

COMMITTEE ON AGING

1

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

----- X

TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON AGING

----- X

Monday, September 23, 2024

Start: 1:05 p.m.

Recess: 4:02 p.m.

HELD AT:

B E F O R E: HON. CRYSTAL HUDSON, CHAIR

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

CHRIS BANKS
LINDA LEE
DARLENE MEALY
YUSEF SALAAM
LYNN C. SCHULMAN
SUSAN ZHUANG

OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS ATTENDING:

YUSEF SALAAM

COMMITTEE ON AGING

A P P E A R A N C E S

Lorraine Cortés-Vázquez,
Commissioner of the New York City Department for
the Aging (NYC Aging)

Tara Klein,
Deputy Director of Policy and Advocacy at United
Neighborhood Houses

Kevin Kiprovski,
Director of Public Policy at LiveOn NY

Molly Krakowski,
Senior Director of Government Affairs at Jewish
Association Serving the Aging (JASA)

Adam Roberts,
New York Apartment Association (NYAA)

Linda Hoffman,
President of New York Foundation for Senior
Citizens

Po-Ling Ng,
Director of Chinese-American Planning Council at
Open Door Senior Center

Jeannine Cahill-Jackson,
Director of Elder Law Civil Practice, The Legal
Aid Society

Kahlia Thompson,
Director of the Older Adult Center @Arverne, a
program operated by Ocean Bay Community
Development Corporation

Darcy Connors
Executive Director, SAGEServes

COMMITTEE ON AGING

(BLANK PAGE)

1
2 SERGEANT LUGO: Good afternoon, this is a
3 microphone check for the Committee on Aging. Today's
4 date is September 23, 2024; located in the Committee
5 Room; recording done by Pedro Lugo.

6 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Good afternoon, and welcome to
7 today's New York City Hearing for the Committee on
8 Aging.

9 To minimize disruptions throughout the hearing,
10 please place all electronic devices to vibrate or
11 silent mode.

12 If you have testimony you wish to submit for the
13 record you may do so via email at
14 testimony@council.nyc.gov, once again, that is
15 testimony@council.nyc.gov.

16 At any time throughout the hearing, please do not
17 approach the dais. We thank you for your cooperation.

18 Chair, we are ready to begin.

19 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: (GAVEL SOUND) (GAVELING IN)

20 Thank you so much. Good afternoon, everyone, I am
21 Council Member Crystal Hudson, Chair of the Committee
22 on Aging. My pronouns are she/her, and welcome to
23 today's oversight hearing on New York City Aging's
24 Community Care Plan.
25

1
2 We will also hear the following legislation
3 today:

4 Introduction Number 1022, sponsored by Council
5 Member Jennifer Gutiérrez and myself, A Local Law in
6 relation to requiring a study on naturally occurring
7 retirement communities and the development of a plan
8 to support aging in place.

9 And the following legislation, which I sponsored,
10 Intro Number 1025, in relation to the provision of
11 information regarding employment discrimination and
12 older adult workforce programs.

13 A Preconsidered Introduction in relation to a
14 study and report on the feasibility of creating older
15 adult information and service centers.

16 A Preconsidered Introduction in relation to a 10-
17 year plan to support aging in place in New York City.

18 And, lastly, Resolution 452, which requires the
19 federal government to pass legislation to lower the
20 age of eligibility for Older Americans Act-supported
21 social services and programs from 60 to 45 years for
22 individuals living with HIV.

23 In April 2021, then mayor Bill de Blasio
24 announced a \$58 million investment in the first year
25 of a five-year Community Care Plan to address the

1
2 increasing and changing needs of New York City's
3 rapidly growing older adult population.

4 Building community care for an age inclusive New
5 York City, which I will refer to... Okay, and I will
6 pause, we are having a technical difficulty online.

7 Did you catch any of it, or no?

8 (PAUSE)

9 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Do you need to do your thing
10 again? Okay, but did you catch or do I need to start
11 over?

12 Okay, thank you, again, for everyone's patience.
13 Apologies for the technical difficulties. I am just
14 going to start over, if that's okay.

15 So, good afternoon, everyone, I am Council Member
16 Crystal Hudson, Chair of the Committee on Aging. My
17 pronouns are she/her. Welcome to today's oversight
18 hearing on New York City Aging's Community Care Plan.

19 We will also hear the following legislation
20 today:

21 Introduction Number 1022, sponsored by Council
22 Member Jennifer Gutiérrez and myself, A Local Law in
23 relation to requiring a study on naturally occurring
24 retirement communities and the development of a plan
25 to support aging in place.

1
2 And the following legislation, which I sponsored,
3 Intro Number 1025, in relation to the provision of
4 information regarding employment discrimination and
5 older adult workforce programs.

6 A Preconsidered Introduction in relation to a
7 study and report on the feasibility of creating older
8 adult information and service centers.

9 A Preconsidered Introduction in relation to a 10-
10 year plan to support aging in place in New York City.

11 And, lastly, Resolution 452, which requires the
12 federal government to pass legislation to lower the
13 age of eligibility for Older Americans Act-supported
14 social services and programs from 60 to 45 years for
15 individuals living with HIV.

16 We are also joined today by Council Member
17 Schulman and Council Member Banks.

18 In April 2021, then mayor Bill de Blasio
19 announced a \$58 million investment in the first year
20 of a five-year Community Care Plan to address the
21 increasing and changing needs of New York City's
22 rapidly growing older adult population.

23 Building community care for age-inclusive New
24 York City, which I will refer to as "the plan",
25 highlights the importance of creating a network of

1
2 services that support that independence, self-
3 reliance, and well-being that older New Yorkers need
4 to age in their homes.

5 Data shows the community care, which refers to a
6 range of services and supports provided to
7 individuals, particularly older adults, within their
8 homes and communities helps people stay healthy
9 longer and avoid institutional care.

10 Given that 90 percent of Americans have reported
11 a desire to age at home, community care is the best
12 to way to help older New Yorkers maintain their
13 health and quality of life while staying connected to
14 their communities. Moreover, community care is cost
15 effective at about \$32,000 annually per person versus
16 a \$154,000 per person in a nursing home. It also
17 reduces hospitalizations and fosters social
18 connections, which benefit both individuals and
19 communities.

20 By 2040, older adults are projected to make up 15
21 percent of New York City's population. The Plan is a
22 forward thinking initiative that addresses the
23 growing needs or the City's older adult population
24 focusing on promoting universal access to community
25 services to ensure older adults have access to a full

1 range of high quality critical services, resources,
2 and opportunities to support their daily living
3 activities: Expanding and strengthening community
4 care services through increased investments in
5 community care to keep pace with the growing and
6 diversifying older adult population, enhancing equity
7 and inclusion by addressing historical funding
8 inequities and ensure services are responsive to the
9 needs of a diverse older adult population including
10 immigrants and ethnic and racial minorities;
11 improving interrogation and collaboration by
12 fostering synergies between older adults centers,
13 naturally occurring retirement communities and other
14 community resources; leveraging technology by
15 utilizing virtual programming and other technologies
16 to reach isolated older adults and enhance service
17 delivery; increasing outreach and marketing to
18 improve awareness and uptake of community care
19 services, especially among those most in need;
20 enhancing transportation options to provide better
21 transportation to connect older adults in service or
22 transportation deserts to essential services; and
23 supporting COVID recovery through the use of
24 community care services to help older adults recover
25

1 from the impacts of the COVID pandemic and avoid the
2 negative effects of isolation.

3
4 NYC Aging budgeted \$179.2 million to support the
5 Community Care Plan across FY22 through FY25, which
6 is largely financed using temporary COVID-19 pandemic
7 related federal stimulus funds that must be used by
8 the end of calendar year 2024. Yet, the Department
9 has not seen any major funding increases since The
10 Plan's announcement to finance its specific needs.

11 In the FY25 adopted plan, \$4.8 million in
12 baseline funding was added to increase reimbursement
13 rates home delivered meals and \$12.2 million in
14 funding was added in FY25 to replace expiring federal
15 funding for older adult centers, and restore funding
16 that had been previously cut with no additional
17 funding added to expand services identified under The
18 Plan.

19 In its FY25 Preliminary Budget response, the
20 Council called for a \$78.2 million additional funding
21 for home care case management to increase
22 reimbursement rates for home delivered meals, to
23 invest in capital improvements at older adult
24 centers, and to restore funding previously cut for
25 older adult centers.

1
2 These investments, along with long term community
3 based planning, are essential to the health and well-
4 being of older New Yorkers.

5 To make that point, I'd like to read something we
6 received from Educational Alliance staff about a NORC
7 (Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities) in
8 Manhattan.

9 Through its boots on the ground work, including
10 home visits and community nursing, Coop Village NORC
11 staff are able to reach older adults who become
12 isolated from their community. In a recent client
13 satisfaction survey, one member shared that the Coop
14 Village NORC case manager and nurse, quote, "Saved my
15 life by reaching out to me when I was in a deep,
16 dark, prolonged depression." End quote.

17 This person has once again become an active
18 member, post pandemic, reconnecting with friends and
19 enjoying exercise and education workshops.

20 While I don't want to take up too much time with
21 my opener, we received quite a few anecdotes
22 assembled by service providers testifying to the
23 importance of this work. They all highlight the
24 significant and positive impact that OACs (Older
25 Adult Center) and NORCS have on older adults. They

1 appreciate the variety of activities including art,
2 ceramics, dance, exercise, and educational work jobs,
3 which help them stay physically, mentally, and
4 emotionally healthy. Many also express gratitude for
5 supportive and friendly staff, the sense of
6 community, and the opportunities for socialization
7 and learning. Virtual classes are particularly valued
8 by those with mobility issues.

9
10 Overall, these programs provide structure,
11 improve well-being, and combat isolation. Ensuring
12 the longevity and growth of these programs is
13 essential to ensuring the quality of life of older
14 New Yorkers now and to come.

15 My legislation is concerned with the City's long
16 term plan for the growing older adult population. It
17 is imperative that we are prepared to serve those New
18 Yorkers who have given so much to our communities,
19 and I look forward to the Administration's feedback
20 on our vision for older New Yorkers.

21 At this hearing, the Committee is also interested
22 in addressing the unique needs of older adults to
23 ensure they can age in place with dignity. This
24 includes an overview of how these needs are being
25 met, how planned funding has been used, and how NYC

1
2 Aging is planning for continued growth of the City's
3 older adult population.

4 Additionally, the Committee seeks an overview of
5 virtual programming and the use of technology to
6 reach as many older adults as possible and reduce the
7 impacts of social isolation.

8 Thank you to the members of the Aging Committee
9 who have joined us today.

10 We've also been joined by Council Member Salaam.

11 Also like to thank my staff, Casie Addison and
12 Andrew Wright, an aging committee staff, Christopher
13 Pepe, Chloë Rivera, Julia Haramis, and Saiyemul
14 Hamid.

15 I will turn it over to the committee counsel now
16 to administer the oath.

17 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Chair. Good
18 afternoon, Commissioner.

19 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Good afternoon.

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Now in accordance with the
21 rules of the Council, I will administer the
22 affirmation to the witnesses from the mayoral
23 administration.

24 Commissioner, please raise your right hand.
25

1
2 Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth,
3 and nothing but the truth in your testimony before
4 this committee, and to respond honestly to council
5 member questions?

6 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: I do.

7 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: You may proceed.

