

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND  
BUILDINGS JOINTLY WITH THE  
COMMITTEE ON LAND USE

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SEPTEMBER 26, 2023  
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HELD AT: COUNCIL CHAMBERS - CITY HALL

B E F O R E: Pierina Sanchez,  
Chairperson of Committee on  
Housing and Buildings  
  
Rafael Salamanca Jr.,  
Chairperson of Committee on Land  
Use

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Speaker Adams  
Shaun Abreu  
Alexa Avilés  
Charles Barron  
Tiffany Cabàn  
David M. Carr  
Eric Dinowitz  
Oswald Feliz  
Crystal Hudson  
Erik Bottcher  
Darlene Mealy  
Franciso Moya

COUNCIL MEMBERS: (CONTINUED)

Farah N. Louis  
Shekar Krishnan  
Kamillah Hanks  
Carlina Rivera  
Gale Brewer  
Selvena N. Brooks-Powers

## A P P E A R A N C E S

Adolfo Carriòn  
Commissioner of the New York City Department of  
Housing, Preservation and Development

Ahmed Tigani  
First Deputy Commissioner and Chief Diversity  
Officer of HPD

Kim Darga  
Deputy Commissioner for Development of HPD

Lucy Joffe  
Associate Commissioner for Housing Policy of HPD

Paul Epstein  
Co-Chair of Inwood Legal Action

Brendan Cheney  
Director of Policy and Operations at the New York  
Housing Conference

Emily Goldstein  
Association for Neighborhood & Housing  
Development (ANHD)

Walter Gerson Rodriguez  
Volunteers of America, Greater New York

Howard Slatkin

Logan Phares  
Political Director of Open New York

Ryan Monell

Chris Widelo  
New York State Association for Affordable Housing  
(NYSFAFH)

## A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Erin Burns-Maine  
The Community Preservation Corporation

Allison Nickerson

Adam Roberts  
Policy Director for the Community Housing  
Improvement Program

Makrand Bhoot  
Path Professional Alliance for Technology and  
Habitat

Ramona Ferreyra  
Founder of Save Section 9

Paul Woody  
Self

Doreen Thomann-Howe  
Self

Mbacke Thiam  
Center for the Independence of the Disabled, NY  
(CIDNY)

Bria Donohue  
American Institute of Architects New York

Tony Lindsay  
New York Homeowners Alliance Corp.

Towaki Komatsu  
Self

Christopher Leon Johnson  
Self

Raul Rivera  
TLC Driver

## A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Shannon Lumpkin  
The Opera House Tenants' Union

Dr. Irvinia Moody  
Self

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3 SERGEANT AT ARMS: This is a microphone check for  
4 the Committee on Housing and Buildings joint with the  
5 Committee on Land Use recorded on September 26, 2023,  
6 located in Chambers, recorded by Danny Wong.

7 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Test one, two. Test one, two.  
8 This is a prerecorded sound test for the Committee on  
9 Hospitals jointly with Health. Today's date is  
10 September 20, 2023. It is being recorded by Michael  
11 Leonardo in the Council Chambers.

12 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Good morning and welcome to  
13 today's New York City Council hearing for the  
14 Committee on Housing and Buildings joint with the  
15 Committee on Land Use. If you wish to submit  
16 testimony, you may at [testimony@council.nyc.gov](mailto:testimony@council.nyc.gov).

17 At this time, please silence all electronic  
18 devices. Just a reminder, no one may approach the  
19 dais during any point at this hearing. Chairs, we  
20 are ready to begin.

21 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Alright, good morning  
22 everyone. I am Council Member Rafael Salamanca,  
23 Chair of the Committee on Land Use. We've been  
24 joined by Speaker Adrienne Adams, Chair Pierina  
25 Sanchez, Council Members Carr, Bottcher and Council  
Member Dinowitz and Council Member Mealy.

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3 So, we will begin and we will allow Speaker  
4 Adrienne Adams to open up with opening remarks.

5 SPEAKER ADAMS: Thank you very much Mr. Chair and  
6 good morning everyone. Thank you for joining us  
7 today and thank you to our Housing and Buildings  
8 Chair Pierina Sanchez who is on Zoom this morning.  
9 And of course, our Land Use Chair Rafael Salamanca  
10 for Chairing today's critical hearing on Fair Housing  
11 and Affordable Housing Development.

12 This oversight hearing could not have come at a  
13 more critical time. Our city is facing a dire  
14 housing crisis that has exacerbated homelessness and  
15 made our city less affordable in every neighborhood.  
16 More than half of all New Yorkers are rent burdened,  
17 paying more than 30 percent of their monthly income  
18 on rent alone.

19 The numbers that explain our housing shortage  
20 could not be clearer. Over the last decade, only  
21 200,000 new housing units were built. While our city  
22 gained 630,000 new residents and nearly one million  
23 jobs. Our rate of housing production has quite  
24 simply not kept pace with our population and job  
25 growth. All of us have felt the pinch of this  
housing shortage, which has worsened over time and

1  
2 has fueled a crisis of affordability. It has  
3 disproportionately burdened those who need affordable  
4 housing at the deepest levels.

5 According to the latest New York City housing and  
6 vacancy survey in 2021, the vacancy rate for rental  
7 apartments below \$1,500 per month was the city's  
8 starkest at less than one percent. This  
9 affordability and housing crisis has triggered a  
10 significant decline in our city's Black population of  
11 ten percent over the past two decades and contributes  
12 to the housing instability across all of our  
13 communities. It's clear that the current system of  
14 advancing housing production is not meeting the scale  
15 of New Yorkers' needs.

16 With so many people struggling to make ends meet,  
17 we need comprehensive solutions that match the needs  
18 of our city. There are many efforts we must  
19 undertake to address these challenges, including  
20 those contributed by our partners in the state and  
21 federal governments. As a city, there is now a focus  
22 on exploring how zoning changes can help unlock  
23 necessary housing production, which the Mayor and  
24 City Planning have initiated with the Preliminary  
25 Proposal for a Citywide Text Amendment.

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3 It is also critical that solutions recognize that  
4 housing production, particularly of affordable units,  
5 has not occurred equitably across the city. Too many  
6 neighborhoods have been able to opt out of  
7 contributing to the production of affordable housing  
8 needed in our city, while others have been pitching  
9 in and deserve greater investments. These inequities  
10 are what Introduction 1031, my Fair Housing Framework  
11 Bill are aimed at addressing. Every neighborhood  
12 across our city must contribute to solving our  
13 housing crisis.

14 This legislation would create five-year housing  
15 production targets for every community district in  
16 the city, including for low-income affordable  
17 housing, supportive housing, and senior housing as  
18 well as the preservation of low-income affordable  
19 units based on factors such as access to opportunity.  
20 Displacement risk, infrastructure capacity and  
21 vulnerability to climate change. It would also  
22 require the development of specific equity goals and  
23 strategies that increase the production and  
24 preservation of low-income affordable housing and  
25 voucher utilization in high opportunity community  
districts. Expand preservation and anti-displacement

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3 resources in districts with the highest displacement  
4 risks and deepen neighborhood investments in  
5 underserved communities that have contributed  
6 significant housing development. It is vital that we  
7 create a framework for meeting our city's housing  
8 needs while working to ensure that this growth is  
9 equitable, sustainable and supported by investments  
10 into communities that have historically been under  
11 resourced.

12 We know that every neighborhood is different and  
13 housing needs vary across income, age and other  
14 demographics but many neighborhoods with abundant  
15 access to infrastructure and amenities like open  
16 space, thriving schools and public transit have  
17 produced far too few housing units. It's important  
18 that every neighborhood does its fair share,  
19 including these and excluding none.

20 To successfully address this housing and  
21 affordability crisis, we know that our city must  
22 boost housing production. It must be done in an  
23 equitable way that advances fair housing goals and  
24 builds stronger and healthier neighborhoods for all  
25 New Yorkers. Our efforts to boost housing production  
must also ensure that approved projects are advanced

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3 in a timely fashion, which too often has not  
4 occurred. This is the focus of Chair Salamanca's  
5 important legislation Introduction 362, which will  
6 also be the subject of today's hearing. The city's  
7 success towards increasing housing production  
8 requires that our relevant city agencies are  
9 adequately staffed and supported. So, the dedicated  
10 public servants responsible can advance our housing  
11 goals.

12 I look forward to hearing from our city's  
13 agencies, advocates and the public about these  
14 policies of legislation and critical issues so we can  
15 solve our city's housing crisis. I want to thank the  
16 Council's legislative and Land Use Staff for their  
17 hard work on this hearing and the bills being heard  
18 today.

19 Now, I will turn it back over to Chair Salamanca  
20 and Chair Sanchez.

21 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Thank you Speaker Adams.  
22 I want to recognize that we've been also joined by  
23 Chair Farah Louis. Now, we will hand it over to  
24 Chair Pierina Sanchez for opening remarks.

25 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Good morning. Thank you so  
much Chair. Thank you Speaker. Good morning. I am

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3 Council Member Pierina Sanchez, Chair of the  
4 Committee on Housing and Buildings. Please excuse my  
5 virtual presence today as I am home with COVID but I  
6 could not miss this most important discussion. Thank  
7 you Speaker for your leadership on this matter.

8 Before I commence my remarks, I would like to ask  
9 for a brief moment of silence. Remembering Nicholas  
10 Feliz Dominici, a one-year-old baby who we lost in  
11 our community following exposure to opioids at a  
12 daycare center in Kings Bridge. As well as three  
13 other children who are still recovering from this  
14 exposure. Thank you.

15 Their exposure highlight so many of the  
16 overlapping challenges that our communities face from  
17 the ruthlessness of an illegal trait, to lacking  
18 affordable childcare opportunities and once you know  
19 more and learn more about the beautiful family of  
20 Nicholas Feliz Dominici, you also understand that  
21 it's also related to affordable housing  
22 opportunities. Nicholas for you, we fight on.

23 So, thank you Speaker. Turning to our hearing  
24 today. New York City and municipalities across the  
25 country are facing a dire housing crisis. Not only  
not one that is felt equally by all New Yorkers are

1 all those who call our country home but one with pain  
2 concentrated in working class communities,  
3 communities of color and one that is most felt by  
4 underrepresented people, like persons living with  
5 disabilities, sexual and gender minorities, religious  
6 minorities. But this pain is felt differentially is  
7 widely documented. It is a function of the history  
8 of our great nation. Government and private sector  
9 policies like redlining that devalued certain  
10 communities because they housed people of color.  
11 Investments from the federal government like the GI  
12 bill, unfavorable mortgages that transferred no less  
13 than \$100 billion dollars and \$19.50 dollars or \$1  
14 trillion dollars and \$23.00 to White families in the  
15 post war period at the exclusion of minority  
16 communities and set the stage for White families to  
17 have an average network of \$188,000 per family and  
18 Black families to have a median network of \$24,100  
19 today, an eight-fold difference.

21 This unequal access to financing and practices  
22 like realistic hearing, they go on in different forms  
23 to this day. They all serve to keep Black and Brown  
24 New Yorkers in some neighborhoods and White New  
25 Yorkers in others. It is an acknowledgement to the

1  
2 physical and spatial manifestation of our countries  
3 deep inequality.

4 The Fair Housing Act of 1968 revisited by HUD in  
5 the Obama and Biden Administration's have sought to  
6 address the legacy through strategic and city region  
7 wide planning. I'm so proud that our city has led  
8 its very own Fair Housing Planning Process called  
9 Where We Live released in 2020, which also intends to  
10 address our city's affirmatively furthering fair  
11 housing obligations. Yet our intentionality must  
12 remain.

13 As of February this year, only 17 of 80  
14 commitments in the Where We Live plan were completed.  
15 And in addition to being behind on these commitments,  
16 our city, as our Speaker has said, is neither  
17 building enough new housing to keep up with demand,  
18 nor building enough deeply affordable housing for  
19 those who need it the most.

20 As we seek to change these realities, we must  
21 keep our collective feet on the gas to drive equity  
22 in our housing policies. Importantly just last week,  
23 Mayor Adams unveiled a series of policies meant to  
24 breath energy into our housing production in New York  
25 City. Density bonuses for permanent affordability,

1 promoting more mixed-use communities, transit-  
2 oriented development, office conversions and the list  
3 goes on.  
4

5 I for one am excited to delve into these tough  
6 discussions as a Council with my colleagues. And  
7 yet, at the heart of those discussions, must be  
8 careful consideration of how different policy lovers  
9 will help us to meet our housing goals.

10 Affirmatively furthering fair housing, producing more  
11 housing for the lowest income New Yorkers and frankly  
12 some of the hardest working and most vulnerable in  
13 our city.

14 Housing for families like that of Nicholas Feliz  
15 Dominici, who lived with his four siblings and  
16 parents in an unaffordable one-bedroom apartment  
17 because of the housing crisis in New York City.

18 Let's talk about this like it's a once in a lifetime  
19 opportunity where political will might just exist to  
20 make profound changes in the way that we produce  
21 housing. We must approach this opportunity  
22 carefully, thoughtfully and attempted to all of our  
23 goals in housing production, and how our levers help  
24 us to meet them.  
25

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3 To that end, thank you again to Speaker Adams for  
4 introducing and fighting for this bill which would  
5 create a citywide fair housing framework. A plan for  
6 housing rules guided by equity to ensure all  
7 communities fairly contribute to addressing the  
8 city's housing crisis and build housing that is  
9 accessible to all.

10 In addition to Intro. 1031, we will also hear  
11 Intro. 362 sponsored by Council Member Salamanca in  
12 relation to reporting requirements for HPD's related  
13 to affordable housing development.

14 I would like to thank my staff Sam Cardenas,  
15 Kadeem Robinson and all of my District Team, as well  
16 as the Housing and Buildings Committee Staff Taylor  
17 Zelony, Claire MacLachlan, Jose Conde, Andrew Bourne,  
18 Dan Kroop and Brook Frye.

19 Now I will pass it back to Council Member  
20 Salamanca to say his opening remarks. Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Thank you Chair Sanchez.  
22 I would like to recognize that we've also been joined  
23 virtually by Council Members Barron, Caban and Moya.  
24 With that, I want to thank you Speaker Adams and  
25 Chair Sanchez for those introductions to today's  
joint hearing and the legislative proposals. I am

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3 Council Member Rafael Salamanca, Chair of the  
4 Committee on Land Use representing District 17 in the  
5 South Bronx including the neighborhoods of Hunts  
6 Point, Melrose, Morrisania, Longwood, Crotona Park  
7 and Soundview.

8 Today's joint hearing between Housing and  
9 Buildings and Land Use reflects the overall goals of  
10 our proposed legislation. To better coordinate the  
11 construction of housing or citywide strategic  
12 planning to ensure our growth is equitable,  
13 sustainable and supported by infrastructure and  
14 services for all New Yorkers to thrive. My district  
15 has built more new, affordable housing than any other  
16 district in the city. With over 9,000 units  
17 completed or currently under development since 2014.  
18 We're doing our part to meet the city's housing  
19 goals, transforming vacant and underutilized land  
20 into affordable homes all across my district. But  
21 the South Bronx alone cannot solve the city's housing  
22 crisis.

23 We need a citywide framework where every  
24 neighborhood contributes a fair share. We cannot  
25 continue to — we cannot continue a status quo where  
one Council District is building more affordable

1 housing than 26 districts combined. We must also do  
2 more to prioritize investments in the infrastructure  
3 of opportunity, education, workforce development,  
4 economic development, transit, public health and open  
5 space alongside affordable housing, especially when  
6 we build in historically underserved neighborhoods.  
7 We cannot continue a status quo where racial  
8 disparities and economic and social wellbeing are  
9 growing rather than shrinking. Where the median  
10 annual household remains less than \$40,000 in some  
11 neighborhoods compared to nearly \$150,000 in other  
12 neighborhoods just a short distance away.  
13

14 Intro. 1031 proposes the framework to integrate  
15 our citywide planning for housing and equity under a  
16 five-year planning cycle for fair housing. This fair  
17 housing framework will ensure that policies increase  
18 housing production such as the Administrations  
19 annuity in our City of Yes for Housing Opportunity  
20 Initiatives are done in coordination with a citywide  
21 strategic plan that prioritizes racial equity and a  
22 holistic approach to development.

23 Yes, we have to build more but we have to think  
24 through where and how we build so that affordable  
25

1 housing is created throughout the whole city and the  
2 needed infrastructure upgrades are also made.  
3

4 This legislation builds on the progress of Local  
5 Law 78 of 2021, which I Co-Sponsored along with the  
6 Public Advocate, creating the equitable development  
7 data explorer and a requirement for Land Use  
8 application to submit a racial equity report on  
9 housing and opportunity. But we will not be  
10 successful in addressing the housing and equity  
11 crisis unless New York City has a housing department  
12 that is well resourced, efficient, transparent in its  
13 development process.

14 On the current practices, it can regularly take  
15 HPD more than five years to move through the process  
16 of planning, land use review, financing, construction  
17 and administrating the housing lottery. In my  
18 district there are projects that we approved ULURP  
19 five to seven years ago that have still not closed  
20 financing and broken ground.

21 HPD's open data does not currently include any  
22 reference to a projects ULURP approvals. Request for  
23 proposal process, if publicly owned land or closing  
24 date, making it difficult to monitor and hold HPD and  
25 developers accountable.

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3 Intro. 362 will close these gaps and open data  
4 and increase transparency and accountability for HPD  
5 development. However, I continue to be very  
6 concerned about the Administrations proposed agencies  
7 budget cuts and hiring freezes. If applied to HPD's  
8 planning, marketing and development units, which are  
9 already understaffed with high vacancy rates. These  
10 cuts will slow down the development process even more  
11 and lead to even less affordable housing.

12 I would like to thank my staff, Land Use  
13 Committee Staff Perris Straughter, Brian Paul,  
14 William Vidal, and Housing and Building Committee  
15 Staff for their work in preparing for this important  
16 and timely hearing and I will now turn it over to the  
17 Council to swear in the panel.

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Please raise your  
19 right hand. Do you affirm to tell the truth, the  
20 whole truth and nothing but the truth before this  
21 Committee and to respond honestly to Council Member  
22 questions? Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: The floor is yours  
24 Commissioner.

25 Thank you Chairman Salamanca, Speaker, Chair  
Sanchez. Let me, before I offer my prepared opening

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3 statement, let me thank you for your leadership, for  
4 your commitment to this cause and for your compelling  
5 statements about the incredible need that we're  
6 facing in this city. We are partners and we look  
7 forward to working together with you and your teams  
8 to address this crisis.

9 Good morning and not only to Speaker Adams, Chair  
10 Sanchez and Chair Salamanca, also to all the members  
11 of the Housing and Buildings and Land Use Committees,  
12 as well as the other members or not members of this  
13 Committee but who have joined today. I, having  
14 served in this body, know that you often show up at a  
15 hearing because you also want your voice to be heard  
16 in that Committee and in that conversation. So,  
17 thank you for being here.

18 I'm Adolfo Carriòn, Commissioner of the New York  
19 City Department of Housing, Preservation and  
20 Development.

21 I'm joined by my colleagues Ahmed Tigani, First  
22 Deputy Commissioner and Chief Diversity Officer of  
23 our agency, Kim Darga Deputy Commissioner for  
24 Development and Lucy Joffe Associate Commissioner for  
25 Housing Policy, as well as our colleague from the  
Department of City Planning.

3 Thank you for the opportunity to be here to  
4 discuss HPD's fair housing work as well as the  
5 legislation being heard today. The city is committed  
6 to building and preserving low cost and affordable  
7 rental housing in every neighborhood to help address  
8 our longstanding housing shortage and to  
9 affirmatively further fair housing. In October 2020,  
10 we released Where We Live NYC, the city's  
11 comprehensive fair housing plan. Where We Live was  
12 based on six years of work, including community  
13 engagement, data analysis, policy analysis, and goal  
14 setting. Our charge in that process was to identify  
15 "meaningful actions to overcome patterns of  
16 segregation and foster communities free from barriers  
17 that restrict access to opportunity based on  
18 protected characteristics."

19 During the community engagement phase of  
20 developing where we live, the agency held more than  
21 62 community conversations across the five boroughs  
22 in 15 languages. In addition to these conversations,  
23 we established new avenues of communication with the  
24 public through a set of interactive online tools that  
25 enabled us to hear from people who traditionally have  
been left out of the conversation. We spoke to more

1  
2 than 700 New Yorkers and 150 organizations in  
3 formulating this plan.

4 The essence of fair housing is having meaningful  
5 choice. New Yorkers, every New Yorker should have  
6 access to housing in the neighborhood that best fits  
7 their needs. And yet, it was very clear through our  
8 Where We Live NYC analysis that too many New Yorkers  
9 face a wide range of obstacles to fair housing. And  
10 as we discussed in the plan in detail, our city is  
11 still very segregated especially by race.

12 Consequently, we committed to a multipronged  
13 approach to achieve our fair housing goals as  
14 expressed in the 6 goals, 25 strategies and 81  
15 commitments laid out in the plan. Most relevant to  
16 today's hearing and the proposed legislation, is the  
17 goal to "facilitate equitable housing development in  
18 New York City and the region."

19 We need to build more housing citywide to  
20 alleviate our extreme housing shortage. The Mayor  
21 and this Administration have said a moonshot goal of  
22 facilitating the development of 500,000 new homes  
23 over the next ten years to address this crisis. To  
24 achieve our fair housing goals, where we build and  
25 the types of housing we build matters.

3 New York is a diverse city and with that  
4 diversity comes a wide range of housing needs and  
5 wants. Some New Yorkers value living near their  
6 preferred school or accessible public transportation.  
7 Some want to be near their jobs and doctors,  
8 churches, synagogues, mosques, parks and other public  
9 spaces near family and friends. To ensure that all  
10 New Yorkers can choose the housing and the  
11 neighborhood that best fits their needs, there must  
12 be housing of all types in every single neighborhood.

13 Unfortunately, new housing development has been  
14 at best inconsistent across the city. In where we  
15 live, we made 20 commitments toward achieving  
16 equitable housing development in the city and the  
17 region. 19 of these 20 commitments are in progress  
18 or are already complete. Specifically, we have begun  
19 to focus on the parts of the city that lack low-cost  
20 housing and as such are not accessible to low-income  
21 New Yorkers in order to understand the specific  
22 obstacles that stand in the way. These limited  
23 affordability areas are the neighborhoods that have  
24 the least amount of low-cost housing, which we define  
25 as housing that would be affordable to households  
earning less than 60 percent of area median income.

3 We can begin to address the lack of low-cost  
4 housing by building new, affordable housing in these  
5 limited affordability areas. So, toward this end,  
6 the city rezoned Gowanus and SoHo NoHo, which will  
7 bring up to 3,900 new, permanently affordable homes  
8 to these neighborhoods. We also added points in the  
9 qualified allocation plan for proposals in limited  
10 affordability areas. This is the process by which  
11 the city sets out criteria and prioritizes for the  
12 allocation of federal, low-income housing tax  
13 credits.

14 We also added limited affordability areas to the  
15 Mayor's Management Report so that New Yorkers can  
16 track our progress in financing affordable housing in  
17 these neighborhoods. To tackle many of the obstacles  
18 to equitable housing development and to achieve our  
19 fair housing goals, we need local and state partners.  
20 We have been fighting for an as of right new  
21 construction tax incentive with deeper affordability  
22 because it is one of our primary tools for developing  
23 affordable housing in the city's high-cost  
24 neighborhoods.

25 We have been advocating for changes at the state  
level to create a path to legalize existing basements

3 and create new accessory dwelling units. The  
4 Department of City Planning is leading collaborative  
5 work on the City of Yes for Housing Opportunity Text  
6 Amendments to simplify and modernize the zoning  
7 resolution to facilitate equitable housing  
8 development citywide. We also need legislative and  
9 regulatory action at the local and state level and  
10 the support of elected leaders and their constituents  
11 for neighborhood-wide and project specific land use  
12 actions. The success of where we live was driven by  
13 the participation of a wide range of New Yorkers,  
14 advocates and elected officials. We're committed  
15 over and above our legal requirement to complete the  
16 next iteration of Where We Live NYC.

