

New York City Council Budget Testimony
Sideya Sherman, Director of the Department of City Planning
Monday, March 23, 2026

Good morning, Chair Riley, Subcommittee Chairs Louis and Marte and distinguished members of the Land Use Committee. I'm joined by City Planning's Executive Director, Edith Hsu-Chen, and Chief Operating Officer, David Parish. Thank you for this opportunity to discuss the Department's Preliminary budget for Fiscal Year 2026.

I am honored to have recently been appointed Director of the Department of City Planning and Chair of the City Planning Commission by Mayor Mamdani. And while this is my sixth day on the job, I'm grateful for the opportunity to join you today and discuss our work to plan for the future of our city.

First, I want to acknowledge the tremendous work that the City Council and City Planning have accomplished together in recent years. In partnership with this body, the agency has implemented historic updates to the zoning code through City of Yes and advanced thoughtful neighborhood plans across the boroughs that will deliver new housing, jobs, and investments to help communities thrive.

But New York City is no place for resting on our laurels. The urgency of the housing crisis before us does not permit it.

The apartment rental vacancy stands at 1.4 percent — the lowest rate since 1968. Half of all tenants are rent-burdened, paying over 30 percent of their income on rent.

But our housing shortage can't be captured these stats alone — because it touches every aspect of people's lives in New York City.

It drives the imbalance of power that leaves tenants feeling at the mercy of their landlords.

It fuels the displacement and gentrification that reshape the neighborhoods and communities we live in.

It drives the homelessness crisis that impacts so many of our neighbors, including families and children. Indeed, in some neighborhoods, as many as one in *five* public school students is living in a shelter or doubled up in an overcrowded apartment.

And the housing shortage is quite literally pushing working people out of this city, particularly Black and Brown New Yorkers who have long been the backbone of so many communities.

So, this is a time of incredible challenges — but also tremendous opportunity.

We have tools in city government to chart a better path forward; to create a fairer, more affordable city for New Yorkers of all incomes and backgrounds. And I am so proud to join Mayor Mamdani, Deputy Mayor Bozorg, and the DCP team in this work.

At DCP, this means unlocking significantly more housing across more neighborhoods, so that opportunity is not limited to just a few places.

It means working faster and smarter to reduce housing costs and timelines so we can get people into new housing faster.

It means activating sites that lie underused, and creating bold plans that support communities with more housing, jobs, and investments — all to make our city more affordable and equitable place for New Yorkers to live in.

At a personal level, this work resonates deeply with me. I am a lifelong New Yorker and the throughline of my career has been working with communities to drive equitable change and stronger neighborhoods. Those experiences will absolutely shape how I approach this role, and how I think about the responsibility we have to plan for a city that works for all New Yorkers.

And of course, the DCP’s work will continue across so many important fronts: whether it’s supporting thriving industrial and commercial sectors, enhancing waterfront resiliency, shaping city-wide capital investments, contributing to Census efforts, analyzing the latest data trends, and engaging New Yorkers to participate in shaping the future of their city.

To my colleagues in the Council, we undertake this work in close partnership with you, and I look forward to continuing a strong, collaborative relationship as we move forward.

Now, I will turn to an overview of the Preliminary Budget.

DCP Financial Summary						
<i>Dollars in Thousands</i>	2024	2025	2026	Preliminary Plan		*Difference
	Actual	Actual	Adopted	2026	2027	2026 - 2027
Spending						
Personal Services	\$ 31,283	\$ 32,565	\$ 35,890	\$ 37,143	\$ 37,237	\$ 1,347
Other Than Personal Services	\$ 14,378	\$ 16,576	\$ 20,899	\$ 21,078	\$ 14,216	\$ (6,683)
Total	\$ 45,661	\$ 49,141	\$ 56,789	\$ 58,221	\$ 51,453	\$ (5,336)
Funding						
City Funds	\$ 31,511	\$ 32,256	\$ 36,405	\$ 37,091	\$ 35,046	\$ (1,359)
Federal - Community Development	\$ 12,688	\$ 15,293	\$ 19,194	\$ 17,824	\$ 15,217	\$ (3,977)
Federal - Other	\$ 1,320	\$ 1,519	\$ 1,043	\$ 2,014	\$ 1,043	\$ -
Intra City	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,146	\$ -	\$ -
State	\$ 143	\$ 73	\$ 147	\$ 147	\$ 147	\$ -
Total	\$ 45,661	\$ 49,141	\$ 56,789	\$ 58,221	\$ 51,453	\$ (5,336)
Headcount						
Full-Time Positions - Civilian	297	311	364	369	370	6
Total	297	311	364	369	370	6