8 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Thank you. Thank you
9 for the opening. We are going to try to answer as
10 many of those questions through the testimony... And,
11 uhm, and, then, I'm sure that the testimony will beg
12 other questions that we will be addressing. So, thank
13 you for that.

14 Good afternoon, Chair Hudson, and members of the
15 New York City Council Committee on Aging. Great to
16 see you again, Council Member Banks, and also Council
17 Member Salaam, it's been great to see you. And I like
18 when you see you in your own respective communities.

19 Before I say who I am, I am going to say that in
20 honor of Older American's Act Month, one of the
21 things we have done at NYC Aging is create
22 certificates of appreciation - precisely for what you
23 were talking about, Council Member, uh, Chair Hudson
24 - and it is acknowledging the valuable work that OACs
25 and NORCS do for older adults. And everyone at NYC

1
2 Aging staff, not only the community service staff,
3 but everyone is required to go out to the 315 sites
4 and give them a certificate. And why is that
5 important? Because many of our staff, you know, are
6 counting, looking at books and paper administered ,
7 and they might not know or it might been a while
8 before they knew exactly how the services are being
9 delivered in the community. And I think it's
10 essential that they know, so that they'll know what
11 all of that paperwork that they do inside, what it
12 looks like materialized in the community.

13 It's been eye opening for a lot of our staff, but
14 it is also a way to making sure that we are not
15 disconnected from what we do every day, which is to
16 serve older adults.

17 So I'm gonna go back to my testimony.

18 I am Lorraine Cortés-Vázquez, I am the
19 Commissioner of the New York City Department for the
20 Aging (NYC Aging) as you all know, and my pronouns,
21 which I always resist, because it's a generalization
22 thing, are she/aya. We have an opportunity to discuss
23 with you NYC Aging's Community Care Plan - something
24 that we are really proud of - and our vision for
25

1
2 aging services for older adults today, but also into
3 the future, because know what the growth is.

4 At its heart, the Community Care Plan was
5 developed to comprehensively address the needs and
6 realities of an aging population. This plan is
7 inextricably linked to the City's overall goal of
8 increasing life expectancy post COVID, and also
9 public health successes, which means that older New
10 Yorkers are healthier, living longer, and spending a
11 greater portion of their lives as older adults.

12 So, it's really an interesting thing, and I'm
13 going off my topic again.

14 It's an interesting thing because we saw
15 longevity reduce overall for the City. And one of the
16 things that our partner in the Department of Health
17 was saying, okay, how do we all work towards
18 increasing longevity at the same time that the older
19 adult population is exploding? So it's one thing that
20 we're all looking at.

21 So our post COVID programming is key. We cannot
22 promote policy solutions to improve people's health
23 when they are young and middle aged without also
24 ensuring that there is a robust support of social
25 service structure in place to meet the needs when

1
2 they become older adults. The reality is that New
3 Yorkers want to age in place. They want to live in
4 their homes and in the communities that they help
5 build and that they're living longer in this process.

6 The Community Care Plan as the Chairwoman Hudson
7 stated, it was developed in 2021. As part of a
8 recognition that the growing and changing landscape
9 of older adult population would require new
10 approaches to ensure that New York City supports
11 older adults as they age in place in their homes and
12 communities. This allowed NYC Aging to build on
13 existing community care elements that were ready in
14 place. None of these are new services, but it is the
15 way we're looking at those services.

16 The Plan was released in conjunction with the
17 2021 older adult center and NORCS naturally occurring
18 retirement communities, request for proposal, which
19 expanded the number of centers and resources for
20 older adults.

21 The goal was to grow the existing NYC Aging
22 network of programs and services to be more
23 responsive to the current and anticipated community
24 needs of older adults.
25

1
2 In the first years, we focused on rightsizing
3 congregate services and better aligning to the
4 realities of aging services we learned at the end of
5 the pandemic, including having providers follow model
6 budgets. We created a model budget. We said this is
7 what it requires... is required to serve older
8 adults, because before we had budgets at all levels
9 and very unequal. And we also then did strive for
10 salary parity so that we could have a workforce that
11 had fair salaries across the board. That's to say
12 that they're still inadequate, but nevertheless,
13 we've been working towards salary parity.

14 This resulted in an increase of the number of
15 older adult centers with a focus on communities where
16 aging population was growing.

17 In the subsequent years, we prioritize linkages
18 and referral pathways to services between providers
19 so that nearby programs can benefit from the
20 resources and address community needs - As a matter
21 of fact, that was built into the RFP - We increased
22 outreach citywide services, and then we realized that
23 we needed to do something else, which was a public
24 education campaign, which we called "Join Us", and to
25 work with providers and also to do their own

1
2 advertising. Last year, we also redeveloped NYC
3 Aging's transportation program through an RFP which
4 ensures that every community has access to individual
5 and group rides, with a citywide provider who can
6 supplement the need.

7 At the same time, NYC Aging also developed vision
8 for an age inclusive New York with the goal of
9 delaying and/or avoiding entirely the reliance on
10 institutional care as an option for older adults.

11 Again, I'm gonna go off the record.

12 You know, as I've told you in the past, that when
13 these services were built, the City's composition and
14 the nation's composition was very different. So, that
15 community care was not something that people thought
16 of intuitively. But, with the multicultural rise in
17 this country and in this city, we see that community
18 care, because that is culturally syntonic with those
19 communities where it was not an approach that may
20 have been in the past.

21 Let me go back to where... Relying on other
22 institutional care, NYC Aging envisions a New York
23 City where older adults benefit from all the
24 cultural, art and entertainment this City offers,
25 coupled with supports, care, and services to live in

1
2 their homes and community with dignity throughout
3 their lifetime. Comprehensive community care reflects
4 the languages and cultural needs of older New Yorkers
5 when considering the nutritional, social,
6 educational, and in-home care - which is a key part
7 of this - which contribute to our continued
8 commitment to avoid institutional care.

9 When people remain in their home, they are more
10 likely, and this is data driven information... They
11 are more likely to physically thrive for longer
12 periods of time than if they were placed in an
13 institutional care. Their mental health also remains
14 stronger when receiving services and support in
15 community rather than in institutions. The community
16 also benefits from having to... to having older
17 adults aging in place, because they're also an
18 economic support for communities. Remaining at home
19 allows older adults to continue to be socially
20 connected and bolster their communities through high
21 level of faith based and civic engagement.

22 Not only are there social community benefits to
23 older adults remaining in their homes longer, but
24 there are also economic impacts for promoting
25 community care as well while living in the

1
2 communities they helped build. Older adults are
3 spending money locally reinvesting in that community.
4 Supporting a person at home also helps to decrease
5 avoidable hospitalizations, emergency room visits,
6 and unnecessary nursing home stays.

7 Overall, the investment as the Chair aptly said,
8 it costs \$32,000 to keep someone in the home with
9 community care support, while institutional care is
10 \$154,000 per adult annually.

11 From a public finance perspective, what would you
12 prefer?

13 This reflects that... was off the record... This
14 reflects the estimated... (CROSS-TALK)

15 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Was that a rhetorical
16 question?

17 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: cost savings of a
18 compilation of services provided through New York
19 City. There is also an impactful benefit to ensuring
20 that more older adults can safely live in their
21 homes, through making improvements in apartments or
22 buildings, which promote universal design, elements
23 so that people can age, in place, live, and thrive.
24
25

1
2 Think about walk up buildings... and I can get to
3 that later... Things that we could do to make those
4 so people can age in place.

5 The future is looking as we plan for the coming
6 of caregiving and home care needs, where we know that
7 those needs will only grow.

8 Our programs and services offered to older adults
9 should go beyond older adult centers, but also should
10 include a full compendium of needs which older adults
11 experience throughout their lives.

12 A fundamental component of the Community Care
13 Plan includes collaboration between partner agencies.
14 And one of the things that we've done is establish a
15 New York... that this mayor has done is establish an
16 NYC cabinet for older New Yorkers, because we saw the
17 need for the component parts of government to
18 innovate and address issues affecting older adults,
19 to try to address problems rather than individually,
20 but through across collaborations and to communicate
21 beyond those silos that have been developed over the
22 years.

23 We were able to access care in programs that they
24 need. We were able to address gaps and also things
25 grew out of this cabinet organically.

1
2 That collaboration addresses key goals of the
3 Community Care Plan by connecting a range of programs
4 and services offered by New York City Aging and other
5 partner agencies to fit the needs of older adults.

6 The Community Care Plan was part of developing
7 cabinet priorities and provided a framework for
8 subcommittees to identify issues most affecting older
9 adults.

10 For example, one priority born out of the
11 Community Care Plan related to public and pedestrian
12 safety. As older adults remain, uh, wish to remain in
13 their communities and continue to age in place, they
14 are more susceptible to injury or death when struck
15 by a vehicle or harmed because of issues like
16 sidewalk and other elements on the street.

17 We partnered with DOT, who had an annual survey
18 or at least a biannual survey that that they would do
19 on pedestrian safety. But, now we've expanded that
20 partnership to develop walking tours and discussion
21 with older adults from NYC Aging OACs to better under
22 understand the issues in their community and develop
23 solutions.

24 This is just one example of the cabinet
25 initiatives, which were key to the success of the

1
2 community plan. And it was fundamental to our
3 outreach efforts, and this was budget neutral
4 efforts.

5 Despite these benefits, we know that there is
6 more work to be done, especially in caregiving sector
7 for older New Yorkers and Americans in general. We
8 struggle to navigate and afford long term care
9 solutions for families and our loved ones. In home
10 solutions and supports are fundamental to the success
11 of Community Care Plan.

12 We are working to build out programmatic and
13 policy based solutions to address the coming a
14 caregiving crisis.

15 As more Baby Boomers retire and grow older, their
16 families are navigating the challenges of an aging
17 population who want to remain in the home but need
18 additional care and support.

19 I know this experience firsthand. I live it. As I
20 always say, I'm not only the commissioner, but I'm
21 also a client. I have worked with my mother and her
22 aging experience in my role as commissioner, and I've
23 learned all of the challenges in navigating these
24 services.

1
2 I am the executive head of the largest area
3 agency in the United States. And I still had to ask,
4 where do I begin? How do I do this? They're
5 frequently... so imagine the average New Yorker
6 caregiver who would say, how do I begin? They're not
7 even aware, number one, that there are services for
8 them. They're not even aware that they're a
9 caregiver, because they just consider themselves a
10 daughter, a godchild, a niece. They need to be
11 informed. This is just going to grow in New York, and
12 they need to address these situations for their loved
13 ones.

14 New York State also needs to do a better job. It
15 needs to do a better job in collaborating and cross-
16 pollinating of all those long term care services that
17 they have. And I'm going to address that later on.

18 Much of our focus in caregiving space is
19 funding... is on funding and education. Many people
20 find themselves to be caregivers who don't even know
21 where to begin as I said.

22 The labyrinth of services and qualifications
23 create daunting barriers to getting the care and
24 support they need for a loved one.

1
2 At times, we run the risk of being our own worst
3 enemy when we do not make options plainly available
4 to people and do not clearly provide the linkages and
5 support within a Community Care Plan. And our
6 Community Care Plan's goal is to achieve that.

7 New York State's expanded in home services for
8 the elderly person's... EISEP program as we commonly
9 know it, is meant to address the gap between
10 individuals and family who are unable to pay out of
11 pocket for some home services, but who are not
12 necessarily low-income enough to qualify for Medicaid
13 services. However, this program requires more funding
14 and too frequently, aging services employees receive
15 different rates of Medicaid clients with further
16 disadvantages, the EISEP funded home care programs.