17 We released this plan in October 2020, and  
18 equitable housing development will remain at the  
19 forefront of our strategy. We will continue to do  
20 the community engagement, the data analysis, the  
21 policy analysis, and policy development required to  
22 meaningfully assess the progress we've made and  
23 advance our fair housing goals even further. We look  
24 forward to working closely with the Council. Our  
25 partners at the state level and members of the public  
to ensure that we bring the same level of data driven

3 decision making, community engagement, and  
4 accountability to our next round of commitments.

5 At this time, I'd like to turn to the legislation  
6 which is the subject of today's hearing. On Intro.  
7 362, we agree that the transparency into HPD's  
8 programs and processes is important. And we look  
9 forward to working with the Council to ensure that  
10 New Yorkers understand the process for financing  
11 affordable housing.

12 While the bill contains some reporting  
13 requirements that HPD cannot fulfill based on our  
14 current systems and the availability of information  
15 that can only be obtained at certain times during the  
16 development cycle, we already report a good portion  
17 of this data and look forward to working with you to  
18 make sure this information is current and is as  
19 accessible as possible at any given moment.

20 We support the goals of Intro. 1031. We welcome  
21 accountability and partnership with the Council to  
22 achieve our fair housing goals. We look forward to  
23 working with you to address these critical issues.  
24 We're grateful for the productive work we have been  
25 able to accomplish with this Committee and the  
Council, especially as we together address the

1  
2 critical housing needs of New Yorkers. Thank you for  
3 the opportunity to testify today and we look forward  
4 to your questions.

5 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Thank you Commissioner  
6 for your opening remarks and it's good to see a Bronx  
7 kid with us today.

8 ADOLFO CARRIÒN: Here we go, yes.

9 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: I want to recognize that  
10 we've been joined by Council Members Abreu, Hanks,  
11 and Shekar and I will hand it off to Speaker Adrienne  
12 Adams for the first round of questions.

13 SPEAKER ADAMS: Thank you so much Chair Salamanca  
14 and Commissioner, welcome once again and the entire  
15 team, welcome today.

16 ADOLFO CARRIÒN: Thank you Speaker.

17 SPEAKER ADAMS: I'm going to focus on my bill  
18 1031, which I'm really happy with and I want to find  
19 out what your thoughts are collectively on this  
20 legislation. Intro. 1031 seeks to help increase  
21 overall housing production by setting targets based  
22 on our city's actual needs and capacity. While  
23 integrating this planning and affirmatively  
24 furthering fair housing framework to address racial  
25 equity and disparities in housing production and

1  
2 neighborhood investment, which you referenced in your  
3 remarks Commissioner.

4 Does the Administration foresee difficulties in  
5 the implementation of this bill?

6 ADOLFO CARRIÒN: Let me begin by saying thank you  
7 for shining a light on this important issue. If I  
8 may reflect for just a moment, uhm, I recall when I  
9 was in the Obama Administration, where President  
10 Obama advanced affirmatively furthering fair housing  
11 and many of us around the country celebrated that,  
12 because we knew that we needed to address historic  
13 discrimination and injustices that have marginalized  
14 large sectors of our population.

15 We as a city embraced the rules that came out of  
16 that, the charge to municipalities around the country  
17 to set up a regime around that and set goals and  
18 aspirations for our cities. Uhm, all toward the end  
19 of social justice. When another president came in in  
20 2016, that was taken down.

21 New York City continued working on Where We Live  
22 NYC, continued working on affirmatively furthering  
23 fair housing. For us Speaker, this is our north  
24 star. All the work that we do is pointed toward  
25 addressing the inequities and furthering fair

1  
2 housing, creating opportunity for all incomes in all  
3 areas of the city. And now, we have an opportunity  
4 with this bill, which we look forward to working on  
5 with you and the Council to advance that work. There  
6 are naturally challenges in every bill because of the  
7 work that we do and the capacity that we have. We do  
8 have a regime of reporting already. It's in the MMR  
9 so every year we come back and report the advances  
10 we're making. Uhm, so our commitment is there. We  
11 look forward to our partnership in this process.

12 SPEAKER ADAMS: Thank you Commissioner. Uhm, the  
13 bill Intro. 1031 begins by requiring a citywide  
14 housing needs assessment and it's a study of the  
15 total number and type of housing units that need to  
16 be produced or preserved to meet our city's long-term  
17 needs. This type of study is a standard best  
18 practice of long-term planning for housing growth and  
19 you mentioned the number 500,000 as being your  
20 moonshot goal in developing new homes over the next  
21 ten years to address the crisis. With relation to  
22 that 500,000 number, we know it's the long-term goal  
23 but is that based on any actual study to date?

24 ADOLFO CARRIÒN: Lucy Joffe will address that.

1  
2 LUCY JOFFE: So, thank you for that question. A  
3 lot of our work internally both through where we live  
4 when we talk about the moonshot goal, is the result  
5 of interagency collaboration and as much planning as  
6 we can. Some of this long-term planning is always  
7 subject to unexpected circumstances and changes in  
8 what's going on in the city and I certainly can defer  
9 to our colleagues at DCP to add more on how we think  
10 about the total citywide need.

11 But these kinds of activities that you're talking  
12 about, the planning activities in the bill are  
13 exactly the kind of fair housing related work that we  
14 have started to engage in because of where we live  
15 and that we want to be working on with the Council  
16 and working in partnership to make sure that we  
17 actually can. As many of us have talked about today  
18 in our testimony in many of your introductory  
19 comments, make sure that we're building in all  
20 neighborhoods, housing all types in all neighborhoods  
21 across the city.

22 SPEAKER ADAMS: Along those lines, is there an  
23 understanding of what types of units or income levels  
24 size are needed?

3 LUCY JOFFE: So, one of the various sources of  
4 data that we look at and that we were here just a few  
5 months ago talking about is the New York City Housing  
6 and Vacancy Survey. One of the major takeaways which  
7 I believe Speaker, you cited in your introductory  
8 remarks, is the incredibly low vacancy rate below,  
9 for units that are renting below \$1,500 a month.  
10 That's below one percent and that is incredibly  
11 concerning. So, you have heard us talk about and  
12 we'll continue to talk about the fact that while we  
13 need more housing of all types citywide, we  
14 especially need low cost and affordable rental units  
15 in many neighborhoods across the city in all  
16 neighborhoods across the city.

17 ADOLFO CARRIÒN: And the outcome of that analysis  
18 has been - the analysis of the need has been that of  
19 the units that we subsidize as an agency, 95 to 96  
20 percent of those units go to low-income families and  
21 it includes extremely low-income, very low-income,  
22 low-income families and you address the issue of rent  
23 burden. The lion share, almost two-thirds are for  
24 families that are below 30 percent of AMI up to 50  
25 percent of AMI. Just about 60 some odd percent. So,

1  
2 uhm, the analysis has led to policy and practice that  
3 is focused on the need.

4 SPEAKER ADAMS: Okay and you and again, we know  
5 that we are so far behind in our production, in our  
6 development. Has DCP taken a look at how other  
7 cities perform their needs assessment?

8 JOHN MAGIN: Thank you Speaker. Yes, one of the  
9 benefits if you can call it that of New York City  
10 being a little bit farther behind some other parts of  
11 the country with respect to you know some of the  
12 zoning changes that we're proposing is that we can  
13 look to other parts of the country to see what the  
14 likely outcomes are of certain types of reforms or  
15 changes, or you know to see you know what the effects  
16 of certain actions are. So, we certainly look to  
17 other parts of the country when we're looking at  
18 that.

19 With respect to the 500,000 number, it's a  
20 dynamic system of course and coming up with a needs  
21 assessment into the future imbeds a number of  
22 assumptions. But based on our analysis of things  
23 like historic production trends, vacancy rates, and  
24 other factors, we think that 500,000 over the next  
25 ten years is what we would need in order to make the

1 housing market palpably more tenant friendly than it  
2 is today.

3  
4 So, back to the Commissioners and Lucy's point  
5 about housing choice, if we're producing more  
6 housing, that 500,000 moonshot, if we're creating  
7 real housing choice for tenants, you know then we  
8 believe we're moving towards the housing market that  
9 we want to see in the city.

10 SPEAKER ADAMS: Well, I mean, you know I'm just  
11 being nosy. Who - we know that we're not up to par  
12 with our development. Who else out there you know  
13 across the globe, who else is you know in the same  
14 situation as New York? You can rat him out.

15 ADOLFO CARRION: Well, we know and I'm sure that  
16 City Planning in their study of cities and the needs  
17 of our city does this kind of analysis but I think we  
18 anecdotally know that there's a housing crisis in the  
19 major American cities. If you look at Los Angeles  
20 with people sleeping in the street near the beaches.  
21 I recently visited San Francisco and I was shocked  
22 that in the downtown there are encampments on the  
23 street.

24 There are people in that city that are working  
25 and homeless. Sadly, we have some of that as well

1  
2 but not as severe. I know that my colleagues and  
3 friends from the Administration back in the City of  
4 Chicago are facing the same kinds of challenges. So,  
5 this is a national issue that requires a national  
6 response and that's why it's so important for all of  
7 us to sing from the same song sheet when it comes to  
8 the federal solutions that we're asking for. And we  
9 can go into this a little later. Kim is an expert on  
10 this and can walk us through it but you know, we're  
11 asking for certain tools from the federal government.

12 In addition to hey, keep the Section 8 vouchers  
13 coming. If we do have an emergency, thank you very  
14 much for the emergency housing vouchers we got. We  
15 have another emergency. We have a migrant crisis.  
16 We have other issues to address right now but in  
17 terms of the tax credits and the capital that we can  
18 apply to invest in producing housing, probably one of  
19 the biggest solutions is to reduce this 50 percent  
20 test that we have on the tax credit application to  
21 these projects to 25 percent.

22 We would essentially put our production on  
23 steroids. We'd almost double our production.  
24 Obviously we face the challenges of do we have the

1  
2 staffing? Do we have the resources to manage the  
3 flow?

4 SPEAKER ADAMS: That was going to be where I was  
5 going.

6 ADOLFO CARRION: To manage the flow, yes. I  
7 would imagine that's your follow up. Uhm, but what a  
8 good problem to have right. To have more resources  
9 than what we need. Right now, and I'm sure we're  
10 going to go into the pipeline issues later but we've  
11 got hundreds of projects in the queue waiting to  
12 close. And if we had more resources, we can get them  
13 through and across the finish line.

14 SPEAKER ADAMS: Yeah, that's a big deal.

15 ADOLFO CARRION: It is, it's a huge deal.

16 SPEAKER ADAMS: That's a big deal, good.

17 LUCY JOFFE: And if I may add to the  
18 Commissioners comments. We have - he's absolutely  
19 correct. This is a challenge that cities, even  
20 smaller cities and small towns talk about there  
21 housing challenges. Those housing challenges look  
22 different outside of New York City in different  
23 cities and different states and internationally as  
24 well. We have seen some cities and states start to  
25 take some of the actions that we've talked about here

1  
2 in front of this Council recently that are part of  
3 the City of Yes for Housing Opportunity. Steps to  
4 make it easier to build accessory dwelling units.  
5 Steps to make it easier to add more housing in parts  
6 of neighborhoods or cities where we're not getting as  
7 much housing developments. We are starting to see  
8 that in other parts of the country and are hoping to  
9 work with the Council and our partners at the state  
10 level as well to make sure that we can do that here.

11 ADOLFO CARRION: And let me just add that the  
12 Zoning Text Amendment, the Citywide Zoning Text  
13 change would unleash private investment. We have the  
14 largest, most productive public, private partnership  
15 to produce affordable housing anywhere in the country  
16 and possibly the world and part of that is the tax  
17 incentives where we incentivize. We say private  
18 investor, come into a deal with us.

19 We will reduce the price point of x-percent of  
20 those units so they can go to affordable housing and  
21 the tool that we have is to obviously reduce your tax  
22 burden so you can deliver affordable housing  
23 especially in high-cost areas. If we could unleash  
24 that in tandem with more places around the city,  
25 where those opportunities become available, think

1 about the you know the opportunity. Most of the new  
2 construction work that happens in New York City for  
3 affordable housing, comes from private applications  
4 or private partners coming to the city and saying,  
5 hey Commissioner, hey Mayor, hey Speaker, I have a  
6 piece of property and I'd like to use one of your  
7 programs to deliver affordable housing. Or hey, I  
8 have a piece of property, you have a tax incentive,  
9 I'm willing to make the investment. It's going to  
10 give you the price point you need to produce  
11 affordable housing, and of course they're in  
12 business. They'll make a return on their dollar.

14 So, it's a sound public, private partnership. We  
15 need to encourage it, so we're anxious to go back to  
16 Albany and continue to make this argument hopefully  
17 with partners from here.

18 SPEAKER ADAMS: I'm just going to ask one more  
19 question for this round. I'll turn it back over to  
20 the Chair. You spoke about other cities in  
21 California and people working and homeless and we do  
22 have that here but we also know that there have been  
23 many jobs created here over the past year or so of  
24 the one million jobs created over the past decade.  
25 Do we know the percentage? Or what percentage is

1  
2 living outside of the city in surrounding region and  
3 to what extent has the housing supply grown in  
4 northern New Jersey, Long Island, parts of  
5 Westchester County?

6 ADOLFO CARRION: Before City Planning chimes in,  
7 I'll take the privilege of an open hot mic to say  
8 that both the Mayor in setting the moonshot goal in  
9 tandem with our governor setting another moonshot  
10 goal for the state of 800,000 units. And think about  
11 it, we have the lion share of that 800,000 that she  
12 envisioned across the state. Taking advantage of  
13 smaller municipalities and transit systems that  
14 spread across the – the veins of that system spread  
15 across regions of the state to exploit that  
16 opportunity to deliver affordable housing for working  
17 families, uhm, she made the argument just as the  
18 Mayor did. Just as you did in your prepared remarks  
19 that it puts us in an uncompetitive position and a  
20 disadvantage.

21 New York City is the global city. The city of  
22 everything, the leader and we are now in a position  
23 where we can't keep our workforce here. So, what  
24 happens? DCP.

25 SPEAKER ADAMS: Right on queue.

1  
2 ADOLFO CARRION: Right on queue, yeah.

3 JOHN MAGIN: Sets the table well. In terms of  
4 general trends, we've seen the share of commuters  
5 coming from New Jersey increase. The share of  
6 commuters coming from Long Island, Westchester, the  
7 rest of Hudson Valley decrease and that's for the  
8 simple reason that New Jersey is building a lot more  
9 housing than New York City's suburbs. White Plains,  
10 Yonkers, New Rochelle, they're building a little bit  
11 of housing, so I don't want to completely you know  
12 drag the suburbs.

13 But the New York City suburbs are lagging far  
14 behind the New Jersey suburbs. That's shifting  
15 commuting patterns toward New Jersey and beyond that  
16 likely represents constraints on the ability of our  
17 regional economy to grow. If you don't have housing  
18 for the workers, then research create research from  
19 other parts of the country shows that that presents  
20 real constraints for the ability of a regional  
21 economy to grow to create jobs. So, it ends up  
22 hurting us all.

23 SPEAKER ADAMS: Sure. Okay, I'm going to leave  
24 it there for now. Thank you. Mr. Chair.

25

1 COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS JOINTLY  
2 WITH THE COMMITTEE ON LAND USE 41

3 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Thank you Madam Speaker.

4 I would like to recognize that we've been joined by  
5 Council Members Rivera, Brewer and Borelli. I have a  
6 few questions before I hand it over to Chair Sanchez.  
7 I want to start with the AMI structure. Who sets the  
8 formula for the AMI's, the Area Median Incomes?

9 ADOLFO CARRION: So, it is set by the federal  
10 government. The Department of Housing and Urban  
11 Development and I'd like Kim to talk just a little  
12 bit about that process and how it plays out on the  
13 ground here very quickly. Thank you Chairman.

14 KIM DARGA: So, I'll defer to Lucy if there's  
15 more technical questions about the formula, but uhm,  
16 we take the national formula and certainly look at  
17 data in New York City, which determines how AMI is  
18 set annually. And within our individual programs, we  
19 then figure out how to create opportunities for  
20 different households with various income, so that we  
21 are able to serve a range of New Yorkers.

22 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Okay, and the AMI, it  
23 changes annually, correct?

24 KIM DARGA: Yes.  
25

3 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: And it's the federal  
4 government who puts the formula together HUD, am I  
5 correct?

6 ADOLFO CARRION: Yes.

7 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Okay and that formula,  
8 are they using the average incomes of New Yorkers, of  
9 just New York City or are they using the average  
10 incomes of New York City and the surrounding  
11 counties?

12 ADOLFO CARRION: Lucy can talk to the formula a  
13 bit.

14 LUCY JOFFE: So, this is a source of major  
15 confusion. In part because the fact that we all use  
16 this term area median income. Some of the more  
17 technical folks call it HUD income limits because of  
18 this confusion. It does in fact include incomes from  
19 surrounding areas but actually it's not incomes that  
20 are driving the major increases or sort of the way  
21 that people might feel disconnected from AMI here in  
22 the city.

23 In New York City and some of the more expensive  
24 housing markets across the country, HUD has a  
25 complicated formula where they are actually factoring  
in rents. So, when our rents increase significantly,

1  
2 it is driving up our area median income calculation  
3 as well for New York City. We find that to be the  
4 bigger factor than the geographic catchment area if  
5 you will.

6 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Okay, uhm is it safe to  
7 say that in the Council and I'm going to use my  
8 district as an example. There are projects that I  
9 approved and rezoned in Council District 17 in 2017,  
10 2018, that have not closed yet through HPD. But we  
11 agreed when we negotiated those projects here in the  
12 Council and we voted, we agreed that we were going –  
13 we agreed on the AMI's at the time in 2017 and 2018.

14 Is it fair to say that when HPD decides to close  
15 in 2023 or 2024, you're going to utilize the AMI's of  
16 the current year, 2023 and 2024 opposed to what we  
17 originally agreed to in 2017 or 2018?

18 ADOLFO CARRION: Chairman, that's a great  
19 question which we deal with all the time. There is a  
20 flow of traffic coming into the agency of deals that  
21 have the same question and pose a challenge and an  
22 opportunity for us to adjust AMI's as needed by  
23 virtue of the changing costs in the market. So, at  
24 the end of the day, we need to make sure that these  
25 deals pencil out so that price point of the rents

1 makes sense. So that we're addressing the local  
2 market conditions in for instance your district in  
3 the South Bronx that we don't topple over the  
4 developer financially or the general contractor.  
5 Everything has to make sense and so, there is a  
6 process for adjusting the AMI's. This is a pass to  
7 Kim.  
8

9 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: So I just - I need an  
10 answer though. What year do you use the AMI's? Do  
11 you use the one that we agreed to or do you use the  
12 one that's in the current year?

13 KIM DARGA: So, the AMI that we agreed to are the  
14 percentage. So, you might have a transaction that is  
15 let's say an ELLA project, right? Extremely Low  
16 Income and low-income project under our financing  
17 programs. We're setting rents at 30 percent AMI, 40  
18 percent AMI, 50, 60 generally. Uhm, and if we've  
19 structured that agreement back in 2017. We are still  
20 committed to maintaining the mix but the rents  
21 absolutely are going to be higher and the reality is  
22 that operating are higher too and so, as the  
23 Commissioner noted, we have to be able at the end of  
24 the day to make sure that income can cover the  
25 expenses for project. And I know in some of the past

1 Council hearings we've had over the last year, we've  
2 talked a lot about the challenges of actually  
3 projects just operating right now. And in the last  
4 two years alone, operating expenses and the projects  
5 that we financed have gone up more than 20 percent  
6 and so, we are with you and absolutely committed to  
7 creating deep affordability that helps serve the  
8 needs of New Yorkers across the city. At the same  
9 time, we need to make sure that at the end of the  
10 day, the project can cover the expenses so that the  
11 housing quality remains over a long period of time.

12 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Let me explain my  
13 frustration. Uh, I approve a project in 2018. I  
14 wrote to the Local Community Board. I say hey, this  
15 is mixed income. I got my 15 percent home set aside  
16 and I got 30 percent, 40 and 50. I'll give an  
17 example, 30 percent in 2018. 30 percent AMI, maybe  
18 five, six, seven hundred dollars. You close on a  
19 project five years later. It's no longer five, six,  
20 seven hundred dollars. We're talking about \$1,300,  
21 \$1,400, \$1,500 and as an elected official when we go  
22 back to the community, you know we're being viewed as  
23 we're not being honest with our communities. And so,  
24 that is the challenge that we're having when HPD  
25

1  
2 doesn't close on projects on a timely fashion. And  
3 it's frustrating as an elected official when you're  
4 going back to your communities and you're reporting  
5 back.

6 How many projects do you have on the pipeline  
7 that this Council approved and is shovel ready and is  
8 waiting for HPD to close?

9 ALDOLFO CARRION: Let me address the higher  
10 universe and then Kim can speak to the more granular  
11 look at this but we've got about 750 projects in the  
12 queue right now. And in new construction in any  
13 given year, what do we do a dozen to 15 uhm of new  
14 construction, a lot more preservation, the lion share  
15 of the work that we do is preserving existing housing  
16 stock to keep it affordable, so we do a lot of  
17 refinancing as you all know in your districts.

18 Uhm, but of that 750, approximately I'm  
19 ballparking it, about 300 of those are new  
20 construction projects and about 450 are preservation  
21 deals. They require project managers, lawyers,  
22 resources, a lot of them and on the new construction  
23 side, obviously our subsidy, tax credits, and a whole  
24 layering of financing. So, that's a big universe  
25 when you think that only a few of those will get

1 through and that's why going back to the tools we  
2 need is so important and I know we're going to talk  
3 later about the production that we were able to  
4 achieve in this last fiscal year which was stellar.  
5 It was the second highest in our history and there's  
6 a lot of firsts and seconds there in terms of record-  
7 breaking stuff but a huge portion of that was tax  
8 incentive driven. The new construction that came  
9 online were private investors coming into the city  
10 and saying, you know I have this site. I'll give  
11 back 30 percent of the units for affordable housing.  
12

13 Now you structured a complicated question about  
14 those projects and maybe you could tackle a little  
15 bit of that.

16 KIM DARGA: Yeah, I think this is one of I think  
17 our shared greatest frustrations. You know and I  
18 think every developer that we work with is equally as  
19 frustrated. We would love to do more. To do so, we  
20 need to all be advocating for broader resources and  
21 tools. And that includes as the Commissioner has  
22 noted, changes at the federal level, right? We have  
23 a certain amount of rental assistance we can allocate  
24 every single year that helps finance our projects.  
25 We are limited, so just to explain a little bit more

1  
2 about what the Commissioner was discussing in terms  
3 of tax credit. So, we have about \$15 million to \$16  
4 million. We are able to actually allocate nine  
5 percent low-income housing tax credits. We do a  
6 competitive process every year and we can basically  
7 use that to finance about a dozen projects. Those  
8 are the smaller, mostly new construction,  
9 occasionally preservation projects with really high  
10 renovation needs.

11 We also have four percent low-income housing tax  
12 credits that come as of right with tax exempt bonds.  
13 So, the amount that HPD gets annually; this is very  
14 technical but please bear with me because this is  
15 where a lot of the frustration comes from. We have  
16 about \$800 million that New York City gets comes  
17 through the state again annually and that allows us  
18 to finance about one dozen larger new construction  
19 projects a year.

20 So, most of the RFP sites that we do now days are  
21 large projects. I think the smallest one I've seen  
22 recently is about 200 units. There's some that are  
23 smaller but most of them are three, four, sometimes  
24 multiphase projects that are 2,000 units, right? So,  
25 if we can fund about a dozen a year, right that means

1 that those projects that the Commissioner mentioned,  
2 the 300 or so projects. Of course people are going  
3 to have to wait and that creates all of this  
4 frustration around time, cost, affordability and I  
5 think for us, we're trying to deliver as much as  
6 possible right? And so, that's where I think we also  
7 need to think not only about the federal changes,  
8 right? Reducing; there's I'm again going to be very  
9 technical, please bear with me but for every tax  
10 credit project we finance with four percent credits,  
11 50 percent of the project cost has to be financed  
12 with tax exempt bonds. So, that means that \$800  
13 million we have, we have to put a lot into every  
14 project in order to move the project forward. That  
15 is the only way you can get four percent low-income  
16 tax credits.

