

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ZONING AND FRANCHISES

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CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ZONING AND
FRANCHISES

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November 13, 2025
Start: 11:14 a.m.
Recess: 12:24 p.m.

HELD AT: 250 BROADWAY - 8TH FLOOR - HEARING
ROOM 3

B E F O R E: Kevin C. Riley, Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Yusef Salaam
Lynn C. Schulman

OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS ATTENDING:
Rafael Salamanca, Jr.

A P P E A R A N C E S

Eric Palatnik, representative for applicant of
1551 Broadway

Christopher Leon Johnson, self

Brett Sikoff, Executive Director of Franchise
Administration for New York City Office of
Technology and Innovation

Chantal Senatus, Deputy Commissioner for Legal
Matters at New York City Office of Technology and
Innovation

Alex Spyropoulos, TechNYC

Nick Calvin, Chief Executive Officer of LinkNYC

Steve Murphy, Local Union Number 3 member

Thomas Terzulli, Local Union Number 3 member

Peter Rescigno, New York Electrical Contractors
Association

Dirk McCall de Palomá, Executive Director of the
Sunnyside Shines Business Improvement District

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Test, test, test. This is a sound check for the Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises recorded on November 13, 2025, by Sergeant Ben Levy. We are located in Hearing Room 3 of 250 Broadway.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good morning. Welcome to today's New York City Council Hearing for the Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchise.

At this time, I would like to ask everyone to place all electronic devices to silent.

Chair, we're ready to go.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: [GAVEL] Good morning, everyone, and welcome to a meeting of the Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises. I am Council Member Kevin Riley, Chair of the Subcommittee. This morning, I am joined by Chair Salamanca, Council Member Schulman.

Today, we are holding two public hearings on LUs Numbers 429 and 430 concerning the 1551 Broadway Midtown Signage Text Amendment and Special Permit; and Resolution 1109 of 2025 concerning an amendment to the Public Communication Structures Franchise Authorization Resolution.

This meeting is being held in hybrid format. Members of the public who wish to testify may testify in person or through Zoom. Members of the public wishing to testify remotely may register by visiting the New York City Council's website at www.council.nyc.gov/landuse to sign up. And for those of you here in person, please see one of the Sergeant-at-Arms to prepare and submit a speaker's card.

Members of the public may also view a live stream broadcast of this meeting at the Council's website.

When you're called to testify before the Subcommittee, if you're joining us remotely, you remain muted until recognized by myself to speak. When you are recognized, your microphone will be unmuted.

We will limit public testimony to two minutes per witness. If you have additional testimony that you would like the Subcommittee to consider, or if you have written testimony that you would like to submit instead of appearing in person, please email to landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. Written testimony may be submitted up to three days after the

hearing is closed. Please indicate the LU number and/or project name in the subject line of your email.

We request that the witnesses joining us remotely remain in the meeting until excused by myself as Council Members may have questions.

Lastly, for everyone attending today's meeting, this is a government proceeding and decorum must be observed at all times. Members of the public are asked not to speak during the meeting unless you are testifying.

The witness table is reserved for people who are called to testify, and no video recording or photography is allowed from the witness table. Further, members of the public may not present audio or video recordings as testimony but may submit transcripts of such recordings to the Sergeant-at-Arms for inclusion in the hearing record.

I will now open the public hearing on LU Items 429 and 430 regarding the application known as 1551 Broadway Midtown Signage Text Amendment and Special Permit. The text amendment will create a special permit that would allow applicants to replace three existing advertising signs in Times Square with

two larger ones. This project is located in Council Member Bottcher's District.

For anyone wishing to testify regarding this proposal remotely, if you have not already done so, you must register online by visiting the Council's website at council.nyc.gov/landuse. For anyone with us in person, please see when you are with Sergeant-at-Arms to submit a speaker's card.

If you prefer to submit written testimony, you can always do so by emailing it to landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov.

I will now call the applicant panel for this proposal, which consists of Eric Palatnik, who is online.

Counsel, can you please administer the affirmation?

SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL VIDAL: To our Zoom team, can we pull up Eric on the screen, if possible?

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Zoom team, can you please pull up Eric Palatnik on the screen?

Eric, if you can hear me, please unmute and speak.

ERIC PALATNIK: I can hear you.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: There you go.

ERIC PALATNIK: Can you hear me?

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: You can read the affirmation.

SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL VIDAL: Good morning, Mr. Palatnik. Could you please raise your right hand?

Do you swear to tell the truth and nothing but the truth in your testimony today and in response to Council Member's questions?

ERIC PALATNIK: I do.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Eric, I just need you to speak up a little bit.

ERIC PALATNIK: I do. Okay, you got it.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you.

For the viewing public, if you need an accessible version of this presentation, please send an email request to landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov.

And now, Eric, you may begin. Just please restate your name and organization for the record.

ERIC PALATNIK: My name is Eric Palatnik, and I'm the applicant, and I'm proud to represent 1551 Broadway in an application to permit a very unique sign, an anamorphic sign, to replace the existing outdated sign at the premises. With your permission, I'd like to continue.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: You can continue.

ERIC PALATNIK: Thank you very much.

We're happy to be here today. As you can see with the project overview that's on the screen in front of you, the left side of the screen shows you at the bottom the existing conditions at the property right now. They're comprised of outdated LED technology, some of which are defunct and not in operation. You'll also see as I go through the application, there's a taller sign rising above that is in operation. The application that we're here for today is the portion of the sign that rests at the bottom of the tower. We rest within Council Member Bottcher's District within Community Board 5. As you can see in the middle column, we're requesting a zoning text amendment to the special Midtown District Theater sub-district to create a new zoning special permit, which would modify signage and frontage regulations for zoning lots with 10,000 square feet or less of lot area. This would allow the project to waive out of outdated zoning requirements, which include a 6-foot setback requirement along Broadway, and I'll explain that in a minute. On the right side of the screen, you can see what we're trying to

achieve. It's really nothing much more than what you see all around the country and all around the world. Modern, up-to-date technology. It's called anamorphic technology. It allows for three-dimensional displays in the form of anything that's put up on the screen. Next slide, please.

As you can see, this is displayed in much clearer version right here on the left-hand side. It's one uniform lower version of the sign. That's what the special permit, if you support the application, would allow us to achieve. As you can see on the right-hand side, it's modifying section 81-734 of the Zoning Resolution. And it would allow, at the bottom of the screen, you can see it would allow for two signs to replace the existing three signs that are there right now. Next slide, please.