**The difference of Fiscal 2026 Adopted compared to Fiscal 2027 Preliminary Budget.*

DCP entered Fiscal Year 2026 with an Adopted Budget of \$56.8 million and an authorized headcount of 364 full-time positions. Of this, \$36.4 million and 190 positions are funded with City Tax-Levy dollars. The rest of the \$20.4 million budget allocation and 174 positions are funded by State and Federal grants, primarily through the HUD Community Development Block Grant Program.

Our \$56.8M FY26 Adopted Budget allocated \$35.9 (63%) to personal services, which include part-time staff, interns, and members of the City Planning Commission. The remaining \$20.9M went to Other-than-Personal-Services.

Now, the FY 27 Preliminary Budget. In comparison to the FY26 Adopted Budget, it represents a net \$5.3 million decrease. This is almost entirely due to the expiration of \$7 million in temporary funding, either grants or funding granted for Environmental Impact Statements for projects that have since been approved by the Council. At the same time, there is \$1.7 million in new funding for new work supporting the 2030 Census, and to begin the implementation of the City Map charter amendment.

Looking at Personal Services, there was a net 6 position change in headcount. In total, the agency gained 12 new positions for census, city map and capital planning work. At the same time, the agency lost 6 positions that were either temporary or grant-funded. This increased headcount came with a net increase of \$1.3M for personal services, which supports the increase in headcount.

Overall, the FY26 Preliminary Budget reflects a strong foundation with a total budget of \$51.4M and an increased full-time headcount of 370 positions.

We are committed to allocating our resources effectively to advance the Department's mission, and help create a more affordable, equitable city for all New Yorkers.

**TESTIMONY OF LISA KERSAVAGE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION,
BEFORE THE LAND USE COMMITTEE OF THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
March 23, 2026**

Thank you, Chair Riley and Chair Marte. Good afternoon to you and the members of the Council Committee on Land Use and the Subcommittee on Landmarks, Sitings, and Dispositions. I am pleased to be here today to speak about the Landmarks Preservation Commission's Fiscal Year 2027 Preliminary Budget. I am joined today by Akeem Bashiru, our Director of Financial Management, and Steven Thomson, Director of Community and Intergovernmental Affairs.

The Commission's mission is to protect the significant architectural, historical, and cultural resources of our City; we do that by designating buildings and sites as landmarks and subsequently regulating changes to them. The preservation of historic resources supports communities, fosters economic development, and contributes to the vitality of New York City. To date, the Commission has designated and regulates more than 38,500 buildings and sites throughout the five boroughs, and the agency issues about 12,000 work permits annually. Since we last testified on our agency's budget, LPC has made continued advancements in our efforts to help make city government work for New Yorkers by increasing the efficiency, transparency, and accessibility of our permitting process, designating significant historic resources across the city – prioritizing those buildings and districts that reflect the City's diversity and tell the stories of all New Yorkers – and educating property owners about permitting processes and grant opportunities.

I will begin our testimony today by giving a brief overview of LPC's budget and how resources are allocated.

Budget Overview

LPC's preliminary budget for Fiscal Year 2027 is \$8.15M, which consists of \$7.45M in City funds and \$698,287 in federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds.