17 I ask all of you to partner with us and to ask
18 our partners in the State, to create a seamless
19 program and application, uh, pathway, I'm sorry,
20 between the EISEP program, the long term care managed
21 program, and the nursing home transition program.

22 There is not a reason why each one of those has
23 to be a separate step, a daunting and complicated
24 application process when someone started in the EISEP
25 program. We should try to create those pathways.

1
2 Additionally, we know that transportation and
3 micro mobility solutions are fundamental to remaining
4 in communities longer.

5 Older adults are more likely to age in place when
6 they can get around, when they can travel, and to
7 their typical daily destinations with some relative
8 ease, even if they have mobility impairments.

9 For older adults, this would mean improvements in
10 public transit access and micromobility options, such
11 as tricycles at the Citi Bike, uh, portal thingies...
12 the alternatives to standard bicycles an open and
13 active and non-vehicular option for older adults to
14 move about their communities and participate in
15 normal aspects of daily living.

16 I have an adult trike. And it really makes me...
17 two things, I'm able to use it, and I'm also able not
18 to use my car. And so I'm helping the environment and
19 I'm also getting exercise, but it is also
20 something... I would not ride a bike in New York
21 City. So I think that that's an option that we should
22 have for more older adults. The alternative to
23 standard bicycles, opens active options for older
24 adults, for shopping, banking, attending church, or
25 visiting friends, when it's in that real local area.

1
2 (TIMER CHIMES) Community care can further be
3 strengthened by building off the cabinet of the older
4 New Yorkers, which I mentioned before, by ensuring
5 that every aspect of aging in place is addressed.

6 I'm going to repeat that.

7 The State of New York is integral to the funding
8 structure for this portion of the Community Care Plan
9 There must be a seamless process of integrating
10 people from one program to the next program to the
11 next program. It should not be a daunting brand new
12 application as if you are unknown to the system in
13 the past.

14 We are looking to the Council's leadership on
15 advocacy for this program. Like what we saw earlier
16 this year in advancing wage increases that matches
17 EISEP funded programs - home care workers compared to
18 Medicaid funded colleagues.

19 One agency could have two types of workers, and
20 they were getting different salaries. We fought that
21 last year. We had to have a big fight again this
22 year. We'd got it done. That should not occur.

23 Home care workers our home care workers. The
24 funding source should not determine salary parity and
25 a livable wage.

1
2 It is imperative that New York State contribute
3 at a commensurate level with the number of older New
4 Yorker City residents, and ensure that the City is
5 able to meet other important needs such as center
6 improvement, infrastructure needs, programs that
7 benefit communities. They also need to be a better
8 partner in terms of addressing environmental and
9 climate change issues -- I just added that, Chair.

10 I look forward to working with you this fall on
11 next year's state legislative convening in Albany to
12 discuss the better approaches to benefit New York.

13 Got to remind everybody.

14 New York City Aging's budget is primarily city tax
15 levied. At one point, a big portion of that was state
16 funding, and over time, that has diminished more and
17 more. So, as we keep talking about all the things we
18 need, we need to have a stronger partner in the
19 State. We're receiving 27 percent of the funding in
20 many areas when we have 47 percent of the population.

21 And before I close, I want to acknowledge the
22 introductions today included in today's Agenda,
23 namely the two surrounding the study on NORCS and
24 older adult workforce programs. We applaud that. As
25 usual, we are aligned with the Council's support and

1
2 intent in this, and we want to have every opportunity
3 to discuss these with you to see how we could support
4 your efforts and make sure that they are not asking
5 for additional information that we don't currently
6 provide. All right? And to make feasible solutions
7 that work for all of us.

8 In conclusion, there are many components to the
9 community care vision that are required for it to be
10 a successful program long term. What we have been
11 able to accomplish in the first four years of this
12 plan would not have been done, and you know I'm gonna
13 say this over and over again, without your
14 investment. You invested in our vans. You've invested
15 in infrastructure. You made us start thinking about a
16 capital plan for our kitchens. All of that is part of
17 a Community Care Plan.

18 So I thank you for this opportunity, and I thank
19 you for your continued partnership. And we want more.

20 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Thank you so much,
21 Commissioner.

22 I'd like to acknowledge that we've also been
23 joined by Council Member Mealy and Council Member
24 Zhuang

1
2 And I will just jump into questions if that's
3 okay with you.

4 So how is the implementation of the Community
5 Care Plan carried out?

6 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Sorry, I didn't
7 hear that.

8 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Of course, how is the
9 implementation of the Community Care Plan carried
10 out?

11 So how is the work structured, who organizes
12 related meetings, agenda items, priorities? If you
13 could start there?

14 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: I'm trying to think
15 of where I start with that question.

16 We looked at... tell me if I'm answering you, all
17 right? If I'm answering you adequately.

18 We looked at a range of factors in developing the
19 plans, including writing an RFP that will reflect
20 what was required.

21 For example, outreach was built into the RFP.
22 Everyone had a community education outreach plan.
23 Everyone had, in that RFP process, there was a
24 partnership plan that people needed to have local
25 partnerships. Uhm, OAC attendance and review rates

1
2 was part of that, you know, utilization of the popup
3 cafes.

4 We started looking at other ways that we could
5 design that would serve people in different ways for
6 those who did not want to go to the OACs. And
7 institutionalizing some of the in initiatives that
8 came out of the older adult cabinet. So, I think that
9 is my answer to what I believe is your question, and
10 tell me if I've answered.

11 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Yes. I think you answered
12 part of it. As far as, like, meetings, priorities
13 that are identified, is that just done by NYC Aging,
14 or are there other stakeholders that participate in
15 that process?

16 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Well, there's the
17 local meetings that the older adult centers and the
18 NORCS do on their own in their community engagement.

19 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay.

20 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: I host, as you are
21 aware of, I host a monthly meeting with all of the
22 directors...

23 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Mm-hmm
24
25

1
2 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: to talk about where
3 we're going and/or things that we need to be mindful
4 of.

5 And then there's a cabinet meetings where... the
6 24 agencies (INAUDIBLE)... (CROSS-TALK)

7 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Right.

8 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: with your addition.
9 Now I think there's, like, three more of it there.
10 There's more cabinet members, and we're constantly...
11 those committees are held, there's a quarterly, but
12 then we have the subcommittees, which meet monthly
13 and start talking about progress.

14 So, it's something that we're all looking at
15 from... there's different perspectives, whether it's
16 transportation, whether it's health, whether it's
17 training of workers, whether it's training on ageism
18 in the board of education. But, we're looking at it
19 against this big plan that everything is about
20 keeping people in their homes.

21 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay, and, then, would you
22 say the implementation of the Plan is on track?

23 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Yeah, it is...
24 (CROSS-TALK)

25 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay.

1
2 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Am I... is it
3 satisfying everything that we wanted to satisfy?
4 Probably not. And I know I'm not supposed to say that
5 in that. (INAUDIBLE)... (CROSS-TALK)

6 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: It's okay, we appreciate your
7 honesty.

8 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: But, because if I...
9 more homecare is, you know, we need more homecare,
10 that is that is... there are two linchpins that I
11 always think about a Community Care Plan. Right? And
12 that's my lived experience, is if you get support in
13 the home for those daily life activities, and then
14 you get transportation that goes a long way in
15 community here.

16 We've addressed those as best as we can. And
17 frankly, I think the transportation one we've
18 addressed quite well. But we need our partners at the
19 MTA to do what they need to do with Access-A-Ride,
20 and we need all of our partners to put in their
21 share, so that when you say was it totally realized?
22 No, there are more things that could be done by some
23 of our other external partners.

24 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Do you think the goals of the
25 Plan have changed since it's been announced?

1
2 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: I don't know that
3 it's changed as much as it evolves. So, if change
4 is... if evolution is part of change, yeah.

5 When we think about our geriatric mental health
6 services. Right? We always had those, but as part of
7 the Community Care Plan, rather than having
8 independent geriatric mental health centers, we
9 incorporated that and came up with that hub and
10 spoke, so that more older adult centers would have
11 geriatric outlets... geriatric mental health
12 services.

13 So, you know, it's been evolved, it's not... Have
14 we added new services, no, we've looked at the
15 implementation of those services and how it is that
16 we can have the broadest reach.

17 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay, great.

18 Can you describe the different ways in which the
19 plan... in which the Plan has been implemented since
20 its inception in 2021, specifically with regards to
21 improving integration and collaboration between older
22 adult centers, naturally occurring retirement
23 communities, and other community resources?

24 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Other than the
25 constant encouragement of that and the partnerships

1
2 on the ground, I would say that the Plan forces that
3 encouragement, and it continues.

4 Am I understanding the question correctly?

5 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: (NO RESPONSE)

6 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Chair, is that an
7 answer that you're seeking at the... more
8 partnerships at the local level?

9 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: I'm sorry, I didn't hear you.
10 I think whatever is most relevant.

11 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Yeah, and I think...
12 (CROSS-TALK)

13 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: So, yeah, at the local level,
14 but also systemically... (CROSS-TALK)

15 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: I think the strength
16 of this plan goes with... it really is about
17 collaboration, you know, locally, but it is also
18 collaboration across agencies, which we're doing with
19 the cabinet, and also some of our partners in
20 government, meaning other funding sources. Which is
21 something that we're constantly trying to advocate
22 for.

23 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: (BACKGROUND NOISE) Okay.

24 What about with regard to enhancing equity and
25 inclusion by addressing historical funding equities

1
2 and ensuring services are responsive to the needs of
3 a diverse older adult population, including
4 immigrants and older adults of color?

5 I think you touched on this in your testimony,
6 but I'm looking for something a little bit more
7 specific in terms of the ways in which the Plan has
8 been implemented with regard to that specifically.

9 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: So when we issued
10 the RFP, we were looking at it with the lens of
11 equity and inclusion. That has been our focus since
12 that RFP was issued.

13 And I would say that... I'm trying to get the
14 number... We not only increased the number of older
15 adult centers, 29 more were added, and we always had
16 that lens of where they were placed. We were looking
17 at it with the lens of ensuring that they were
18 responsive to the ethnic and cultural needs of the
19 community. We also had eight naturally occurring
20 NORCS added as a result of that RFP.

21 And if I'm not mistaken, 13 of those older adult
22 clubs were focused were new cultural programs like
23 India House other programs that were specific to
24 community needs.

1
2 So, the issue of equity and inclusion is
3 something that. We saw... and you've heard me report
4 that we were very mindful of the increase in the
5 African American population, Latino, and Asian
6 American population from the last census, and our
7 goal was to respond to that.

8 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: What about service providers
9 beyond OACs and NORCS?

10 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Where we're not...
11 where we have no... all of our... we look to that
12 for case management agencies when we did that - home
13 delivered meals. That is key to us. I mean, we have
14 the first, uh, we created five commissaries to
15 address that, so that we could be able to respond to
16 the ethnic and cultural and religious needs of the
17 population.

18 So it's not only OACs, but you will see that we
19 did the same thing in each one of the RFPs that we've
20 let...since then for case management, home delivered
21 meals, and even transportation.

22 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay. There's...

23 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Oh, they gave me
24 something here... Yeah, uh, 13 of the new providers
25 are culturally relevant and new, and four of those

1
2 were MWBEs (Minority and Women-owned Business
3 Enterprise).