This really shows it to you in a little more clear version. The left side of the screen shows you what's existing. The right side shows you what's proposed. If you just keep your focus on the blue portion at the bottom, the two bottom portions on the left side, that's what's there right now. You can see there's a lower sign that's about 5,769 square feet. And that setback, once you hit the 60-foot mark, it

sets back on the Broadway side of the sign by about 6 feet. And the upper sign then goes and rises up to the height of 120 feet. We don't want to include that setback anymore. It doesn't become of the anamorphic technology, which really requires one singular plane upon which the dimensions and the images can be displayed. So the right-hand side of the screen shows you that. You'll notice that there is a tower rising above the 250 feet. That's allowed as-of-right. That exists right now. We're not asking to change that, although we will be changing the technology. Next slide, please.

 This just shows you everything I explained in more detail. The left side shows you the yellow portion is the waiver area. That's the 6-foot setback that we're asking now to eliminate under the new text. The right-hand side shows you what I haven't yet spoken to, which is the top shows you what we're required to do on the top right, which is to have three different signs. That's actually the way the old zoning is written. It was written to achieve, obviously, much different materials and much different state-of-the-art technology back in the '70s when the regulations were drafted. The bottom

shows you what we want to do. The top shows you what we're required to do, which is to have three signs. We want to eliminate that text and just have two signs. That's what this application is all about. Next slide, please.

The next slide just shows you which properties would be affected by the application. It would apply to 17 lots. We don't expect that many of them would take advantage of what we're doing here. It's a very unique location already with existing signage, which we're simply replacing like-for-like. Go to the next slide.

The next slide is rather compelling because it caught a moment in time when the signs were dark. They did fix some of the technology on the lower sign. They invested some money in it. The top sign is just a vinyl wrap that's around it right now. It's not actually a sign. That's because it's very expensive to keep the signs going with the old technology. The new approval, if it's approved, the new sign would replace what you see here in this image. Next slide, please.

This gives you more imagery of what's existing right now on the property just so you can understand it. Go to the next slide.

This is exciting. It shows you what it's going to look like if it is approved. Clearly, everybody can see the difference. It allows for basically what you see everywhere you go. If you go to the next slide, it really shows you some cool stuff.

This is probably some of the wildest stuff that's out there and allows for things like this to be displayed in Times Square in a special district, which is, and I quote, the world's foremost concentration of diverse and entertainment-related uses. Really, we're speaking to the heart of Times Square here. Next slide.

The rest of the slides I have for you are really just a lot of technical information showing you everything I just explained. I'd be happy to stop my presentation right here.

I'd also mention that we did meet with the Community Board and we've met with the Council Person, and I have not heard of any opposition to the application or the request at all.

Thank you very much for your time. I'm happy to answer any questions.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Eric. I just have three questions for you just so you could clarify for the record. Why do the current regulations require advertising signs to be split up into smaller displays instead of allowing one or two large signs as you are proposing?

ERIC PALATNIK: I think the reason was to encourage people to have smaller businesses in place in Times Square. I don't think you see the type of larger big box retailers that you see now. Back then, I think there were much smaller storefronts. I remember when they were all painted different colors. But when I was a kid, some of them were boarded up. But it wasn't what you see right now. So we believe that was the intent when we spoke about it. And the setback requirement we believe was a function back then also just of setbacks in general. It was the way the buildings were designed and if you look at the evolution of zoning through the years, there's been setback requirements imposed since the zoning was created, and we believe it was a part of that as well.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Just want to state for the record we've been joined by Council Member Carr.

Can you provide examples of existing signs in Times Square that do not comply with the setback requirements you are seeking a waiver from?

ERIC PALATNIK: Sure. If you can go to page 8 of the presentation, basically the whole side of that whole page shows you somewhere you need conditions.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Can we go back to page 8?

ERIC PALATNIK: Whoever's controlling the screen.

You can see here our sign is on the left-hand side but you can see on the right-hand side, you can see the signs that all rise up to the height of 60 feet and you can see how they're all broken down into individual sign frontages as you go across the properties.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay.

We've also been joined by Council Member Moya.

Did your team conduct any study to make sure that the proposed signs would not negatively impact safety along this busy corridor for pedestrians, bike users, and drivers alike?

ERIC PALATNIK: Well, we conducted an environmental assessment statement, and we did have a lighting specialist review it as far as the amount of lumens that are being emitted and we found nothing negative to be of any concern to anybody in the community and the Community Board felt the same way.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay. Thank you, Eric.

I have no more questions so you're excused.

Just want to confirm there's no members of the public you want to testify on this proposal?

Christopher Leon Johnson.

CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: Yeah. Hello. My name is Christopher Leon Johnson. I have two minutes to kill. I'm here to show support for that project. I just saw this on the computer and I was like, wow, that's a beautiful outlet. I don't know about the City of Yes, will that allow the developers to do this without community input? But I think that the City Council need to start pushing for more of these

signs to be lit up everywhere else all over the city. Those work in Japan, like they work in Korea. I mean, those are nice. Those are nice designs. I mean, I like that illumination. One thing I want to say is that going forward, I think the City Council need to start pushing more for these all over the city, especially in Union Square. Get rid of that clock at Union Square and turn it into a LED light screen. So, I'm here to show support. I hope this goes through. And thank you. Thank you so much.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you.

There being no other members of the public who wish to testify on LUs 429 and 430 regarding 1551 Broadway Midtown Signage Text Amendment and Special Permit, the public hearing is now closed, and the items are laid over.

I will now open the public hearing on Resolution 1109 of 2025 regarding an amendment to Public Communications Structure's, PCS, Franchise Authorizing Resolution. This resolution would extend by five years the franchise agreement with CityBridge to install and operate LinkNYC kiosks throughout the city.

For anyone wishing to testify regarding this proposal remotely, if you have not already done so, you must register online by visiting the council's website at council.nyc.gov/landuse. For anyone with us in person, please see one of the Sergeant-at-Arms to submit a speaker's card.

If you prefer to submit written testimony, you can always do so by emailing it to landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov.

I will now call on the applicant panel for this proposal, which consists of Brett Sikoff and Chantal Senatus.

Counsel, can you please administer the affirmation?

SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL VIDAL: Good morning. Could you please raise your right hand?

Do you swear to tell the truth and nothing but the truth in your testimony today?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIKOFF: I do.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SENATUS: I do.

SUBCOMMITTEE COUNSEL VIDAL: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. I just ask that you please restate your name and organization for the record.

You may begin.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIKOFF: Of course.

Brett Sikoff, Executive Director of Franchise
Administration for OTI.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SENATUS: Chantal
Senatus, Deputy Commissioner for Legal Matters at
OTI.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIKOFF: Good morning,
Chair Riley, Chair Salamanca, Members of the
Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises. Again, my name
is Brett Sikoff. I am the Executive Director of
Franchise Administration and Broadband for the Office
of Tech and Innovation, or OTI. I am here today with
Chantal Senatus, OTI's Deputy Commissioner for Legal
Matters. We will discuss Resolution 1109 of 2025, an
Authorizing Resolution, or AR, submitted by the Mayor
pursuant to Section 363 of the Charter to extend the
term of non-exclusive franchises for the
installation, operation, and maintenance of Public
Communication Structures citywide, or PCS. In other
words, this AR will simply allow OTI to negotiate an
extension of the franchise agreement that permits the
operation and deployment of LinkNYC, the City's free
public Wi-Fi kiosk program.