LPC is fundamentally an agency of professionals. Almost ninety percent of the preliminary budget (\$7.3M) is allocated to personnel services (PS) and only 10% (\$864,716) is allocated to other than personnel services (OTPS). Our budget supports the Agency's five departments, including the Research Department, responsible for evaluating and advancing properties for designation; the Preservation Department which reviews permit applications for work on designated properties; the Enforcement Department, which investigates complaints of potential violations, and helps owners correct non-compliances; and the Archaeology and Environmental Review Departments, which assist city, state and federal agencies in their Environmental Review process. The agency's total headcount in Fiscal Year 2027 preliminary budget is 78 full-time staff. We also have 5 part-time staff.

Of the CDBG funding, about 82% is allocated to personnel supporting critical community development-related functions such as surveys, environmental review, archaeology, community outreach, and education; while about 18%, or approximately \$114,790 is allocated for our Historic Preservation Grant Program for low-income homeowners and not-for-profit organizations.

I will now discuss the work of the Commission that these resources support.

Research and Designation

LPC is committed to equitable representation in designations, with a focus on communities and neighborhoods that have been less represented by landmark designation, and we work closely with agencies like the Department of City Planning to find opportunities for designation in areas of growth and development citywide.

In Fiscal Year 2026 to date, LPC has designated five new individual landmarks and two historic districts, for a total of 433 buildings. The two new districts are in Flatbush, Brooklyn: Beverley Square West Historic District and Ditmas Park West Historic District, comprising a total of 427 buildings. These two districts of distinctive free-standing houses contain some of the finest residential streetscapes in this part of Brooklyn.

The five individual landmarks are in Midtown South Manhattan and are related to the garment industry: Barbey Building, Fashion Tower, Furcraft Building, 29th Street Towers, and Lefcourt Clothing Center, all designated as individual landmarks in August. Designed by many of the city's leading architects of the time, the buildings are some of the Garment District's most impressive examples of early 20th-century commercial architecture, and together tell the story of Midtown Manhattan's transformation at the turn of the 20th century into a global center for the garment and furrier industries, and a hub for the nation's growing labor movement, particularly for women. The Commission's designation of these buildings was done in coordination with DCP's Midtown South Mixed-Use Plan. With the rezoning and designation of these five buildings, they can be adaptively reused for housing, and any excess air rights could be transferred to create additional housing opportunities.

Earlier this month, LPC held public hearings for the proposed designation of three sites in Brooklyn and Manhattan as individual landmarks: Public School 15 Annex in Brooklyn, the Church of Saint Mary, located on the Lower East Side, and the Lithuanian Alliance Building in Midtown Manhattan. In addition to their architectural significance, these buildings are all related to New York City's rich immigration history, with all three serving important functions to educate, uplift, and provide social services to their respective communities.

Moving forward, we will continue to prioritize designations that tell the full story of all New Yorkers and represent the diversity of the city, and that are in areas less represented by landmarks.

I will now turn to our preservation and permitting operations.

Preservation and Permitting

It is a top priority for LPC to support property owners of designated landmark buildings, and to ensure an efficient, transparent, and accessible process for all applicants. Our job is not to prevent change, but to manage it, so that we can ensure these significant buildings and sites are protected and also remain vital.

LPC's Preservation Department is the regulatory arm of the Commission and is the largest department within the agency. Our staff are professionally trained preservationists who work with property and business owners to help them obtain approval for work that meets their needs and is sensitive to the historic building and context. Each year, approximately 94-97% of permits are issued by staff pursuant to the Commission's rules. The remaining 3-6% of the applications are reviewed by the full Commission. LPC staff works closely with property owners to ensure they understand the criteria and review process and to help them put together a complete application and presentation.

