be accepted. Preference will be given to New York City residents. Current and eligible residents of Bronx Community Board # 1 will receive preference for 50% of the units. Eligible households that include persons with mobility impairments will receive preference for 5% of the units; eligible households that include persons with visual and/or hearing impairments will receive preference for 2% of the units; and eligible City of New York Municipal Employees will receive a 5% preference.

No Brokers Fee. No Application Fee.

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The State of New York  
www.nyc.gov/hpd



Shop for apparel by local designers and artists at Subdivision on Vernon Boulevard.

(PHOTOS: RJ MICKELSON/AMNY)

### TO EAT

For foodies, Long Island City has a broad selection of intimate and unusual restaurants, often making it difficult to settle on one.

#### Tournesol 50-12 Vernon Blvd., 718-472-4355

A classic, unfussy, authentic French bistro, you'll get a real cassoulet or coq au vin here.

#### Café Henri 10-10 50th Ave., 718-383-9315

Another ode to France, this corner bistro has all the faves — croque-monsieur, saucisson-beurre, escargot — as well as an impressive crepe menu.



Enjoy classic French fare at easygoing bistro Tournesol.

#### Tuk Tuk 49-06 Vernon Blvd., 718-472-5598

Named for a three-wheeled rickshaw, this Queens outpost of the now-closed Boerum Hill joint is a spacious and sleek spot to sample LIC's Thai and Asian fusion offerings. The pan-fried pork dumplings win raves.



A curry sandwich and matcha latte from Communitea.

### TO SHOP

#### Subdivision 48-18 Vernon Blvd., 718-482-1899

Part fiber-arts boutique, part art gallery, expect a highly eclectic mix of apparel for women, men and kids by local designers and artists.

#### Hunters Point Wine 47-07 Vernon Blvd., 718-472-9463

With an emphasis on estate-grown-and-produced wine and handcrafted spirits, this shop's care-

ful selection offers wines both old world and new. Stop in for tastings Thursday and Friday, 6-8 p.m.

#### Lightbox Home 1207 Jackson Ave., 646-239-1621

Designer Gordon Joseph opened this shop a mere-

### THE BUZZ

#### Shops groan about 7 train outages through March

Usually a one-stop hop on the 7 train from Grand Central, public transportation to LIC will be diverted on weekends through March. Three stops along Hunters Point will close for track work, leaving local businesses that depend on Manhattan day-trippers in a lurch. The MTA will run shuttle buses from Queensboro Plaza — serviced by the N/W trains, and a short walk from the E and R at Queens Plaza — to points around LIC.

three months ago, offering LIC residents some real hometown style: hand-made lightbox lamps with echoes of artist Noguchi.

#### Delta Force Army Navy 49-10 Vernon Blvd., 718-577-1249.

One of the most comprehensive Army Navy surplus stores in the U.S. Cool clothes are just the beginning: props, supplies and everything else you need for survival — urban and beyond.

### +DID YOU KNOW?

Kaufman-Astoria Studios (35th Ave. and 36th St.) was built as Famous Player-Lasky Studios in 1920. It was later used to make U.S. Army Signal Corps films between 1942 and 1971.