As you know, LinkNYC is the world's fastest free public Wi-Fi network, providing high-speed connectivity, free phone calling, device charging, and connections to vital City services across the five boroughs. Because it is made possible through a franchise agreement that allows CityBridge to deploy kiosks on the City's valuable rights-of-way, these free services do not cost any taxpayer money. In fact, the program has generated approximately 130 million dollars in crucial revenue for the City over the course of the franchise. Since its launch in 2015, the network of about 2,250 LinkNYC kiosks have become an integral part of the city's streetscape, providing free Wi-Fi to over 19 million subscribers, facilitating over 30 million phone calls, promoting over 2,200 community-based non-profits and local small businesses through LinkNYC's LinkLocal program, and boosting critical City messaging among many other benefits. Link5G, the kiosk design CityBridge has been deploying since 2021, supports the future needs of 5G infrastructure throughout the city.

OTI anticipates continuing the growth of this program and maintaining it for years to come,

which is why we support this authorizing resolution.

An extension of the term of the franchise, which is

what the AR before us today would authorize, will

enable CityBridge to continue providing LinkNYC

services that New Yorkers rely on. If the Council

passes this AR, we can begin earnest discussions with

CityBridge to restructure the current franchise to

better serve New Yorkers and the City in light of

real-world conditions, requirements, and evolving

technologies. We intend on negotiating more favorable

terms for the City with respect to minimum annual

guarantees, higher minimum annual guarantees of

revenue, alternative designs for residents in

historic districts, and a community-focused approach

to new deployments.

The AR under consideration today will

allow for the extension of the term of OTI's

franchise with LinkNYC franchisee CityBridge for a

maximum of five additional years, bringing the total

term of the agreement up to 20 years. Upon Council

passage of the AR, the substance of this extension

will be determined through a negotiation between OTI

and CityBridge and will be subject to the approval of

the Franchise and Concession Review Committee, or the

FCRC, and a separate and additional approval of the mayor.

We respectfully request the Council's consideration and passage of this Authorizing Resolution. We'll now be happy to take any questions.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you so much, Brett. I'm going to ask a few questions, and then I'm going to turn it over to Chair Salamanca.

My first question, you answered it within your testimony. Currently right now, you said you installed 2,250 kiosks. The projected number, and please correct me if I'm wrong, was supposed to be 4,000. Can you please explain why you haven't met that target and what barriers you have encountered in doing so?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIKOFF: Yeah. Thank you for the question. So you're right, the current target is 4,000. The requirement is that they build 4,000 over the life of their franchise. Over the last several years, really since COVID, as we've converted or transferred over to the Link5G model, there were several kind of just planning and approval and compliance realities that came into play, including getting the additional approval from the New York

State for the 5G structures. So, in order to get those approvals from the New York State Historical and Preservation Office/FCC, that took a lot more time than we anticipated. Plus, there's just the realities of proposing sites that often fall through for one reason or another. They don't meet the siting compliance requirements. We often get feedback from the community when a site is proposed that requires that it come off from consideration, and then sites are reallocated as necessary. Part of the long-term outlook, assuming we're able to get this extension if the AR is passed, is to take another look at whether 4,000 is the right number. There may be a number less than 4,000 that right-sizes the franchise to a number that better meets the needs for the telecom industry as far as their planning for wireless infrastructure upgrades, and also addresses the community's concerns about maybe there being too many in our communities.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: So you guys are open to decreasing that number if possible?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIKOFF: If it makes sense.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: The whole point of this proposal is for it to be more equitable within

our community and accessible. So, what measures are being placed to ensure an equitable distribution of kiosks across all communities, including underserved or out-of-borough neighborhoods?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIKOFF: Chair, as you said, that's really the foundation of all of our franchises, not just the Public Communication Structures. With respect to our mobile telecom and information services franchise, it's building that equity, making sure that historically underserved, under-connected communities are finally getting what they deserve. The core tenet of this franchise is that 90 percent of new structures that are built must go above 96th Street in Manhattan and the out-of-boroughs so they're not below 96th Street where they've been saturated for many, many years. We fully expect that, if not that exact equity provision, or an equity provision similar to that, we'll continue to ensure that communities that do not have the appropriate levels of broadband coverage or need wireless coverage are addressed through this franchise.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: So you said 90 percent is supposed to be above 96th Street, right? Is there

a specific plan in where you guys are going to locate these kiosks? Do you have zip codes? Are you guys going to be working with community members? What kind of feedback can you give with that?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIKOFF: So, there are currently 13 targeted equity districts that comprise really across the city, where again, this goes back to 2020-2021, where there were assessments made about the numbers of people who have home broadband and median incomes and pedestrian accounts that we targeted as being high need.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: So 13, is that 13 zip codes that you could provide?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIKOFF: 13 community districts.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Community districts.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIKOFF: Yeah. We're going to take another look at that as we move forward in the franchise to see if that still makes sense if those 13 districts are considered equity districts.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: And that number was justified in 2021-2022, roughly?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIKOFF: Yeah. Pursuant to the third amendment of the franchise.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Would that change now, potentially?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIKOFF: It could. We want to take this opportunity to make sure we're doing this right, to make sure that the community's needs are addressed. And if they are changing based on what's happened in the past five years, for example, the OTI launched the Big Apple Connect program, which provides high-speed internet to 220 NYCHA developments, that will likely make a big impact on what we consider an equity district, and maybe there's other areas that could be better served.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay. If you could provide that list that you have from 2021, that would be helpful. And as soon as possible, if you could get that new list, I think that would be helpful for the Council as well.

Could you explain the criteria or process used to determine where kiosks are installed in a neighborhood?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIKOFF: Yeah. So, we do have vigorous siting criteria, so they can't just go anywhere, right? We have to maintain, there's

dozens, about 100 different siting criteria. They can't go too close to one another, we have to maintain a clear path, can't go too close to other street furniture, fire hydrants, things like that. So. working with those restrictions, the franchise, the CityBridge, also looks at where there's business needs for the cellular communications networks. So the cell providers, AT and T, T-Mobile, Verizon, they all have and can take advantage of the benefits of the Link5G, given that they can site their antennas and radio equipment in the structures so where there are needs for them to improve coverage, improve capacity for their networks, that will factor into where CityBridge makes their applications to us. But it starts with CityBridge. They propose to us a location, working within, again, the siting criteria, the business needs of the community, our equity requirements built into the franchise, and then that settles into where the locations are.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: So, after CityBridge proposes the locations, is there any public outreach efforts that you guys have with the community to let them know, hey, this is a potential location that we will put this kiosk. And then after you get feedback,

does that feedback have any way on if that location is the best location to have it?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIKOFF: Yes and yes.