17 We've been advocating to reduce that to 25  
18 percent. That would basically double the amount of  
19 production that we could do for new construction  
20 projects. We don't even do preservation projects  
21 with tax credits really at this point. In addition  
22 to that, we need to think about other tools. So, the  
23 City of Yes opening zoning possibility for  
24 development. Thinking about projects that can be  
25

1  
2 financed without deep public subsidies, right. So,  
3 uhm, we have been advocating for mixed income  
4 development and I think one of the great lessons of  
5 the production the last year is that we financed  
6 almost the most new construction, affordable new  
7 construction ever in New York City. And if you look  
8 a decade ago, we were doing half as much new  
9 construction as we were this year.

10 We did that because of as of right programs that  
11 don't require the same level of public subsidies,  
12 don't require the amount of staff time, right that  
13 having tax credits and subsidy and everything else  
14 has in every deal. I'm not saying that's the only  
15 approach that we need but we absolutely need tools  
16 that allow us to close as of right transactions  
17 because it takes less brain damage and less public  
18 resources. And it allows us to work in communities  
19 across New York City.

20 It allows us to stretch our public investment  
21 further and to use the market in high-cost  
22 communities to cross subsidize.

23 So, we really do need to think about every piece  
24 of the toolbox. We need that multiprong strategy,  
25 not multiprong approach because without it there's no

1 way that we're going to get to where we need to be  
2 long term.

3  
4 ADOLFO CARRION: And if we add Chairman, if we  
5 add the ability to do commercial conversions and  
6 create mixed use commercial residential buildings in  
7 the central business districts in these office  
8 buildings that are partly empty, and in some cases  
9 largely empty. Uhm, if we raise the floor area ratio  
10 and create platforms of real estate for residential  
11 development. If we go out to the far reaches of the  
12 city where homeowners have a stand-alone garage or a  
13 large basement that they can convert into legal,  
14 safe, healthy housing with some tweaks. Uhm, there  
15 are hundreds of thousands of units out there  
16 potentially, hundreds of thousands of units out there  
17 potentially for us to capture where working families  
18 can start. Where a mother-daughter situation can be  
19 created. Where income can be enhanced for a  
20 homeowner who is on a fixed income and is near  
21 retirement. They have many new sources. The  
22 potential is there, it has to be a multipronged  
23 strategy.

24  
25

3 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Alright thank you. Do  
4 projects that are in the ELLA term sheets get  
5 priority for closing in the HPD pipeline?

6 KIM DARGA: Sorry, can you repeat that?

7 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Do projects that are in  
8 the ELLA term sheet, do they get priority in when  
9 you're deciding on closing on projects?

10 KIM DARGA: The ELLA program, the Extremely Low-  
11 and Low-Income program, which finances uhm, lower  
12 income rental housing is one of the largest that we  
13 have in new construction. So, it finances the vast  
14 majority of our new subsidized – and by that I mean  
15 with direct subsidy from the city for a capital  
16 budget. Mostly low-income housing tax credits. The  
17 other big programs that we use are the Supportive  
18 Housing Loan program, the Senior program and then our  
19 Mixed Income program, which it's a little bit of a  
20 maybe not named totally appropriately because it  
21 mostly actually finances low-income housing as well.

22 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: But when you're deciding  
23 on closing on projects twice a year right? You close  
24 on projects in June and in December.

25 KIM DARGA: Yes.

3 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Are you prioritizing the  
4 ELLA term sheets over other term sheets?

5 KIM DARGA: I don't know that that's the way that  
6 we prioritize our projects by program that way.

7 Rather, we look at a couple things. We do try to  
8 make sure we are financing some senior and supportive  
9 housing every year. One of our big priorities right  
10 now has been prioritizing projects that have a higher  
11 percentage of and service for households exiting  
12 shelter. So, permanent supportive housing has been a  
13 major priority.

14 We finance that in every program in new  
15 construction but there are certainly some projects  
16 where there's a lower percentage of that and some  
17 that are higher. So, that's certainly a priority.  
18 We also have been prioritizing projects in low,  
19 limited affordability areas. Those are very few and  
20 far between right now and that's a major problem that  
21 we all have to solve, right? So, uhm, those are  
22 areas and we can talk more about that that have fewer  
23 number of units that turn over that are available and  
24 are low cost. So, we're certainly prioritizing  
25 those. We're prioritizing projects with MWBE and  
nonprofit developers, especially those that have been

1  
2 in pipeline for a long time. Any project that has  
3 been in the pipeline for a long time we also take  
4 some special consideration for.

5 So, at the end of the day, most of the project  
6 that we finance; I just want to be really clear. In  
7 new construction, 95 percent, the units that we  
8 finance are affordable, below 80 percent of AMI. And  
9 it's actually - you know most of those units, almost  
10 half of those units are for extremely low- and low-  
11 income households. So, it doesn't matter if it's  
12 ELLA or mix and match or senior housing or supportive  
13 housing loan program, at the end of the day, we are -  
14 that commitment from HPD to finance that housing, to  
15 use our scarce resources, that commitment to the  
16 lowest income households is there.

17 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Yeah, uhm do you  
18 prioritize projects that are funded through Council  
19 Members Reso. A funding that we provide? There are  
20 many projects that I believe in and the developer  
21 says hey, I want to fill the gap. It could be half a  
22 million, a million, it all depends. Is there a  
23 priority when a Council Member is given Reso? A  
24 money? And you can give us direct answers because I  
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have many Council Members here and I want to make sure we get to all their questions.

KIM DARGA: Uhm, again, it's not quite so simple as like yes or no, right? We have Reso. A requests that go for all different types of things. Often times the Reso. A is not just about, it's not about the seed of making things happen. It's about trying to do something that is outside of program parameters, right?

So, a Council Member say, I actually want to go deeper on affordability here then in some of term sheets, I willing to allocate some funds to make it happen. Or a preservation project where you know you're hearing a lot of concerns about roof issues, right? And the program is really strapped and so you might allocate funding to help with that repair. All of those requests for us are priority, right. Because all of the projects are important. I mentioned a few minutes ago the general prioritization framework we have for new construction and preservation are priorities, any project that has urgent, financial and physical needs.

3 So, there's a Reso. A request that helps us to  
4 address physical, urgent, physical and financial  
5 needs. That is going to be a top priority for us.

6 ADOLFO CARRION: Okay, just very quickly; I know  
7 you want to get to the members Chairman. Having been  
8 on the Reso. A side as a Council Member and a Borough  
9 President, I know how frustrating it is to sit by and  
10 watch them sail by other projects and your project  
11 sits in the queue.

12 It is terribly frustrating for us as it is for  
13 you. The funnel is small and that's what - we're  
14 talking about widening the mouth of that funnel to  
15 allow more projects to get through but I just want to  
16 say on the record as Commissioner, thank you to every  
17 member who invests. Thank you, thank you because you  
18 help us pencil out these projects often. There's  
19 gaps missing. There's things that need to be  
20 addressed at the local level that are very specific  
21 to your constituents and we're able to get to them.  
22 Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: I am going to hold off  
24 the rest of my questions. I'm going to hand it over  
25 to Chair Pierina Sanchez for her line of questioning.

3 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you  
4 Chair. My first question is just a clarification.  
5 You mentioned that this last fiscal year was the  
6 highest producing fiscal year. The second highest  
7 fiscal year in terms of new construction. Can you  
8 help us understand that? Because that just doesn't  
9 comport with some of our understanding of what  
10 production has been like, especially with the  
11 staffing prices at HPD. And in particular, are you  
12 including things like NYCHA? Any categories, RAD  
13 conversions, are you including any categories that  
14 weren't included in previous numbers?

15 ADOLFO CARRION: So, I'll do a high level and  
16 pass it off to my colleagues but the number that we  
17 achieved in this banner year was about \$27,000 ball  
18 park. Of those, HPD's share of units that were  
19 financed by our agency were just in excess of 24,000  
20 units. Of those 24,060 units; I think that's the  
21 number, 12,278 were new construction units which is  
22 about 51 percent and 49 percent were preservation  
23 deals that allowed us to refi, fix and keep housing  
24 affordable. Uhm, so I think I'll stop there and not  
25 consume any more time.

3 KIM DARGA: Yeah, I think the Commissioner hit  
4 the high level. I think the record, year record  
5 breaking this year was really on the affordable new  
6 construction where it was about 150 units short of  
7 the highest level of new, affordable housing  
8 production on record and that as I mentioned is about  
9 twice as much as we were producing about a decade  
10 ago. And it is largely because in our amount of  
11 subsidized, 100 percent subsidized new construction  
12 has been pretty equivalent 5,000 to 6,000 units a  
13 year, 6,000 units a year.

14 What has really changed is the impact of as of  
15 right programs that they've had across New York City.  
16 And that is all 42A 16 Inclusionary housing below the  
17 mandatory and the voluntary inclusionary housing  
18 programs.

19 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. The second  
20 question is also a clarifying question. If there's  
21 any way you can answer it yes or no, that would be  
22 helpful. But to follow-up on Council Member  
23 Salamanca's questions about what AMI definition year  
24 do you use to finance. Yes or no, it's at HPD's  
25 discretion to decide which year?

3 ADOLFO CARRION: When a project comes in, the  
4 factors that go into it, uhm all the measures are  
5 current day measures. As the project ages in the  
6 development pipeline, new considerations have to be  
7 applied to the project, so we may based on a request  
8 and a need that we identify, say these AMI's need to  
9 be adjusted to today's market conditions.

10 KIM DARGA: Yeah, I would just say that again,  
11 the formula we use is federal, right but the way in  
12 which we actually craft our programs and our public  
13 investment is ultimately at our discretion right?  
14 So, our Extremely Low- and Low-Income Housing rental  
15 program, that mixed affordability is because we know  
16 that there is a dire need in New York City for  
17 housing that serves the need of extremely low and low  
18 income, very low-income households. And so,  
19 programmaticaly we can make choices about how we are  
20 able to serve different households through our  
21 programs.

22 ADOLFO CARRION: So, consequently what happens  
23 Chair is two-thirds of our production hit the  
24 extremely low and very low-income demographic, which  
25 is up to 30 percent, up to 50 percent of AMI.

AHMED TIGANI: For that mix, yeah.

1 COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS JOINTLY  
2 WITH THE COMMITTEE ON LAND USE 60

3 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: In which year?

4 KIM DARGA: So, overall last fiscal year, 77  
5 percent of our housing that HPD financed in some way  
6 was for low-income households and below. If you look  
7 at our subsidized housing, so we're investing capital  
8 funding, low-income housing tax credit, other tools  
9 that are at our discretion, it is for overall  
10 subsidized housing, 96 percent was available for low-  
11 income households and below.

12 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you, thank you. Uhm,  
13 just you know just in the same way as you say \$20,  
14 \$22 or \$19.58 dollars, you know the way that we talk  
15 about inflation, I think we need to talk about these  
16 affordability metrics in that way as well given the  
17 changing nature of AMI's to Council Member  
18 Salamanca's point.

19 But to move forward and I also want to yield my  
20 time to Council Members here. You know I'm overall  
21 optimistic about the opportunities for collaboration  
22 here with the Administration and part of the  
23 collaboration that we can have in solving, meeting  
24 the challenge of an affordable housing crisis in the  
25 City of New York is to provide transparency. You  
know transparency from the Administration to the

1 Council in all areas possible. And so, to that end,  
2 last year the Housing and Buildings Committee held a  
3 hearing right after housing our neighbors blueprint  
4 was released and the blueprint included \$22 billion  
5 over ten years to build and preserve affordable  
6 housing.  
7

8 You know that we have a very lengthy discussion  
9 about the general guideposts that were in the plan  
10 and getting down to some of the nitty gritty and so,  
11 you know we had general guideposts in there like  
12 shifting the balance between rental and homeownership  
13 between lower income units and uh, you know higher  
14 income or more working-class subsidies, prioritizing  
15 projects in areas that have fewer affordable homes as  
16 we're talking about fair housing today.

17 How has the Administration started to execute  
18 these plans and in particular, then Chief Housing  
19 Officer Katz mentioned that there would be periodic  
20 releases and updates for the public on meeting the  
21 goals of the housing blueprint. So, what has been  
22 released or what can we expect in terms of updates on  
23 the plan?

24 ADOLFO CARRION: I think, let me just say very  
25 quickly, thank you Chair. These strategies, these

1  
2 goals, these initiatives live in the Mayor's  
3 Management Report and in other reports that we  
4 continue to produce. Priorities are the same  
5 essentially and I think First Deputy Commissioner  
6 Tigani can provide some highlights and background on  
7 how we're addressing that.

8 AHMED TIGANI: Yes, thank you for the question  
9 Chair. Overall 80 percent of our initiatives and  
10 action items are either in progress or completed.  
11 Some highlights is the release of the preservation  
12 and zoning guidelines. Our new construction design  
13 guidelines. Again, these are in the service of not  
14 only making our housing both accessible but then  
15 creating efficiencies so that we're building projects  
16 faster. We expanded our homeownership initiatives  
17 both the first program the Homeowner Help Desk and  
18 the Home Fix Loan program that in particular helps  
19 low- and moderate-income households. We've increased  
20 our awareness in the community, both on fire safety  
21 and code enforcement as well as the programs that we  
22 do through our CBO partners and with our staff.  
23 We're looking at the way that our tenants interact  
24 with our programs in using like rental subsidies. We  
25 made a commitment to streamline our ability for

1 tenants to work with our programs by removing  
2 unnecessary forms either because of changes that we  
3 successfully fought for at the federal level so that  
4 people are not constantly proving that they are in  
5 need for housing or because there are certain forms  
6 producing the information that create trauma for our  
7 families.  
8

9 We've also worked to make sure that we have the  
10 Partners in Preservation program moving forward to  
11 create that partnership with tenants legal aid and  
12 housing agencies to make sure that the housing people  
13 live in is actually safe and habitable. We look  
14 forward to launching that program in the fall. We're  
15 working as Deputy Commissioner Darga mentioned, we're  
16 working with our priorities to make sure that MWBE  
17 and faith-based groups who are already partners of  
18 our communities are also developing accessible  
19 housing and that work is ongoing but we've made great  
20 strides.

21 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. That's helpful.  
22 Moving to another set of questions, as the Speaker  
23 mentioned in her opening remarks and we all know from  
24 2010 to 2020 New York City built only about 200,000  
25 new housing units while gaining 630,000 new residents

1 and nearly one million jobs. I'm curious if the  
2 Administration, whether it's DCP or HPD. Do you have  
3 a sense of not just affordable production but how  
4 many housing units would the city need to be  
5 producing per year to meet the current demand for -  
6 and maybe if not a per year unit, unit number, from  
7 now until 2030 or something like that. Do you have  
8 an estimate?  
9

10 ADOLFO CARRION: I will say that based on all the  
11 discussion and the testimony and the statements, the  
12 need is overwhelming and if you just look at  
13 affordable housing for working families and there are  
14 examples of you know a couple, two jobs, a child or  
15 two who just can't make it happen in New York City.  
16 If you look at the vacancy rate of less than one  
17 percent for units that rent at \$1,500 or less a  
18 month, you know it's overwhelming. So, there have  
19 been attempts by industry groups, by government, by  
20 economists to try to nail down a number and the range  
21 and City Planning can speak to this but you know it  
22 can range from 400,000 to 700,000 units. Maybe City  
23 Planning can talk a little bit about that.

24 JOHN MAGIN: Sure, thank you Commissioner. So,  
25 this is what - the thinking that went into the

1 500,000-unit moonshot. What do we need to catch up?

2 As for the amount of production that we would need  
3 per year after that, again its dynamic system embeds  
4 lot of assumptions. But that's the animating idea  
5 behind the housing opportunity text amendments as  
6 well.  
7

8 We realize -

9 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: And that is timeline?

10 JOHN MAGIN: Pardon Chair, did you have a  
11 question?

12 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Sorry, that's the 500,000-  
13 moonshot goal is with the timeline to 2030?

14 JOHN MAGIN: Uh yeah, the moonshot goal was  
15 within the next ten years and of course that will  
16 require a range of initiatives beyond even the  
17 Housing Opportunity Text Amendments but a  
18 particularly important part of hitting those numbers  
19 are the recently announced Housing Opportunity Text  
20 Amendments. For the first time ever in city history,  
21 we're putting together a series of zoning changes  
22 intended to create more housing in every neighborhood  
23 across the city, from the lowest density areas to the  
24 highest density areas. The thinking there is if  
25 we're going to produce a lot of housing, we want to

1 do it in a way you know, like the Speaker wants to do  
2 it. Like everyone here wants to it in a way that's  
3 equitably distributed across the city in a way that  
4 doesn't expect too much of particular neighborhoods.  
5 That doesn't target particular neighborhoods in a way  
6 that you know neighborhoods fear or that can over tax  
7 infrastructure or other negative consequences.  
8

9 And so, you know the center piece of that  
10 strategy is the series of zoning reforms announced  
11 last week. I also want to say that the draft scope  
12 of work for the proposal, the first major milestone  
13 for the environmental review that includes a lot more  
14 detail than the Mayor even included in his speech  
15 last week is - will be on our website later today.  
16 You know it may be there as we speak.

17 And so, I would encourage all of you to take a  
18 look at that, the draft scope of work on City  
19 Planning's website to digest that and then of course  
20 we're extremely excited to talk to any of you, at any  
21 time. We've talked to many of you already about  
22 what's in the proposal and to have that conversation  
23 over the next year about how we get to in  
24 collaboration a series of proposals that really do  
25 enable us to you know, to work our way out of the

3 housing shortage and the range of you know really  
4 serious human consequences that we live with today.

5 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you so  
6 much. No, there will most certainly be very  
7 productive discussions with respect to the text  
8 amendments. And in my opening remarks, I started off  
9 by sharing that you know I personally think that  
10 there's a lot to be done in terms of a citywide fair  
11 housing right? We don't want to tax neighborhood  
12 infrastructure. We want to promote fair housing. We  
13 want to produce, make sure that we are producing  
14 enough of the lowest income housing for New Yorkers.

15 And so, to that, you know I suppose this question  
16 might be more for HPD, you know I think it's  
17 troubling that only 17 items of the 81 commitments  
18 that were present in the Where We Live plan have been  
19 completed as to February 2023. And Commissioner, of  
20 course, you describe the rest of them as being in  
21 progress. But can you help us understand what has  
22 accounted for this low pace of the commitments? And  
23 in particular, you know the original plan included  
24 that the actions were going to be undertaken by 2025.  
25 We're half way through that time but less than a  
quarter of the items have been completed.

3 So, how does the Administration plan to meet the  
4 rest of its goals from where we live and what are the  
5 challenges that you face?

6 And again, this in the context, that yes, we want  
7 to increase affordable housing and housing production  
8 across the City of New York but we want to make sure  
9 that there are guardrails and that those guardrails  
10 are affirmatively furthering fair housing as goals  
11 that we share.

12 LUCY JOFFE: Thank you Chair for that question.  
13 We appreciate the focus on the information that we  
14 put out through the progress report. We think this  
15 level of sharing and transparency and accountability  
16 is really important. We have had – moved a few more  
17 to the completed category since we released the  
18 report last year but this is a really important  
19 piece, a really important question about our fair  
20 housing work and our fair housing commitment  
21 generally.

22 I'll start by saying first of all, we did get off  
23 to a slower start because the pandemic did delay a  
24 lot of our work in that final year in 2020. But it  
25 is primarily because these are very serious and big  
undertakings. They are not boxes that we can check

1 off and be done with. So, uhm, while we have been  
2 able to move through some of the commitments already  
3 and are glad to be moving on and devoting resources  
4 to others, a lot of them is the slow sustained work  
5 that goes into deep fair housing planning.  
6

7 And so, the reason why we continue to cite the  
8 fact that almost 90 percent are in progress or  
9 complete, is because that is the work that we're  
10 doing and we think that's really good evidence of how  
11 committed we are to these commitments and they are  
12 also reflected in the announcements around City of  
13 Yes for Housing Opportunity. These are some things  
14 that will take us awhile and the real work of where  
15 we live is not the shiny report that we are proud to  
16 have released it. We are committed to the work that  
17 goes into the planning for the next one but it is the  
18 intense every day work that we're doing to  
19 affirmatively further fair housing across the board.  
20 And so, we would be happy to dig into any of those  
21 commitments and talk with you more about what we're  
22 doing to advance each of them individually.

23 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Okay, thank you. Thank  
24 you. My last question Chair Salamanca, flagging for  
25 you. My last question is maybe we have quorum or I

1 can ask more but I want to give time to my  
2 colleagues.

3  
4 So, the Speakers bill would require a citywide  
5 strategic equity framework with goals and strategies  
6 to increase affordable housing production and voucher  
7 utilization in high opportunity districts, increase  
8 preservation and anti-displacement resources in high  
9 displacement risk neighborhoods like ours. And  
10 increase neighborhood equity investments in  
11 underserved districts. Based on the Where We Live  
12 plan other reports, these all appear to be goals that  
13 the Administration and agencies have already  
14 embraced. Can you share some of the ways that the  
15 agencies have been making progress on these goals and  
16 does HPD currently seek to focus preservation and  
17 anti-displacement resources in high displacement risk  
18 neighborhoods as measured by the equitable  
19 development data tour?

20 ADOLFO CARRION: Let me just at the top say or  
21 repeat what you suggested, which is that we fully  
22 embrace fair housing, creating opportunity everywhere  
23 and that's why it's so important that this City of  
24 Yes for Housing Opportunity moves forward. I think  
25 it's expressed in the work that we do in

1  
2 neighborhoods all across the city, whether it's  
3 public sites where we fully engage what I call the  
4 host community to help us think through, where are  
5 the opportunities in the area where they live and do  
6 business to capture affordable housing sites and  
7 dress them up with the amenities that those  
8 neighborhoods need. I again, hark back to need for  
9 the tools.

10 We need help from this body and from the  
11 leadership of the city to continue to get the tools  
12 that we need, so we can advance the work of fair  
13 housing and I'll pass it to my colleagues.

14 AHMED TIGANI: So, let me in order we can talk  
15 about voucher utilization. So, for HPD, we are the  
16 fifth largest Public Housing Authority PHA by the  
17 federal governments definition that operates a  
18 voucher program, a federal housing choice voucher  
19 program.

20 Our utilization hovers between 98 percent and up  
21 to 100 percent. Sometimes we are at complete  
22 utilization. That goes to the point that Kim made  
23 earlier about how key it is and how much it's  
24 integrated into making sure our development program  
25 is affordable and accessible.

1  
2 One thing to really point out here is, recently  
3 we were in a position to be able to get emergency  
4 housing vouchers. The city in total received about  
5 7,800 vouchers that was immediately put to work. We  
6 created a new framework to distribute these vouchers  
7 to hit our most vulnerable communities. Especially  
8 given as Lucy pointed out, the low availability of  
9 affordable units, we used a range of new tools  
10 including housing search support to make sure to  
11 connect people to those homes. That is something  
12 that we found is integral to making the vouchers work  
13 outside of the development program and what we are  
14 asking the federal government to do. The larger  
15 point is, without the availability of units, without  
16 the kind of development that we're trying to achieve  
17 in City of Yes. It makes our job that much harder.  
18 So, housing search support, yes. Federal government  
19 support to do that with our voucher work but then  
20 again supply is critical to having a place for the  
21 vouchers to go.

22 And then the other thing I would say there is  
23 that on the MWBE and faith-based work, vouchers and  
24 voucher utilization is part of the dynamics we make  
25 to make those deals work as well and again, HPD is

1 using our full voucher utilization to promote both  
2 sides.

