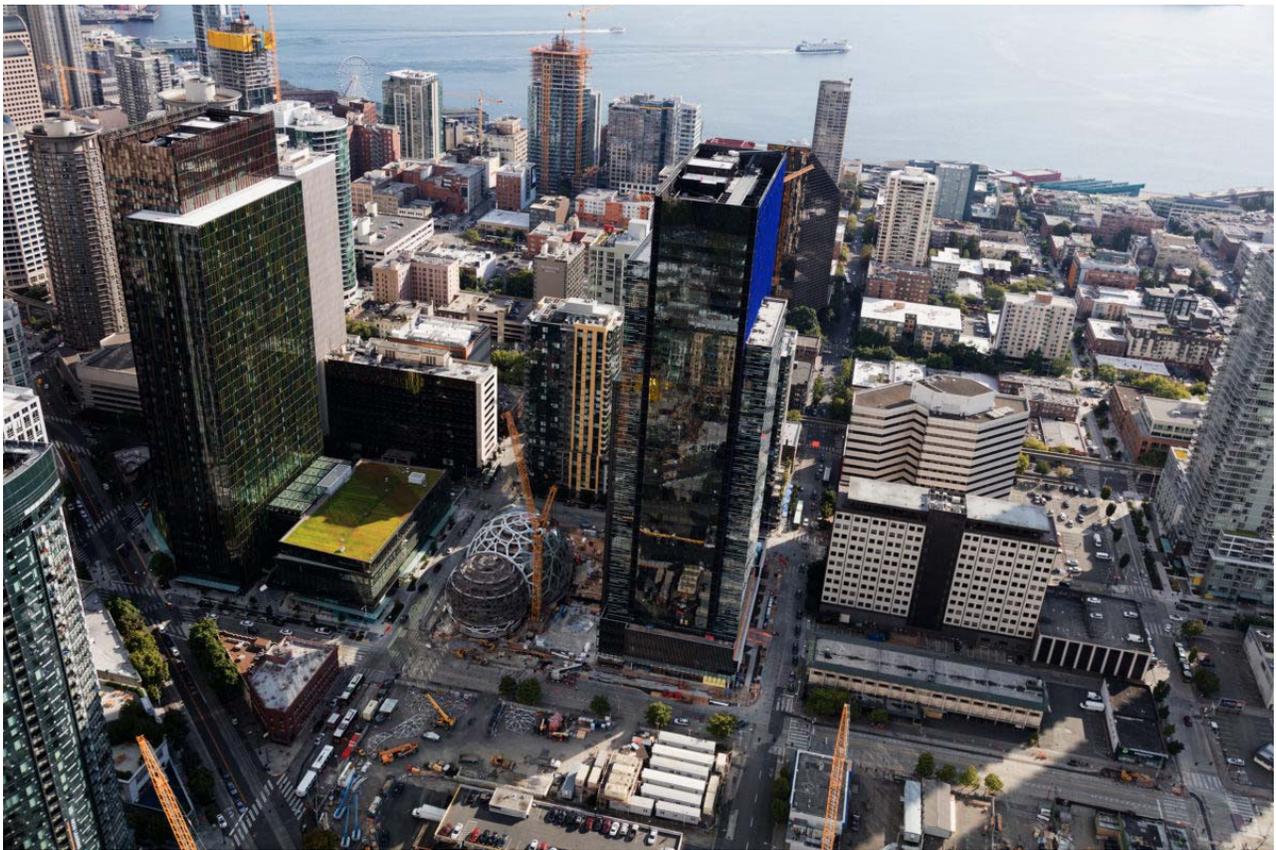




## **Amazon scraps NYC plans, but Philly's not back in play (for now)**

Or any city, for that matter: Amazon it would not reopen the HQ2 bid after the 25,000 job project in Queens was nixed. Here are two silver linings for Philly.

Robert Torres – February 15, 2019



*Amazon's HQ in Seattle.*

Following pressure from local lawmakers and activists against it New York headquarters plans, ecommerce behemoth Amazon announced on Thursday that it would be canceling its HQ2 project it had slated for the Long Island City section of Queens.

What does that mean for Philadelphia, where local stakeholders eagerly participated in the national year-long search, and banded to create a comprehensive proposal — complete with a \$5.7 billion joint incentive package between Philly and Pennsylvania — to woo the company here, but later learned the city was not picked?

The immediate impact is not major, since Amazon announced it has no plans to reopen the bid process for now, and will instead shift its focus to the second site picked for the HQ2 project, a site called National Landing in Northern Virginia.

Mayor Jim Kenney and Chamber of Commerce for Greater Philadelphia Chairman Daniel Hilferty said in a joint statement to Technical.ly on Thursday that the HQ2 bid process had served as a “catalyst for business, civic, and community leaders” in Philly, who began a “new, positive discussion about the importance of inclusive economic growth as the key driver to improving the quality of life” in the city.

“Participating in the Amazon HQ2 process gave us the opportunity to evaluate our own assets and build consensus around diverse, sustainable and inclusive strategies for driving growth,” the civic leaders said. “We are committed to supporting the continued growth and success of Philadelphia’s home-grown entrepreneurs, small businesses, and midsize or larger companies. We welcome any growing business to join employers large and small that are choosing to locate, stay, and grow in Philadelphia.”

But what if the HQ2 craze were to become reignited? Department of Commerce Communications Director Lauren Cox said the City was not preparing anything in response to the latest report. “They know how to reach us if they change their mind and want to reconsider what Philadelphia has to offer,” Cox said.

New York-specific impact to these news aside, these news take away the silver lining Amino founder Will Luttrell mentioned to us in November. “It means more trained engineers, product, sales, etc. folks for us to coax down to the much more livable City of Brotherly Love,” Luttrell had said, highlighting the connectivity of the Northeast Corridor.

But New Jersey-based site selection consultant John Boyd, who has previously assisted tech and life sciences companies in picking their ideal hubs, says there’s still an opportunity for Philly to see a sliver of benefit from the news yesterday.

“Amazon is rapidly increasing its workforce in tech but also in things like fashion, and food and beverage,” Boyd said. “These 25,000 to 40,000 jobs *will* be shifting to other markets around the country. You look first at regional hubs where Amazon has a significant presence, like Atlanta or Chicago. But there’s an argument to be made that any of these cities on the shortlist might also feel reap some of the benefits.”

Want another silver lining? There are lessons in this whole ordeal, says the Philadelphia Inquirer’s editorial board, for local politicians on standing up to corporations when conditions aren’t fair.