So, when we get a proposed location, we do, like you mentioned, a rigorous review to make sure it meets all the siting criteria as an initial review. Once we determine that it does, simultaneous with the larger New York State Historical and Preservation Office review for the sites that CityBridge initiates, we reach out to every community board, every Council Member, every Borough President, and provide them with 60 days to review the site. We give them information about where it's located. We seek their input. We attend Community Board meetings. We meet with members as requested. We really do, in earnest, try to find out what this potential site would mean to that community and if there's a better location or if there's a concern with that particular location.

And then to answer your second question, when we do get the feedback, we take it back, try to determine if people just don't want it versus maybe it could go around the corner. Maybe there's a better location where there's less traffic, less foot traffic. Maybe there's a certain building next door

to it that they just didn't want it to be sited next to. So, where there's a practical solution to be able to move it, we make every attempt to do so.

Otherwise, we do engage the community, try to answer all their questions, address their concerns to the extent if we cannot move it, we at least try to make sure everyone's heard and give them an opportunity to provide their input.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay. I'll come back on that, but I know our Chair probably will dig more in on that. So, Chair Salamanca, I'll give you the floor to ask your questions.

CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Good morning.

I just want to continue on to that conversation there then I have my list of questions. So, you're saying that when you're proposing sites, you send them out to Community Boards and the Council Members, and you attend Community Board meetings?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIKOFF: I do.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay. That's the first I hear of it. And you attend Community Board meetings at the request of the Community Board, or you just

come as an applicant and say, hey, this is what we're presenting. I want to present to the Community Board.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIKOFF: It's the latter. So when they say, hey, we've received this letter, what does it mean, what does it do, how can we get more information back to the community, we either offer to attend an upcoming committee meeting or they'll say, hey, can you come to the next committee meeting? Or we have one. If it's in the late spring, early summer, and they're not meeting over the summer, we'll give an extension to that 60-day period to attend that Community Board meeting. We've done that quite often. So it's largely the latter in that upon request, we're totally available.

CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: What happens when a Community Board does not agree with that location?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIKOFF: So, it really depends on what the issue is. And we certainly hear people and we want to be accommodating as much as possible. The fact remains the infrastructure that's being installed provides a tremendous amount of benefits and utility to constituents. And if we receive negative feedback on a particular site, just to say we don't want it in the community, we don't

want it in the neighborhood, we don't want it in the city, we're really neglecting the majority of the city that is fully engaged.

CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: I understand. I understand. What happens when a Community Board does not want that kiosk in that particular site?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIKOFF: So, we certainly take the feedback in and we try to determine if it's something that can be relocated nearby. Like if we get feedback that it's, as I mentioned to Chair Riley, it's in front of an area, a school or something. So, to give you an example, forgetting the exact location, I think it was in Tremont, there was a site right in front of a school entrance and it was proposed in front of an entrance to where school buses drop off kids. It made no sense to go there. It met the siting criteria but didn't make any sense to go there. So, we were able to work with the franchisee to find another location within the neighborhood that also met the needs of the community. If it's just we don't want it because we don't want it, not to be callous about it, but we've got to think of the greater good for the community.

CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: I understand. Who chooses the sites? Is it the franchisee or is it the OTI?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIKOFF: So the franchisee, City Bridge, will come to us with their proposals.

CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: So they go out, and my understanding is they're going to testify after you. So just to understand the process, your role and their role. So they go out, they choose locations and then they present you with the locations, OTI.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIKOFF: That's right.

CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: And then you review it and you come to some type of agreement and then it goes to the Community Boards and Council Members, the 60-day notice you're saying, correct?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIKOFF: Right. We initially do that preliminary review to make sure it meets the minimum siting criteria and then it goes to the community.

CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Does someone from OTI physically go and visit the location?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIKOFF: We do.

CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: And they say, I agree with this location?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIKOFF: Well, we have a field inspector that validates the findings of the office folks...

CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Physically go out in the street?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIKOFF: We do. We physically go out to street to do measurements to make sure it's with the proper distance from other street furniture and other types of... (CROSS-TALK)

CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: And the reason I'm being very specific on these locations is because there's frustration in my community on sites, certain locations that have been chosen, which we feel are inappropriate, and there are other concerns that these kiosks have brought to our communities. And I know that I'm going to wait for the applicant or for the next panel to come and speak. You know, one of the issues and concerns that we have is installing of these kiosks. I represent an extremely low-income community. Out of all 51 Council Members. I have one of the highest amounts of homeless shelters in my District. I'm housing more homeless people from

outside my District than people that are homeless actually live in my community. And this is past administrations. So this is a mess that they've created, and this is something that is challenging for our communities. And unfortunately, I also have homeless family or individuals who are refusing City help. They just choose to be, you know, they want to live in the street, and so they're using these kiosks to charge their phones, charge their technology that they may have. But what's happening is that some of these individuals are camping out. They're creating camps on these kiosks, and I've asked the... and there was a time where I had a specific issue on Longwood and Dawson Street, and I got pushback from the, I call them the applicant but the person who has the contract as to what we're going to do to turn off the kiosk or how do we figure this out, and there was great opposition. And this is what started these conversation as to who chooses these locations. What happens if there's community opposition and are you actually hearing our community opposition? And should there be Council oversight in terms of a special permit to allow so that the Council can give us final stamp of approval as to where these pieces of these

kiosks are being put in city streets. And so that's the frustration that my community has.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIKOFF: Yeah. Chair Salamanca, I totally hear you, and we've seen it in other communities as well so it's not unique. I totally understand the uniqueness in yours.

What I would say is when we do get feedback from a community representative or a member of the public themselves about unhoused folks camped out at a site we do, you know, OTI is the tech agency, right, we don't do social services in that way, but we do we don't just wash our hands of it. We have a very aggressive partnership with other City agencies and social service agencies like Department of Homeless Services and the Mayor's Quality of Life Task Force that immediately address or seek to address the issue there. So, they'll send someone out within a day or two, I don't think it's ever gone more than two days, reach out to the individual, individuals who may be camped out at the site see if they can support them, get them services, and try to mitigate the issue that was brought to us. I totally understand. And it's a tough situation just...

CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: No. Let's go through this because they're watching. So you send out DHS and that individual refuses services. What's next?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIKOFF: I mean that that from an OTI perspective...

CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: No. What's next? Yes. So that issue. So you follow the procedure, that homeless individual is refusing services and they're physically camped out there. What is the next step that you... and they're camped out there because they're utilizing that kiosk as a source to charge their equipment and to watch TV to just be stationed there so what's next?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIKOFF: Yeah. I do know that both the Quality of Life folks from the Mayor's Office and the Task Force and Homeless Services will follow up and go back out, either at our request if we get a secondary complaint or someone has to say that it didn't help or the person may not have been there when the social service representatives showed up, and then we'll repeat that effort. But I would also say again the kiosk for all the good they're doing across the city, there really

is no limit to who they should serve, right. I don't speak for anyone else but my personal opinion is whether you're unhoused or you're living in a high rise that you should have access to technology, you should have access to Wi-Fi and be able to charge your device whenever you need it, again, whatever your situation.

CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: I don't want to deviate from my question.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIKOFF: No.

CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: I agree with them. I have a kiosk in front of my office. I see how it plays a positive role in my community. I don't have that issue in terms of an encampment in front of my office, but there are certain areas in my community that we do have and I want to go through this process. What happens next now? And the reason that I'm asking these questions is, number one, this kiosk that was placed there should have never been placed there. It should have been placed across the street by the park, but the City, at the time, made its appropriate decision to place it there because a community board or a recommendation from a Council Member is just advisory to your agency, and that is

the whole point of my idea of putting a special permit where you do not have the last say so. The community boards and local Members should have the last say so as to where these kiosks are placed, and the frustration that we had, how did we address that issue. After over close to two months, they were able to turn that kiosk off and that individual ended up going somewhere else and we were able to in the short time address that quality-of-life issue that we had in that location.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIKOFF: Moving forward, and you touched on it, shutting off that that charging feature which seems to be a draw for some folks is certainly a mitigation effort that we explored currently and that we will look at going forward as we come up with new design to see if that or any other element of the structure is a source of the problem or a problem. But, yeah, so we can certainly look at that and absolutely open to the Members here who may have additional thoughts on how we can do greater community engagement and have a larger impact on both where sites go and if they remain if they're causing any long-term public nuisance.

CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Who owns the kiosk, the physical structure? Is it the City or...

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIKOFF: They're owned by the franchisee.

CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: The franchisee. Okay, perfect.

What data is being collected through the kiosk, and how is that data stored and protected and used.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIKOFF: So, the data, again, it's a private network. It's run completely by the franchisee. They do provide information on the number of like five sessions on phone calls, time, stuff like that and that's all provided to us regularly and uploaded onto Open Data.

CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Have any studies or assessments been concluded to evaluate the potential health impacts associated with 5G technology used in or around the kiosk?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIKOFF: So, just like we do with all of our like telecom structures, we also franchise the pole top structures across the city in which there are about 6,000 which routinely get independent RF, radio frequency, emissions

testing to make sure that they're safe and they all come back clean. To date there haven't been any tested on the Link structures for the wireless, you know, the mobile telecom side because nothing has been activated to date just yet. But when it is we will absolutely make sure that that's compliant with all federal regulations. Again, that's completely under the feds.

CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: All right. And then lastly finances. You know, I know that you mentioned here that the program has generated 130 million dollars in revenue for the City. Have you gotten that whole 130 dollars?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIKOFF: Yes. So that 130 has been paid to the City. That's based on franchise fees that have been paid to the City. Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: All right. And are there any current monies that are owed to the City from this franchisee.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIKOFF: So, there's pursuant to the last amendment, the third amendment from several years ago, the franchisee was required to repay what's called a foreborn minimum annual guarantee and they were given monthly installments to

make those payments and they've been paying those on time and they're up-to-date. So, I think it was initially 60 million dollars that they owed us, and they haven't missed the payment and they owe us roughly 24 million dollars.

CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: 25 million. Okay.

And how much is the monthly payment.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIKOFF: It varies. So, the franchise fees escalate over time and so does the foreborn (INAUDIBLE) so I can get that to you, but it's a monthly payment that's made every month and it increases over time.

CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: Okay. All right.

Again, my frustration and the reason for me being here is the locations, how they're chosen, and real community input, and how much that community input actually means to the final decision. Would your agency support a special permit where the Council will have the final say so as to where these kiosks are placed.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SENATUS: Thank you for the question. I think we would be open to additional discussions with respect to the level of involvement the City Council has but it's the City's

authority and also OTI's authority over technology and infrastructure that motivates this. So, to the extent that we're trying to strike a balance between the public good and the good of a community somewhere down the line where this kiosk when it was cited it was fine but then a condition develops later, we need to strike a particular balance with respect to that. You may say fine with respect to the permit on day one but then still want that kiosk gone two or three years later and, given the fact that this is a very lengthy process in terms of engaging in these installations, I see that there may be a chance... I mean I don't I don't think it will necessarily address your concerns in all honesty.

CHAIRPERSON SALAMANCA: I think the issue is that I feel that there are individuals who do not live in the communities are making decisions as to where these kiosks are placed when there's community opposition, and so that's really my basis of this argument. Thank you.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SENATUS: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Chair.

Just want to state for a record we've been joined by Council Member Salamanca.

Just one more question, oh, not
Salamanca, excuse me, Council Member Salam. I'm
sorry, Council Member Salam.

Just for my understanding, when you guys
are I guess identifying the areas for the kiosk, what
is, I guess what influences the areas that you put it
in, like does it have to have the infrastructure
there, are there outside sources telling you they
need it there, what influences this decision?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIKOFF: Yeah. There's
a lot that goes into it, and it's a great question.
Given that the Link5G structures itself are designed
and given its size to support the telecom industry to
be able to improve telecommunications services,
that's a driver of it. I don't want to say it's the
driver of it. And, as I mentioned, CityBridge will be
testifying shortly after us so they can maybe better
speak to what goes into their decision making but,
from our perspective, we want to improve
telecommunications infrastructure, however we do it.
Through this franchise, through the others. This is
one method by which they do that so that's big for
us.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: I think with that list that you provided if... I do understand that it might be a lengthy process to have us as Members be a part of this, but I do feel where Council Member Salamanca is coming from because we are the ones that have to address the concerns in our community and, going into a lot of Districts, that has been a lot of concerns that there's a lot of encampments by these kiosks so if there is some way that we can have the list and maybe Council Members or community boards can give locations that will be doable for the kiosks, I think it will kind of mitigate a lot of the issues that Council Member Salamanca and a lot of people in our communities see so I think there's space where we can have some balance that have a lot more community say and you guys are actually listening because these are actually Members that know the corridors and know the activities that usually happen around them.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIKOFF: Yeah. For sure, and we totally appreciate that. And I would just note going back to, I mentioned the earlier I think 2021 period, there was an MOU that we signed with the Borough Presidents that I believe Council Members at the time were part of or at least involved

in discussions that outlined the community engagement process and we can certainly take a look at a way to boost that up in lieu of a more maybe complicated and potentially impactful, negatively impactful process that would affect the franchise. There may be another way to address the concerns through that.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thanks, Brad. I appreciate it.

There being no more questions, this panel is excused.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIKOFF: Thank you so much.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you.

The next panel I'm going to call consists of Nicholas Calvin and Alex Spyropoulos. I'm sorry if I mispronounce your name Alex.