3  
4 LUCY JOFFE: And if I may, I'd like to talk a  
5 little bit about some of the fair housing, the  
6 boarder fair housing aspects of your question. Where  
7 We Live and HPD's approach to fair housing reflects a  
8 balanced approach. We have to both continue to both  
9 invest in communities that have historically  
10 experienced disinvestment and desperately need more  
11 low-cost and affordable housing. And we need to be  
12 able to build more housing in what we have been  
13 calling limited affordability areas or parts of the  
14 city the city that don't have a lot of low cost or  
15 affordable housing.

16 That parallels this balanced approached idea  
17 where you both need to invest in communities place-  
18 based strategies as well as create opportunities for  
19 New Yorkers to be able to move or mobility strategies  
20 because the essence of fair housing as the  
21 Commissioner talked about earlier, is about choice.  
22 So, that's the ability to choose to stay in your  
23 neighborhood, in your home or to move if that's  
24 what's best for you. We mentioned this a little bit  
25 in Where We Live but we try to be very careful when

1 we talk about the idea of high opportunity  
2 neighborhoods because that actually is quite complex  
3 and New Yorkers are incredibly diverse and have a  
4 huge range of needs and preferences. And so,  
5 therefore essentially any neighborhood might be high  
6 opportunity for those in habitants, those residents  
7 or other folks who want to be able to move there.

9 So, it is our obligation as city government and  
10 as committed to undoing some of the wrongs that  
11 government has participated in and cause when we talk  
12 about fair housing, is to really be able to remove  
13 the obstacle so that New Yorkers can make that  
14 choice. They can decide to stay in their home and in  
15 their neighborhood, or they could decide to move into  
16 a neighborhood that's better or represents more  
17 opportunity for them.

18 So, this requires a wide range of balancing.  
19 Deputy Commissioner Darga talked about that a little  
20 bit in how we think about the pipeline but also, in  
21 how we think about the balance of our work and our  
22 investments for fair housing.

23 ADOLFO CARRION: Let me suggest something very  
24 quickly. It's not in any official remarks. I  
25 haven't talked to anybody about this but I think we

1  
2 need to stop using the terminology high opportunity  
3 areas because it suggests that other areas are areas  
4 of low opportunity.

5 So, I just want to put the thought out there. We  
6 can debate it at any time.

7 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you  
8 Commissioner. Yeah, I mean, I recall like just in  
9 you know in ten plus years of working on these  
10 issues, I'd always take offense to people talking  
11 about you know like the fair housing folks who you  
12 know in one camp that were wanting to create housing  
13 in areas that were wealthier, had you know more  
14 parks, had more you know all of these right and then  
15 the folks who - I kind of considered myself in the  
16 second camp which was, you can't take me out of King  
17 Bridge. You can't take me out of you know Burnside.  
18 This is where I'm from, this is where I want to be  
19 and my neighborhood should be a neighborhood of  
20 opportunity, so I just want to you know respect and  
21 agree with that classification. You know we have to  
22 do it's a yes and. We have to you know make sure  
23 that people have opportunities to live wherever they  
24 want to live in existing neighborhoods. But we also  
25 have to continue the investments into our lower

1  
2 income communities that you know have a different set  
3 of challenges, like the one that I'm from.

4 There's one sort of corollary question and then  
5 I'll turn it back over to Council Member Salamanca.  
6 I'm curious, HPD has the fifth largest public housing  
7 authority in terms of vouchers that you administer.  
8 The way that our city has been tracking affordable  
9 housing production to track the characteristics of  
10 neighborhoods that voucher holders you know use their  
11 vouchers in, are we seeing a replication of vouchers  
12 being used in lower income communities and such? Or  
13 are we seeing more a diversification in use of  
14 vouchers?

15 AHMED TIGANI: So, I can start and I'll ask Lucy  
16 to add but largely our vouchers are almost equally  
17 distributed across the five boroughs. Our vouchers  
18 go - a significant portion goes to supporting very  
19 low income and senior New Yorkers. We are seeing it  
20 match up with our development portfolio. So, as we  
21 move to look at low affordability areas, it is also  
22 where our voucher population goes to as well.  
23 Additionally, as we point out we've both locally and  
24 federally, we've gotten support to look at more  
25 mobility programs. So, currently New York was due to

1  
2 our work and our focus on this, the recipients of a  
3 \$4 million award to work on mobility programs with  
4 our voucher holders giving them additional support to  
5 be able to make choices about where they want to  
6 live. We have programs that work with families in  
7 our program Family Self-Sufficiency program, which is  
8 a federal program that we administer locally to  
9 again, builds up family support to create choices and  
10 options for those families.

11 So, there are a number of programs that we're  
12 doing to create new options and opportunities and we  
13 see a lot of distribution across all five boroughs.

14 LUCY JOFFE: Picking up from there, there is a  
15 parallel discussion to be had in terms of how we  
16 think about voucher utilization and where families  
17 who have rental assistance can and choose to move.  
18 And we know that historically and currently, that  
19 residents with rental assistance often struggle to  
20 find housing in the neighborhoods that they want to  
21 move in to, particularly if those are wealthier  
22 neighborhoods, maybe ones with uhm, uh, in a  
23 different borough than where they currently live.  
24 And part of fair housing is removing those obstacles  
25 so that families can make that choice. Not

1  
2 necessarily telling households, this is the type of  
3 neighborhood you should live in or you should live  
4 near people with these characteristics and your life  
5 will be better. But you should be empowered to use  
6 your voucher, your rental assistance to make the best  
7 decision for your household and for your family.

8       So, our job is to figure out, how do we remove  
9 those obstacles that are getting in the way and one  
10 of the things is that there is a significant amount  
11 of discrimination that uses a rental assistance,  
12 households that use rental assistance face in the  
13 private market. This is a huge concern and something  
14 that will really limit the usability, the helpfulness  
15 of continued federal assistance through rental  
16 assistance if we don't really invest in enforcement.  
17 And so we have and we are working to – we did a pilot  
18 this past spring and we're looking to invest  
19 significantly over the next several years to build up  
20 the cities enforcement infrastructure, testing and  
21 enforcement infrastructure to root out source of  
22 income discrimination in the private market. Which  
23 we do think is another really important step that  
24 we're taking.

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2 WITH THE COMMITTEE ON LAND USE 79

3 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: I'm sorry, I'm sorry, we  
4 have to - if you could just answer the question and  
5 move on because I have a whole panel of Council  
6 Members here. Council Member, are we okay with that?  
7 Sanchez?

8 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Yes, thank you. Thank you  
9 so much Chair, appreciate you, yup.

10 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Alright, we'll try our  
11 best to come back to the second round. Alright,  
12 thank you very much. So, we're going to give our  
13 members five minutes. I'm going to ask the panel,  
14 please be direct with the answers so we can get as  
15 many questions as possible. We're going to start  
16 with Council Member Krishnan.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: Good morning, good  
18 afternoon Commissioner. Nice to see you. Thank you  
19 so much for your testimony today and thank you to  
20 Speaker Adams, Chair Sanchez and Salamanca for  
21 today's really important hearing. I'm very heartened  
22 by today's hearing and the focus on fair housing.  
23 This was my career before coming to the City Council.  
24 My first case out of law school was the Broadway  
25 Triangle Fair Housing Litigation under Bloomberg. It  
lasted ten years to de Blasio with a comprehensive

1  
2 settlement. And one thing we saw and I saw over that  
3 time was in the beginning, fair housing wasn't talked  
4 about during that litigation. There was a lot of  
5 testimony that we weren't thinking about AFFH and  
6 with the sustained advocacy of the Broadway Triangle  
7 Community Coalition, we've seen Where We Live, NYC  
8 and much more.

9       So, I want to commend HPD on that focus. At the  
10 same time, I still feel like you know the Fair  
11 Housing Act as envisioned by Dr. King and in Congress  
12 has a very broad mandate at 3608. It's very broad  
13 and it's changed from analysis and impediments to a  
14 much more meaningful analysis under Obama. But it  
15 seems like New York City's approach to it is still  
16 falling short of the broad mandate. Under prior  
17 administrations as well and I can't help but think if  
18 part of that is because we look at fair housing as a  
19 citywide issue. But still, we're very diverse as a  
20 city. We still have one of the highest segregation  
21 disease in the entire country and I just wonder what  
22 steps specifically HPD is taking to look at a  
23 neighborhood-by-neighborhood analysis of AFFH. For  
24 example, Boston looks at - has a project based AFFH  
25 analysis with developers. Has New York City looked

1  
2 at those things to really – not just at the citywide  
3 metrics but on the neighborhood specific metrics?

4 LUCY JOFFE: Thank you for that question and for  
5 as a shared fair housing attorney by background.  
6 Uhm, so yes, we have looked at what other cities have  
7 done around the country and we have identified the 30  
8 percent lowest in terms of neighborhoods across the  
9 city. The neighborhoods with the lowest amount of  
10 low-cost and affordable housing. To us, this is  
11 actually the critical issue because if there is not  
12 enough low-cost housing in the neighborhood, then a  
13 New Yorker who decides that's the neighborhood that  
14 represents the best opportunity for me and for my  
15 family, cannot choose to live there. And so, we have  
16 added that as criteria or points to the qualified  
17 allocation plan. That's how we in part allocate low-  
18 income tax credits. So, that's going to help us be  
19 able to do some of the work to prioritize new  
20 projects in these communities.

21 We are also starting to report on it in the  
22 Mayor's Management Report, so that we are holding  
23 ourselves accountable and so that everyone can also  
24 join us in holding ourselves accountable. This is  
25 work, however, that is quite challenging and it is

3 something that we have been working at and trying to  
4 do and want the Council's partnership on it. We have  
5 been more successful in certain parts of the city  
6 that in others in building and developing more low  
7 cost and affordable housing. So, we're excited as  
8 well to be here to talk about fair housing, to be  
9 able to talk about this bill. To be able to work  
10 with you guys on having targets but also having,  
11 creating a path where we can work with all of you to  
12 make sure we really are following through on  
13 everything that we're saying here today. When we  
14 talk about needing housing of all types in all  
15 communities across the city.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: Thank you and I just  
17 add as my final comment too. You know I think that  
18 that will be really important and I appreciate and  
19 I'm glad to hear this neighborhood specific focus on  
20 affirmatively furthering fair housing. The only  
21 point I'd mention is, you know I think Chair Sanchez  
22 alluded to it as well. Uhm, what I'm glad about with  
23 Intro. 1031, the Speaker's legislation is it  
24 specifically takes an anti-displacement perspective.  
25 And of course, you know that and being my work too,  
that's something that I think that Chair Sanchez

1 mentioned, you know, we tend to misconstrue what fair  
2 housing is and we don't look at anti-displacement and  
3 that's how you end up with under the prior  
4 administration a number of rezonings in communities  
5 of color only.  
6

7 So, I would just urge HPD to continue down that  
8 road of looking at fair housing from the lens of you  
9 know, not just certain neighborhoods only but how do  
10 we keep people in their homes, especially as  
11 gentrification increases tremendously in certain  
12 communities only in our city. But that anti  
13 displacement perspective is so important both in  
14 thinking about fair housing and investing in legal  
15 services to keep people in their homes and how we  
16 think about again, how we get our segregation index  
17 much, much lower than it is right now.

18 LUCY JOFFE: Absolutely and one of our six goals  
19 in where we live was about preventing displacement  
20 because it an essential part of our fair housing  
21 strategy.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER KRISHNAN: Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Thank you Council Member.  
24 Now, we will get questions from Council Member Hanks  
25 followed by Council Member Dinowitz.

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER HANKS: Thank you Chair Salamanca.  
3 I very much – sorry, well, I’m done already. That  
4 was quick. So, I very much appreciate your testimony  
5 and I definitely want to speak, uhm, thank the  
6 Speaker for this important and timely legislation. I  
7 am on Staten Island and we just released our Staten  
8 Island Action Plan where we’re looking to build over  
9 5,000 units of housing. We definitely have the space  
10 for it and I also appreciate this map here that  
11 really illustrates that Staten Island, Northshore is  
12 far behind in low-income and affordable units. And  
13 so, which leads me to my question that we do have a  
14 lot of housing projects in the hopper and it’s in the  
15 queue and I’m also sharing with Chair Salamanca’s  
16 frustrations that when we talk about closing on these  
17 projects and how do we get them shovel ready but my  
18 question really is, are there pathways that we can  
19 discuss with the development whose frustrated about  
20 closing because some of them want to back out. Are  
21 there any programs or any pathways we can get to to  
22 make sure that these projects are done that we can  
23 start lifting these numbers in the Northshore to the  
24 point where it’s you know comparable to the other  
25 places in the city because we are definitely

1  
2 destitute. We need affordable and low-income  
3 housing.

4 So, how do we work with HPD and development who  
5 have these projects in the hopper that kind of want  
6 to you know look at other avenues to get these  
7 shovels in the ground to make sure that we can  
8 provide affordable housing. Thank you.

9 ADLOFO CARRION: Council Member, very quickly and  
10 I'm sure that our Deputy Commissioner for Development  
11 you know will want to share some thoughts but uhm,  
12 our work is driven by the need and the opportunity to  
13 deliver in areas of limited affordability. Your  
14 borough, Council Member Borelli's borough, uhm is one  
15 of those areas and patches of it are in this heat map  
16 are hotter than other patches.

17 So, one, we welcome the opportunity for this new  
18 development. I know there was a big announcement.  
19 Congratulations. Now we have to get past the  
20 announcement and get those units delivered. So, we  
21 look forward to working with you at the host  
22 Community Board with the Borough President there to  
23 deliver on these sorely needed affordable housing  
24 units and the transformation of those areas I think  
25 is critical for not only Staten Island but for New

1 York City. It allows us to spread opportunity  
2 further, which goes to the City of Yes Zoning Text  
3 Amendment.  
4

5 KIM DARGA: Yeah, just really quickly, this is,  
6 again this is - I know this is great frustration for  
7 everyone and ourselves including, about how long it  
8 can take and as mentioned, you know we do need  
9 changes at the federal level to unlock resources for  
10 us. As long as we are you know new construction  
11 financing, it's expensive to finance new  
12 construction, right? And so, we either to create 100  
13 percent affordable housing, we need layers of  
14 subsidy. We need federal low-income housing tax  
15 credits. We have property tax exemptions. Capital  
16 subsidy, rental subsidies. In order to do more, we  
17 need to expand all of those pots.

18 I would say the other thing I just want to  
19 reiterate is that we need the zoning changes and we  
20 need to unlock the potential of small sites as well  
21 as large sites. So, large sites are really resource  
22 intensive and they're great but there's also  
23 potential to do so much in little ways throughout New  
24 York City. And so, you know I think that's certainly  
25 a priority and making sure we can unlock as of right

3 tax exemptions for new construction, which you know  
4 the expiration of the current program; I'm not going  
5 to get into that today but without a program that  
6 provides an as of right, clear knowable path, we are  
7 really going to be limited in terms of what we can  
8 finance in new construction.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER HANKS: Thank you so much. I look  
10 forward to just talking offline with you and about  
11 the particulars of the project. Thank you so much.

12 KIM DARGA: Great, thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: I have a quick question  
14 before we go on.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER HANKS: Thank you Chair.

16 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Thank you. I'm sorry  
17 Council Member. Thank you for your questions.  
18 Before we go on to Council Member Dinowitz, uhm, I'm  
19 going to throw a scenario that happened in my  
20 district and I would like to know how often this  
21 happens. In around 2017, 2016, I rezoned a piece of  
22 property in my district and the developer, after the  
23 land was rezoned, he could not afford the overhead.  
24 And so, he sold that property to another developer.  
25 They had that property for some time, could not  
afford the overhead and that developer sold that

1  
2 property to a third developer, which finally they  
3 closed on that project, which I'm happy to hear. But  
4 in terms of City Planning, when we in the Council  
5 rezone a piece of property and the developer chooses  
6 to sell that property, the new owner, can they build  
7 as of right or they need to build within what was  
8 agreed to in the Council?

9 JOHN MAGIN: Great question. It depends on the  
10 nature of the action. So, if it's just a straight  
11 rezoning, that's a legislative act. In the new  
12 zoning district that was put into place, allows what  
13 it allows. And when you're looking at a project from  
14 the private applicant for that legislative act, that  
15 rezoning, you're looking at an illustrative project  
16 and Council can and does you know make side deals or  
17 whatever if they want this or that out of the  
18 project. But that's not something that gets baked in  
19 to the underlying zoning district. That's just a law  
20 of general applicability. It allows what it allows  
21 on that site.

22 On the other hand, if it's something like a  
23 special permit where an applicant is coming in for  
24 actions from City Planning Commission from you to  
25 enable a very particular project. Usually it would

1  
2 require waivers to the zoning. And so, the deal is,  
3 you give them waivers to the zoning in exchange for a  
4 particular project. In that instance, if you get a  
5 special permit, even if the developer sells that you  
6 know to the next guy down the line, their choice  
7 would be either to comply with the particular special  
8 permit that was approved by Council, including the  
9 waivers in exchange for a particular project. Or  
10 just to develop pursuant to whatever the underlying  
11 zoning allows. Does that make sense?

12 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Yeah, but we don't do  
13 many special permits here. We do, in the Council,  
14 what we do is we do rezoning's based on building  
15 affordable housing. How often HPD, do you keep track  
16 of how often a developer sells their land because  
17 they cannot afford the overhead while they're waiting  
18 for HPD to close on the project?

19 KIM DARGA: We don't track that. It is not  
20 common but it does happen and we do hear from  
21 applicants that time is money. It is. If we could  
22 finance projects faster, they would be cheaper  
23 projects to finance.

24 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: So, basically I can  
25 rezone a piece of property in my district with a

1  
2 developer for 100 percent affordable housing. They  
3 wait a few years, cannot pay the overhead, sell it to  
4 another developer and they come and build market  
5 rate?

6 KIM DARGA: If the project had requirements  
7 embedded associated with the rezoning to be  
8 affordable housing, those requirements would survive  
9 in a transfer. So, there's currently specific  
10 depending on the type of approval, etc., etc.. But  
11 if it is certainly an HPD supported action, any  
12 affordability restrictions would be embedded and  
13 required of any subsequent owner.

14 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Alright, alright, thank  
15 you.

16 ADOLFO CARRION: And I think Chairman if I'm  
17 guessing which site it is they changed hands several  
18 times in your district. There were restrictions  
19 associated with it and the ultimate deliverable was  
20 you know an affordable -

21 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Well, I worry and I'm  
22 going to let Council Member Dinowitz but I worry  
23 because in this past administration, there were three  
24 rezones, citywide rezonings that were done, right?  
25 You got Washington Heights, uh you had SoHo NoHo.

1  
2 Actually, you had Gowanus and you had Jerome and I'm  
3 just curious to know and for example in Jerome, if  
4 all those lots that were rezoned, are they building  
5 true affordable housing or are the developer or the  
6 property owner sell that land and they're building as  
7 of right?

8 JOHN MAGIN: So, every quickly, the commitments  
9 to 100 percent affordable rezoning - affordable  
10 housing on public lots, those will remain the  
11 commitments moving forward. That's our land. We  
12 would keep those commitments.

13 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Yeah, but not private  
14 property.

15 JOHN MAGIN: So, in the rezoning, the private  
16 properties did have a specific commitment. Our goal  
17 was to put forward tools to bring them into  
18 affordable housing framework.

19 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Alright, I'm going to let  
20 Council Member Dinowitz ask his questions but I want  
21 to go back to this topic. Go ahead Council Member.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Thank you Chair. I was  
23 saying, you take your time, you're the Chairman and  
24 uh, thank you Chair Sanchez and Speaker Adams.

25

1 Commissioner, I actually want to you know commend  
2 you. The language with which we use I think is very  
3 important and even in your testimony talking about  
4 homes instead of units, I think is an important step  
5 forward in the way we talk about what is being  
6 constructed and one thing I've brought up a number of  
7 times and not just homes, I know that if I were  
8 looking for a new home for my family, I wouldn't  
9 search home, I would search two bedroom, three  
10 bedroom, four bedroom home, or as it used to be  
11 called a unit.  
12

13 And with your affordable housing term sheets, it  
14 seems that those family units, families who have  
15 children, that those units are being disincentivized,  
16 right? That you can build a minimum of 30 percent  
17 two-bedroom units and most developers will choose to  
18 do that. Even though it's more efficient per person  
19 to build two- and three-bedroom apartments, more  
20 square footage per home, unit, or apartment, you  
21 could fit more people in there and we have this  
22 issue, families are leaving. There aren't enough  
23 apartments for families and school enrollment is  
24 down. In part because there aren't enough supply of  
25 those homes.

1  
2 So, I'm interested to know how often you update  
3 your term sheets to meet the needs of our city and to  
4 meet the needs of specific communities and what data  
5 are informing those term sheets?

6 ADOLFO CARRION: Thank you for that question and  
7 for the framing and it is a challenge. Uhm, to  
8 answer the need but our work follows the overwhelming  
9 need in the city and Kim can talk a little bit about  
10 our experience, and if you think of these homes as  
11 being opportunities to purchase on a shelf, right?  
12 The shelf life of a three-bedroom, four-bedroom unit  
13 used to be way longer in New York City. It's still  
14 very long. The shelf life in other words, they are  
15 not takers compared to the takers for studios and one  
16 bedrooms and two bedrooms. They fly off the shelf  
17 and they fly off the shelf because of a universe of  
18 renters and are single adult households and smaller  
19 families but Kim, you can give some texture to that.

20 KIM DARGA: Yeah.

21 ADOLFO CARRION: And let me just say, I'm sorry  
22 to interrupt you but notwithstanding that every host  
23 community is different and I think we talked about it  
24 before the hearing.

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Yeah, yeah, well,  
3 that's what I mean is there no data to localize -

4 ADOLFO CARRION: We look at those host  
5 communities as we sit down with the developer to talk  
6 about what to deliver there.

7 KIM DARGA: Yeah, so we actually work really  
8 closely; see the policy team and development is both  
9 up here because we actually work really closely when  
10 we are trying to structure our program term sheets to  
11 make sure that they are addressing overall housing  
12 needs and they are based on data. So, Lucy may be  
13 able to speak in a minute to what the data tells us  
14 about needs for housing in the city.

15 Generally speaking in our multi-family new  
16 construction term sheets, we do set a maximum of 25  
17 percent of units as studio apartments. Uhm 15  
18 percent for one bedrooms and a minimum of 30 percent  
19 of the units are two bedrooms or more. So, we do  
20 limit studio production but -

21 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: But when you're  
22 counting - I'm sorry to interrupt. When you're  
23 counting the number of units instead of the number of  
24 bedrooms, certainly a developer is going to maximize

1  
2 the number of units that they produce rather than  
3 bedrooms.

4 KIM DARGA: Yup, so that's why we have standards  
5 outlined in the term sheet that specifically state  
6 the maximum number of studios, the target one  
7 bedrooms and uhm, a minimum number of two or three  
8 bedrooms.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Right and what -

10 KIM DARGA: That are created.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Yeah and what I'm  
12 saying is they're going to do the bare minimum of the  
13 number of two bedrooms because they can and I know  
14 you mentioned three bedrooms but those aren't even on  
15 your term sheets. And so, I don't know any developer  
16 who's again incentivized to just create units and  
17 units and not bedrooms that would without any  
18 guidance or pressure from you actually construct  
19 three-bedroom apartments.

20 I want to move onto - I have two other things  
21 that I'll mention in a row to make sure that you hear  
22 them and one is, Deputy Commissioner you mentioned  
23 interagency collaboration. I represent three  
24 different community boards, 8, 12 and 7, all of which

25

1  
2 are asking, we'd like to build more affordable  
3 housing.

4       Instead what's happening is DHS is coming in and  
5 building shelters and my view is your job should be  
6 to house people permanently and of course to the  
7 extent possible put DHS out of business. We want  
8 people in houses not in shelters but instead that's  
9 what we're getting our community. And of course, I'm  
10 interested to know what that interagency  
11 collaboration looks like because it sounds like DSS  
12 is kind of just going in, getting these properties  
13 and building more shelters and I will leave it there  
14 and ask off line the other question but I want to  
15 hear about that. Thank you.

