What's going on in Gowanus?

There are lots of government and community plans and initiatives in progress in the neighborhood right now. Other plans and initiatives from the past have already shaped the Gowanus we know today.

2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018

Manufactured Gas Plant Clean-Ups (2003 - Present)

Gowanus Green (2007 - Present)

Gowanus Canal Superfund Site Plan + Clean-Up (2008 - Present)

Green Infrastructure Plan (2010 - Present)

NYCHA Wyckoff Infill (2015 - Present)

Gowanus Neighborhood Rezoning (2016 - Present)

North Park Slope Rezoning (2003)

South Park Slope Rezoning (2007)

Gowanus Canal Corridor Framework (2008 - 2009)

Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) Nomination Study (2012 - 2014)

Bridging Gowanus (2013 - 2015)

Manufactured Gas Plant Clean-Ups (2003 - Present)

What is it?
Three former manufactured gas plants, which are a source of coal tar contamination, surround the Canal. These are scheduled to be cleaned up to reduce health and environmental risks and prepare land for redevelopment.

Who's in charge?
NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, with input from the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

How are community members involved?
Community involvement is guided by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation's public comment and engagement process.

Gowanus Green (2007 - Present)

What is it?
A plan to redevelop a Public Place site on the northwest side of the Canal. The development will feature over 770 units of housing—70% of which will be affordable—and a public park. The project has been delayed because of the Superfund clean-up process.

Who's in charge?
NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Developement (HPD). The development team includes Fifth Avenue Committee, Hudson Companies, Jonathan Rose Companies, and the Bluestone Organization. The development proposal will go through the city's Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP).

How are community members involved?
Fifth Avenue Committee organized extensive community outreach and engagement from 2007 to 2010; outreach will continue when the time for redevelopment gets closer.

Gowanus Superfund Site Plan and Clean-Up (2008 - Present)

What is it?
A plan and process for cleaning up contamination in the Gowanus Canal, plus other improvements to keep water clean in the future. Some of the work has started, but more funding is needed to carry out the full plan.

Who's in charge?
US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

How are community members involved?
The Gowanus Canal Community Advisory Group (CAG) represents the community's voice in the plan. Membership is open to organizations serving neighborhoods along the Canal, and CAG meetings are open to the public.

Green Infrastructure Plan (2010 - Present)

What is it?
A plan and process for creating bioswales and other improvements that soak up stormwater, which keeps runoff from going into the Canal.

Who's in charge?
NYC Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

How are community members involved?
Gowanus Canal Conservancy is leading local engagement.

NYCHA Wyckoff Infill (2015 - Present)

What is it?
As part of a plan to close its budget gap, New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) is allowing private developers to build on public housing land. NYCHA has chosen Gowanus' Wyckoff Gardens as one the first sites to be open to development, which will be 50% affordable and 50% market-rate.

Who's in charge?
NYCHA, NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD)

How are community members involved?
A resident advisory committee at Wyckoff Gardens is providing input to NYCHA on the development process, with support from Fifth Avenue Committee and FUREE. The infill plan will also go through the city's Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP).

Gowanus Neighborhood Rezoning (2016 - Present)

What is it?
A rezoning changes the rules about what can get built where, including what buildings can be used for and how big they can be. The Gowanus rezoning is one of several rezonings happening across the city as a part of Mayor de Blasio's plan to build more affordable housing.

Who's in charge?
NYC Department of City Planning (DCP) is leading the process. The rezoning will go through the city's Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP), which will include public meetings and Community Board review. Council Members Lander and Levin will advise on the plan and vote on the proposal.

How are community members involved?
DCP has been hosting public meetings; Fifth Avenue Committee launched the Gowanus Neighborhood Coalition for Justice.

North Park Slope Rezoning (2003) & South Park Slope Rezoning (2007)

What is it?
In 2003 and 2007, the city changed the zoning along parts of 4th Avenue to allow for bigger residential buildings. Since then, rents in the area have increased dramatically, and many low- and moderate-income renters have been displaced.

Who was in charge?
NYC Department of City Planning (DCP)

Gowanus Canal Corridor Framework (2008 - 2009)

What is it?
In 2008, the city studied the Gowanus Canal for a potential rezoning, in part to allow for more housing development. While the rezoning didn't end up happening, the study coincided with increasing developer speculation.

Who was in charge?
NYC Department of City Planning (DCP)

Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) Nomination Study (2012 - 2014)

What is it?
The New York State Department of State's BOA Program provides funding and technical assistance to cities and community-based organizations to improve urban sites that have been contaminated (called "brownfields"). Before an organization gets assistance, it must complete a nomination process, which includes a detailed study.

Who was in charge?
Friends of Community Board 6 sponsored a study of two sites in Gowanus; Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Development Corporation sponsored the review of sites in Red Hook.

Bridging Gowanus (2013 - 2015)

What is it?
A community planning initiative focused on issues impacting the neighborhood, like environmental sustainability, preserving manufacturing jobs, and creating affordable housing. The plan was designed to shape a vision for the community before the city proposed a rezoning. DCP has said that ideas in Bridging Gowanus will help shape their rezoning proposal.

Who was in charge?
Council Member Brad Lander led the initiative, supported by all local elected officials; Pratt Center for Community Development provided planning expertise and assistance, with significant public involvement.

Created by the Center for Urban Pedagogy (CUP), Fifth Avenue Committee, and Pratt Center for Community Development