First, we'll begin with Alex.

ALEX SPYROPOULOS: Good morning still. Thank you, Chair Riley and Members of the Subcommittee, for the opportunity to provide testimony today. My name is Alex Spyropoulos, and I am here to testify on behalf of TechNYC in strong support of extending the City's franchise agreement with LinkNYC.

For nearly a decade, New York City has been a national leader in recognizing that broadband is a critical infrastructure, not a luxury. Through the City's partnership with LinkNYC, millions of New Yorkers and visitors have gained access to fast, free, and digital services in their neighborhoods while the program has generated more than 130 million in revenue for the City with at least 70 million more projected by 2035. In addition to my testimony, I have attached a letter from over 20 organizations representing business community, labor, non-profit, civic and community organizations in support of renewing LinkNYC's franchise underscoring the broad citywide backing for this critical infrastructure. To better understand how New Yorkers engage with this infrastructure, TechNYC and LinkNYC partnered in 2025 on a citywide survey. The findings were clear from it. Connectivity is essential, usage is growing, and there is broad public support for continuing and expanding LinkNYC's work. 55 percent of New Yorkers now use free public Wi-Fi at least once a month and a six-point increase since 2023. Demand for fast, free Wi-Fi in your home is especially strong, underscoring how important it is to deploy this infrastructure in

residential neighborhoods, not just central business districts. At the same time, the survey highlights real affordability challenges. 35 percent of New Yorkers do not have an unlimited data plan, and among that group, 51 percent run out of data at least once per month per year. For these New Yorkers, free public Wi-Fi is not a convenience, it is a necessity, that allows them to stay connected to work, school healthcare, and government services when their paid data runs out. Extending the LinkNYC franchise is therefore directly tied to the Council's broader goals around affordability, equity, and opportunity.

For these reasons and based on the clear evidence of public need and support from the joint TechNYC and LinkNYC survey as well as the letter that I've attached, we respectfully urge the City Council and the Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises to extend the LinkNYC franchise agreement. Doing so will reaffirm the City's commitment to an affordable, accessible, and future-ready digital infrastructure that serves every neighborhood and every New Yorker. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. Nicholas.

NICHOLAS CALVIN: Thank you, Chair Riley, Chair Salamanca, and Members of the Committee. My name is Nick Calvin. I'm the CEO of LinkNYC. Since 2016, over 19 million users have connected to our free public Wi-Fi, the fastest of its kind anywhere. Every month, tens of thousands of New Yorkers use LinkNYC to call 9-1-1, 3-1-1, 9-8-8, and the New York State EBT helpline which is consistently the most frequently dialed number from LinkNYC kiosks. I'm here to ask for your support of this Authorizing Resolution so LinkNYC can keep doing what it was built to do, help make New York the most connected and accessible city in the country. A five-year extension will keep private investment flowing into the program and generate a projected 70 million more in revenue for the City by 2035, all without burdening taxpayers. It will also give us time to design new structures including smart poles tailored for residential and historic districts, reflecting the feedback we've heard from community members and Council Members alike. We're expanding access to connectivity in the neighborhoods that need it most. 90 percent of new deployments are above 96th Street and outside of Manhattan. And beyond connectivity,

LinkNYC supports good paying union jobs and generates a significant economic impact. LinkNYC has paid about 130 million to the City, and we provide tens of millions of dollars in free ad space for City agencies, community based non-profits, and local small businesses every year. No other program in the world combines free Wi-Fi, phone calls, device charging, direct access to City services, and critical 5G infrastructure all without any public funding. This five-year extension will ensure that we can keep strengthening this essential digital safety net, serving all New Yorkers and equipping our city for a more connected future together. Thank you so much for giving me this time.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you. I just have a couple of questions and I'll pass it to Chair Salamanca.

The kiosk, there was a redesign of the kiosk, correct?

NICHOLAS CALVIN: That's correct.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Can you discuss why there was a redesign of the kiosk and how many of these kiosks have been redesigned out of the I'm assuming 2,025 I think?

NICHOLAS CALVIN: Yeah. So back in '21 when the additional service of cellular radio placements was added to the franchise, we created the Link5G design. This is the first and only to date piece of infrastructure designed from the ground up to support wireless infrastructure, and that's because we're leveraging the private funding to deploy cellular infrastructure to help promote new deployments of the free services for New Yorkers. So, the design was specifically to support up to five cellular radios, multiple technologies from all of the commercial carriers that are out there.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay. And the radius of the 5G connections, can you discuss how far the radius goes? Is it half a mile, a mile?

NICHOLAS CALVIN: It depends on the technology. So as I said, there's multiple technologies supported. The ultra fast due to limitations of the technology inherent, not to the structure itself but to the radios, it's more like 500 feet. Some of the other technologies that are slightly slower but can go much farther are more like 1,500 feet up to maybe half a mile, quarter mile, half a mile, something like that.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Do these factors determine the location of where you guys want to put the kiosk?

NICHOLAS CALVIN: I would say a primary factor in the areas we target are based on two things. One is the equity targets of the City, so we do look at that, as well as the cellular carriers as the other primary objective. And the way it works is the carriers are very secretive about exactly where they need service, but they'll say we need service in this, say, three block area so find somewhere in that three-block area that will support this coverage need or this capacity need.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: I think if communities knew where the carriers wanted to put the services, they could give a better response in where they would think would be the best location. I think when Chair Salamanca was speaking, he said that you guys put it at one place and it would have been better suited across the street so is there any way we could kind of push the carriers to kind of give us the location so we could kind of better suit and ask the community, where within this radius do you feel it would be best for this kiosk?

NICHOLAS CALVIN: I would love that. The carriers, like I said, are fairly secretive, and I will say that their needs change all the time as people's movement patterns change and where they live change and the demands on the network so they don't give a lot of advance notice as to where they're looking. And I will also say, as Brett mentioned earlier, there are lots of requirements as far as siting criteria. I think there's over a hundred stipulating various distances from other infrastructure like fire hydrants, bus shelters, entrances to buildings, a myriad of things that go into selecting a specific location on the sidewalk so it's not really feasible for the carriers to pick a site because they're not familiar with all those rules. So, what they do is they give us the area and then we comb through all those rules. We do surveys first like a desktop exercise, and then we send people out to the street to validate what the maps we have are telling us about what's available. And often in, say, a two-block stretch, we may find only one site in that entire two-block stretch that's actually compliant with the siting criteria that are imposed

upon us by both local, city, state, and federal requirements.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay. Chair Salamanca.

CHAIR SALAMANCA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
How are you?

So, I have a few questions for you.