16       LUCY JOFFE: Thank you Council Member. All of  
17 the data sources that we use and look at including  
18 the New York City Housing Vacancy Survey, when we  
19 look at the households in shelter, we are deeply  
20 concerned about every household type that is  
21 experiencing housing instability but across the  
22 board, we see greater numbers of single adults and  
23 one's and two's two-family households who are in need  
24 of affordable housing. And so, that is why our term  
25 sheets and that are structured that way, why it's our

3 greater focus. With that being said, like all of  
4 this, these are things that we have to balance  
5 especially when we're thinking about our fair housing  
6 policy front and center. There is a long history of  
7 communities, some communities, particularly Whiter  
8 and wealthier communities trying to exclude families.  
9 So, we do think about that as well when we are  
10 thinking about what we are building and where we are  
11 building. But the data does suggest that the problem  
12 is significantly in smaller households.

13 And so, we are mindful of that as we are  
14 structuring our term sheets. We would love to work  
15 with you to build more affordable housing in your  
16 district. Uhm, again we are balancing as a city  
17 multiple crisis if you will. There are many, many  
18 New Yorkers in need of greater housing stability and  
19 there are many, many New Yorkers currently in  
20 shelter. This is something that we have to do both.

21 ADOLFO CARRION: I know time is against us.  
22 We're doing a lot of work with the Department of  
23 Homeless Services, with the Department of Social  
24 Services to move families as quickly as possible into  
25 permanent housing. We had a banner year of those  
transfers from shelter to permanent housing. I want

1  
2 to thank you Council Member, we call it the Salamanca  
3 15 but to all the members who voted yes on that.  
4 That was important and we're working with the  
5 development community to in some cases increase that  
6 share of units or homes so that we can get families  
7 out of shelter into permanent homes.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Thank you Chair. I  
9 would say that a lot of significant development has  
10 been done with shelters in our community and not  
11 actual housing. Uhm and so I want to put that out  
12 there because it is a huge problem. I'm sure it's a  
13 problem across the city where we're not people for  
14 people putting roots in the community. Thank you  
15 Chairs. Thank you Speaker.

16 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Commissioner, thank you  
17 for that. You know when I tried to get that passed  
18 in 2019, HPD the prior administration was totally  
19 opposed to that 15 percent homeless set aside.

20 ADOLFO CARRION: It was unpopular at the time.

21 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Yeah but it's popular  
22 now.

23 ADOLFO CARRION: Bravo.  
24  
25

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3 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Yes, alright. I am going  
4 to hand it off to Chair Louis for questioning. After  
5 Chair Louis, Council Member Brewer.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER LOUIS: Thank you Chair Salamanca,  
7 Chair Sanchez and Speaker Adams. Thank you  
8 Commissioner for being here. I'm just going to ask  
9 my questions first and you guys can answer  
10 afterwards, since we're short on time.

11 Uhm, as I'm looking at this map that was given to  
12 us here, the total housing development for – between  
13 2018 and 2023, the largest number of housing  
14 production in central Brooklyn falls under CB17 with  
15 CB5 to follow. I wanted to know while there's  
16 development being completed or in progress, we still  
17 have a large number of vacancies in some of these  
18 areas.

19 So, I wanted to know what could HPD do better to  
20 ensure New Yorkers, especially those that live in  
21 CB17 and CB5 have opportunities and can qualify. We  
22 have a lot of people in those areas who are renting  
23 rooms and while we want to accommodate formerly  
24 homeless New Yorkers, there's a set aside for them.  
25 What we also see is they're not single adults that

1 live in East Flatbush, East New York areas, are not  
2 being – don't have the opportunity.  
3

4 Second question, uhm, if you could give a quick  
5 overview of HPD's closing date complexities and  
6 shortfalls using CCC urban village as an example  
7 where you have a project by a private developer who  
8 is faith based as well and wants to help with our  
9 housing stock issue here in the City of New York and  
10 the state actually did their part so that they could  
11 get towards the closing date but HPD didn't do their  
12 part to get closer to the closing date.

13 So, I wanted to know if you could use that as an  
14 example so that the Committee here can understand the  
15 complexities that you all have with that, what we  
16 could do better, and how we could support projects  
17 like CCC's Urban Village?

18 Third question, this is in regards to the slate  
19 of Article 11 that you all are asking us to support.  
20 I wanted to know the \$800 million that was mentioned  
21 today in your testimony, is that \$800 million going  
22 towards the Article 11's that you all are asking us  
23 to support here in the Council? And so that we could  
24 understand part of the housing stock, does that fall  
25 there? And my last question, to specify the tools

1  
2 and incentives that HPD needs to support your  
3 financing, you mentioned incentives earlier for  
4 housing production. If you could specify those tools  
5 for us again.

6 So, the first question is in regards to what's  
7 happening in Central Brooklyn with vacancies and then  
8 everything else afterwards. Thank you.

9 ADOLFO CARRION: Thank you Council Member Louis  
10 and thank you for your partnership at the close of  
11 the fiscal year as we close the preservation deal in  
12 your district that I think is going to deliver  
13 phenomenally for that community that's been suffering  
14 for a long time.

15 Big questions, you packed in four of them.

16 CHAIRPERSON LOUIS: You can do it.

17 ADOLFO CARRION: We're going to try to beat the  
18 clock. Look, on the large number of vacancies I'll  
19 let one my colleagues pick that up. I think we  
20 should save that for last. Uhm, I want to go to the  
21 CCC Urban Village project, which we fully support.  
22 We've had extensive conversations with the developer  
23 there. We're excited about the fact that we can  
24 deliver a transformative project for that part of the  
25 city and to do it in partnership with a faith-based

1  
2 organization is a great model. We have expanded our  
3 work and continue to expand our work with faith-based  
4 organizations. The complexity in the closing cycle –  
5 we need hours to address it. Do you want to talk a  
6 little bit about the challenge that they face as I  
7 mean we partner with the state? We have our own  
8 contribution to that project. There was a rezoning  
9 action associated with this earlier. There are a  
10 number of challenges, yeah.

11 KIM DARGA: So, the project overall is going to  
12 be, it's huge. I mean it will absolutely be  
13 transformative. Uhm, this is actually kind of a  
14 perfect example of the challenge that we face, right?  
15 We want to support it. We want to move it forward.  
16 It meets many of our priorities. It's extremely  
17 resource intensive.

18 And you were mentioning the kind of \$800 million.  
19 I'm going to connect these two things. So, the \$800  
20 million is the allocation of tax-exempt bonds through  
21 the state that goes to the Housing Development  
22 Corporation. That they, with us, allocate to finance  
23 low-income tax credit projects. Basically that means  
24 it's a federal loan income housing tax credit. That  
25 tax credit is sold that brings in equity investment

1 into the projects. Separate from Article 11, which  
2 is a property tax exemption okay. Uhm and that  
3 project alone, like if we – so we can finance like  
4 about a dozen projects a year, about 2,600 units.  
5 That project alone is almost that size. So, that's  
6 putting aside the capital budget that we would need  
7 as well. So, in a multifaced project like that, the  
8 challenge we face if we want to do it, we also have  
9 needs across all of New York City. And so, that's a  
10 project where it's going to be phased and it's going  
11 to take awhile to get all the way through. We are  
12 committed. The first phase, the state is issuing the  
13 tax-exempt bonds and allocating the tax credits. HPD  
14 is bringing the subsidy in and the property tax  
15 exemption. So, it's actually a partnership with the  
16 state to finance the first part. The rest of it is  
17 going to take some time to get through and we're  
18 going to continue to talk with the development team.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER LOUIS: While we understand all  
21 that, I think what happens is HPD takes a long time  
22 to tell the developer or the private entity what the  
23 intricacies are and then it delays the process. In  
24 which delays us in trying to get production for  
25 housing for the City of New York. So, I think you

1  
2 all could do a better job with that. We just wanted  
3 to use CCC as an example and if you could also please  
4 specify really quickly the tools and incentives that  
5 are needed for financing. Thank you.

6 KIM DARGA: So, we are very lucky in New York  
7 City. I would just say we're very lucky, right? We  
8 have property tax exemptions. We have a capital  
9 budget that is the largest we've ever had. We have  
10 about a \$2 million capital budget this year with a  
11 long-term significant capital allocation. We have a  
12 significant rental subsidy allocation. We also are  
13 an entity that can allocate federal low-income  
14 housing tax credits. Amazing tools.

15 We also have the Mandatory Inclusionary Housing  
16 program and we have a great partnership that DCP is  
17 leading with looking at zoning now. We also need  
18 additional tools and resources though. So, we do  
19 need zoning itself to be assessed across the city.  
20 We need support at the state level as well. Uhm, we  
21 had a property tax exemption as of right for new  
22 construction. That no longer exists and that  
23 contributed about half of the production this year.  
24 So, we expect over the last couple years that in a  
25 time when we're trying to actually address housing

1 need, uhm and that's market and affordable across New  
2 York City, that we are going to lose one of the most  
3 critical tools that we have. We also need to look at  
4 ADU's and basement conversions. We need to look at  
5 commercial conversions including an incentive to make  
6 sure that if there is a conversion, that we can have  
7 some affordable housing, right?  
8

9 So, there is a huge range of resources. I mean  
10 every single one of these, there are potential  
11 opportunities to look at expansion. And so, we would  
12 be happy to have a detailed conversation on each and  
13 every one of those tools to think about how we could  
14 do more.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER LOUIS: Thank you and thank you  
16 Chair.

17 ADOLFO CARRION: Very quickly you know I  
18 mentioned earlier in the hearing about the fact that  
19 there are 750 projects in the queue. 300 of them are  
20 new construction like this one that you brought up  
21 and just on the Article 11, Chairman if I may for a  
22 second, on the preservation side, uhm, this is an  
23 opportunity for another incentive to get to the  
24 right, to preserve affordable housing as it exists  
25 across the city. To stabilize the properties but

1  
2 that tool is absolutely essential for us to be able  
3 to do that.

4 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Alright, thank you.  
5 Thank you for that. I have to recognize that we've  
6 been joined, I'm sorry by Council Member Brooks-  
7 Powers, Council Members Avilés and Council Member  
8 Feliz.

9 Right before we get to Council Member Brewer, I  
10 just want to ask a question here. Uhm, the Housing  
11 Connect, right? One of the biggest complaints that I  
12 get when I'm going around in my district saying, I  
13 built x-amount of units is, I don't know anyone  
14 that's moved into that building that lives in the  
15 community right? And so, the frustration that I'm  
16 hearing, even though there's a 50 percent community  
17 preference and I know that HPD is very uhm, how can I  
18 say, you're very serious on ensuring that that 50  
19 percent community preference is upheld. I know that  
20 but one of the concerns and issues that I get from my  
21 community is navigating Housing Connect and the  
22 difficulty in Housing Connect.

23 And if you can just explain this to me. One of  
24 the issues that I had was that you may have one  
25 building in my district, 100 units and I'm hearing

1  
2 anywhere between 30,000 - 60,000 people are applying  
3 for that one building for 100 units. And residents  
4 in my community who may not be as savvy as others  
5 with technology, they go and they apply online and  
6 then a few weeks later, they apply again and it's my  
7 understanding that if you apply and you get a number  
8 let's - I'm going to make a number up, 120. And you  
9 apply again, you can get a new number of 25,000 and  
10 you fall in that category of the later view with the  
11 last number that you applied. Is that a true  
12 statement in terms of Housing Connect, the way it  
13 works Commissioner?

14 ADOLFO CARRION: Let me just say that we are now  
15 in Housing Connect 2.0 because of the many problems  
16 that 1.0 faced. We are making some technological IT  
17 changes if you will to it and I think cleaning up the  
18 process, we've made it much more user friendly where  
19 an applicant now gets to create an account. And so,  
20 their interaction with the agency lives in their  
21 account. One of the improvements and relatively  
22 recently, one of the improvements is that you don't  
23 get to just throw a wide net out there. You target  
24 specific areas of the city. So you can apply very  
25 specifically what we were getting in the past was

1  
2 that people would just apply in as many places as  
3 they could to see what happens and then they would  
4 reject units and they would tie up the system. I  
5 don't know if anybody else has anything to add.

6 AHMED TIGANI: So, as quick as I can, so I think  
7 part of 2.0 is that there are new profile set ups to  
8 try to avoid that problem. We're going to confirm  
9 right now that this particular law, repetition issue  
10 is part of 2.0 but the point of the profile is in  
11 order to make sure that people aren't repeatedly  
12 applying for the same building and creating  
13 miscommunication, misinformation. Again, step back,  
14 2.0 plus the roll out of that came with new training  
15 tools. We work with over 60 organizations on the  
16 ground. Our housing ambassadors to train people so  
17 we have local - we have local educators in the  
18 system. We as HPD, do events throughout the city on  
19 a regular basis to make sure people are aware.  
20 Beyond that, there are more technology improvements  
21 we're doing to get people into housing faster. So,  
22 part of the system includes and I'm confirming yes,  
23 it is part of the new profile piece that was changed.  
24 Part of the system is also to increase more speed by  
25 removing paperwork and double counting or double on

1  
2 the back end. So, we moved from a front-end check to  
3 a back-end check. This allows us to get people into  
4 housing faster. We created a profile this way. The  
5 double lock system is fairly pulling the log numbers  
6 as people apply.

7 Additionally, with our housing ambassadors, if  
8 you are not technology friendly, you can apply by  
9 paper and still enter the lottery if you don't want  
10 to use the profile and we count for the double log.  
11 So, those are some of the things and with more time,  
12 I'm happy to talk about all the things we plan on  
13 doing for 3.0.

14 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Alright thank you. I'm  
15 going to hand it over to Council Member Brewer  
16 followed by Council Member Bottcher.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Thank you very much.  
18 Thank you to everybody and thank you for asking that  
19 question Chair. So, I want to talk about Manhattan.  
20 So, in terms of my like 200 ULURPs that I did as  
21 Borough President, the previous administration said  
22 only affordable. Affordable will only be subsidized  
23 by the private sector. I want to know if there's any  
24 subsidy going into Manhattan projects? Because what  
25 happens is, we end up, we'd love to have more

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affordable housing in the Borough of Manhattan but without the subsidy, it's very difficult. Question number one.

Question number two, with this, I totally agree with the fact that we'd like to have more affordable and less of those that are temporarily housed but what's going to happen is some of them are going to move. There are going to be less people, hopefully in terms of the migrant community and then single room occupancies are going to be available. Will HPD or the city help nonprofits purchase them because they're for sale? And they're just making money now temporarily. So that's question number two regarding Manhattan.

Number three, the FHEPS voucher being increased is great but you still can't get an apartment or can't get a studio in the Borough of Manhattan. I just want to make clear, when you say we want to be diverse in terms of where we're moving, forget it. I got six people in my office right now with vouchers, single people and they can't - we're taking them elsewhere. There's no place in Manhattan you can get an apartment.

3 And then also, I want to just talk about the  
4 religious opportunities. There are churches and  
5 synagogues, what are doing to make sure - what they  
6 do is, they'll have two nearby churches for sale.  
7 They'll make one high income and maybe one because  
8 the Catholics will do this, affordable. They should  
9 all be affordable. What are doing to help them be  
10 affordable?

11 I also want to mention, I know others may do this  
12 with NYCHA. We got I don't know 6,900, 6,200, I  
13 don't know the number of vacant apartments. That's  
14 not your problem. We asked the question thanks to  
15 the Chair the other day but it's one city, it's one  
16 administration. Those apartments sit empty. I don't  
17 know the solution but it is insane to have them all  
18 be sitting there vacant.

19 I'm also going to mention uhm Mr. Tigani knows,  
20 what about Harborview? That's 100 percent affordable  
21 with promise as part of Hudson Yards, nothing has  
22 been built. Everybody wants to build. What's going  
23 on with Harborview for affordable housing? And then  
24 59<sup>th</sup> Street, I complain because it's a brand-new  
25 building. It's going to be a shelter. I don't  
understand why it can't be permanent housing.

1  
2 So, really my questions are about Manhattan. How  
3 are we going to deal with more affordability as the  
4 Speaker has suggested and others, in the Borough of  
5 Manhattan, if there's no subsidy, no support on the  
6 religious and no purchase of the SRO's? It's great  
7 to have commercial conversion. Even the Mayor has  
8 announced, none of it will be affordable. Maybe if  
9 you get some state 421A, if that ever happens, but  
10 otherwise it's not going to be affordable. Maybe it  
11 fits into your 500 but not one unit of affordable  
12 housing. Thank you.

13 ADOLFO CARRION: Thank you Council Member Brewer.  
14 Uhm, you packed a lot in there.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I could keep going if you  
16 want.

17 ADOLFO CARRION: No, I know you can. Let me give  
18 you the shortest answer to your first question, which  
19 is, is there subsidy going into Manhattan? The  
20 answer is a resounding very large yes and we can give  
21 you a breakdown of where we have applied subsidy.

22 In terms of helping nonprofits, uhm, we work very  
23 closely with nonprofit developers. We've set up  
24 programs specifically for them to help them purchase  
25 property. Through the New York City Acquisition

1 Fund, that was open to everybody and it's now open to  
2 nonprofits and minority and women owned business  
3 enterprises for site acquisition and other supports  
4 in the development process.  
5

6 You mentioned City FHEPs, I'll let somebody else  
7 tackle that. Uhm, we've created - the city has - the  
8 Mayor's office has created an office of faith-based  
9 opportunities.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I know them.

11 ADOLFO CARRION: Yeah, there's an ongoing  
12 discussion —

13 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Ongoing is the operative  
14 word.

15 ADOLFO CARRION: Yeah, no it's ongoing because  
16 there are so many opportunities for us to capture  
17 affordable housing in many communities across the  
18 city and there are many faith-based organizations  
19 that are willing to step up. We have capacity  
20 building on our side. Ahmed Tigani can talk a little  
21 bit about that work. He's at the lead of that with  
22 the team. And then Harborview and 59<sup>th</sup> Street, maybe  
23 some folks can pick up on those.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Tigani knows it well.  
25

1  
2 AHMED TIGANI: So, on Harborview, we're talking  
3 with NYCHA. They have a larger development plan and  
4 HPD is ready and working to play our role but we know  
5 that that's an important site to you.

6 On the faith-based piece, I will say and Kim can  
7 speak to it. We have faith-based developers we're  
8 working with now and we have multiple projects that  
9 recently closed in our pipeline. It's one of the  
10 considerations that we're working on. The Mayor's  
11 leadership on faith-based work is something that  
12 comes out of a summit from last year. We're looking  
13 both at the financial tools, professional development  
14 and trying to speak to churches early about what the  
15 opportunities are, so that they can come into a  
16 development pipeline. And I think -

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: SRO's.

18 AHMED TIGANI: Oh, so the Mayor has again made  
19 clear that we're looking at Share NYC on a larger  
20 scale. We're looking to bring shared apartments and  
21 shared housing as another housing type, given the  
22 need for that housing type being demonstrated in many  
23 parts of the city. So, we have one great project on  
24 106<sup>th</sup> Street in Council Member Ayala's district.  
25 It's moving through ULURP now. We hope that is going

1  
2 to be an opportunity to learn and build from to build  
3 a broader set of shared housing projects in the city.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: What about just  
5 conversion for Midtown being zero affordable?

6 LUCY JOFFE: So, the list of questions we are  
7 trying to organize ourselves and deal with, it's  
8 going to take what – not very artfully, apologies for  
9 that. Uhm, so on your broader Manhattan questions,  
10 which cover a couple of the questions as you noted.  
11 The Commissioner said, yes. Many parts of Manhattan,  
12 though not all, are limited affordability areas.  
13 That means that they are – there is not that much  
14 low-cost housing and we are prioritizing projects in  
15 those neighborhoods in various ways, so that we can  
16 make sure that we actually get those projects over  
17 the line.

18 Some of those neighborhoods are also high-cost  
19 areas, which means they are quite expensive to build  
20 in. Most of our, as you noted, most of our  
21 affordable homes we've been able to create in high-  
22 cost areas across the city and those are different  
23 concepts and we think they're important to really  
24 diagnose each fair housing challenges a bit  
25 separately. Uhm, has been with as of right new

1  
2 construction tax incentives either independently or  
3 in coordination with subsidy. It's why it's one of  
4 our most important fair housing tools, having an as  
5 of right new tax incentive with deep affordability.

6 Uhm, we are seeking and DCP could talk more about  
7 commercial conversions. It's helpful but we are  
8 seeking to get affordability through all of our  
9 programs and that includes Manhattan. It includes  
10 the high-cost parts of Manhattan. It includes the  
11 limited affordability parts of Manhattan and we want  
12 partnership with the Council, with state electives to  
13 make sure that we have the path for doing that. Some  
14 of that relies on us. You've heard us talk a lot  
15 about how we can use either the public, private  
16 partnerships that we have. Additional subsidy  
17 differently. That allows us to then more effectively  
18 get to some of these projects we've all talked about.  
19 Whether they're the more deeply affordable projects.  
20 Whether they're the projects that are in higher cost  
21 parts of the city.

22 So, we want to work with all of you. We want to  
23 overcome the frustration we're all talking about to  
24 be able to move more projects forward and to be able  
25 to focus our resources as efficiently as possible.

3 On the City FHEPs question, uhm DSS is not here  
4 and we would generally defer to them. They are some  
5 of their policies and practices are different from  
6 Section 8. However, what we will say is that we do  
7 look very carefully at where we are able, where New  
8 Yorkers are able to lease up vouchers and we know  
9 that source of income discrimination is a rampant  
10 problem in the city and requires a robust response.  
11 And so, that is one of our primary responses right  
12 now is how do we make sure that when there are  
13 apartments available and we do believe there are.  
14 We've been up here talking about housing shortages  
15 and how expensive housing is but if those homes are  
16 not accessible to people with vouchers because the  
17 owner is not willing to take them, that's the first  
18 impediment and we could offer as much money as  
19 possible and they will not accept it. So, we need to  
20 invest in that and that's our plan, one of our plans.

21 JOHN MAGIN: Just quick follow up on the faith-  
22 based organizations aspect of your question, I know  
23 you were a leader on that when you were Borough  
24 President as well, I spoke to your taskforce there a  
25 couple times. Ahmed and I are participating very  
closely in the working group and in fact, the housing

1  
2 opportunity text amendments, among the details that  
3 you know might not have made it into the Mayor's  
4 speech but will be in the draft scope of work are  
5 several things that we're doing for faith-based  
6 organizations and campuses across the city to enable  
7 more development sites on faith-based campuses to  
8 enable conversions. This was an ask from the work  
9 group for old you know monasteries, convents you know  
10 old Catholic schools, things like that. Also, even  
11 landmark TDR liberalization.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Be careful on that one.

13 JOHN MAGIN: To enable the hundreds of religious  
14 landmarks around the city actually to use that the  
15 first time.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: No, no, no, no.

17 JOHN MAGIN: And then cleaning up on the  
18 conversions piece. We had a conversions taskforce  
19 multiagency last year based on merging out of the  
20 Council bill actually. The feasibility analysis  
21 there showed that like it's a pretty small minority  
22 of existing office buildings where conversion is  
23 feasible even in the absence of affordability  
24 requirement. Once you layer on an affordability  
25 requirement that the feasibility goes to zero

1 basically. So, we are strongly advocating for a tax  
2 incentive from the state so that we can get  
3 affordability in those conversions. Unfortunately we  
4 don't have the local authority to do that here but  
5 we're doing the regulatory piece with our local  
6 authority and then advocating strongly for the tax  
7 piece from the state so that we can get that done.