In FY25, the Commission received 11,748 permit applications and took action on 11,324 applications, ranging from restoration, adaptive reuse, additions, and new buildings. As of March 1st, we have received about 7,600

applications and are roughly on track to match the FY25 total. The projects approved by the Commission not only preserve historic buildings, but also help create new housing, support New York City's iconic cultural institutions, and help drive economic growth across all five boroughs

Two years ago, LPC launched the agency's online application portal, Portico. Designed with New York City's small property owners in mind, Portico has had a transformative effect on LPC's permit application process, making it easier and faster for applicants to obtain permits to perform work on their designated properties. Since its launch, Portico has driven significant improvements in the efficiency of LPC's permitting process, with a 30% reduction in the average time it takes the agency to issue the three most common types of staff-level permits, and a 36% increase in the number of applications received and reviewed through LPC's expedited services, including the agency's Business Express Service. A December 2025 report from the New York City Comptroller's Office highlighted these gains, finding that Portico has increased both the efficiency and the transparency of LPC's permitting process.

LPC works hard to make our application process easy to understand and accessible. In the last year, we updated our Permit Guidebook, which helps applicants file complete applications, so the agency can more quickly issue permits. The update incorporated newly adopted rules that allow for staff-level review of certain applications. Work to adopt new rules is ongoing, because it allows a faster and more streamlined review of some applications, which allows the agency to be more responsive to property owners.

I will now share some further details about the essential outreach and education work LPC conducts.

Outreach and Education

Outreach and education are also essential to our success. Our goal is to make information accessible to everyone, especially property owners, business owners, and faith-based organizations, as a substantial number of owners directly file for permits with LPC.

In recent years, we have increased community outreach efforts and now place special emphasis on meeting with communities across all five boroughs. In the last year, we have partnered with several Council Members and Community Boards to host events to share information on permits, grants, and financial incentives for property owners in historic districts ranging from Sugar Hill and Hamilton Heights in Upper Manhattan, to Sunset Park and Bedford-Stuyvesant in Brooklyn, and St. George and Stapleton Heights on Staten Island and in the months ahead we look forward to holding events in Longwood in the Bronx and in Ridgewood, Queens. These in-person engagements make regulation and funding opportunities accessible through direct conversations with LPC staff members, accompanied by language interpreters, who can answer questions in real-time and maintain contact with property owners as they prepare permit applications.

We also work to celebrate landmark designations and provide educational tools for New Yorkers to engage in the city's history. In the last year, LPC released two enhanced online mapping tools – the Discover NYC Landmarks Map and the Archaeology Report Finder – that make it even easier for users looking for information on a given landmark site. These are accessible on LPC's website along with other tools, including story maps featuring sites and an immersive heritage trail of abolitionist and Underground Railroad sites in Brooklyn.

Community Development Block Grant Funding

Before I conclude, I want to return to the Historic Preservation Grant Program, a modest, federally funded program targeted for low and moderate-income homeowners and not-for-profit organizations to help restore or repair the facades of their landmarked buildings.

In FY25, the Program awarded three \$35,000 grants: two to homeowners and one to a non-profit organization. The homeowner grants supported restoration work at properties in the Crown Heights North Historic District in Brooklyn and the Cambria Heights Historic District in Queens, including brownstone and stoop repairs, window replacement, and lead paint remediation. The non-profit grant supported roof replacement at the office building at Frederick Douglass Memorial Park, an individual landmark on Staten Island.

In FY26 thus far, LPC has awarded three grants ranging from \$11,000 to \$35,000 to one homeowner and two non-profit organizations. The homeowner grant supports window replacement and restoration of a brownstone stoop and trim at a property in the Morris High School Historic District in the Bronx. The non-profit grants include window replacement at a religious property in the Chelsea Historic District in Manhattan and work at the Metro Theater, an individual landmark on Broadway on the Upper West Side.

Summary

In summary, we are excited for the future of preservation in New York City and thank the Administration and Council for your continued support and the resources provided in this budget. We are a small agency, and nearly the entirety of our budget is personnel-based. LPC has a hardworking, dedicated, and professional staff with an outsized impact on our city, responsible for the protection and preservation of its most significant buildings, districts, and sites. Our commitment is that we will continue to do this important work with the resources provided and strive to do so equitably, efficiently, and transparently.