First, I want to say that having this service in my community, knowing the community that I represent has, my community is benefiting from these services so I just want to be clear on that. The frustration here is the unintended consequence. And I think that some of these unintended consequences can be addressed if you come and talk to us and listen to us and allow us to tell you what's the best locations for these kiosks. And so I want to start very quickly. Is there a way for you to track the amount of USB usage or energy or, you know, every time someone plugs in their telephone to recharge a piece of electronic or equipment?

NICHOLAS CALVIN: Unfortunately, right now, due to the technology that was available when we first designed this 10 years ago, we are not able to tell that. We do have an upgrade to the USB charger that we are getting ready to begin rolling out now.

So in the coming months and years, we will be able to track that on a site-by-site basis. But today, we cannot track that remotely.

CHAIR SALAMANCA: What's the cost of installing one of these kiosks?

NICHOLAS CALVIN: That varies greatly per site, but I will say it is north of 70,000 dollars per site and sometimes a lot more.

CHAIR SALAMANCA: 70,000, so that's breaking up the ground, installing, and that doesn't include the piece of equipment?

NICHOLAS CALVIN: That includes the piece of equipment also. It also includes trenching to the nearest manhole for electricity, for fiber, getting the fiber backbone to the location. That's why the cost can go up dramatically from there and also conditions on the street affect it.

CHAIR SALAMANCA: And you're subcontracting these installations?

NICHOLAS CALVIN: That's correct. We work with a number of different civil contractors.

CHAIR SALAMANCA: And they're union labor?

NICHOLAS CALVIN: Correct.

CHAIR SALAMANCA: Good. Full transparency, we had a conversation. I know that you had more questions than you wanted to hear what my concerns were, but something that struck me, there was an issue on that same location on Longwood and Dawson where they installed a kiosk next to a homeowner who owns a daycare. Listen to this, Mr. Chair. And during the installation that occurred, first, there was no notification for her. One day, she just saw a group of individuals just hanging out there all hours of the night, and then her Con Ed bill just skyrocketed. And for some reason, they connected the kiosk... there was some faulty connection where the kiosk was connected to her. She was being charged for electricity that was being used in this kiosk. When she notified us, we were able to work with your organization and Con Ed, and the issue was addressed. But you did mention that you utilized Con Ed to connect the electrical?

NICHOLAS CALVIN: We pay civil contractors to do the actual running of the line to the Con Ed manhole. But yes, we pay Con Ed for each and every connection and a dedicated connection to each kiosk.

So, I have no idea how that happened. That shouldn't be possible as far as I understand it.

CHAIR SALAMANCA: All right. Now, in terms of going back to the locations, and I did learn that it's OTI who has kind of the final say-so. So, you're identifying locations and presenting them to the OTI, and they're the ones that are giving you the green light or saying, no, this is not an appropriate location.

NICHOLAS CALVIN: That's right. And we do, I will say, we support OTI in reaching out to communities and to Council Members and the Borough Presidents to let them know this is coming and to present to them and hear their concerns firsthand. And at times, we'll even go out, so an example would be, I think, actually, Chair Riley's District. I think we reached out and spoke to you even before the Community Board meeting, and you recommended we speak to, I think it was Parkside Terrace, something like that. What's the name of the property? What's that?

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Mark Terrace.

NICHOLAS CALVIN: Mark Terrace. Okay. Thank you. We went out and spoke to them, and they suggested a different location. Thankfully, we were

able to move it there. I will say, we try to accommodate every request to move a kiosk if it makes more sense for the community. We want these to make sense to the community where they're located. Sometimes we can't because of those very many siting criteria that we have to adhere to sometimes, even though a site looks like it might be okay. The example you brought up about the park, I can't speak to that specific location, but we are prohibited from being within a certain distance of a park, for example, so there's lots of things that may appear to be a perfect spot, but there's arcane rules that prevent us from installing there.

CHAIR SALAMANCA: I have a question about that. Is that a City rule? Those are the restrictions that they put where you cannot be by a City park?

NICHOLAS CALVIN: Many of them, yes. There are others that are federal in nature. I believe there's some other state restrictions as well. There's many different layers of regulatory oversight on this.

CHAIR SALAMANCA: Okay. Very quickly, I just want to go back into the finances. I know that OTI, they spoke earlier and they said that there was

a 60-million-dollar debt and you brought it down to 25 million dollars. I (TIMER CHIME) know this because in my past, I've been Chair of Land Use since 2018 and during the budget hearings, we would ask OTI and the Commissioner, what's the status of this money that is owed? Why was the debt incurred? I know that you're paying it down, but I'm just curious.

NICHOLAS CALVIN: Without going into all of the details of the past, the program was restructured in 2021 to right-size both the finances and the deployment targets. If you go all the way back to 2014 when the franchise was originally envisioned by the City and the original folks who worked at CityBridge to bring this together, there were a lot of assumptions that were made regarding how much it would cost to build the network and how much revenue it would generate. Unfortunately, as is too often the case, the cost projections were far too low and the revenue projections were far too high. The minimum annual guarantee that was set originally in the program was based on that original assumption about revenue and cost that was just unfortunately quite wrong. There came a point where while we were still continuing to deploy, we couldn't afford to

keep deploying and also pay a very high minimum annual guarantee at the same time. We continued deploying, stopped paying the minimum annual guarantee, and worked with the City at that point to start restructuring the program to right-size it in that way.

CHAIR SALAMANCA: Okay. Is there a commitment from your agency or your office that when a Community Board or a Council Member is having a similar issue with individuals who are camping out on these kiosks that you would move much quicker to deactivate that kiosk until we figure out a long-term solution to address that issue?

NICHOLAS CALVIN: I will say when you say deactivate, I'll speak to the USB... (CROSS-TALK)

CHAIR SALAMANCA: (INAUDIBLE)

NICHOLAS CALVIN: Or specific services being problematic. Absolutely. I do want to say that we are required by our contract to provide USB charging as an example and don't have discretion to deactivate it for weeks or permanently or anything like that. We do need the City to tell us to do that.

CHAIR SALAMANCA: So it's the City's decision to tell you to deactivate the USB?

NICHOLAS CALVIN: Correct. If there's a site like the case you're describing where the community is asking for it to be deactivated for several weeks, we need the City to tell us to do that.

CHAIR SALAMANCA: Okay.

NICHOLAS CALVIN: We'll work with you. We're happy to talk to you and raise the concern as well but we can't unilaterally make that decision.

CHAIR SALAMANCA: All right. Finally, your prices, your fees for advertising. Is there a sliding fee for non-for-profits?

NICHOLAS CALVIN: We actually provide free advertising for non-profits.

CHAIR SALAMANCA: Free advertising for what?

NICHOLAS CALVIN: Within reason. There's obviously different sizes of non-profits, and there's guardrails around how much free advertising you can get but we do give free advertising to local non-profits and also small businesses that meet certain criteria in terms of the size of the business.

CHAIR SALAMANCA: You have kiosks where there are BIDs. Are you offering that same service to the BIDs?