9 AHMED TIGANI: And then just on the voucher  
10 piece, for Section 8 vouchers, we have something  
11 called exception payment standards, which low  
12 affordability areas actually pay a higher, it's  
13 called half contract at housing assistance payment  
14 contract. So, we're trying to meet the need by using  
15 these exception payment standards.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Right, thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Thank you for that. We  
18 will now get questions from Council Member Bottcher  
19 followed by Council Member Rivera.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: Thank you so much  
21 Chair. Commissioner, earlier you said that the  
22 housing shortage that we're facing is a national  
23 crisis that requires a national response. I would  
24 also suggest that it's a global crisis that requires  
25 a local response. And the reason I say that is

1  
2 because the population of earth has increased from  
3 2.5 billion people in 1950 to 7.7 billion people  
4 today. The world population is expected to increase  
5 to 8.6 billion in 2030, 9.8 billion in 2050 and 11.2  
6 billion by the end of the century. Those are figures  
7 that should concern all of us a great deal.

8 What are the implications of this population  
9 growth? Not just for the planet but for New York  
10 City? But considering the planet, what are the  
11 implications for the earth for natural habitats  
12 around the world for species, for farm land? And a  
13 big question is, how will this population growth play  
14 out around the world? Will it take the form of  
15 suburban sprawl? Low density development with single  
16 family homes where personal vehicles are needed to  
17 get around. Or will that growth take the form of  
18 denser communities, multi-family homes, walkable  
19 communities with public transportation, communities  
20 fueled by green energy. And what is our role in all  
21 of this in New York City?

22 Unfortunately as a city, we've been falling short  
23 and this map says it all with whole swaths of the  
24 city barely producing any housing at all in recent  
25 decades, enforcing urban sprawl. So, today, I'm so

1  
2 proud to be part of this City Council that's stepping  
3 up as a Council and the Speakers legislation that I'm  
4 proud to Co-sponsor that says we're going to set  
5 targets, housing production targets around the city  
6 with the expectation that we're all going to have to  
7 produce our share of housing. So, today the City  
8 Council is stepping up. We're going to set targets  
9 for housing production. My question is, how will you  
10 HPD meet these targets? And we're setting targets  
11 we're looking at how long these projects are taking.  
12 The sluggishness of housing development even when it  
13 is allowed. How are you going to step up and help  
14 address this crisis?

15 ADOLFO CARRION: Thank you Council Member. You  
16 bring up some very important questions that we have  
17 to tackle as a global community, let alone as a  
18 nation and a city. The premise of your questions  
19 lead to smart cities, efficiency, efficient resource,  
20 management, feeding the globe, housing the globe.  
21 How do we do it? What's the least impactful way and  
22 how do local governments and municipalities then sort  
23 of unroll that or unleash that or allow it to happen  
24 the smart way. And I'll suggest that uhm, the Mayor  
25 has taken and this Administration has taken on that

1 challenge with the City of Yes for Housing  
2 Opportunity, City of Yes for Sustainability, City of  
3 Yes for doing business in smarter ways in this town.  
4 And we have a number of initiatives that address  
5 those questions. The role we play is to partner with  
6 host communities in the fence that we're responsible  
7 for.

8  
9 We need hundreds of thousands of units. They  
10 will be stacked vertically for the most part. They  
11 ought to be and I know this is a sort of a City  
12 Planning conversation. I tell my folks we're a  
13 planning agency. You know we go into an area like at  
14 388 Hudson in the West Village that you represent and  
15 we call the question, what ought to be here? We have  
16 a city resource of land that's super valuable in a  
17 high cost, very expensive real estate market and we  
18 have an opportunity to create affordable housing  
19 vertically, take advantage of the surroundings, marry  
20 the school, marry the services, marry the open space.  
21 You said yes. The Borough President said yes. The  
22 Community Board said yes. That host community is  
23 stepping up and that's going to be 100 percent  
24 affordable housing and it's going to be lots of  
25 units. And you know and I know I'm taking just a tad

1 too much time but uhm, when the host community said  
2 to us, you came to us with a plan. It's not enough.  
3 We need more affordable housing. We were so  
4 encouraged and we hope to partner with all of the  
5 members in this body, all 51 in every corner of the  
6 city to identify those opportunities and to roll out  
7 that City of Yes carpet that allows us to get there.  
8 Thank you.  
9

10 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Thank you. Uhm, thank  
11 you Council Member. Before we go onto the next  
12 Council Member, when I ask questions about staffing  
13 that you utilize for closing of projects. Uhm,  
14 Commissioner, you're responsible for the closing of  
15 projects, your division?

16 KIM DARGA: Yes, I am.

17 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Okay, how many staffers  
18 do you have? How many staffers do you have and how  
19 many vacancies do you have just for the closing of  
20 projects?

21 KIM DARGA: We have a vacancy rate of 25 percent.  
22 So, it's about 100 vacancies currently. That's down  
23 from - I will say, it is down from where we were a  
24 few months ago for a variety of reasons. OMB I think  
25 worked with city agencies to try to figure out how to

1 streamline process. It made a big difference for us.  
2  
3 The collective bargaining contract with DC37  
4 certainly we think has really helped from a  
5 recruitment and a retention perspective, and we have  
6 been basically aggressively attending hiring fairs.  
7 But the challenge for us is not over yet.

8 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: So, you're down 100. At  
9 full capacity, full staffing, what would the number  
10 be?

11 KIM DARGA: About 400.

12 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: 400, so you're down.  
13 Okay, so you're down 100. Uhm, what's your retention  
14 rate with these staffers?

15 KIM DARGA: We - I don't have that with me today  
16 but we - our attrition rate has dropped a lot. So,  
17 we've during the early years of the pandemic, we,  
18 like I think many employers, private, public, uhm had  
19 really significant turnover. That has really slowed  
20 and I think in large degree because of the collective  
21 bargaining efforts. I also would say it's a little  
22 bit of like, you know we have to set aggressive but  
23 realistic goals for our staff and I think we have  
24 really tried to figure out how far we can push but  
25 also make sure that our staff at the end of the day

1  
2 can achieve those goals. And I know our First Deputy  
3 Commissioner who oversees you know the HR and Budget  
4 situation more generally for the agency may be able  
5 to speak—

6 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: What's the because I want  
7 to get to the other Council Members. What's the  
8 starting salary for these staffers in this division?

9 KIM DARGA: So, uhm a Project Manager you'll love  
10 this. I started at HPD a long time ago. Now,  
11 actually a decade and a half ago and our starting  
12 salary was about \$60,000, \$65,000 for Project Manager  
13 until very recently, it was still \$60,000 to \$65,000  
14 for a Project Manager.

15 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: What is it now starting  
16 salary?

17 KIM DARGA: We just raised it to \$77,000. The  
18 starting and I just want to be clear, these are staff  
19 that have both masters, usually have master's degrees  
20 in business, public policy, urban planning. A number  
21 of other professional fields and you know so we've  
22 looked at starting salaries for staff for people that  
23 are leaving those degree programs to figure out what  
24 would be competitive. We're trying to get closer to  
25 competitive salaries.

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: The salary is low. We  
3 have to help you and see how we increase those  
4 salaries. Uhm, you know I, in speaking you know in  
5 the development world, you know speaking to HPD,  
6 speaking to private developers, speaking to former  
7 employees of HPD that are now in the private sector,  
8 you know they're making two to three, four times more  
9 than what they were making at HPD with the wealth of  
10 knowledge that they receive from HPD to maneuver the  
11 system to close on projects uhm and I want to help  
12 you. Figure out how we can help you in terms of that  
13 retention rate, decreasing it so that you can have  
14 staff so we can close on these projects.

15 ADOLFO CARRION: Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Uhm, we're going to hear  
17 from Council Member Rivera followed by Council Member  
18 Brooks-Powers, Avilés and then Feliz.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: Thank you Mr. Chair. I  
20 agree, you know working in government in public  
21 service is such a privilege. You know when you look  
22 at July numbers and the average rent in Manhattan is  
23 \$5,500 and you're making \$77,000, it's really, really  
24 tough but I just want to say it is a privilege to  
25 work in government with all of you, so thank you.

1  
2 ADOLFO CARRION: Thank you.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: Alright, so in your new  
4 homes development number that you all have cited  
5 multiple times, you include homes that have been  
6 preserved, fixed and created. Those were words that  
7 you all used. So, it includes and I'm building on  
8 Chair Sanchez's question, that does include RAD/PACT  
9 conversions right? In things that are NYCHA related?

10 ADOLFO CARRION: About 2,600 units of that. Just  
11 shy of 2,600 units are RAD/PACT related. The balance  
12 24,060 or so, are financed, 5149 new construction  
13 preservation.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: Would it include a place  
15 like Stuy Town and the preservation efforts that were  
16 just included?

17 KIM DARGA: When we financed Stuy or HDC I guess  
18 specifically financed Stuyvesant Town, back in like  
19 2015, 2016, that was counted as a preservation  
20 project.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: I just ask because some  
22 of these preservation projects and some of these  
23 conversions are in actually permanently affordable.  
24 They'll be you know affordable for 25, 30 years. And  
25 so, you know that creates a problem in itself but I

1 just want to move on. What are you counting as  
2 fixed? Like what's an example of something that was  
3 fixed? You use that word.

4  
5 ADOLFO CARRION: You want to talk a little bit  
6 about preservation.

7 KIM DARGA: So, we have a huge range of  
8 preservation programs that assist everything from you  
9 know single family property owner to very large  
10 multi-family like Stuyvesant Town and we assist  
11 properties in a variety of ways. So, fixed can be  
12 specific to the property, right. So, that's  
13 everything from helping make sure and especially in  
14 this climate, projects can cover their expenses. So  
15 we mentioned earlier Article 11. We have a couple  
16 property tax exemptions that are available for  
17 affordable housing projects. We also help with  
18 renovations and that's one of the biggest things that  
19 we do and we've seen increasing need over the last  
20 couple years as operating costs have gone up  
21 including maintenance costs and the cost of debt has  
22 gone up where applicants are increasingly seeking HPD  
23 help for renovations and repairs.

24 Those are really the two big interventions.  
25 There are certainly other strategies that we will

1  
2 deploy on a project-by-project basis including  
3 bringing in rental assistance, project based rental  
4 assistance. But the two biggest interventions are  
5 property tax exemptions and loans for capital  
6 improvements.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: And I thank you for that  
8 because I know we've worked on some HCFC projects in  
9 my own district and that's really important to  
10 keeping long term residents in place. So, I'll just  
11 ask my two questions briefly. Thank you for thanking  
12 us for Reso. A money. I think we've all rehashed  
13 here today the frustrations because the delays, you  
14 know they actually decrease the value of the money,  
15 right. Every year that passes, that \$500 K that we  
16 put towards an affordable housing project just  
17 becomes less valuable.

18 And so you said you want to widen the funnel for  
19 the 750 projects in the pipeline, so how are you  
20 doing that? I mean really briefly because I feel  
21 like we've spoken like very general level and  
22 specifically you mentioned prioritizing not for  
23 profit developers and at the last Housing and  
24 Buildings hearing, Deputy Commissioner Tigani, Tigani  
25 with a hard G, is that right? Explained - it's

1  
2 alright, they call me Carolina all the time. So,  
3 Deputy Commissioner Tigani explained that there's a  
4 taskforce looking at the contracting process for  
5 housing development specifically in regards to CLT's  
6 and nonprofits and how to streamline that process.  
7 So, what has been found so far? Is the  
8 Administration planning to create new community land  
9 trust and what has the Administration done to support  
10 CLT's?

11 And my last question is really numbers. You  
12 mentioned rezoning in a transit rich area in my  
13 district. I think everybody's every familiar from  
14 2021 that included SoHo and NoHo. That was intended  
15 to maximize the creation of new affordable housing  
16 without displacing the long-term residents there. Do  
17 you have an update on new projects that will include  
18 affordable housing in that area in terms of both  
19 total units in the pipeline, estimated units within  
20 the next five years and how many resident's were  
21 actually preserved in the rezoning? Thank you very  
22 much.

23 KIM DARGA: Maybe I can start and then Ahmed do  
24 you want to jump in too? Yeah, so just one quick  
25 note. So, just nonprofit CLT's, uhm, so we have a

1 range of tools that are specifically designed to  
2 support and allow kind of – or provide additional  
3 support for nonprofits. And I would say also  
4 minority women businesses. That includes the  
5 acquisition fund. It includes the equitable  
6 ownership requirement that we now have in RFP sites.  
7 And I would also just state that CLT's are a  
8 nonprofit are formed as nonprofit entities and so  
9 they have access to those tools as well.  
10

11 One of the biggest challenges that we had and I  
12 think when we had a hearing in the spring, this was  
13 one of the issues. Is that our loan authorities do  
14 not, still do not but we're getting over that hump,  
15 allow us to provide assistance for properties on  
16 ground leases. And so the State Legislature did pass  
17 legislation that changes that. We're still waiting  
18 for the governor to sign that legislation but we all,  
19 I think, expect that will be soon and that will  
20 remove one of the big hurtles that we've had in  
21 supporting CLT's specifically, which are structured  
22 on ground leases.

23 Ahmed, I think –

24 AHMED TIGANI: Yeah, I'm trying to remember the  
25 actual conversation. There was questions from even

1  
2 the hearing before that from Council Member Caban. I  
3 see this came up again when it came to discretionary  
4 dollars that went to nonprofits. In particular,  
5 we're trying to look at how that moves through the  
6 process faster. So, we're looking at both the  
7 responsible determination even for the back, the  
8 scope of work and trying to I guess frame that out as  
9 templates, so that we're not recreating the wheel  
10 every time and trying to get them to discretionary  
11 dollars faster.

12 In addition, just with CLT's and development, we  
13 do have a point team, an executive director for  
14 Community Land Trust. We work with them both on the  
15 development side. We are working with them both on  
16 the contracting side to make sure that the money that  
17 they're getting for their offices is coming quickly  
18 because that's what discretionary dollars do and that  
19 they have opportunities in our projects, including  
20 calling out community engagement as preference in our  
21 RFP's.

22 ADOLFO CARRION: Let me just take this  
23 opportunity for a commercial break and to engage you  
24 as our business partner, if you will. Uhm, we're  
25 waiting - we were fortunate to get two of our

1 legislative requests through. One was J51, which is  
2 all about preservation and that's the tax incentive  
3 that Kim was talking about. To all of the people in  
4 this body who said yes and advocated for that, thank  
5 you because it got through. And the Housing  
6 Affordability Resiliency, Energy and Efficiency  
7 Improvement Act, which expanded our lending authority  
8 and it allows us now to work with Community Land  
9 Trusts. But Kim mentioned it earlier, I want to be  
10 seat you to send a message tother with us, the  
11 governor, to sign the bill. I know that probably is  
12 awkward what I just said but we need it. We need to  
13 hurry up and get this out of the gate and she's been  
14 a terrific partner Governor Hochul and now we just  
15 need her to sign the bills.

17 LUCY JOFFE: If I could follow up. You said what  
18 are the tools that we need that allow us to expand  
19 the funnel? Some of these are things that we've  
20 mentioned but we need our ability to develop more, in  
21 particular new construction housing is not just based  
22 on the amount that the city puts in but a lot of it  
23 is based on the amount of low-income housing tax  
24 credits we have, as Deputy Commissioner Darga  
25 explained. So, we have been advocating at the

1  
2 federal level for changes that will allow the city to  
3 actually better capitalize on the resources we have  
4 and actually use more.

5 So, that's the work at the federal level. At the  
6 state level and at the local level, there are zoning  
7 changes and we've talked a lot about as of right new  
8 construction tax incentives with deep affordability.  
9 All of these are things that allow us to stretch our  
10 resources further because if we get back to where we  
11 started at the beginning of this, when we talk about  
12 a moonshot goal of 500,000 units or homes, we're  
13 talking about a lot and not something we're going to  
14 be able to do at the rate that we can do it alone.  
15 And so we need partnership at all of these levels and  
16 with communities to recognize that we need housing of  
17 all types in all communities.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: I know you want us to be  
19 partners, you've said it multiple times. I don't  
20 think we're here asking you these questions if we  
21 don't want to be your partner. So, having said that,  
22 we would love to advocate; you know how much the  
23 state legislatures love when we tell them what to do.  
24 But we're definitely going to be a partner on that.

1  
2 So, if you could just briefly, my commercial  
3 break is to advocate for a piece of land – it was  
4 previously seen Emeric’s Church on Avenue D and it’s  
5 Archdiocese property. It’s really important that we  
6 develop that with as much affordable housing, low-  
7 income housing as possible. So I just want to make  
8 sure we move that along because I don’t have much  
9 time and just the numbers for the SoHo NoHo rezoning.  
10 That was my last question and I want to thank the  
11 Chair for being so gracious.

12 LUCY JOFFE: So, we can get back to you on the  
13 numbers for SoHo NoHo rezoning. What we’ve seen is  
14 that in the neighborhood wide rezonings, it does take  
15 a bit longer for units to be proposed in buildings,  
16 projects to be proposed because they’re not  
17 necessarily in the pipeline or in development yet at  
18 the time of the rezoning. So, this is some of the  
19 trend that we’ve seen. But we do expect that we will  
20 start to get more affordable homes in those  
21 neighborhoods soon.

22 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Thank you Council Member.  
23 We will hear next from Council Member Brooks-Powers  
24 followed by Council Member Avilés and Council Member  
25 Feliz.

1 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you Chairs.

2 Uhm, a few questions. I want to know if you could  
3 first walk us through the Administrations goals to  
4 expand availability of home ownership opportunities,  
5 especially in lower income areas and communities of  
6 color. I often hear the conversation about building  
7 housing and what that housing has largely been has  
8 been one type of housing, which is low-income rental  
9 properties.  
10

11 And there are communities like the one that I  
12 represent that have a high desire and interest to  
13 expand homeownership opportunities, especially in  
14 light of the flight of Black New Yorkers leaving New  
15 York City largely being priced out of New York City.

16 Also, I want to touch briefly on two programs:  
17 Home Fix and Home First. On Home First, per HPD's  
18 Where We Live Progress Report released earlier this  
19 year, the city expanded the program to offer first  
20 time homebuyers up to \$100,000 in down payment  
21 assistance. However, from October 2021 to December  
22 2022, just 120 households received assistance from  
23 Home First. What efforts are being made to publicize  
24 the Home First program? Does the Administration hope  
25 to expand the number of users of this program and if

1 so, what does that look like and on Home Fix, HPD  
2 launched a program in 2019 to fund home repairs for  
3 low income, low- and moderate-income homeowners  
4 repairs so that they can remain safe in their homes.  
5

6 But as of earlier this year, the program had only  
7 served 94 homeowners. There are more than one  
8 million owner occupied units in the city. And I know  
9 my office gets a lot of calls, especially from  
10 seniors needing this resource. So, what efforts are  
11 being made to publicize the Home Fix program and does  
12 the Administration hope to expand the number of users  
13 of this program? And I'd like to know exactly how  
14 the Administration plans to do so.

15 ADOLFO CARRION: Thank you Council Member. I'll  
16 just open up with this comment and then pass it over  
17 to Deputy Commissioner Darga who administers this  
18 basket of programs. Homeownership is one of the  
19 suite of opportunities right and many opportunities  
20 that we offer New Yorkers to have access to fair  
21 housing in many neighborhoods across the city. All  
22 of the work we do and when the Speaker offered her  
23 comments, you know I responded to those. All of the  
24 work we do is wrapped in the pursuit of creating a  
25 city of opportunity for everyone, right? We're

1 charged in making sure that the city is affordable.

2 That those opportunities are fair and touch every

3 need. The overwhelming need that we answer is

4 affordable rental housing but we also have programs

5 that offer affordable homeownership opportunities and

6 opening the door to create multigenerational wealth

7 for families and an opportunity to own a piece of

8 real estate.

9  
10 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: I personally feel

11 that there has been an effort by the agency to move

12 away from affordable homeownership opportunities.

13 ADOLFO CARRION: I will say this and then I'll

14 pass it to the Deputy Commissioner but the Mayor in

15 the last cycle made one of the largest investments in

16 homeownership programming and you know you'll hear

17 about the downpayment assistance program growing.

18 The Home Fix growing, outreach to homeowners, a

19 homeowner help desk growing and expanded citywide.

20 So, the commitment is there and maybe you can give

21 some texture to that.

22 KIM DARGA: Sure, so uhm, a couple things. So,

23 Home First, as you noted we did increase the amount

24 from \$40,000 to \$100,000 and we also just increased

25 the funding. So, we actually rely on federal home

1 funds to administer that program. And so, we did go  
2 through the process of expanding the amount of home  
3 funding that we're putting in, so that we can serve  
4 more homeowners. This is the first year that that's  
5 happening, so we would expect some ramp up over the  
6 next couple years.  
7

8 Second, we are in the process of identifying  
9 another servicer for the program. So, that there are  
10 a couple organizations out there that can work with  
11 potential applicants. And third, we are looking to  
12 for the first time and this is also dependent on our  
13 loan authority that we talked about a minute ago,  
14 expand the program potentially to moderate income  
15 homeowners. So, between 80 and 120 percent AMI.  
16 It's exclusively been available to households under  
17 80 percent AMI historically.

18 So, those are three things that we're doing in  
19 order to expand capacity there. It isn't where we  
20 want it to be yet. It's going to take us a little  
21 bit longer but we're certainly on that path.

22 Home Fix, also a really critical program. We  
23 first launched -

24 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: Sorry before you  
25 move on to Home Fix. How, like what efforts are

1  
2 being made to publicize that program? I know you  
3 said you want to get like new partners but like in  
4 terms of marketing, is there anything being done like  
5 that in terms of you know the Mayor has a radio  
6 program each week that he's on, is he talking about  
7 that? Are you putting it in ethnic newspapers?  
8 Like, what is, what is the grassroots effort to get  
9 that information out from the Administration?

10 KIM DARGA: That is a great question and uhm, I  
11 think the problem historically has been we've had one  
12 servicer and limited funding and so, we have not  
13 really done that. As we identify a second servicer  
14 and we have more funding available, I think we can  
15 talk about how to increase marketing so that it is  
16 more broadly known. But we haven't, we just haven't  
17 had enough capacity to really go.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: I encourage you to  
19 look at earned media too. Like writing and op ed,  
20 doing press releases around that. You know that's a  
21 start as well.

22 KIM DARGA: Right, yup, I love that suggestion.

23 AHMED TIGANI: Just to add very quick, so that's  
24 exactly the direction that we want to do more of.  
25 So, when we launched - when we celebrated the

1  
2 Homeowner Help Desk and then we celebrated the  
3 announcement of the Homeowner Manual that was  
4 released last year, that came with a number of weeks  
5 of earned media placements in ethic media.

6 We also since then have counted a lot on the  
7 promotional and marketing ability of the dozen or so  
8 CBO's we work with as part of the Homeowner Help  
9 Desk. Again, completely aligned. We need to do  
10 more. We need to put more muscle behind it but right  
11 now, we have been doing op ed's. We have been  
12 working with CBO's. I think we do need to talk more  
13 about getting to the next level but with the launch  
14 of the Homeowner Help Desk citywide, we'll have a  
15 better platform to do that.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: And I encourage  
17 you to also leverage social media and the Council  
18 Members. Like if you create the graphics, I'll post  
19 it every other day on my social media platforms as  
20 well because I truly think it's important that people  
21 know that this is available. Because often times the  
22 hurdle to homeownership is that downpayment because  
23 the mortgage is often cheaper than the rent.

24 KIM DARGA: Yeah, agreed.

25 ADOLFO CARRION: We welcome the opportunity.

3 KIM DARGA: I do want to just really quickly  
4 speak to Home Fix. So, we initially funded that. It  
5 is a three-year program. We relied on a combination  
6 of some city funding with a lot of non-city funding  
7 and uhm, as the Commissioner mentioned, the historic  
8 investment last year was in three areas. The  
9 Homeowner Help Desk, the Technical Assistance piece  
10 that uhm, we just talked about, Home First expansion.  
11 The final part was Home Fix, the home repair program.  
12 We're in a transitional moment right now, so the  
13 original three-year program we funded so far a little  
14 over 200 repair loans. We expect the new program  
15 once it's up and running next year. We're in the  
16 procurement process right now. We'll serve more than  
17 that annually.