Thank you again for allowing me to testify, and I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Testimony of the New York Housing Conference

**New York City Council Committee on Land Use
Testimony**

March 23, 2026

Good afternoon. My name is Brendan Cheney. I am Director of Policy and Operations at the New York Housing Conference (NYHC). I would like to thank the Committee for the opportunity to testify about the FY 2027 preliminary budget.

NYHC is a nonprofit affordable housing policy and advocacy organization. As a broad-based coalition, our mission is to advance City, State and Federal policies and funding to support the development and preservation of decent and affordable housing for all New Yorkers.

NYHC was a strong supporter of the City of Yes and housing-related Charter ballot changes and we are excited about the ways these changes will support housing development going forward. We greatly appreciate the work of the DCP staff around the City of Yes and staff of the Charter Revision Commission around these changes.

Moving forward, the City will need to work hard to process plans to take advantage of both City of Yes and the Charter changes and will need to continue neighborhood rezonings to add new housing citywide. New opportunities such as Sunnyside Yards, a large scale housing and infrastructure project, or the Interborough Express, a rapid transit line that would connect up to 17 subway lines between Brooklyn and Queens all require the thoughtful planning of DCP staff to study, evaluate, engage and propose zoning and land use changes to plan for NYC's growth, equitable development and changing neighborhood needs.

However, we are concerned about DCP's budget and staffing levels required to process projects in a timely manner and to develop and finalize neighborhood rezonings. The agency currently has significant vacancies, with an actual headcount of 309 compared to a budgeted headcount of 370. In addition, the agency's budget is cut from \$58.2 million to \$51.4 million.

With current staffing, we expect the agency will be limited in its capacity to meet the needs to review and evaluate land use matters necessary to address NYC's supply shortage. Increasing the DCP budget is a wise investment. A relatively small change in staffing will have exponential long-term benefits. One rezoning for example can add thousands of new units of housing. It is a small investment with a huge payoff in terms of creating housing, jobs and local economic stimulus, while planning for NYC's future.

We urge robust funding in the annual budget with adequate budgeted headcount to ensure DCP can complete rezonings and process applications to fully take advantage of the City of Yes, neighborhood rezonings and future planning needs.



Open New York Testimony before the New York City Council Land Use Committee
Preliminary Budget Hearing
March 23, 2026

Good morning, my name is Logan Phares and I serve as the Political Director at Open New York – a statewide, grassroots advocacy organization that advocates for more homes, lower rents, and tenant protections. Thank you Chair Riley and members of the committee for allowing me to speak today.

In November, New Yorkers voted overwhelmingly to meaningfully address our housing crisis by making it easier and faster to build homes in every corner of our city. These changes expanded upon the historic progress made in the City of Yes for Housing Opportunity and the City Council's City for All which collectively enabled over 80,000 new homes across the five boroughs.

While these changes mark a massive step toward addressing our historic housing crisis, it also means that we're asking for even more from the Department of City Planning. From small private applications to large neighborhood rezonings that will create tens of thousands more affordable homes, all of it requires staff and resources.

Cutting DCP's budget by 12% as proposed will save just \$6.8 million, not much in the context of a \$127 billion budget. The minor savings achieved will be eclipsed by the cost of working people continuing to leave our city, taking their talents and tax dollars with them. New Yorkers were clear this past election: we need to continue to make strides to create more housing and lower the rent.

Mayor Mamdani and Speaker Menin agree that we must drastically increase the number of homes in order to make our city affordable for working families. We've made great progress with City of Yes and City for All. Now, we must empower DCP to deliver the housing New Yorkers need by funding the agency above and beyond last year's allocation.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

CONTACT: Logan Phares, Political Director | logan@opennewyork.org

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SBIDC

Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Development Corporation

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Eileen Vázquez Thornton
Flushing Bank

March 23rd, 2026
Re: Land Use Preliminary Budget Hearing

Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Development Corporation (SBIDC), thanks Committee Chair Riley, and members of the Committee, for the opportunity to submit testimony on land use-related proposals for the Fiscal Year 2027 Preliminary Budget.