4 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay, great, thank you. I
5 think you had your numbers accurate.

6 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: I was... I
7 remembered the numbers.

8 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: (LAUGHS) All right.

9 If you can also explain the different ways the
10 Plan has been implemented with regard to leveraging
11 technology by utilizing virtual programming and other
12 technologies to engage isolated older adults and
13 enhancing service delivery?

14 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: So, I've said this
15 before, you'd never let a good pandemic go to waste.
16 The learnings of that pandemic was virtual
17 programming. We've expanded virtual programming, and
18 I'm sure you're gonna ask me for how much, and I will
19 get you those numbers later on. I will get back to
20 you on that.

21 But we've expanded virtual programming, not only
22 for recreational and education, but also for a
23 variety of other in other areas.

24 The other thing that we did was we gave out
25 tablets to increase people's access to technology in

1
2 NYCHA (New York City Housing Authority) and in non-
3 NYCHA employees. Then we worked with the Office of
4 Technology, our Chief Technology Officer, Matt
5 Fraser, and were part of the NYCHA efforts to make
6 sure that everybody in NYCHA had access to high speed
7 internet. We're currently looking at ways of bringing
8 that... Right now, we have a proposal in with them to
9 look at ways to bring that to other non NYCHA
10 residents in the community.

11 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Oh, great. This is something
12 that I talk about all the time. I just want to get a
13 sense, also, specifically with regards to expanding
14 and strengthening community care services through
15 increased investments, specifically to keep pace with
16 the growing and diversifying older adult population
17 with really an emphasis on the growing older adult
18 population. What does that look like? What does the
19 Plan look like specifically with that in mind?

20 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: One of the things we
21 look at, everything that we look at and how we evolve
22 it is not intuitive, this was all data driven. And
23 it's data driven not only on income, but on
24 ethnicity. And one of the things... and also age
25 cohorts. And one of the things that we've done is to

1
2 look at the future is how many people are... no, I
3 want the age breakdown. Okay, so while I give that...
4 we look at where people are living, and we're also
5 give in census data, start looking at where people
6 will be moving to or growing, all right? Where the
7 populations shrink and where populations are growing,
8 and that is how we determine where services should
9 be, and where services should be today, but also in
10 the future. And it is all based on looking at that
11 data.

12 And one of the things we just hear, which alarmed
13 us a little bit, was that overall New York City
14 census shrunk as in the 2020... in the last census
15 data from the American study.

16 So we're looking at that and the impact on older
17 adults.

18 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay, then, I know you talked
19 about transportation initiatives in your testimony,
20 but can you just expand a little bit on what enhanced
21 transportation options you have to better connect
22 older adults in geographically remote areas?

23 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: So recognizing two
24 things, recognizing that we need to have more
25

1
2 interaction with Access-A-Ride, which is run by the
3 MTA, which is...

4 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: I think a lot of people would
5 dispute that... (CROSS-TALK)

6 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Yeah, we call it
7 "inaccessible rides".

8 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Maybe not so much
9 interaction...

10 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Yeah.

11 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: with Access-A-Ride.

12 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: But, it is what we
13 have, and my goal, is in, the time that I can, to
14 make sure that that starts working for us. And, so,
15 some of the legislations that we proposed, which I
16 would love for all of you to be partners, we proposed
17 legislation that they create a liaison the way they
18 created a liaison between NYCHA and Aging to create a
19 liaison between Access-A-Ride. Not that we will take
20 responsibility for them, but that we will be mindful
21 as to where the big gaps are, and informing them, and
22 giving them solutions, so that we could really work
23 towards improvement. Because, right now there's just
24 a repository of complaints with no solutions for
25 addressing those complaints. So, that's one thing.

1
2 It is the biggest system that we have that needs to
3 be responsive. So, that's one thing that we're
4 constantly looking at.

5 So, that's one thing that we do. The other thing
6 that we did last year, we issued that transportation
7 RFP. All older adult clubs can have the option to do
8 transportation locally to bring older adults to and
9 from the center. And some of them add, you know, some
10 group activities and things like that. They're all...
11 if they wanted the funding, we could...

12 (PAUSE)

13 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: So, the other thing
14 that we did was the transportation programs. So, each
15 contract, or each older adult club can choose to have
16 that built into their program and budget, uh, with
17 their funds for that. But, then what we found was
18 because we knew that we needed to expand
19 transportation, we included, per borough, a
20 transportation program that could supplement that,
21 especially for group activities so that no one can
22 say, we can't go shopping outside of our community,
23 and we can't go to Mohansic State Park or wherever...
24 those wonderful places.

1
2 So, we built that in, and then we also had a
3 citywide transportation program that would
4 supplement. So, that was our effort to try to
5 mitigate a little bit of what we saw as some of the
6 challenges in in Access-A-Ride.

7 The other thing is that we're very mindful of the
8 transportation deserts. For example, in the Bronx,
9 out of 12 community districts, we have four
10 transportation deserts. And they're not even in a
11 contiguous statement. Like, if you live in the Bronx,
12 the northern part of the Bronx, I know, is a
13 transportation desert. And then if you live in the
14 South Bronx, there's certain parts that are also
15 transportation desert. You wouldn't even believe
16 that.

17 In Brooklyn, out of 18, we have five
18 transportation deserts. All right? And a lot of these
19 are in communities that we know well and care for
20 very well.

21 And then in Queens, out of 14 planning boards,
22 there are six transportation deserts. So we're kinda
23 like mindful...

24 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Yes.
25

1
2 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: of that, when we're
3 looking at transportation and coming up with
4 transportation alternatives - micromobility, all of
5 those other solutions that could mitigate, you know,
6 these transportation deserts.

7 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Are those transportation
8 services provided by OACS and NORCS, or are they
9 provided by are they provided by third parties?

10 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Not NORCS... OACs
11 have the option to have local transportation in their
12 budget and contract. Not all of them opted for that.
13 But, that is available and an option that they have.

14 In addition to that, that's where we came up with
15 the transportation design last year.

16 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Mm-hmm

17 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Where we had one for
18 borough to supplement what OACs did not offer, and
19 then we had one citywide that can take you across
20 boroughs, you know, which, you know, people live in
21 Brooklyn, go to the doctor in Manhattan, same thing
22 happens in the Bronx.

23 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Right, okay. Uh, thank you...

24 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: But, I want you to
25 be mindful of transportation deserts, because if we

1
2 are looking at an age inclusive city, and what we
3 consider a transportation desert by normal standards,
4 we are not creating something new, imagine the
5 complexity of that for an older adult if the bus stop
6 is four blocks away.

7 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Totally.

8 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: It deterred
9 people... (CROSS-TALK)

10 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: We were working with the MTA
11 around of their bus redesign ,you know, of the
12 various lines making sure that we are addressing
13 exactly those needs in some of those communities to
14 make sure that they're not removing bus stops that
15 already exist, and that they are expanding the number
16 of bus stops on particular lines.

17 Can you describe the ways in which NYC Aging
18 works and collaborates with other city agencies and
19 stakeholders to ensure comprehensive implementation
20 of the plan? And how does the Plan interplay with the
21 Senior Advisory Council and the cabinet for older New
22 Yorkers? I know you addressed this a little bit.

23 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Yeah, it's an
24 integral part of the work that we do with the cabinet
25 members. One of the things that we knew is health

1
2 care professionals are one of the group of people
3 that older adults interact with the most. So, what we
4 have done is we designed a training program in all of
5 our H+H (Health + Hospitals) programs to ensure that
6 frontline workers, meaning those that give access to
7 the client, not frontline like first responders, but
8 frontline workers are aware of what the aging
9 services are. So, we have trained a lot of them,
10 almost the entire force has been trained in aging
11 services. And, them, you know, this is not a one shot
12 training, it's not one and done. You know, we have to
13 go back, people change, we know that this is an
14 ongoing thing.

15 Another one is the work that we are doing with
16 the Board of Education, now called the Department of
17 Education, where we are training young people on
18 agism, which we know is one of the keys to holding
19 all of this in place if we want to be an age
20 inclusive city.

21 And the partnership that we have from DOT, that
22 has grown tremendously in terms of doing these
23 community audits, looking at micromobility.

24 So, everything emerges from that. And the work we
25 did with the Police Department, NYPD, which was to

1
2 look at creating a liaison, a person in each precinct
3 that becomes the community officer who focuses on
4 older adults. And we have done an incredible amount
5 of training of those individuals, so that they are
6 aware of the services, but they are also the link in
7 the community for that.

8 So, all of it is emerging around that.

9 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay, great, thank you.

10 I'm just going to ask a few more questions, and
11 I'm gonna turn it over to my colleagues for their
12 questions as well.

13 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Okay.

14 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: But what challenges has the
15 City faced in implementing the plan? And in what ways
16 does NYC Aging believe that the Plan can be improved?

17 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: You know, I wanted
18 to... The challenges is the growing number of older
19 adults. Right? When we look at the population, we've
20 got to be responsive, because they each have
21 different needs. Right? (TIMER CHIMES) So, when we
22 look at 60 to 64, we realize that that is the lowest
23 number of people who are attending older adult clubs.

24 So what does that do? Makes us think, well, where
25 are they going? Right? So, right now, we're doing a

1
2 partnership with the New York City Libraries. We're
3 doing a partnership with Parks Department, because we
4 know that they go to those facilities. So how is
5 it... And that comes out of the cabinet.

6 So we're looking at, okay, how best to serve
7 them, because we know that they're going somewhere...
8 so how we best can serve them.

9 Then we know that the, if you want to call it the
10 sweet spot, but the largest number is from the 65 to
11 80 category of older adults. Those are the ones that
12 frequent the older adult clubs. Those are the ones
13 that... and then 85 plus are getting our home
14 delivered meals. So we're looking at all of our
15 services by age category also to see, what do I need
16 for this group, what do I need more for that group?
17 And that is an integral part of how we're also making
18 decisions.

19 So, we look at geographic, we look at age cohort,
20 we look at income, and we definitely look at
21 ethnicity because that is ever changing.

22 So, those are the things that sort of drive this
23 plan... and keeping pace with that. Okay?

24 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: And so how can the Plan be
25 improved?

1
2 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: The Plan could be
3 improved, and I won't say improved, I'm going say
4 evolved. The Plan can be more responsive, because I
5 don't think you can improve a plan that's already
6 pretty comprehensive. You need to evolve it. And for
7 us to look at exactly what I just said before, what
8 do we what do we do to engage that 60 to 64-year-old?
9 What do we do to make sure that we enhance services
10 for that 85+ who still wants to stay at home? I got a
11 95-year-old just like that.

12 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Mm-hmm

13 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: And what do we do
14 for that sweet spot, which is the bulk of the older
15 adult population, which is six 65 to about 80.

16 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Can you explain a little bit
17 more about the interagency partnerships with Parks
18 and Libraries? What does that work look like?

19 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Sure.

20 So, that is the beauty, I wish the state would do
21 this, and I'm so happy that Senator Gillibrand has
22 now said for every state to have a State Master Plan.
23 New York State Master Plan needs... I'm not sure
24 where it's going yet... But, we have a model in New
25 York, like the aging cabinet, that has really served

1
2 us well. So one of the things that came out, Andrew,
3 for your information, is we looked at... Parks
4 Department started thinking of don't ,you know, I
5 always get everybody's name wrong... Parks Department
6 was looking at the older adults that they serve in
7 their recreation facilities. Right? And one of the
8 things that they found was a lot of these people are
9 having mental health issues, low level mental health
10 issues, and higher mental health issues.