18 So, that funding, like I said, we're just in the  
19 procurement process. It will take us a few more  
20 months to get it up and running.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: Uhm, thank you.  
22 Sorry, go ahead.

23 LUCY JOFFE: I just also wanted to note that we  
24 talk a lot in Fair Housing about the difficult policy  
25 balance and sometimes that policy balance is both  
making sure that we're making homeownership

1  
2 opportunities widely available to more residents  
3 while also making sure that every community has  
4 rental housing. So, if there isn't, if there are  
5 communities where there isn't low cost and affordable  
6 rental housing, that also is going to be a priority  
7 because the overwhelming majority of New Yorkers and  
8 those who are experiencing significant housing  
9 instability are looking for rental housing. And so,  
10 we want to continue to balance that and make sure  
11 that we're getting at least some rental housing in  
12 all of the districts across the city.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: I will say I  
14 somewhat agree with the statement you made because  
15 yes, you do need a mixture in terms of the type of  
16 housing stock that you do have. But when you look at  
17 for example Council District 31, where we have  
18 significant low-income rentals that have been built  
19 and that is in the pipeline to be built and then  
20 compare it in terms of homeownership opportunities.  
21 Ocean Crest, which we were able to achieve more  
22 recently, is the first time in about 15 years that  
23 the agency has developed affordable homeownership in  
24 that district. But you have several thousands of new  
25 low-income rentals that are being built there but I

1  
2 also think we need to talk about policy. You have  
3 to, when you engage with the different districts,  
4 work with the members in terms of what we see that  
5 our community is advocating for. Often times I feel  
6 like we're being forced into taking one or not having  
7 anything at all when the goal is to build housing but  
8 it's to build housing that the local community - to  
9 be able to keep those folks in that community also.  
10 So, I think that that needs to be prioritized in the  
11 policy that you're doing. Thank you Chairs for the  
12 opportunity.

13 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Thank you Council Member.  
14 We will now hear from Council Member Avilés followed  
15 by Council Member Feliz.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILES: Great, thank you Chairs  
17 for this important hearing and you know want to thank  
18 all the public servants at this table and that work  
19 in your agencies every day on this very critical  
20 issue.

21 You know, while I really appreciate the noble  
22 words of opportunity and fairness, and all the things  
23 that you mention that are part of this plan, we have  
24 to acknowledge that in a capitalist system that  
25 commodifies housing. These principles are constantly

1  
2 undermined, right towards the work that we're seeing  
3 that we proprot to move towards. And in fact, under  
4 the guides of - I have so many questions. Under the  
5 guides of the tools right, I think we often feel  
6 because we are in this crisis that all these tools  
7 clearly have limitations and often see like why are  
8 they like functioning to the maximum capacity that we  
9 have, which is part of the challenge. So, under that  
10 guides I was curious about a couple of things. When  
11 we see projects that are coming for ULURP right, the  
12 25 percent MIH tool is woefully just inadequate. And  
13 while we understood back in the day when it was  
14 introduced, it was revolutionary oh my God, you  
15 actually have to produce some kind of affordable  
16 housing.

17 It is not materializing years later the levels of  
18 low-income housing that we need. Are you considering  
19 revising the MIH tools to increase that percentage?  
20 Why? Why not? Uhm, and also in terms of other  
21 tools, what I don't see and I'd love to hear more  
22 about is where our seniors fall? This is my greatest  
23 heartbreak every single day in my office is to have  
24 seniors who have no place to go. Renting single  
25 rooms in homes and just at the brink of displacement

1  
2 and I have no tool other than to tell them Housing  
3 Connect, which they do not understand and often  
4 they're not even qualified for what's listed on  
5 Housing Connect.

6 I'd like to hear more about what the agencies are  
7 doing specifically around income source  
8 discrimination. We write letters all the time to  
9 tell landlords, you can't do that, it's against the  
10 law and they laugh at me and we still have residents  
11 we can't support.

12 So, what exactly does increased law enforcement  
13 look like? Increased enforcement around this issue  
14 look like? And uhm, I'd also like to know if uhm  
15 given under the guides again of tools, if the  
16 agencies and the Administration is supportive of  
17 using of a public banking, of public bank right?  
18 Under the guides of using New York City's most  
19 formattable public deposits and using it for the  
20 things to finance and capitalize the things that we  
21 need in the city rather than allowing cooperations to  
22 both not only make money off of our money but then  
23 tell us whether or not what we can use it for.

24 So, I'd love to know whether the Administration  
25 is truly going to consider and put forward some heft

1  
2 around using our deposits for our good, public  
3 resources for public good. I'll leave it at that.

4 ADOLFO CARRION: Just little things.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILES: Oh and NYCHA and so much  
6 conversation about NYCHA. The last one to add. Uhm,  
7 Council Member Brewer mentioned I guess the noble  
8 developments and I think Commissioner Tigani, you,  
9 you, yeah, if you could talk specifically more about  
10 what you are suggesting there and why HPD isn't  
11 throwing down on the 6,500 vacant units that are  
12 sitting in NYCHA because it effects the whole system.  
13 It is not just a NYCHA problem, it is a New York City  
14 problem. Thank you.

15 So, let me just take sort of a top line on the  
16 multipronged approach and the multiple tools that we  
17 need and you're right, we are operating in a  
18 capitalist system and those are sort of the laws of  
19 gravity that we operate in to try to - and to manage  
20 those tensions to finance public interest projects  
21 that deal with large societal issues.

22 On the MIH tool, it has been successful and  
23 always can be more successful. That mandatory and  
24 inclusionary housing lives with and rides with a new  
25 construction tax incentive that invites partners to

1 invest in the what we characterize here as an  
2 overwhelming housing need in New York City right.  
3 And we have an incredible supply problem that needs  
4 to be addressed. The city's role is somewhat limited  
5 in that. I mean, HPD is a thin slice of a very large  
6 market. So, what we try to do is to take this  
7 multipronged approach and apply tools to address that  
8 need and my colleagues can add a lot of texture to  
9 that. I want to go to the older adults and we can  
10 come back to the tools but on the older adults, I  
11 just want to say for purposes of some of sort of the  
12 public conversation, we have a number of programs to  
13 address older adult housing needs and some of them  
14 are historically targeted. And we've dedicated  
15 buildings to older adults but the biggest opportunity  
16 that we have to address the need for affordable,  
17 stable, safe, healthy housing for older adults, older  
18 New Yorkers, is preservation and allowing them to age  
19 in place in a healthy way whether it's in the old  
20 housing stock that gets improved and modernized and  
21 made sustainable or in our new development and the  
22 team can talk a little bit about the programs and how  
23 we address that.  
24

1  
2 I'll finish with this and then you guys can take  
3 the rest. We created as an administration an older  
4 adult interagency working group. Commissioner  
5 Lorraine Cortès-Vázquez, Chairs it. I Co-Chair it  
6 with other agencies and we're coming to the table  
7 with additional solutions where how do we allow older  
8 New Yorkers to age in place in a healthy way and we  
9 as public agencies to sustain that and to support  
10 that.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILES: I certainly believe in  
12 aging in place nevertheless in a gentrifying  
13 community, which I represent. They are pushed from  
14 their apartments into now single rooms and then with  
15 no other place to go. So, I'd love to see the city  
16 include in its toolbox the same we have set asides  
17 for homeless, for unhoused New Yorkers where we're  
18 building in every development units for seniors as  
19 well, as just a matter of practice.

20 AHMED TIGANI: So, just on the lottery piece, I  
21 think would like to offline with your office about  
22 just the navigation with Housing Connect for seniors.  
23 We can work with you and the local housing ambassador  
24 to make sure the right communication is there.  
25 Certainly because there are many seniors that we see

1  
2 come through and qualify. And again for all our  
3 developments, there is an opportunity for seniors  
4 since we are meeting both in senior specific  
5 buildings and in multifamily housing. We are both in  
6 the designing of the building and the execution of  
7 the marketing and the lottery. We're trying to make  
8 sure that there are opportunities for seniors.

9 On the NYCHA question that Council Member Brewer  
10 brought up, so it's part of a 2007 Hudson Yards area  
11 rezoning. There was a commitment to finish off the  
12 urban renewal large scale plan for what is now known  
13 as Harborview, which is part of the Amsterdam houses  
14 broader development. 150 units of affordable housing  
15 was to be built on phase three. The affordable  
16 housing commitment is there. I defer to NYCHA on  
17 questions about their development plan and HPD is  
18 still ready and there and we will work together to  
19 address that project when the appropriate time comes.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILES: I'm sorry, so NYCHA is  
21 the developer of the affordable housing?

22 AHMED TIGANI: The land is NYCHA land. It is  
23 part of the Harborview footprint. The proposal is to  
24 build a 100 percent affordable project on that  
25 development. 150 units of housing is the estimated

1  
2 total. So, since it's NYCHA land, we would defer to  
3 NYCHA but likely in the past, it's gone through an  
4 RFP to solicit a developer who would build and  
5 fulfill both that in the commitments collected from  
6 the community and from NYCHA.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILES: Alright, I'll follow up  
8 with you.

9 ADOLFO CARRION: And I know you know you've run  
10 out of time and I wish we could spend so much more  
11 time talking through some of these important issues  
12 but I just want to say on the public bank issue, I  
13 would defer to Department of Finance and you probably  
14 should have you know an extensive discussion with  
15 them.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILES: Do you support the idea  
17 and principle?

18 ADOLFO CARRION: I don't really understand. I  
19 would like to see what you're talking about.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILES: We do have another, it's  
21 basically a bank where we use our deposits at our,  
22 where we determine where we use our deposit as  
23 opposed to giving it to JP Morgan Chase, she tells us  
24 how to use our money and make money off of us. There  
25

1  
2 is one in the country and there are many variations  
3 of public banking institutions but thank you.

4 ADOLFO CARRION: Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Thank you Council Member.  
6 Now we will have Council Member Feliz.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER FELIZ: Thank you. I want to  
8 start by thanking Speaker Adrienne Adams and Chair  
9 Salamanca for two very important housing bills before  
10 this Committee today. When we're talking about  
11 housing, we're talking about obviously an affordable  
12 housing crisis but when we're talking about housing  
13 in the City of New York, we're also talking about one  
14 of the most racially and economically segregated  
15 housing markets in the entire country.

16 And to touch on one point that was mentioned  
17 earlier, about high end low opportunity  
18 neighborhoods, here in the city and unfortunately  
19 many other cities, you can tell the level of  
20 opportunity one will have based on the neighborhood  
21 that you live in. You can tell the type of schools  
22 you'll have access to, the type of jobs you'll have  
23 access to, the air that you'll be breathing, all  
24 based on the neighborhood that you live in.

3 We have a housing crisis and it seems like – it  
4 seems like we're only building affordable housing in  
5 the poorest communities in the City of New York and  
6 this is not a theory, this is not an argument. You  
7 could actually tell based on this map that we all  
8 have in front of us. So, I think we need to take  
9 steps to make sure that every single community is  
10 building, not only the low-income communities.

11 So, I have a few questions on that topic. Uhm,  
12 are there any proactive steps that HPD takes to  
13 ensure that affordable housing is built in areas that  
14 haven't been building affordable housing? And I know  
15 earlier you mentioned giving some projects some  
16 priority, so can you elaborate on that and any other  
17 steps that you take?

18 ADOLFO CARRION: Let me just say your remarks,  
19 amen.

20 KIM DARGA: Yes.

21 ADOLFO CARRION: We're on the same page and  
22 that's why you know the conversation about the City  
23 of Yes, creating a city of housing opportunity across  
24 the entire landscape is important and we're excited  
25 about it and folks at this desk work every day to  
extend the reach of affordability and fair housing

1  
2 opportunity and choice in every neighborhood of the  
3 city and we could speak to that.

4 KIM DARGA: Yeah, maybe I could talk about some  
5 of the things that we - so, just as the Commissioner  
6 said, yes, 100 percent agree and I think one of the  
7 things that is most important for all of us is that  
8 we all have to make - take deliberate action right to  
9 actually change the status quo. If we don't actually  
10 take deliberate action, the same things will continue  
11 to happen.

12 So, some of the things that we've done, we talked  
13 a few minutes ago about homeownership. We changed  
14 the amount of assistance available for first time  
15 homebuyers from 40 to 100,000 in order to allow New  
16 Yorkers to buy in more parts of the city. We know  
17 that average home price is over \$700,000 depending on  
18 where you are and so, without the additional  
19 assistance, it would really limit options. So, that  
20 is one deliberate decision. In the new construction  
21 world as I mentioned off and on in the last couple  
22 hours, we use low-income housing tax credits to  
23 basically finance every single new construction  
24 project that we build. The one's that are subsidized  
25 by the city, not the as of right.

3 Because of those subsidized projects, we, because  
4 we use tax credits, we have scoring criteria and one  
5 of the things that we have changed is in the scoring  
6 criteria. We now have a bucket specifically for  
7 limited affordability areas. So, we're taking all of  
8 these like little steps in a bunch of places that add  
9 up. And RFP's, we specifically looked at what we -  
10 we don't actually have a lot of public sites left but  
11 we certainly have looked pretty hard at those public  
12 sites to try to figure out where we have not been  
13 able to provide as much affordable housing and we are  
14 advancing those projects as soon as we possibly can.

15 So, it's these decisions in all of the different  
16 pieces of our work that we hope add up to a bigger  
17 picture but we really do need - and I know we talked  
18 about the partnership but it's everything from you  
19 know Council and land use actions to the state  
20 legislature and the tools that we have the authority  
21 to use and that allow us to work in different types  
22 of communities the City of Yes and the Zoning Text  
23 Amendment that builds up to actually provide a  
24 framework that it will allow us to actually be able  
25 to provide housing choice in different communities of  
New York City.

1  
2 So, those are some discrete actions but we could  
3 talk more. Go ahead, sorry.

4 AHMED TIGANI: I was just going to say that you  
5 asked for examples, so just when we were able to  
6 actually reconstitute the predevelopment team and get  
7 back on the ground with RFP's. The areas that we  
8 started off with was Jersey Street in Staten Island  
9 where we need more affordable housing. 388 Hudson in  
10 the west side of Manhattan where it's low  
11 affordability and we need more housing. 280 Burgan  
12 in downtown Brooklyn where we need more housing.  
13 It's low affordability and building on the work of  
14 the Gowanus rezoning.

15 So, we are certainly putting our resources are  
16 time into the areas that you suggested, we need to  
17 resources and time.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER FELIZ: Yeah and just curious, how  
19 effective have those steps been in terms of bringing  
20 affordable housing to those areas that haven't been?

21 KIM DARGA: Yeah, I would just for a minute just  
22 say that you know we've looked; we just started  
23 tracking our affordable housing production in limited  
24 affordability areas. It's actually a new metric that  
25 we added to the Mayor's Management Report, so we you

1  
2 can see how we're doing over time. Uhm, we have been  
3 at about ten percent. There was a slight uptick this  
4 year and so, right now, that's where we are. And so,  
5 we're going to continue to track progress. You know  
6 we aren't just considered with limited affordability  
7 areas. There's certainly other housing investments,  
8 investments that we think are important. We talked  
9 about anti-displacement. We talked about  
10 preservation work.

11 So, that's certainly not our only focus but  
12 because investing in those areas does take really  
13 deliberate concrete action, that is one metric that  
14 we are trying to track more transparently.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER FELIZ: Okay and final question,  
16 based on the system that we currently have, including  
17 those changes that you just mentioned that were  
18 recently made, how much progress can we expect to  
19 make let's say in the next five, ten years? Can we  
20 expect progress and do you think that's efficient  
21 progress on the issue of racial and economic  
22 inclusion in housing?

23 LUCY JOFFE: Thank you for that question. We  
24 think it depends on a lot of factors. Uhm, the  
25 Commissioner referred to HPD slice as a small part of

1  
2 all of this and it's an important piece but uhm, I've  
3 mentioned it but I'm going to mention it again, we  
4 need partnership from the Council to help us overcome  
5 some of the barriers that we have historically  
6 experienced in building in some of these areas.  
7 That's why some of these areas are limited  
8 affordability areas. Sometimes it's because they are  
9 very expensive and it takes more resources and  
10 sometimes it's not and it's just been hard for us to  
11 build.

12 And so, in addition to thinking about targets and  
13 overcoming these and building more, we need to  
14 overcome some of the obstacles that are preventing us  
15 from building there in the first place. A major step  
16 is the City of Yes for Housing Opportunity. We want  
17 to work collectively to pass and move those zoning  
18 text amendments forward. That's one way that we'll  
19 be able to do more in areas where we haven't been  
20 able to do it so far. And we think that with those  
21 steps and working together and the Speaker's bill is  
22 something we look forward to working with all of you  
23 on, then we can move forward against these  
24 challenges.

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER FELIZ: Alright, thank you very  
3 much.

4 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Thank you Council Member  
5 Feliz. I, you know I'm just going to wrap up by  
6 saying thank you for being here today on this and  
7 hopefully we can continue to work. I know that  
8 there's a little push back on Intro. 362 regarding  
9 that reporting a bill but I'm confident that we can  
10 get to a good place and we can get this to the finish  
11 line. I want to thank you all for coming and  
12 testifying in front of the Council.

13 We're going to take a ten-minute recess and then  
14 we're going to open up with public testimony.

15 ADOLFO CARRION: Thank you Chairman.

16 KIM DARGA: Thank you.

17 RECESS [03:15:19]- [03:25:59].

18 SERGEANT AT ARMS: I will need everybody to take  
19 a seat. We're resuming the hearing, thank you.

20 [03:26:04]- [03:26:10]

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: We will now turn to testimony  
22 from the public. Please listen for your name to be  
23 called whether you are here in person or if you're  
24 appearing via Zoom. If you are testifying on Zoom,  
25 when it is your turn to testify, you will be prompted

1  
2 to unmute. Please accept this prompt and begin your  
3 testimony. In the interest of time, your testimony  
4 will be limited to two minutes per person. And on  
5 our first panel, we will have Paul Epstein, Brendan  
6 Cheney, Emily Goldstein and Walter Rodriguez. If you  
7 are here, please come up to the table and we will be  
8 starting with Paul Epstein on Zoom. Mr. Epstein, you  
9 can begin.

10 PAUL EPSTEIN: Okay thank you. I am Paul  
11 Epstein, Co-Chair of Inwood Legal Action. As a  
12 Racial Impact Study Coalition member, we worked on  
13 Local Law 78 and the Equitable Development Data Tool  
14 or (EDDE) which are critical to Intro. 1031. Intro.  
15 1031 as promised for fair housing but needs some  
16 major improvements. Here is ten recommendations  
17 summarized. Please see our full written testimony  
18 for details.

19 One, mandate research and collaboration with  
20 stakeholders to develop better measurements to  
21 identify high opportunity districts. It's absolutely  
22 crucial to get the opportunity index right, but the  
23 current indicators won't do that. Two, replace  
24 HUD's Area Median Income for determining  
25 affordability. Our areas AMI is seriously distorted.

1 It disadvantages lower income households. Use city  
2 renter median income instead. Three, replace a  
3 single 60 percent AMI benchmark for targeting low-  
4 income housing with multiple targets based on  
5 affordable rental housing unit shortages by income  
6 band or need space to equitable planning. Four,  
7 require timely housing and vacancy survey microdata  
8 release. Five, mandate regular upgrades to the EDDE  
9 methodologies and indicators so the best information  
10 will drive plans. Six, require HPD & DCP annually  
11 identify costs for desirable EDDE upgrades, so the  
12 Council can fund them. Seven, broaden the scope of  
13 climate vulnerability focusing on resilience and  
14 coping with climate effects and prevention of harm  
15 from climate events and of emissions. Eight, annual  
16 fair housing progress reports should include an  
17 assessment of rental housing conditions to ensure  
18 affordability is not ruined by poor maintenance.  
19 Nine, use the True Cost of Living Measure to assess  
20 economic security and poverty reduction in the annual  
21 equity report. And ten, for annual reports on  
22 social, economic, and environmental health. Mandate  
23 more specific environmental information. That's ten  
24 recommendations fast but there's a lot more detail  
25

3 from we have submitted in writing. I commend you to  
4 please see our – the Inwood Legal Actions detailed  
5 written testimony. We're both in the Racial Impact  
6 Study Coalition and in the Thriving Communities  
7 Coalition. We both want to see this bill passed but  
8 passed in a better form. Thank you.

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Brendan Cheney.

10 BRENDAN CHENEY: Good afternoon. My name is  
11 Brendan Cheney, I'm the Director of Policy and  
12 Operations at the New York Housing Conference. I'd  
13 like to thank the Committee Chairs for the  
14 opportunity to testify today. I've submitted our  
15 full testimony and will summarize our main points  
16 here.

17 First, we applaud Council Speaker Adrienne Adams  
18 and Committee Chair Salamanca and Sanchez for their  
19 leadership on the issue of fair housing and  
20 affordable housing. And we support the aim of Intro.  
21 1031 in planning and increasing production of  
22 affordable, of housing and affordable housing in each  
23 community district and holding the Administration  
24 accountable to achieving this goal.

25 Our New York City Housing Tracker shows that  
housing production and affordable housing production

1  
2 is not shared equally across the city. Between 2014  
3 and 2022, 16 Council districts produce more than  
4 2,000 units of new affordable housing, while 17  
5 districts produce fewer than 400 units over that  
6 time. Council Member Salamanca, I know you know this  
7 because your district is deleting produce for  
8 affordable housing over that time.

9 The planning that will need to come along with  
10 this legislation will need to include strategies for  
11 achieving higher production in some neighborhoods,  
12 including up zoning's. We also suggest that the fair  
13 housing reporting include barriers to achieving the  
14 necessary housing production. However, we want to  
15 suggest that the housing targets include minimum  
16 targets only. We should always strive for more  
17 housing.

18 Requiring this report will hold the  
19 Administration accountable to build more housing and  
20 build it more equitably throughout the city but we  
21 also encourage the Council to be held accountable.  
22 The Council must support adding housing supply in  
23 every neighborhood. The Council has recently had  
24 notable successes fighting for housing including in  
25 Frogs Neck, Calottes North and Innovation Queens.

1  
2 However, we are still often fighting for every  
3 project. For truly fighting for fair housing, the  
4 Council must approach rezoning's with a citywide  
5 lens. And usual Council Members should advocate for  
6 the best deal possible of course but the Council  
7 should always be united to support housing in that  
8 housing supply.

9 Finally the Council should support the fourth  
10 coming zoning text amendments for housing. Without  
11 zoning changes to allow for more housing, we will see  
12 the same patterns of development. The Council should  
13 also support a tax incentive that would require  
14 affordable housing and market rate that would support  
15 affordable housing market rate rental housing  
16 developments. Without a tax incentive, many  
17 neighborhoods, especially higher income  
18 neighborhoods, especially higher income neighborhoods  
19 will be off the hook for producing any affordable  
20 housing.

21 I thank the Council for this important hearing  
22 and the opportunity to testify today.

23 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Emily Goldstein  
24 followed by Walter Rodriguez.

3 EMILY GOLDSTEIN: Hello and thank you for the  
4 opportunity to testify today. My name is Emily  
5 Goldstein, I am the Director of Organizing & Advocacy  
6 at the Association for Neighborhood & Housing  
7 Development or (ANHD). ANHD has long called for a  
8 more equitable and intentional planning system in New  
9 York City. We therefore applaud Speaker Adams,  
10 member Salamanca, member Sanchez and the many, many  
11 other Council Members who have Co-sponsored this  
12 legislation requiring the city to create fair housing  
13 plans on a regular basis.

14 We know that our city's geography of inequality  
15 didn't happen by chance. It was the predictable  
16 outcome of decades of planning decisions that only  
17 serve to reenforce racial and economic disparities, a  
18 pattern that continues to this day.

19 Breaking that mold will require proactive  
20 deliberative planning to achieve clear equity-  
21 oriented goals and we believe the fair housing plan  
22 legislation is an important step in that direction  
23 and represents the type of equity focused planning  
24 that we need to be moving towards citywide and across  
25 all issue areas.