For over 40 years, SBIDC has served the industrial businesses and workers of Sunset Park, Red Hook, and Gowanus. Across these neighborhoods, more than 2,000 industrial firms power the working waterfront—from food production and garment manufacturing to film and TV, fabrication, wholesale, and logistics. We have deep, decades-long relationships with these businesses. We know the pulse of these sectors. We are trusted local intermediaries that connect them to government. Each year, SBIDC supports over 250 businesses through direct services and advocacy, and since 2017, we've helped place more than 2,000 New Yorkers into quality, family-sustaining jobs.

Land use and planning decisions made by the City have a direct and significant impact on industrial businesses and the communities that depend on them. SBIDC has served for decades as a steward of the industrial sector, helping to maintain the stable and economically resilient environments that industrial land is intended to support. For context, our industrial areas were called In Place Industrial Parks and were established by the City of New York in the 1970s to protect industrial and manufacturing businesses. During a period when many businesses were leaving the area, we were entrusted with supporting these areas. Our early responsibilities centered on critical issues such as safety and sanitation. As administrations and policies evolved—eventually redefining these areas as Industrial Business Zones—we have consistently provided and evolved our dedicated support and services to these essential business communities.

While today's challenges are less about safety and more about ensuring long-term land use stability, the need for specialized guidance remains paramount. We are testifying to address a new and serious threat to the continuity of services that have helped industrial companies withstand decades of uncertainty.

We serve as the Industrial Business Service Provider for South Brooklyn, providing customized, community-based support for industrial and manufacturing businesses. Two weeks ago, the Department of Small Business Services released an RFP that would drastically restructure how the City provides support to industrial businesses, contradicting several key recommendations of the 2025 Industrial Action Plan. If this effort by SBS proceeds, the decades of customized services built on trust that the City of New York has counted on for crucial support, will end.

Industrial jobs are extremely important to our communities as they provide strong wages, low barriers to entry, and career pathways for those without

college educations and those for whom English is a second language. They are the cornerstone of an economic justice platform. Across NYC, the industrial sector provides over 450,000 jobs with an average wage over \$87,000 and contributes over \$1.7 billion annually in tax revenue. The sector accounts for 33% of all NYC jobs that pay over \$50,000 and do not require a college degree. Upholding this vital industry and these good jobs was a key driver of the Industrial Action Plan.

The RFP that SBS released threatens not only the work that SBIDC does, but also the recommendations of the IDAP. To fulfill the goal of enabling industrial businesses to evolve, innovate, and modernize, the IDAP recommends that SBS “include specialized industrial business services in a way that addresses the evolving needs of industrial businesses with high-quality services at scale.” Through this RFP, IBSPs will shift industrial support to existing Business Solution Centers. Instead of the deep, trusted neighborhood-based expertise provided by organizations like ours, the City proposes a single rotating staff member per borough. This is an unrealistic "drop-in" model that cannot replace decades of specialized knowledge in industrial real estate, permitting, and regulation, and does nothing to optimize or provide high-quality service. In fact, this constitutes a steep cut to industrial support by the City.

Should the IBSP program cease to exist, this will severely impact the ability of organizations like SBIDC to serve as a partner in fulfilling several other key goals of the IDAP. These include helping existing local businesses access opportunities in the green economy, developing quality workforce development programs for the shifting industrial economy, and strengthening primary industrial areas, many of which are supported by local IBSPs.

To ensure that industrial businesses can remain and thrive in NYC and that IBSPs can continue to play our vital role in serving them, **we ask this Committee and City Council to engage with SBS to revise this RFP to remove language related to industrial services, extend the existing IBSP contracts by two years to maintain continuity, and collaborate with the Industrial Jobs Coalition to modernize, rather than dismantle, this vital network.**

Thank you for understanding the importance of the industrial sector to our city, and for your continued efforts to ensure quality jobs and equitable economic growth across New York.