NICHOLAS CALVIN: I believe we do offer that to the BIDs. Nicole, who's here with me, runs that part of the program and she can keep me honest here.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: She's shaking her head.

CHAIR SALAMANCA: She made eye contact with me.

NICHOLAS CALVIN: Yes, we do.

CHAIR SALAMANCA: Okay. All right. Mr. Chair, thank you for the opportunity to ask these questions.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Chair. It seems like our beef is with the City, not with you guys. We truly appreciate it and we know how important this service is. I think we just want to make sure that it's more efficient. Thank you for willing to hear our concerns and actually addressing them. Thank you so much.

There being no more questions, this panel is excused.

We're going to go into public testimony, and we're going to begin with this panel which consists of Thomas Terzulli, Steve Murphy, and Christopher Leon Johnson.

Gentlemen, thank you so much for coming and testifying today. We'll begin first with Steve and then we'll start with Thomas.

STEVE MURPHY: Good afternoon. Thank you for allowing me to speak.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Steve, if you could just talk a little bit closer to it.

STEVE MURPHY: Good morning. Thank you for allowing me to speak. On behalf of the offices and nearly 27,000 members of Local Union No. 3 IBEW, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of the LinkNYC Franchise Extension. My name is Steve Murphy. I've been a journeyman electrician for the last 39 years in Local Union No. 3. LinkNYC plays an essential role in building the telecommunications and digital infrastructure that powers New York's economy and keeps our city connected. As a member of Local Union No. 3 IBEW, I strongly support the LinkNYC program because it has consistently stood with union workers and delivered real measurable economic

benefits for working families across all the five boroughs. Since its inception, LinkNYC has supported hundreds of good-paying union jobs, from construction and installation to the ongoing maintenance and operations of these units. These are solid middle-class careers that allow New Yorkers to support their families, buy homes, and reinvest in their communities. The program's commitment to using union labor ensures that the benefits of modern infrastructure are shared by the workers who build and maintain it. When you support LinkNYC, you're supporting the union jobs, small business owners, and the economic foundation of this great city. LinkNYC strengthens our middle class, invests in our local workforce, and keeps our city's economy moving forward. Thank you for your time.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Steve, for your testimony.

Thomas.

THOMAS TERZULLI: Thomas Terzulli, Local 3 member. I just want to say LinkNYC has given many opportunities to a lot of people that live in, I think, actually some of your Councilmen communities. Union-paying jobs bring up the income of diversity in

union-paying jobs with women, minorities, bring people up out of poverty, give them a fair working chance, send their kids to schools, but also gives insurance, which we know is under assault in this country, to union members, which are your constituents. So, supporting this project would be great for New York City, great for the underprivileged people that we're going to expand this to, and great for New York City citizens that rely on good union jobs and a living wage. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Steve.

Thank you, Thomas, for your testimony. You're excused.

We're going to transition to online testimony. This panel will consist of Edward Wallace, Dirk McCall, and Peter Rescigno.

We'll begin first with Edward Wallace.

Edward, if you can hear me, please unmute and you may begin.

EDWARD WALLACE: Can you hear me? Can you hear me? No?

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes. Go ahead, Edward.

EDWARD WALLACE: I'm actually going to decline to testify, save you the time, and we'll submit a memorandum. Okay. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Okay. Thank you, Edward.

Next, we'll hear from Dirk McCall.

Dirk, if you can hear me, please unmute and you may begin.

Dirk McCall, if you can hear me, please unmute and you may begin.

Okay. We'll move to Peter Rescigno.

PETER RESCIGNO: Great. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On behalf of the New York Electrical Contractors Association, New York City's leading trade association of unionized electrical contractors, signatory to a collective bargaining agreement with Local 3, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of the franchise extension for Link New York City. Link New York City plays an essential role in building the telecommunications and digital infrastructure that powers New York's economy and keeps our city connected. As labor leaders, we strongly support Link New York City's program because it has consistently stood with union workers and

delivered real, measurable economic benefits for working families across the five boroughs. Since its inception, Link New York City has supported hundreds of good-paying union jobs, from construction and installation to the ongoing maintenance and operations of the program. These are solid, middle-class careers that allow New Yorkers to support their families, buy homes, and reinvest in their communities. The program's commitment to using union labor ensures the benefits of modern infrastructure is shared by the workers who build it and maintain it. The economic ripple effect is substantial. Link New York City has generated over 1.3 billion in local economic activity, 780 million in labor income, and 130 million in direct revenue for the City, all while providing free public Wi-Fi and nationwide phone calling at no cost to the taxpayers. Beyond its union workforce, Link New York City's Link Local initiative has helped more than 2,000 small businesses and non-profits, many of them minority and women-owned, access over 16 million in free digital advertising, helping them compete and grow. While you support Link New York City, you are supporting union jobs, small business owners, and the economic foundation of the

City of New York. Link New York City strengthens our middle-class, invests in our local workforce, and keeps our city economy moving forward. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today, and we support your continued efforts to renew this franchise extension. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Peter.

Dirk McCall, you can press star 6 to unmute, and you may begin.

DIRK MCCALL: Hi. Are you able to hear me?

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Yes, we can hear you.

DIRK MCCALL DE PALOMÁ: Thank you so much.

Thank you, Chair Riley and Members of the Subcommittee, for this opportunity to bring to the Subcommittee this evening. My name is Dirk McCall de Palomá, and I am the Executive Director of the Sunnyside Shines Business Improvement District in Sunnyside, Queens. I'm honored to be here today to speak in support of the CityBridge Franchising Authorizing Resolution Amendment. Sunnyside Shines works very closely with LinkNYC, and their network is incredibly helpful to the residents of Sunnyside. We advertise many local events on the kiosk regularly, and every time we advertise, we hear from many people

that they saw the kiosk and the advertisements. We've been working with our local merchants to get more of them to advertise on the kiosk as well. It's an amazing way to share information with the public. Every day we see people using the kiosk to charge phones, to access the Internet. It's been very, very welcome in Sunnyside, and the more kiosks we can have in Sunnyside, the better. We strongly encourage the authorization to extend this franchise for another five years, and I thank you for this opportunity to bring testimony.

CHAIRPERSON RILEY: Thank you, Dirk.

If there are any other members of the public who want to testify, please use the raise hand function online, and if you're in the room, please see one of the Sergeant-at-Arms. We will stand at ease for 30 seconds.

Okay. There being no other members of the public who wish to testify on Resolution 1109 of 2025 regarding an amendment to the Public Communications Structure Franchise Authorizing Resolution, the public hearing is now closed, and the items are laid over.

That concludes today's business.

I would like to thank the members of the public, my Colleagues, Subcommittee Counsel, Land Use and other Council Staff, and the Sergeant- at-Arms for participating in today's meeting.

This meeting is hereby adjourned. Thank you. [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 December 4, 2025