3 We are especially pleased to see explicit goals  
4 around equitable distribution of both market rate and  
5 affordable housing development, preservation of  
6 affordable housing and prevention of displacement.  
7 And making equitably investments to address  
8 discrimination, segregation and poverty, especially  
9 in neighborhoods with an acute history around those  
10 issues.

11 To best achieve these goals, we believe there are  
12 few additions to the legislation that could be  
13 strengthened. We recommend adjusting the  
14 accountability and reporting in the legislation to  
15 make sure we understand how city agencies and all  
16 levels of government are working to meet the goals  
17 and targets that are set including identifying  
18 obstacles that might stand in the way and resources  
19 needed to overcome those obstacles.

20 Additionally, we believe the legislation should  
21 further target the desperate need for affordable  
22 housing to those at the lowest income levels by not  
23 only breaking out housing below 60 percent AMI but  
24 breaking out a wider variety of AMI levels at  
25 extremely low - very low and low incomes across all  
the analysis.

3 Again, we thank the Speaker, the Chair Salamanca  
4 and Chair Sanchez, sorry. It's been a long time and  
5 we look forward to working on this legislation  
6 together.

7 WALTER RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. My name is Walter  
8 Rodríguez, Senior Director, Strategic Community  
9 Partnerships at Volunteers of America-Greater New  
10 York. I would like to thank Speaker Adrienne Adams,  
11 Housing and Buildings Chair Pierina Sanchez and Land  
12 Use Chair Rafael Salamanca, as well as the members of  
13 the Committee for the opportunity to submit this  
14 testimony. I will summarize and give focus on the  
15 main points and provide my written testimony.

16 Thank you for emphasizing the need for  
17 transparency and public input into the development of  
18 affordable housing, principles that undergird both  
19 Intro. 362 and Intro. 1031. VOA Greater New York is  
20 an anti-poverty organization that aims to end  
21 homelessness in the New York area by 2050 through  
22 housing, health, and wealth building services.

23 We are one of the region's largest human service  
24 providers impacting more than 11,000 adults and  
25 children annually through 66 programs in New York  
City and Northern New Jersey.

3 We are in support of Intro. 1031 and calls for  
4 adequately providing the appropriations in the city  
5 budget necessary to address the housing crisis. We  
6 join the earlier points made by Speaker Adrienne  
7 Adams, housing demand far out paces production. We  
8 call for thoughtful planning that results in more  
9 equitable distribution of support housing and social  
10 services given that neighborhoods that have faced  
11 historical disinvestment, discrimination, segregation  
12 and poverty often experience a separation of these  
13 services.

14 The highest concentration of evictions take place  
15 in BIPOC communities. As noted in 1031, displacement  
16 risk and vulnerability very strongly encourages that  
17 supportive and affordable housing projects include  
18 set aside units especially for following at risk  
19 populations, seniors, veterans, artists and those in  
20 the service or social service sector.

21 The racial makeup of a population in the shelter  
22 system is primary made of BIPOC people. Over 75  
23 percent of shelter residents come from the very  
24 communities, the program they are located in, the  
25 neighborhoods, the shelters residents come from have  
often been neglected, under invested for decades,

1 living in their way, the conditions of poverty, poor  
2 health and unemployment. Investments in these  
3 communities is vital.

4  
5 In closing, we are advocates for the following:  
6 One, an equitable distribution of supportive housing  
7 and services. Two, supportive affordable housing  
8 projects that include set aside units. And three,  
9 investments in neighborhoods with a history of  
10 discrimination, segregation and poverty. I will also  
11 like to give a special thank you to Chair Salamanca  
12 and Chair Sanchez for your support and leadership for  
13 Volunteers of America where we have programs in your  
14 district.

15 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Thank you. Thank you for  
16 your statements. I want to specifically thank the  
17 New York Housing Conference and ADHD for your data.  
18 Believe it or not, we, my team and I, when we're  
19 discussing affordable housing, we do utilize your  
20 data but New York Housing Conference you know your  
21 data has helped other Council Members go to their  
22 community boards and show them that their community  
23 boards are not doing enough, so thank you.

24 WALTER RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

25 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Okay.

1  
2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Great, thank you. For our  
3 next panel we will have Howard Slatkin, Logan Phares,  
4 Ryan Monell and Chris Widelo. You can start, thank  
5 you.

6 CHRIS WIDELO: Great thank you. Good morning or  
7 good afternoon Chair Salamanca and Chair Sanchez.  
8 Thanks so much for this opportunity to testify. My  
9 name is Chris Widelo. I'm the Director of External  
10 Affairs for NASAFAH. The New York State Association  
11 for Affordable Housing. I think you're aware of who  
12 we are, so I'll get past it. I submitted uhm,  
13 electronically I'll be submitting later today our  
14 official testimony.

15 NYSFAFH wants to recognize HPD and HDC for all  
16 the work and success that they had over this past  
17 year, fiscal year. We have an extreme housing  
18 shortage as you know and they've significantly  
19 increased housing production to serve our most  
20 vulnerable populations, including very low income and  
21 supportive units. And as he city continues to work  
22 towards the goal of 500,000 new homes over the next  
23 decade, our members are ready to partner with the  
24 city to build this critical housing.

1  
2 In regards to Intro. 362, we certainly support  
3 the transparency around affordable housing finance  
4 and development. It's absolutely necessary. There  
5 are currently a number of reporting mechanisms in  
6 place, including Local Law 44 and also HPD reports  
7 quarterly on the health of the housing pipeline. In  
8 the industry, we truly can't predict the housing  
9 pipeline or speculate on what might be built or come  
10 online. From the time a housing project is conceived  
11 to the time the door is open, there are any number of  
12 factors that could impact the project and the housing  
13 that it offers. You know only once that building is  
14 open can we truly count on those units and I think  
15 maybe there's a compromise where we look at this  
16 legislation and is there a way to maybe eliminate  
17 some of the other duplicative reporting processes, so  
18 we have one that works for the whole city.

19 In regards to Intro. 1031, sponsored by the  
20 Speaker, it's very laudable and NYSAFAH supports the  
21 goal of this proposal, which is that every community  
22 should allow the development of affordable housing  
23 but without a builders remedy or an as of right  
24 mechanism to allow affordable housing and mixed  
25 income housing in neighborhoods that are typically

1  
2 resistant to this, the proposal will fall short of  
3 those intended goals.

4 We need fair housing in all Council Districts  
5 across the city and a broad approach that sets  
6 citywide targets for overall production and simple  
7 minimal minimum targets for each district is what is  
8 best. We know politically that you know within the  
9 Council, there is the you know there is the power to  
10 solve the political problem of member deference that  
11 is too often a barrier to production goals. You know  
12 we want to really you know address the situation that  
13 is a crisis before it becomes an absolute  
14 catastrophe. And you know, it's not going to get  
15 solved if people in neighborhoods are turning their  
16 back on the problem. So, thanks for the opportunity  
17 to testify today.

18 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Thank you.

19 LOGAN PHARES: Okay, thank you to the Chairs and  
20 the Speaker for the opportunity to share testimony in  
21 support of Introduction 1031. My name is Logan  
22 Phares and I serve as the Political Director of Open  
23 New York. We're an independent grassroots pro-  
24 housing nonprofit.

3 Since Speaker Adams first presented her fair  
4 housing framework to the public in December 2022, New  
5 York's housing crisis has continued to worsen.  
6 Evictions have increased and the asking rents for  
7 unregulated housing has skyrocketed and newly issued  
8 building permits have plummeted. The city needs a  
9 comprehensive approach to reverse these trends.

10 Introduction 1031 points the city in the right  
11 direction, exclusionary and antigrowth policies have  
12 shaped our land use and housing finance programs for  
13 decades, perpetuating inequitable and segregated  
14 residential patterns across our neighborhoods as the  
15 city recognized in the Where We Live NYC Plan.

16 While some neighborhoods have grown tremendously  
17 over the 20 years, far more areas have been frozen in  
18 the amber of the product of decades of down zonings  
19 from 1961 through the Bloomberg Administration.

20 We need every tool in the toolkit to undo this  
21 legacy and fix where housing is built in New York  
22 City. Introduction 1031 will require city agencies  
23 to publish valuable and accessible information  
24 regarding the housing crisis and to set targets for  
25 more equitable development. Other cities and states  
such as the District of Columbia have created similar

1  
2 planning process recently, which have improved public  
3 discussion of the housing shortage and have put  
4 pressure on exclusionary neighborhoods to open more  
5 opportunities for housing growth.

6 The city also needs to take action immediately to  
7 produce more housing. The recently announced City of  
8 Yes for Housing Opportunity Initiative provides a  
9 once in a generation chance to improve New York  
10 City's outdated zoning code. For far too long, many  
11 of the most well-resourced parts of the city have  
12 been off limits to new residents, especially New  
13 Yorkers who need affordable housing. If these  
14 proposed changes are implemented, every neighborhood  
15 in the city will finally take part in solving our  
16 housing shortage and we'll see dramatic changes in  
17 the distribution of new income restricted housing  
18 across the five boroughs.

19 This year, the Mayor and City Council can  
20 redirect the course of our housing shortage by  
21 passing Intro. 1031 and the City of Yes for Housing  
22 Opportunity Proposals. Open New Yorks members will  
23 be advocating fiercely to make sure the city seize  
24 this chance.

1  
2 Finally, we must utilize every tool at our  
3 disposal to aggressively pursue fair housing goals  
4 and in inclusionary zoning practices rooted in that  
5 exist through our state today. Only the governor and  
6 state legislature have the power to hold all  
7 communities accountable to these goals, both within  
8 New York City's boundaries as well as the suburbs of  
9 Westchester and Long Island. His exceptional lack of  
10 housing production exacerbates New York City's  
11 housing affordability crisis.

12 We look forward to working with the Speaker and  
13 City Council members to call for accountability and  
14 action from the governor and state legislature in the  
15 2024 session. Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Thank you for your  
17 testimony.

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Next up, we'll  
19 have Erin Burns-Maine, Allison Nickerson, Myra  
20 Hernandez and Adam Roberts. You can begin, thank  
21 you.

22 ERIN BURNS-MAINE: Let's see. Good afternoon.  
23 My name is Erin Burns-Maine, I'm Chief of Staff and  
24 Vice President of Policy at the Community  
25 Preservation Corporation. Thanks so much for having

1  
2 me today and thank you to the Chairs for continuing  
3 to listen to testimony.

4 I'm going to skip over a chunk of our testimony  
5 that talks about the Community Preservation  
6 Corporations impact on communities, as well as what  
7 we're seeing in our portfolio but it's a great read,  
8 so I highly recommend it.

9 But I will skip down to talk about how every day  
10 New Yorkers are struggling with housing affordability  
11 and we're reaching a crisis point. I think we've all  
12 heard it today and came in knowing that. In addition  
13 to continuing to push at the state level for a tax  
14 incentive for affordable housing, we all have to do  
15 whatever is possible to address what is within our  
16 control.

17 Addressing bureaucratic inefficiencies, advancing  
18 zoning reform and enthusiastically supporting new  
19 housing in all of our communities. We know that the  
20 Departments of Housing Preservation Development,  
21 Buildings, City Planning, Social Services and OMB  
22 work hard to manage the multistep processes that  
23 yield the production and preservation of housing  
24 citywide and we appreciate their efforts.

25

3 Over the last three years, CPC has been working  
4 directly with emerging BIPOC developers throughout  
5 Access initiative. We often hear from those  
6 developers that the current regulatory processes for  
7 new construction and rehab can be riddled with  
8 inefficiencies that cause unreasonably long delays  
9 across the lifespan of a project.

10 Large developers with deep balance sheets can  
11 afford to wait it out. We heard an example of this  
12 earlier today but for smaller emerging developers,  
13 including many MWBE's that lack access to patient  
14 capital, these delays can kill their projects and  
15 discourage folks from taking on future projects.

16 At a time when affordable housing is extremely  
17 scarce, the Council must prioritize addressing  
18 inefficiencies and streamlining processes across  
19 these pipelines. In addition to this, we all have  
20 our own role in getting more housing built. We're  
21 very supportive of the Mayor's City of Yes for  
22 Housing Opportunity Zoning Reform Proposal. For too  
23 long, the city's outdated zoning has been a key  
24 contributor in our affordable housing crisis. It's  
25 limited where, how and what we can build and in many  
cases it's dictated to who can live in which

1  
2 neighborhoods. The Mayor's proposed zoning reform  
3 will be the most significant overhaul of our city's  
4 zoning in decades, increasing housing supply, fueling  
5 our economy and making the city a much more  
6 affordable and equitable place to live. Big  
7 challenges demand big solutions and there's no  
8 greater challenge right now for New York than our  
9 housing crisis. Mayor Adams and his administration  
10 are giving us thoughtful ambitious plans that reflect  
11 both the gravity of the crisis and the all of the  
12 above approach that were needed to make housing more  
13 abundant, accessible and affordable. We are decades  
14 too late to try and solve our housing problems with  
15 one silver bullet.

16 We urge you all to work together and support the  
17 zoning reforms. Say yes to housing in your district,  
18 yes to making the city more affordable, to spurring  
19 economic opportunity, to creating jobs and to making  
20 neighborhoods more accessible and equitable.

21 In short, we can do more with more but we need  
22 all of your help. This is a critical moment and a  
23 tipping point for our city and we can't afford not to  
24 act. Thank you for your time.

3 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Adam Roberts on  
4 Zoom.

5 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

6 ADAM ROBERTS: Alright. Thank you for holding  
7 this hearing today. I am Adam Roberts, Policy  
8 Director for the Community Housing Improvement  
9 Program, also known as CHIP. We represent New York's  
10 housing providers including apartment building owners  
11 and managers. While we strongly support the idea of  
12 a fair housing plan, the plan outlined in Intro. 1031  
13 is too limited its scope to provide an adequate  
14 understanding of the city's affordable housing needs.  
15 Glaringly the bill limits its definition of low-  
16 income affordable housing so that buildings with rent  
17 stabilized apartments are not included.

18 As our members provide and operate rent  
19 stabilized housing, this is deeply concerning. Rent  
20 stabilized housing is a critical source of hundreds  
21 of thousands of affordable apartments. This bill if  
22 significantly amended would provide much needed data  
23 on the city's rent stabilized housing. We do not  
24 know how many rent stabilized apartments exist, as  
25 HPD's housing vacancy survey and the Department of  
Finance real income and expense reports provide

1  
2 different estimates. We also do not know how many  
3 additional rent stabilized apartments could be built.  
4 Currently, NYCHA's replacing some less dense  
5 developments with denser ones that hold more  
6 apartments. A fair housing plan should examine how  
7 many more apartments could be built if rent  
8 stabilized buildings could pursue a similar strategy.  
9 Furthermore, the city is not collecting data on the  
10 financial needs of rent stabilized tenants. This  
11 would be valuable information to understand if rent  
12 stabilization is actually benefiting low-income  
13 renters, as well as if reform should be implemented  
14 to prioritize affordable housing for those who need  
15 it. It is important to note that rent stabilized  
16 tenants have no income threshold, meaning wealthy  
17 tenants often live in rent stabilized housing.

18 Lastly, this legislation does not require  
19 reporting on the condition of affordable housing,  
20 including rent stabilized apartments. Over the last  
21 few years, policy changes in Albany have caused  
22 funding for renovating rent stabilized apartments to  
23 evaporate. As a result, tens of thousands of  
24 apartments are vacant and others have necessary  
25 maintenance deferred. Not only should New Yorkers be

1  
2 entitled to affordable housing but that housing  
3 should be safe.

4 While we think this bill could be improved, we  
5 applaud the Council for beginning the conversation  
6 about the need for better data on affordable housing.  
7 We look forward to working with the Council to ensure  
8 the best data is collected. Thank you for holding  
9 this hearing.

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. We'll move onto  
11 our next panel on Zoom. So, first we have Ramona  
12 Ferreyra.

13 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: You can start when you're  
15 unmuted, thank you.

16 RAMONA FERREYRA: Can you hear me okay?

17 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: We can hear you.

18 RAMONA FERREYRA: Oh, sorry about that. Okay, so  
19 my name is [03:49:55] and my colonial name is Ramona  
20 Ferreyra. I am the Founder of Save Section 9. Save  
21 Section 9 works nationally to ensure that we collect,  
22 we rehabilitate and expand public housing and I  
23 wanted to take the time to commend the city for  
24 wanting to identify an actionable pathway towards  
25 affordable housing.

3 According to the National Low Income Housing  
4 Coalition Report the gap, America currently faces a  
5 national shortage of 7.3 million affordable and  
6 available rental homes for extremely low-income  
7 renters. For New York that number tells us that  
8 there are 32 affordable homes for every 100 extremely  
9 low-income households.

10 This problem was created by the toolkit, which  
11 the city continues to work with. That includes  
12 Section 8 tax credits and those are going to both  
13 private and nonprofit developers. So, I just want to  
14 actually state the obvious thing that folks are not  
15 talking about in their testimony or in the hearing  
16 and that's that this bill is not going to address our  
17 need. The only thing that will is public housing  
18 under Section 9.

19 According to the 2023 report Out of Reach by the  
20 same organization, the wage that's required to afford  
21 a two-bedroom rental in New York is \$40.08.

22 Personally I survive on public assistance as a  
23 chronic illness, making traditional employment  
24 impossible for me. But it's being served by public  
25 housing that lets me thrive. Affordable housing  
development is not the answer. Public housing is and

1  
2 I expect to see public housing centered in this bill  
3 and within the Mayor's City of Yes plan. We should  
4 all be concerned that that plan doesn't actually want  
5 to include public housing, which is the only truly  
6 affordable housing in the United States.

7 The answer to our crisis is not going to be just  
8 as we build. It is to build what we need and what we  
9 deserve and the abandonment that public housing had  
10 experienced since the 80's is why today we are in  
11 this situation. So, speaking about what we deserve.  
12 We deserve public housing that is safe, vibrant, and  
13 that mimic the communities that have actually thrived  
14 within NYCHA. But I'm not going to ignore that NYCHA  
15 is a failure. NYCHA has failed -

16 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Thank you so much. Your time  
17 has expired.

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Next we'll have  
19 Mbacke Thiam.

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: You can start speaking when  
22 you are unmuted, thank you.

23 MBACKE THIAM: Hello everyone, my Mbacke Thiam.  
24 Thank you Speaker Adams, Chair Salamanca, and all  
25 Council Members for the work that you are doing to

1 reduce our housing crisis. My name is Mbacke Thiam.  
2  
3 I am the Housing and Health Community Organizer at  
4 Center for the Independence of the Disabled, mostly  
5 known as (CIDNY). We are a nonprofit organization  
6 founded in 1978 and we are part of the Independent  
7 Living Centers movement, a national network of  
8 grassroots and community-based organizations that  
9 enhance opportunities for all people with  
10 disabilities to direct their own lives.

11 CIDNY is the voice of people with disabilities in  
12 the five boroughs of New York City. We support this  
13 bill and uh, we're also working in order to bring  
14 awareness for people with disability to know about  
15 the opportunity. But I'm curious about the  
16 accessible units for people with disability,  
17 especially visual and mobile disabilities and also  
18 how applicants can see themselves approved. Because we  
19 know that a lot of times people with disability may  
20 be you know, reduced or disqualified when the  
21 percentage of folks with disability is very you know  
22 limited. So, maybe five percent or less, so we're  
23 advocating to have more people with disability  
24 involved and you know uproot in this public housing.

1  
2 I'm also going to talk about outreach strategies.  
3 How are we going to make sure that folks are living  
4 in the suburb of New York City and far in the Bronx  
5 or Staten Island can be aware of these opportunities  
6 and be able to take advantage of it. I will send a  
7 written testimony. I just wanted to be here and be  
8 you know - to share also and as I didn't notice that  
9 any person was given and I hope also this bill will  
10 pass and we bring - we bring more opportunity for  
11 folks with disabilities.

12 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Thank you so much. Your time  
13 has expired.

14 MBACKE THIAM: Thanks.

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Makrand Bhoot,  
16 Paul Woody, Doreen Thomann-Howe, Bria Donohue, Tony  
17 Lindsay, Shannon Lumpkin, Dr. Irvinia Moody, Towaki  
18 Komatsu, Christopher Leon Johnson, Raul Rivera.

19 You can begin.

20 CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: Alright, good  
21 afternoon everybody. My name is Christopher Leon  
22 Johnson. So, thanks for all the Council Members  
23 including you Chair for hosting this Committee and  
24 actually like the most members that came to a  
25 Committee I've ever saw. Like probably like the

1 majority of City Council is here. I appreciate them  
2 all coming because I think everybody knows that  
3 there's a big housing crisis in New York City and  
4 there's a lot of problem with the housing situation  
5 in New York City.  
6

7 I'm going to say this right now is we need 100  
8 percent affordable housing in the more in poverty  
9 districts, especially in my district, District 41.  
10 There's a big problem where there's a lot of  
11 developments getting built in my district and the  
12 requirements to afford a unit is like it's  
13 astronomical. Like, no I can't afford \$100,000 to  
14 live in apartment, especially when a certain of these  
15 units are getting courted by these top real estate  
16 firms and I'm not here to knock down the real estate  
17 industry but it's like, if you're going to push  
18 affordable housing, you either get like certain  
19 nonprofits to start selling the properties or leasing  
20 the properties, not these upscale real estate firms  
21 like Compass and [03:56:49] firm. I might get  
22 chocked for that and these other to start pushing the  
23 properties because they're going to start charging  
24 astronomical prices just to even rent it and then you  
25 got to pay the broker fees. And they all through my

1 money, so that's what I think and then I think most  
2 and then more is, we need to stop having the  
3 influence of certain of these organizations that  
4 pushing the City Council to say, oh, where do we need  
5 to put the affordable housing at? And this is how we  
6 need to charge like for all and uhm and Erin Carr who  
7 don't know anything at all to start lobbying guys to  
8 push for affordable housing.  
9

10 So, I mean you need to put real affordable  
11 housing in these districts. You have to really go by  
12 the median income level because you can't just put  
13 uhm, \$100,000 units in a \$20,000 neighborhood. It's  
14 impossible. So, thank you so much.

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you.

16 CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: Hmm, hmm.

17 RAUL RIVERA: Good afternoon. My name is Raul  
18 Rivera. I'm a TLC driver and TLC driver advocate.  
19 Uhm, you know you heard the expression if you see  
20 something, say something. So, I'm here to say  
21 something to this Committee and to the Chair, Mr.  
22 Salamanca. 2021, the New York Center and the  
23 proposed Commercial Tower that was proposed by the  
24 Committee of District 5, including Council Member Ben  
25 Kallos, Congresswoman Caroline Malony and many other

1  
2 elected officials. 2022 Jessenia Aponte, your wife  
3 was given the job as Bronx Borough Commissioner at  
4 the cost of the New York City taxpayer of \$177,000  
5 per year by Mayor Eric Adams. January 21, 2023, you  
6 refused to stand with the Puerto Rican community when  
7 the Mayor and his DOT Commissioner Ydanis Rodriguez  
8 was bigoted against the Puerto Rican community. You  
9 was protecting the Mayor and the DOT Commissioner  
10 because Mayor Adams gave your wife the job of Bronx  
11 Parks Commissioner.

12 On July 22, I asked and found an investigation by  
13 the Conflict-of-Interest Board into you and your wife  
14 and anyone who tries to stop investigation, we will  
15 also seek an investigation into them. I am also  
16 interested in knowing if our Public Advocate Jumaane  
17 Williams was informed of this conflict and behavior  
18 from Council Member Salamanca. If so, when was the  
19 Public Advocate told and if any action was taken by  
20 him. You are a disgrace to New York City and the  
21 Puerto Rican. You are disgrace to the Puerto Rican  
22 people and your [03:59:28], just so you know it.

23 CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: I want to thank everyone  
24 for attending today's hearing. This hearing is now  
25 adjourned. [GAVEL].

C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date October 3, 2023