Sincerely,

Miquela Craytor
Interim Executive Director, SBIDC
4223 1st Ave 2nd Floor,
Brooklyn, New York 11232



March 24, 2026

The New York City Council, Committee on Land Use

RE: March 24, 2026

Subject: Testimony to New York City Committee on Land Use Regarding the Preliminary Budget for Fiscal Year 2027

Good morning, Chair and members of the Committee on Land Use. My name is **Marcel Negret**, and I am the **Land Use Director at the Regional Plan Association (RPA)**.

RPA is an independent, non-profit civic organization that has worked for over 100 years to improve economic opportunity, housing affordability, mobility, climate resilience, and quality of life across the New York metropolitan region. We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the **Preliminary Budget for Fiscal Year 2027** as it pertains to the Department of City Planning (DCP) and the city's broader planning capacity.

The Essential Value of Urban Planning

Robust urban planning is not merely a regulatory exercise; it is the blueprint for a functional, equitable, and resilient city. Effective planning serves several critical functions:

- **Economic Vitality:** By optimizing land use, the city can foster job growth and ensure that commercial hubs are integrated with transit.¹
- **Environmental Sustainability & Resilience:** Planning is a key tool for mitigating the impacts of climate change, from coastal flooding to extreme heat.
- **Social Equity:** Intentional planning helps correct historical inequities by ensuring all neighborhoods have access to affordable housing, parks, and essential services.
- **Infrastructure Efficiency:** It ensures that new developments are supported by the necessary transportation, school seats, and utility capacity.

Without a well-resourced planning department, the city will risk falling into "reactive" mode, struggling to keep pace with the evolving needs of its eight million residents.

RPA's recent research underscores that our housing and climate challenges cannot adequately be addressed without expanding proactive and well-resourced planning. In our [Averting Crisis](#) report, we calculated that in NYC alone, over 800,000 additional homes will be needed by 2040 to address current and future needs. This demand must be integrated with adaptation strategies to reduce our risk to on-going and future climate risks. The housing and climate crises necessitate a coordinated planning approach to

¹ A previous RPA analysis estimated that City of Yes for Housing Opportunity could deliver between 15,000 and 30,000 new jobs generating between \$1.1 and \$2.1 billion in earnings each year, and an overall economic impact of between \$41 and \$83 billion. [City of Yes — More Than Just Housing](#), Oct 2024.



Outlook

[EXTERNAL] Bushwick City Farm

From Akiva Hort [REDACTED]**Date** Tue 3/24/2026 12:01 AM**To** Land Use Testimony <landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. Report suspected phishing emails with the Phish Alert Button or forward them to phish@oti.nyc.gov as an attachment.

Hi! I am a volunteer with Bushwick City Farm. Being able to access the farm has meant the world to me; it's so important to me to have access to a green space, especially in an area so developed and congested as Bushwick. Through the farm I have been able to connect with the local community as well which can be daunting as a newcomer. Please help save the farm!

Akiva Hort

Sent from my iPhone



[EXTERNAL] Bushwick City Farms Testimony

From Clio Walton [REDACTED]
Date Mon 3/23/2026 3:20 PM
To Land Use Testimony <landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov>

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Hello, my name is Clio Walton and I would like to submit testimony in support of Bushwick City Farms (BCF), a treasured and rare green space in Bushwick located at 354 Stockton St.

For 15 years (since 2011), this garden space has acted as an education space, a community gathering space, a nurturing and therapeutic green space, a green carbon sink, and a supportive net for folks experiencing food insecurity and houselessness.

Before it was reclaimed through collective community efforts, the land was an unused and unsafe dumping site for garbage and used drug paraphernalia. The community cleaned it up and put it to use---local children learned woodworking skills alongside community volunteers, building the gazebo and installing solar lights. Unhoused community members were met with kindness, and farm volunteers assisted them in finding open shelters and jobs. Food has been distributed twice a week *every week* for those in the community facing food insecurity---during the height of the COVID-19 crisis, 1,500 meals were distributed weekly by farm volunteers. Children have learned about plant care, local ecology, and chicken care.

BCF is now facing an existential threat. The site has been rezoned as a commercial space, though it produces no profits---its value is inherent, and if it were to receive city funding, its worth in positive externalities would pay for that funding within the year.

