Today’s restrictive zoning rules make it difficult to repurpose underused office space. In turn, businesses may have trouble adapting to a changing economy, bringing more vacancy to NYC streets.

*city of yes for economic opportunity* would allow for adaptive reuse of office buildings to help a wide range of businesses more easily find or repurpose space in NYC.

### Lifting Unnecessary Restrictions

**Loading:** When new businesses move into an office building, today’s zoning often requires them to add loading docks on-site – even beyond what is appropriate for the business. *city of yes* would lift this cost-prohibitive and outdated rule.

**Stacking:** Today’s zoning includes “stacking rules” that only allow businesses on lower floors in residential buildings. Therefore, owners have few financially-viable options to convert their buildings into mixed-use spaces. *city of yes* would remove stacking rules for buildings, while requiring a physical separation between residential and commercial uses.

### Boosting Emerging Industries

**Amusements:** New Yorkers must travel to industrial areas for many arcades, virtual reality games, and other amusements. To bring recreational businesses closer to where people live, and to fill unused space, *city of yes* would allow small amusements on neighborhood commercial streets and larger amusements in office districts.
Life Sciences: Today’s zoning is getting in the way of life sciences innovation. Unclear zoning terminology prevents labs from setting up in offices near research centers that could benefit these labs. city of yes would allow life science businesses that meet environmental standards to find space in commercial offices.

Makerspaces: Existing zoning forces many “maker” businesses—such as apparel makers, 3-D printers, and other high-tech or artisan manufacturing—to locate in industrial areas far from their customer base. city of yes would allow some small-scale, clean production businesses in offices, provided they meet relevant environmental standards.

Urban agriculture: As technologies change, entrepreneurs can increasingly grow food for their communities safely and cleanly indoors – but zoning has not kept up. Urban agriculture in most areas of NYC is only allowed outside or in a greenhouse. city of yes would permit indoor agriculture in commercial spaces, including converted offices.

Questions or comments?

Please email NYC Planning at EconomicOpportunity@planning.nyc.gov.