11 And so one of the things that we've done is say,
12 all right, let's not look at this as a bifurcated
13 program, let's see how we could integrate.

14 So, we first started by sending them a worker, a
15 community mental health worker, geriatric mental
16 health worker once in a while. Well, now we've done
17 it as a systemic program, and now we're linking them
18 as if they were an older adult club the way we have
19 Hub and Spokes. That's one. And the same thing with
20 the libraries, is looking at the partnership with the
21 libraries. We met with Dennis [Walcott] to start
22 thinking about, okay, you do a lot with older adults,
23 what is it that you need? Where are the gaps? And how
24 do we work this together?

25 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Great, thank you for that.

1
2 You mentioned State Master Plan, well, this plan
3 is a five-year road map, and we're more than halfway
4 through its time frame. What's the future of the
5 plan? And given great and growing needs of the City's
6 older adult population, does NYC Aging plan on
7 introducing a longer term plan to the Community Care
8 Plan?

9 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: So, the answer is,
10 yes and yes.

11 Yes, uh, as I said, it's an evolve... (CROSS-
12 TALK)

13 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Well, the first... The first
14 question was what's the future of the plan, which is
15 not yes or no... (CROSS-TALK)

16 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: The future of the
17 Plan is to continue this...

18 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay...

19 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: You can't to back
20 from looking at things comprehensively to go back to
21 look at things in silos. It just makes no sense,
22 particularly when the population is growing.

23 So, the future of the Plains to obviously
24 continue this approach, particularly because it's in
25

1
2 line with an age inclusive city. So, that's the
3 trajectory.

4 Now, what I would say is staging out what needs
5 to be done, what are some alternatives for the 60 to
6 64? Popup cafés? Are those the alternative? Is Parks
7 Department the alternative? Start looking at it from
8 what we are learning so far, and, then, going
9 forward... And we know that for the 85+, the only way
10 we are going to really serve those individuals well,
11 if they want to continue in community, is to have a
12 shift and a change in the way State - because, the
13 state does those Medicaid and long term care services
14 - is to have a shift in the way that they look at
15 this population and look at an integrated approach to
16 it.

17 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Great.

18 I am going to break here and turn to my
19 colleagues for some of their questions starting with
20 Council Member Banks.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Thank you, Commissioner,
22 Good to see you again, and thank you, Madam Chair.

23 When it comes to capital needs, I know recently
24 at Penn-Wortman Houses, we just had a move for that
25 particular older adult center was just moved into a

1
2 new NYCHA facility, or it was already on the Penn-
3 Wortman property, and, you know, that's a RAD/PACT
4 converted development. Though capital needs are
5 important, and, obviously, the but the new move, and
6 we welcome that, because it's been a long time coming
7 and needed where the seniors need to be separated
8 from the youth community on the youth community
9 center. So we're glad to see that.

10 But now we know there's a major need for a
11 capital improvement in that particular center with
12 the grand opening we had a couple of months ago, all
13 month or so ago.

14 The Community Care Plan is predicated on the OACs
15 as hub for older New Yorkers to access programs and
16 services needed to live healthy and engaging lives.

17 The physical infrastructure of many older adult
18 centers are falling apart, with some being rendered
19 inoperable by physical damage.

20 How does any future system succeed without a
21 thorough assessment of the capital needs in the
22 existing OAC system.

23 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Fabulous question,
24 thank you. I wish I had an easy answer. One of the
25 things that we always did regularly was look at them

1
2 as one offs. And started, you know, like, you needed
3 this and your program officer was aggressive, and
4 then we would help you with that.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Right.

6 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: What came out of
7 this committee about a year ago, was the need to look
8 at this proactively, and we started with the
9 kitchens, so that plan is something that we're
10 looking at. The challenge that we had at New York
11 City Aging is that if we get capital dollars, we
12 don't manage those dollars directly. Those dollars
13 are managed through EDC or Design and Construction
14 Authority. You know, then our projects become
15 second... and we have some projects still on the
16 books, I think I've told you about that...

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Right.

18 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: about some elevators
19 and stuff that have been on the books for years, and
20 it's not in their queue. What we're what we have done
21 and we have the first example is through your borough
22 president..

23 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Okay.

24 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Not your... yes,
25 your board president.

1 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Yes.

2 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Antonio?

3 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Right, Antonio?

4 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Yeah? Mm-hmm...

5 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Reynoso.

6 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Yeah, Reynoso,
7 right. So, Antonio, uh, Borough President Reynoso,
8 gave us a capital grant just for older adult clubs
9 (TIMER CHIMES) and he gave it to us directly. And
10 what we're gonna do is hire a... and Jose's eyes are
11 gonna (INAUDIBLE) but we're hiring in MWBE... I mean,
12 we're hiring a contractor to oversee those services
13 so that we can do that implementation ourselves. And
14 this is a model, and I've asked... and I've already
15 approached three of the other borough presidents
16 about this, and not all the other takers. So, Antonio
17 needs to do some magic with his colleagues, but that
18 is an approach to start looking at that. Because,
19 your borough president's commitment is that should we
20 have climate change, a disaster, all of our OACs in
21 Brooklyn will be state of the art. All of our
22 kitchens will be state of the art. So we know that
23 this is the first infusion and model in that. That is
24
25

1
2 how we're gonna go for it. Some of our facilities,
3 and most of them in NYCHA, are less than desirable.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: That was going to be my
5 (INAUDIBLE)... (CROSS-TALK)

6 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Yeah, so...

7 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: question...

8 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: So, if we could look
9 at that and come up with something comparable for
10 NYCHA...

11 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Okay...

12 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: We would be able to
13 go further. Right now we do have a much... we have a
14 good partnership with NYCHA in having them cue up
15 some of those issues for us. Our relationship with
16 NYCHA is, uh, Council Member Banks, we take care of
17 inside the wall, and you take... I mean, we take from
18 the wall out, and you're responsible for the inside
19 the walls...

20 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Because I know that's the
21 constant back and forth, who's responsible for what.
22 Because we experienced that with a couple of the
23 centers, especially when it came to the ovens
24 (INAUDIBLE)... (CROSS-TALK)

1
2 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: The ovens would
3 be... (CROSS-TALK)

4 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: or the stoves. Uhm...

5 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Ovens or stoves
6 would be...

7 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: NYCHA...

8 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: No, no, ovens and
9 stoves would be, uh, Aging.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Aging, okay.

11 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: The line for oven
12 and stoves...

13 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: The gas line, right, that
14 was the issue, correct.. (CROSS-TALK)

15 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: and the (INAUDIBLE)
16 are NYCHA.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Correct.

18 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: So, you get the
19 stove, and unless that gets done and upgraded ,you
20 know...

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Correct. And, that was an
22 impasse. I knew a brand new stove or oven that was
23 there for at least two or three years, and it was...

24 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Uh-huh. Uh-huh...
25

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: And it was ,you know...
3 But, in particular, uhm, how does it affect, uh, the
4 uh, RAD/PACT of developments when it comes to NYCHA?
5 Because, we know that it's new management coming in.
6 They operate definitely differently, uh, to some
7 degree, but; nevertheless, and I know particularly
8 with Penn-Wortman, which is a RAD/PACT conversion,
9 how are we still meeting the needs or the capital
10 needs in that particular situation... (CROSS-TALK)

11 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: So, as a result I
12 think of a question you asked me of maybe nine months
13 ago or something - what we have developed was an MOU
14 (memorandum of understanding) that we gave to each
15 agency, and the MOU models , the operations, and the
16 understanding we have with NYCHA, so that they will
17 do that with each one of the RADs, so that they have
18 the same agreements that...

19 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Right...

20 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: And, each one of
21 those, as you know, is a one by one, uh,
22 relationship... (CROSS-TALK)

23 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Relationship...

24 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: what we told NYCHA
25 is, this is the MOU that each... We don't get... We

1
2 don't engage in that, it's each center, but we gave a
3 draft MOU... Somebody correct me if I'm saying it
4 incorrectly. Right? We drafted an MOU for each one of
5 the RADs and the nonprofit agencies.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Okay. Moving on, talking
7 about the topic of virtual programming, in the
8 Community Care Plan, NYC Aging recommended enhanced
9 and expanded virtual programming to reach those
10 unable to get to older adult centers and out of their
11 NORC apartments for onsite programming as well as
12 large number of other New Yorkers, concurrently
13 isolated and unconnected. Expanded virtual
14 programming was a critical tool to homebound older
15 adults to remain connected during COVID-19. Since the
16 Plan was published, what kinds of virtual programming
17 and service The Department for Aging championed, and
18 what kind of programming was funded or what types or
19 programs were funded?

20 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: We... there is no
21 program we exclude...

22 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Okay...

23 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: from virtual
24 programming. So, the balance is, because we know that
25 even a virtual program gives you some sort of social

1
2 connection, because what we're all fighting against
3 is social isolation. Right? What we want is as
4 much... not for home delivered meals to clients, but
5 for other clients, come into the center occasionally.
6 But, we know that people can choose virtual
7 programming, because it gives you more options, and
8 it gives it for your schedule. So there is no program
9 that we do not allow to be in a virtual program.

10 And the other thing is that, and it's one of the
11 things that I constantly talk to our team about, is
12 meals are an essential piece, but a lot of people
13 come in and do not used a meal in an older adult club
14 or even in a NORC. And what they want is that other
15 programming socialization. So that what we want is to
16 make sure that the there's not an overemphasis on the
17 meal part but also on the programming part.

18 And so the note here is hybrid programming gives
19 us more flexibility, but also gives the older adult
20 more flexibility.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Okay.

22 Is there a range of available virtual programming
23 and services as expansive today as it was during the
24 peak of the pandemic?

1
2 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Is? Say it again, I
3 didn't hear you.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: I said, is the range of
5 available virtual programming and services as
6 expansive today as it was during the peak of COVID?

7 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: That's a good
8 question. I don't know the answer that.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Okay.

10 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Intuitively, I going
11 to say, yes, but I'm not gonna give you an intuitive
12 answer, I'll give you a number.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Okay.

14 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: to see that
15 (INAUDIBLE)...

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: The Plan discusses virtual
17 programming as a key strategy on the future of
18 service. Many providers have shared with us that they
19 are being discouraged from providing virtual
20 programming or have been instructed to stop providing
21 these services. What has been the rationale for this
22 reversal of this policy?

23 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: So, I don't know
24 that that's an accurate statement. Right? That we
25

1
2 prevented it? What we have said is that it can
3 supplant programming...

4 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Said discouraged, not
5 prevent...

6 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Right, so we
7 can't... You can't... All you programs can't be
8 virtual, that's basically what we are discouraging.
9 You to have a hybrid, you have to have programs
10 available inhouse in person as well as virtual
11 programming.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Has the access to virtual
13 programing expanded the number of older adults that
14 Department of Aging and contracted providers are
15 regularly interacting with?

16 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: I'll get you that.
17 My, again, my reaction would be, yes, but I'll get
18 you some real data on that.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Data on that? Okay,
20 perfect.

21 The 2024 Mayor's Management Report shows that
22 35,000 older adult center clients participated in.
23 virtual and hybrid programs in 2024, in FY22, the
24 number stood at 61,351 participants. Do you track
25 whether individuals who attend virtual or hybrid

1
2 programming has shifted to in person participation at
3 the older adult centers?