BCF's proposal to be made into an official Green Thumb City Site would ensure the lasting benefits already mentioned here, and would fulfill city goals around access to green spaces in every neighborhood. I wholeheartedly support this proposal, and know that I speak with many other Bushwick community members in doing so.

Thank you,
-Clio Walton



[EXTERNAL] Bushwick City Farm is paradise

From Jane [REDACTED]
Date Wed 3/25/2026 10:18 PM
To Land Use Testimony <landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov>

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To the Committee on Land Use:

Since 2014, I have volunteered with my son at Bushwick City Farm (BCF) on Lewis Avenue between Myrtle Av & Broadway (officially at 23 Lewis Street or 354 Stockton Street, Brooklyn, NY 11206). He is now a young man and cherishes his time at BCF, tending chickens, distributing their eggs, planting vegetables for the people in the community, with people from the community. Bushwick City Farm has served as a rare green space and community hub for their neighbors, particularly children. It is a place of serenity, learning and community. So many people have come to depend on the resources BCF has provided over the years— green space, shade, fresh food, workshops, free English lessons, volunteer opportunities, a beautiful place to hang & help - a true community asset. During the pandemic, BCF teamed up with Club A Kitchen. They have been distributed fresh food and continues to this day 2x a week.

Personally, I volunteer every Friday morning for chicken duty. I wish everyone could have the experiences I've had tending to 2 dozen chickens for over 11 years.

Simply put, Bushwick City Farm is paradise. It would be a tragedy to lose this remarkable cherished green community space. Please do the right thing and preserve BCF as an official Green Thumb space.

Yours truly,
Jane Bottner

tackle the land-use, infrastructure and resilience strategies we need to implement - and NYCDCP is the agency positioned to lead.

Sound planning is also critical to delivering on the expectations of the NYC Streets Plan and expanding it to create a more vibrant and safe public realm. In our [Re-envisioning the Right-of-Way](#) and [Building Better Streets](#) reports, we highlighted strategies to repurpose how our streets and sidewalks can deliver more benefits for New Yorkers. Land-use and transportation planning must be closely aligned to achieve our goals, and DCP is the agency that can align zoning, urban design and capital planning across agencies.

We know it takes time and resources to effectively plan. Recent neighborhood rezonings took several years and incurred significant costs to properly engage with the community and develop a cohesive plan. The new administration is focused on delivering more affordability and accountability to New Yorkers and NYCDCP is the agency that can lead that change for the built-environment. It is critical they be given the resources to do so.

Concerns Regarding DCP Staffing and Capacity

While we recognize the fiscal challenges facing the city, RPA is concerned that the **Preliminary Budget proposes essentially no change in current staffing levels at DCP.**

The current staffing model, especially within the **Borough Offices**, significantly limits DCP's capacity. In the previous term, the city managed to complete only five neighborhood-scale plans. While these accomplishments are noteworthy, they are not enough to tackle the magnitude of the housing crisis and the pressing need for climate adaptation across all five boroughs.

Increased Demands on the Land Use Process

Maintaining the status quo is, in effect, a step backward given the projected increase in workload:

1. **Neighborhood Planning Goals:** To meet the city's ambitious housing and resiliency targets, DCP must have the bandwidth to lead multiple proactive, community-based planning processes simultaneously without sacrificing depth or engagement quality.
2. **Charter Modifications:** We are anticipating a significant influx of private land use applications resulting from the **City Charter modifications approved last year**. These changes are expected to streamline certain processes but will inevitably increase the volume of technical reviews, environmental assessments, and coordination required of DCP staff.

Conclusion

If we want a city that is more than the sum of its individual development projects, we must invest in the people who coordinate that vision. We urge the Council to advocate for increased technical and staffing capacity at the Department of City Planning. Ensuring that the borough offices are fully staffed is the only way to move from a "project-by-project" approach to a holistic, neighborhood-centered planning strategy.

Thank you for your time and for your dedication to New York City's future.

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Name: Emi

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I represent: self

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