4 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: That's what we
5 will... I'll get you that data. Because, each one of
6 those is unduplicated numbers... Oh, go ahead...

7 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Well, uh, Madam Chair,
8 thank you so much, and I appreciate the time, thank
9 you.

10 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Absolutely, thank you.

11 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: I want to make sure
12 what I promised you, so that they can make sure what
13 I promised you, so that we can get you the
14 information. All right so...

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: I look forward to the
16 data...

17 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: So, it's two things
18 that you want, the (TIMER CHIMES) the number of
19 people participating in hybrid...

20 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Correct.

21 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: The number of
22 people, if there has been an increase in that
23 (INAUDIBLE)...

24 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: In that, right...
25

1
2 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: And, then, the other
3 thing that you wanted, has there been a diminishing
4 piece of in-home?

5 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Correct...

6 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: related to that?

7 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Correct...

8 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Okay. And, then, you
9 wanted me to give... I'll give you the correct
10 language or the language on what we prohibit and the
11 intent of the way we say that. All right?

12 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Correct, thank you, we look
13 forward that information... (CROSS-TALK)

14 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: (INAUDIBLE) so the
15 facts are friendly rather than interpretations.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Just to clarify on the second
18 to last question, it's about tracking individuals who
19 attend virtual and hybrid programming and whether
20 they have shifted to in person only.

21 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Right, yes, got it,
22 got it, thanks.

23 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Thank you, I am going to move
24 to Council Member Schulman, followed by Council
25 Member Zhuang.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: Thank you very much,
3 Chair. And, thank you for everything that you do,
4 Commissioner, I really appreciate it.

5 So, I have a couple of questions. One is, you
6 know, that the mayor launched a year ago, Healthy
7 NYC, to increase life expectancy to the age of 83 by
8 the year 2030...

9 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Right.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: So, how does the Care
11 Plan fit into that... what we were talking about?

12 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: One of our strong
13 partnerships is with the Department of Health around
14 that. We have two initiatives, one is we're doing a
15 health fair, we did Groove, we work very much with
16 the Department of Health on coming up with citywide
17 initiatives that promote health and longevity.

18 We're having a health fair in a few days, again,
19 around that, it is the messaging that we do
20 together... Thursday 26th is our health fair, but
21 some of the other initiatives that we do directly
22 with the Department of Health are centered around
23 longevity issues as well as healthy living.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: And, another question I
25 have, so, the mayor launched his one portal like for

1
2 all services and everything else. Is... I know it's
3 for everybody, but is there a specific section maybe
4 for older adults? Because I know, like, for a SCRIE
5 (Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption) and DRIE
6 (Disability Rent Increase Exemption)... (CROSS-TALK)

7 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: So, the first
8 (INAUDIBLE)...

9 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: and, also, I will say as
10 somebody who just got my reduced fair card from the
11 MTA, that that's, you know, we should be able to,
12 like, go up and do that.

13 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: So, the goal of the
14 City is one city, so that we could do what the mayor
15 calls it, uh, upstream approaches rather than
16 downstream approaches. NYC Aging and services for
17 older adults are part of that, and we are starting
18 with... the SHRIE and DRIE is one of the first ones
19 that we're starting up. (TIMER CHIMES) And we're
20 looking at other services, like down the road, that
21 we will do. So it is very, very clear that older
22 adults are part of that plan. It is not like a
23 separate plan for older adults. It's really looking
24 at it comprehensively. If we do a separate plan for
25 older adults, we're creating silos.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: Right, no, I... (CROSS-
3 TALK)

4 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: So, what we want...
5 (CROSS-TALK)

6 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: I do get it...

7 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: is what is the full
8 range from housing to Right to Counsel, and all of
9 those, making sure that people know. And, the other
10 piece that we are looking at is auto enrollment as
11 much as possible.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: I mean, and I understand
13 about the silos and everything else, but I just want
14 to make sure it's navigable for older adults who may
15 not necessarily know how to navigate the internet or
16 ,you know, online, the computer, all of that stuff.
17 So, I just wanted to mention that... (CROSS-TALK)

18 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: No, the commitment
19 is to make it accessible for all.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: Okay, thank you very
21 much.

22 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: That's it? Great, uh, thank
23 you Council Member, Council Member Zhuang?

24 COUNCIL MEMBER ZHUANG: Thank you, Chair...
25

1
2 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: This council member
3 is going to ask me about housing. (LAUGHS)

4 COUNCIL MEMBER ZHUANG: Yes. (LAUGHS) Yes, that's
5 right, and, also, the first question is not about
6 housing but about funding.

7 In my district we the NORCS programs. People
8 there are very happy. The only thing the seniors keep
9 asking me is about funding. They worry that their
10 funding will be cut and they don't have enough money,
11 and they are not able to survive there. Also, there
12 is another sad story I hear from my communities
13 saying... a lot of people complain adult daycare
14 centers have more funding than NORC programs.

15 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: That's the State.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER ZHUANG: Yes. How are they going to
17 compete with each other, they feel like they are
18 competing. How do we make sure the NORC programs
19 stay?

20 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: All right...

21 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: The OACs.

22 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Right. So, I go from
23 the notion that they're not competitive. Adult
24 daycare centers, if they are doing what they are
25 supposed to be doing, are really taking care of a

1
2 very infirmed population. All right? That's still
3 living in the community. That is not the natural
4 population that goes to OACs. That being said, adult
5 daycare centers, which are regulated by the state,
6 sometimes to not abide maybe by those rules. I can't
7 attest to that. What I can attest is that this city
8 council years ago created an ombudsmen program under
9 the Department for the Aging so that we could, one,
10 make sure that they are enrolled, all adult daycare
11 centers are enrolled, and, then, we could monitor the
12 complaints and report those to the State at a higher
13 level.

14 But, I do not think that they are competitive by
15 nature, uh, because they are supposed to be serving
16 populations. Are they not doing what they are
17 supposed to be doing? That's possible.

18 The funding is very different, the funding of one
19 does not take away from the funding of another. NORCS
20 are funded are under the Department for the Aging,
21 the NYC Aging, a senior adult daycare centers are
22 funding under the State.

23 There have been no cuts to the NORCS. And, there
24 have been no budget cuts to any of the programs.

25

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER ZHUANG: Thank you. And, also, I
3 asked before about the Meals on Wheels Program, are
4 you able to find anything in my district? I
5 especially have a large Asian population in my
6 district who keep asking me, or a lot of seniors ask
7 me if we are able to Meal on Wheels Chinese food,
8 (TIMER CHIMES) Koren food, those types of things?

9 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: We do have a service
10 provider that provides Meals on Wheels for the Asian
11 population. So, I will get back to you and see what
12 they are doing in your community.

13 The other thing... (CROSS-TALK)

14 COUNCIL MEMBER ZHUANG: I have (INAUDIBLE) in
15 Brooklyn, probably they have it in Queens, but I did
16 not see any in southern Brooklyn.

17 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Uhm, no...

18 COUNCIL MEMBER ZHUANG: Are you able to get me...

19 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: It's citywide. We...
20 each one of the home delivered meals programs,
21 because of an agreement we have with the Council, is
22 to make sure that they serve the population in the
23 choice of religious and cultural food that they want.
24 So, those provisions are attended to.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER ZHUANG: Okay... (CROSS-TALK)

1
2 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: (INAUDIBLE)...

3 (CROSS-TALK)

4 COUNCIL MEMBER ZHUANG: I would like to have the
5 information. (INAUDIBLE)... (CROSS-TALK)

6 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Yeah, we'll get it
7 for you, we'll get it for you.

8 But, I wanted to address housing for you.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER ZHUANG: Okay.

10 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: You didn't raise it,
11 I'm going to raise it.

12 I went to a program that has a model housing
13 program that I am just... I have spoken to people in
14 the Bronx about, I think I have spoken to people in
15 Brooklyn about it, it is a housing concept developed
16 by India House. A halal program, and where they
17 purchased a home and have four adults, it could be
18 couples, too, co-living, and they call it co-living.
19 It's very different from shared housing. But, it's
20 co-living where they each have their bedroom, they
21 each a bathroom, and they each have a common eating
22 area, and, then, two recreational areas. When I start
23 thinking about ,you know, housing needs, and I look
24 at all of the alternatives, I keep telling everyone,
25 think about this ,you know, think about all of the

1
2 older adults that are house rich, and asset rich, and
3 can't afford them. You know, if we start looking at
4 the laws that we have, how do we do that so that the
5 person doesn't lose their capital and investment in
6 the home, but at the same time can convert it, what
7 would be some of the benefits... it is something for
8 us to seriously look at. And, India House has, I
9 mean, I have... they've had this model, I want
10 everyone to go visit them, because it is a feasible
11 and a faster solution - maybe a faster solution to
12 housing. Very different from home sharing. I don't
13 want to confuse it with home sharing where one person
14 is the homeowner and the other person is the tenant,
15 and then the complex see these and the cost of making
16 those matches.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER ZHUANG: Is that similar to, I
18 feel... I imagine that is similar to college dorms?

19 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Yeah, you could look
20 at it that way.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER ZHUANG: Okay, uhm, my... (CROSS-
22 TALK)

23 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Frankly, I think as
24 an older adult, I would think that's a viable option.
25 But, yeah, think about it as college dorms.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER ZHUANG: And, also, right now, I am
3 proposing a place in my district, building senior
4 housing. But as the Senior Affordable Rental
5 Apartments (SARA) Program take so long, five years,
6 is there any way...

7 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Sometimes it takes
8 eight years for someone to be on the list before they
9 get an apartment.

10 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Yeah.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER ZHUANG: Yes, is there any way we
12 can do something to push that?

13 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: You know, the market
14 determines. When you have one percent vacancy rate...

15 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Supply and demand.

16 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: It's a supply and
17 demand. You know, it's pure good old economics. It's
18 unfortunate but that's the reality that we live in.

19 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Yeah, I mean we do need the
20 City to build more affordable ,you know, housing for
21 older adults. But, short of a... anyway that's a...

22 (CROSS-TALK)

23 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: And, I think... I
24 think... (CROSS-TALK)

25

1
2 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: perhaps another hearing
3 topic.

4 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: the direction with
5 the City of Yes, I think some of the directions that
6 we are going with as the City thinking about ADUs
7 (Accessory Dwelling Unit) ,you know, alternative
8 units.

9 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Right.

10 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: I mean, co-living
11 ,you know, all of those are shorter term solutions
12 for this massive issue that we have.

13 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Absolutely.

14 Any other questions, Council Member?

15 COUNCIL MEMBER ZHUANG: That's it.

16 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay...

17 COUNCIL MEMBER ZHUANG: She read my mind.

18 (LAUGHTER)

19 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Yes, she knew what you were
20 coming with. Thank you so much.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER ZHUANG: Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: I am going to ask some
23 Finance questions.

24 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Is this, uh, you
25 want to hold those for the budget for The Finance

1
2 Committee, or see what I can answer? Because, I might
3 not have the answers for you here.

4 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Well, I'm sure if you don't
5 have the answers with you now, you can send them to
6 me... (CROSS-TALK)

7 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Okay, cool, great.

8 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: In the adopted plan, NYC
9 Aging's Fiscal 2025 Budget totals \$550.2 million
10 decreasing by \$124.3 million to \$425.9 million in
11 fiscal 2026. A larger contributor to this decrease is
12 the expiring federal pandemic related funding, which
13 totals \$68.2 million in in fiscal 2025 only.

14 How is NYC Aging planning on addressing the
15 significant decrease in funding for the agency
16 starting in fiscal 2026, and will additional funding
17 be added?

18 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: So, you know, it's
19 early to have a budget conversation, but I can tell
20 you that the fiscal cliff that you're mentioning is
21 on the public record. And we've already engaged with
22 OMB in these conversations, because it has an impact
23 on OACs, and it has impact on the NORC RFP and all of
24 those issues.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: And, that's why... just to be
3 clear, that's why I'm asking a question. When we're
4 talking about all of this plus the Community Care
5 Plan... (CROSS-TALK)

6 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: So, I have a high
7 degree of confidence, given my conversations with
8 OMB, that we are engaged in very strong conversations
9 and they are very much aware of the impact if that
10 fiscal cliff becomes a reality.

11 So, these are very good, productive
12 conversations. And I have a high degree of confidence
13 that we will be able to come up with a very good
14 solution.

15 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay. If funding is not
16 added, what programs or areas of the agency will be
17 impacted by this fiscal cliff? And which programs and
18 services might need to be cut... (CROSS-TALK)

19 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: That's one of the
20 things that we're talking with OMB right now, giving
21 them you know, worst case scenario, it's giving them
22 different impacts by program, by community, by
23 program area. Those are the conversations that we're
24 having right now with (INAUDIBLE)... (CROSS-TALK)

1
2 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay, and which programs are
3 utilizing the federal pandemic related funding?

4 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Say that again?

5 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Which programs are utilizing
6 the federal pandemic related funding?

7 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: You know, that...
8 when you said that earlier in your opening statement,
9 our federal dollars, and Jose will... I can get back
10 to you on that. But our most of our, whatever you
11 would call them, pandemic, I don't understand what...
12 So, those federal dollars were used to support OACs
13 and NORCS, but a lot of that was baselined with
14 capital dollar... I mean with City funding.

15 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay, a lot of it?

16 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Yeah, I'll have to
17 get you those numbers. I'm not prepared to address
18 any of those very specifics (sic) right now.

19 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay. Do you know how much of
20 the funding has been replaced with City funds to
21 date?

22 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: You know, what I
23 have for you is interesting... Okay, we'll get back
24 to you on that.

1
2 But, what I had for you was the budget dollars
3 for the Community Care Plan. Those were the only
4 dollars that I have available with me today.

5 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay. You mentioned that some
6 of the programs have been replaced with City dollars,
7 but I think only partially?

8 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: I am going to get
9 back to on the correct answer for that.

10 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay, and, then, specifically
11 related to the Community Care Plan, how would budget
12 cuts meet the stated goals of the plan?

13 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: It's one of the
14 conversations we're having with OMB and looking at
15 the impact. We'll get back to you on that, too.

16 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: So, you're trying to minimize
17 the impact?

18 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Yeah.

19 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: In your conversations with
20 OMB, do you know if they have plans to increase your
21 budget that would align with the increase in older
22 New Yorkers and the needs that we can clearly
23 anticipate?

24 Can you take your conversations with the OMB to
25 the bank? See what I did there?

1
2 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: I can tell you that
3 they are fully transparent and open conversations
4 with OMB. And they're aware of the impact of the
5 growing population, they're very much aware of the
6 diversity in that population, and they're also very
7 much aware of the growing caregiving needs.

8 So, taking it to the bank, I can tell you have
9 full confidence in the degree and depth of those
10 conversations, and that we are being heard, and that
11 it is transparent and responsible conversations.

12 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay. So we've heard that
13 there might be up to 60 older adult centers that that
14 would close. Is that part of the plan or part of the
15 conversations you're having with OMB? (CROSS-TALK)

16 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: That's never gonna
17 be part of the plan. But, that's part of the
18 conversations that we have with OMB. What would be
19 the impact? Would it be 60? I can't give you a
20 number, because those conversations are fluid.

21 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: I know you can't necessarily
22 answer this question, you don't speak on behalf of
23 OMB, but it really is honestly and truly baffling to
24 me that OMB, in every budget hearing that, you know,
25 I've been in with them, I ask them and tell them the

1
2 same exact thing I do everywhere. You know, I am like
3 a broken record. We know the population increases
4 among older adults, and NYC Aging continues to be
5 cut.

6 Do you think they, like, really understand the
7 implications of continuing to cut your budget given
8 the increasing population?

9 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: What I can tell
10 you... what I can tell you with certainty, is that
11 that the conversations we've had with them, which are
12 responsible conversations, which are transparent
13 conversations, they're aware of the impact of the
14 public plan if it if it gets materialized.

15 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay.

16 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: And have been
17 responsible in their response to us.

18 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay. In their response to
19 you...

20 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Right.

21 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Not necessarily in their
22 response to me. But I know the responses are
23 different, I get that.

24 I am just trying to find a question that I think
25 you will be able to answer. Okay. Maybe about the

1
2 budgets for OACs - in the adopted plan from OMB
3 documents, we see \$235.7 million is included for OACs
4 in fiscal 2025. Under budget codes, 5300 and CR 02,
5 this funding drops considerably to a \$177.7 million
6 in fiscal 2026, and then a \$164.2 million in fiscals
7 27 and 28.

8 Can you confirm if this is the full current
9 budget for OACs, and if not, what other units of
10 appropriation and budget codes include OAC funding?

11 And is it isolated or does it also include other
12 programs?

13 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: So the fiscal cliff
14 is part of the public record, and what I described
15 earlier is the conversations that we have around how
16 to best address that fiscal cliff for NYC Aging.

17 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay, bear with me one second
18 here.

19 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Okay.

20 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: I am going to move to data.

21 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: You're going to go?

22 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: To data...

23 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Data, all right.

24 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: What trends are NYC Aging
25 tracking to ensure the Plan is impactful.

1
2 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: In addition to our
3 MMR report, which looks at meals and clients served,
4 the other thing that we're tracking is number of home
5 care hours. One of the things that we have found is
6 that even the homecare hours stay steady, the number
7 of clients has gone down because more home care
8 hours...

9 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Sorry, you said homecare
10 hours are steady, but clients have gone down?

11 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Because more clients
12 are using homecare, uh, case management, I'm sorry,
13 more clients are using case management, and the needs
14 are... the situations are more complex. So, the
15 number of clients is going down.

16 The other thing that we are tracking is homecare
17 hours to make sure... and to look at the range of
18 homecare services that we provide. We are looking at
19 transportation, transportation deserts, those are the
20 things that we are tracking to make sure that the
21 program is meeting the full range of needs that we
22 have.

23 And, then, of course, we are always in the care
24 giving conversation.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: And, then, how many OACs
3 currently exist compared to the number when the Plan
4 was announced.

5 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: We have 29 more
6 older adult centers than we did prior to that, and we
7 have eight more NORCS than we did prior to that.

8 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Eight?

9 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Eight. Eight NORCS
10 and 236, and 29 to about 314 older adult clubs.

11 That's not contracts. That's clubs. Remember,
12 some contracts will have multiple clubs under them.

13 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: It's not contracts, it's
14 clubs, but were some of those actually new?

15 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Of the 20...

16 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Or...

17 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Of the... of the
18 yes...

19 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: So, 29 and the eight?

20 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Yeah. That's where
21 the additional dollars went to.

22 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Copy.

23 With regards to creating an age inclusive and age
24 friendly New York City, can you estimate the number
25 of older adults who have avoided or delayed

1
2 institutional care since the implementation of the
3 plan?

4 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: So, I'm gonna give
5 you a statistic that I think it's a trend.

6 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay.

7 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Because, I don't
8 think there's an actual number, but...

9 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Or, also, like, a percentage
10 of older adults?

11 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Right. So, there are
12 41,000 people in nursing homes, and we serve over 220
13 people with our older adults services at NYC.

14 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: 220,000?

15 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: 220,000, right.
16 Which is why the work of the cabinet is so important,
17 because then we start seeing how many more older
18 adults are served outside of NYC Aging, which is a
19 much larger number when you start thinking about
20 SCRIE and DRIE and all of those other services...
21 SNAP and all of those other services.

22 So, when you look at that, I would say that the
23 Community Care Plan is preventing initialization,
24 because that number has not been growing, but the
25 number of older adults in the community has been.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay, so maybe a correlation
3 but not necessarily causation?

4 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: No, no, and it would
5 be as if we would have to keep the State data steady,
6 and then do a comparison. We have not done that.

7 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay. Do you plan to do it,
8 or you don't... (CROSS-TALK)

9 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: We look at it? I
10 could seriously have my... the research team look at
11 it...

12 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay, I think that would be
13 helpful.

14 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Yeah. And to see
15 what it would require to do that, right?

16 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay.

17 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Like, what are the
18 elements that we would have to look at so that it's
19 not trend number but an actual data number.

20 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Yeah, I mean, I think it's
21 good for you to have, too, just to show...

22 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Yeah.

23 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: The impact of the work.
24 Uhm...

1
2 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Just think that if
3 we keep institutionalization down, we know that
4 there's a direct correlation with that.

5 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Absolutely.

6 I want you to have those numbers for everybody
7 else, I don't need them.

8 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Yeah, yeah, yeah...

9 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: You know, like, I don't need
10 to be sold... (CROSS-TALK)

11 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Yeah, no, we need...
12 No, you don't need them, but we need them for the
13 State, so we can tell the State, turn some of those
14 long term care dollars into community care and not
15 all for medical model...

16 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Totally

17 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: We all need them.

18 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Do you what, if any,
19 improvements in quality of life health and safety
20 metrics have been observed among older New Yorkers?

21 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: One of the things
22 that we look at in terms of the... trends that we do
23 look at are elder abuse trends, and we see a decrease
24 on that. The other thing... The other trend that we
25 have been looking at is the number of fatalities,

1
2 pedestrian fatalities for older adults, looking at
3 that... So, uh, those are the ones that we have been
4 looking at.

5 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Numbers gone done?

6 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Yeah.

7 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay.

8 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: And, then, the other
9 thing that we will be looking at with our latest
10 needs assessment is some of the quality of life
11 issues.

12 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay.

13 And how many new age-friendly initiatives have
14 been introduced?

15 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: You mean age
16 inclusive? Uh, mmm, I'll get back to you, but there's
17 a... I'll get back to you on a cabinet report.

18 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay.

19 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: And, to tell which
20 ones have gone to the second iteration.

21 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Yeah...

22 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Right? So, they
23 started here and now they're in the second iteration.

24 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay, that would be great.

25 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: All right?

1
2 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: With regard to promoting
3 universal access to community services, what
4 percentage of older New Yorkers now have greater
5 access to services and programming compared to before
6 the Plan's implementation, or what... what are you
7 sort of aiming for?

8 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: So, universal access
9 is, in our definition, is pretty broad in the sense
10 that, regardless of income, older adult services are
11 available to you. Right? Regardless of ethnicity and
12 regardless of status. So, all of those services are
13 available to you with the exception of home delivered
14 meals, that is a very prescribed program. So, when we
15 talk about universal access, all older adults, with
16 the exception of home delivered meals, have access to
17 all services provided by NYC Aging.

18 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: How many new service
19 providers have been added to the NYC Aging network?
20 And if you could provide examples that would be
21 great.

22 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: I believe we started
23 out with 10, and I'll... (CROSS-TALK)

24 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: You started with 10 or you
25 have added 10?

1
2 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: You are talking
3 about the age integration programs? The
4 intergenerational programs?

5 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Uhm...

6 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Is that what you're
7 talking about, the youth programs?

8 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: How many new, uh, to the
9 overall network, the overall NYC Aging network
10 service providers?

11 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: It's the same 29.

12 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Just in terms of your overall
13 footprint in adding more diverse providers and ,you
14 know, providers that meet specific needs... (CROSS-
15 TALK)

16 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: It's the same...
17 It's the same...

18 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: How new service providers...

19 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: 29 uh, 29 added...

20 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay...

21 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Uh, since Plan's
22 inception, and the 8 NORCS, it's the same number.

23 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay, that addresses those
24 issues? Okay.

1
2 How does utilization rate of NYC Aging's network
3 of service providers today compared to that of before
4 the Plan's implementation? So utilization rate. So
5 since the Plan has been implemented, how has the
6 utilization rate of your service providers changed?

7 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: So, when we look at
8 utilization, in the OACs, we've seen that we've
9 served 13,000 more individuals.

10 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Yep. Sorry, since the Plan's
11 (INAUDIBLE)... (CROSS-TALK)

12 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: and that's always...
13 Huh?

14 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Since the Plan's
15 implementation?

16 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Yeah...

17 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: It always is? Okay.

18 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Yeah. Then we've
19 also seen approximately 3,000 older adults now
20 receive more services in the NORCS that were added.
21 These were the additive numbers, not the overall. For
22 the 29, we saw 13,000 more individuals. Don't forget
23 these are unduplicated numbers. And then we saw
24 another 3,000 additional older adults in the NORCS.

25 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay.

1
2 With regard to expanding and strengthening
3 community care services, how does the current budget
4 for community care services compare to what it was
5 prior to the Plan's implementation? Sorry, a lot of
6 these questions are gonna be repetitive, but
7 different topic areas.

8 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: You have the
9 modified budget for 2024 went from... the overall
10 agency budget, went from \$375 million to \$521
11 million, alright, during that time when we've been
12 implementing the Plan to 2024.

13 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay, thank you.

14 With regard to enhancing equity and inclusion,
15 what is the demographic breakdown of older adults
16 receiving services, and how has it changed since the
17 Plan's implementation?

18 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: So, I have I have
19 the break the ethnic breakdown for you. Just let me
20 find it. Charlie, where is it? I know we have the
21 percentage, let me just... bear with me for a minute,
22 I'm looking for...

23 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: No problem, take your time.

24 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Thank you. And this
25 is all self-reported data, so 45 percent are white,

1
2 and also includes Latinos who consider themselves
3 white; 19 percent are Asians; 17 percent are African
4 American Black; 23 percent Hispanic Latino; 46
5 percent of our clients are under the age of 75; and
6 53 percent are over the age of 75.

7 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Thank you. And how many new
8 service providers with diverse backgrounds have been
9 added to the NYC Aging network?

10 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Of the 29, 13.

11 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Oh, great.

12 And what specific programs have been... (CROSS-
13 TALK)

14 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: That's not to
15 include all the ones that existed before.

16 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: So, that does or doesn't
17 include all the ones that existed before?

18 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Does not...

19 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Does not? Yes...

20 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Yes, yes, we
21 added... (CROSS-TALK)

22 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Of the 29 new ones, 13...

23 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Right, right...

24 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: of those... Got it.

25 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Right.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: What specific programs have
3 been introduced to address the needs of immigrant and
4 older adults of color?

5 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: I think those 13
6 programs are a big piece of that. I mean, I go back
7 to India House, it is the first Halal program we had.
8 It's the first time that Halal is now a mandated
9 service as Kosher always was, as ,you know, and as
10 Spanish and Asian ,you know, so we have introduced
11 that, so I think that that is the kind of movement
12 and trend that we will be seeing more of.

13 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Thank you. With regard to an
14 increase in outreach and marketing, how many outreach
15 and marketing campaigns have been conducted, and what
16 is their reach?

17 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Uhm, I can tell you
18 about the Join Us Campaign, which is the last one,
19 and I can get you that data for that. But, there are
20 lots of local education and outreach programs that
21 are done by each one of the OACs and NORCS.

22 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay, so you will follow up
23 with us on that? Okay, uh, as well as the metrics
24 that you have used to determine whether outreach
25 (INAUDIBLE)... (CROSS-TALK)

1 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: for those...

2 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: success... (CROSS-TALK)

3 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: we can tell you that
4 for the citywide campaigns.

5 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Yeah.

6 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: I don't know that we
7 asked the... (CROSS-TALK)

8 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Not necessarily...

9 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: OACs to collect
10 metrics that way. We could probably tell you the
11 number of activities that they have done... (CROSS-
12 TALK)

13 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Yeah, I mean, even...

14 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: The kinds of
15 activities...

16 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: It would be helpful to even
17 to know the metrics that they use to determine
18 whether or not the campaign has been successful.

19 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: That's a question,
20 we will pose that question.

21 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Uhm, and in what languages
22 and media has such outreach been conducted? So,
23 specifically, with the Join Us Campaign...

24 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Yeah...

1
2 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: That was done I believe in...

3 (CROSS-TALK)

4 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: That was done... It
5 was (INAUDIBLE)... (CROSS-TALK)

6 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: multiple languages?

7 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Almost... Almost two
8 years now.

9 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Yeah, but was that done in
10 multiple languages?

11 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Hmm?

12 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Was that done in multiple
13 languages?

14 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: The Join Us
15 campaign? Yes... (CROSS-TALK)

16 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Yeah, some of... It was,
17 right? Yeah.

18 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: I love that the MTA
19 doesn't change their ads often, and some of them are
20 still running... (CROSS-TALK)

21 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: And, they're still running,
22 yeah...

23 (LAUGHTER)

24 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: I saw one the other day,
25 actually.

1
2 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Yeah, we like it...

3 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Uhm...

4 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: We still even
5 sometimes see one of the Ability is Ageless campaign.
6 That's one thing I love about the MTA.

7 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Yeah. (LAUGHS) Well, don't
8 tell them, because we don't want to...

9 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: No, no, we don't
10 want them to look for the ads and take them down.

11 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: on top of that, yeah.

12 Uh, have you notified an uptick in older adult
13 engagement since that campaign?

14 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: You know, it's
15 really, uhm, I don't know that there's been an
16 uptick, I think it's been steady. But, there has been
17 changes seasonally. We have had a brutal summer, so
18 we know that it really is a seasonal, uh, variation.
19 But, overall, has there been an uptick? I think it's
20 been pretty flat.

21 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay, great.

22 Before I jump legislation, I did want to just ask
23 one question about your website. Does NYC Aging's
24 Activities Finder website include results for virtual
25

1
2 programming. And is there an ability to filter search
3 results for virtual activities on the website?

4 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Oh, yes.

5 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay, great, thank you.

6 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: And I think we have
7 one of the websites that is the most user friendly
8 for unsighted individuals is what I've been told.

9 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay, can you tell us exactly
10 how to search for it? How to find... because when we
11 looked, it wasn't up there.

12 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: All right.

13 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: You'll follow-up with that?

14 (PAUSE)

15 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Going into the legislation...

16 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: For your legislation
17 with the things you're proposing or legislation that
18 I'm asking for?

19 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Uh, the ones that I am
20 proposing...

21 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: You're proposing...

22 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Well, me and my colleagues.

23 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Yes.

24 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: So, for Intro Number 1022,
25 Council Member Gutiérrez, and myself, requiring a

1 study on naturally occurring retirement communities
2 and the development of a plan to support aging in
3 place, are you supportive of the legislation that
4 would require a study to identify potential NORCS and
5 NORCS in New York City, assess the needs of older
6 adults, evaluate necessary improvements, and collect
7 data on demographic trends and health outcomes of
8 older adults?
9

10 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: So, there is no
11 objection to...

12 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay...

13 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: No, no, no, let me
14 just finish the statement.

15 (LAUGHTER)

16 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: I know (LAUGHS)

17 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: There is no
18 objection to any of the legislation proposed, because
19 it is things that we would be wanting to look at.
20 What we need to do as... I've had the conversation
21 with you about the home delivered meals one...

22 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Right...

23 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: and all of those. We
24 need to work... look at some of the language, and
25 see, one, is it duplicative? Uhm, we also need to

1
2 look at some of the language to see ,you know, does
3 it.. Are we the best entity to be looking at that
4 data? And, also, what ultimately, what we want to
5 find out from that data, particularly around the
6 workforce. You and I are aligned, that we need to get
7 more workforce initiatives, but what does that look
8 like? Who does it serve? Those are the kinds of
9 things that we would love to work with you on some of
10 the language. And, as I said before, there has to be
11 corresponding support for that. Because, we are a
12 small agency with small resources.

13 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Understood. So, specifically
14 related to the workforce programs legislation, what
15 information does NYC Aging currently provide to older
16 adults regarding older adults workforce programs and
17 any employment discrimination issues and resources?

18 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Great question.

19 So we have our 40 plus year program called SYEP
20 (Summer Youth Employment Program), right? We've done
21 some changes in that program, uh, to make sure that
22 more people can benefit from that program - meaning
23 the length of time that someone serves as an intern,
24 and working more with the partners of that program to
25 unsubsidized the individuals so that we could bring

1
2 in more individuals into the program. So that's one
3 of the things that we've done. T

4 The other thing is we have the Silver Stars
5 program which is now include Silver Core. It is
6 anyone... any older adult who is interested in
7 volunteering and then on a pathway to work, we work
8 with you, make sure that we get you a volunteer
9 opportunity then put you in a path to employment.

10 The other program that we have is the actual
11 Silver Star that started out for City retirees who
12 want to come back to the workforce.

13 The caveat without workforce program, because I'm
14 a firm believer that older adults should work, those
15 who want to work, right? Is not to set up
16 expectations, that there's more opportunities for
17 them out there than what they really are. So, we're
18 constantly in this battle of what do we market, how
19 do we present it, how do we sell it so that...
20 expect... you come in, you have an expectation, and
21 we don't have you without work for such a long period
22 of time until we find the employer for you.

23 But, what we do is give you all of the skills
24 that you need so that then we could, you know, the
25 resume writing, some of the soft technology skills.

1
2 That we will constantly work with you on, but it's
3 the placement where, you know, I keep telling staff,
4 I don't want to advertise this broadly, because I
5 don't want have unmet needs.

6 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Yeah.

7 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: So, it's, you know,
8 it's one of those tricky things, you want to combat
9 ageism, and you want more employers to be your
10 partner in this. And, that's a slower, slower uptake
11 than the desire to work. (INAUDIBLE)...

12 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: That was going to be That was
13 gonna be my follow-up question, just with regards
14 specifically to the employers, is that the, I guess,
15 the primary challenge that you're...

16 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: That's the that's
17 the primary challenge, yes... (CROSS-TALK)

18 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Is it ageism or is it, like,
19 lack of capacity or whatever or, like, they literally
20 just don't want to hire older adults for work?

21 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: No, So, I could give
22 you that answer two different ways.

23 In the nonprofit sector, you know, we've built in
24 a workforce, right, by giving them subsidized
25 employees. It's very hard to... you know, they're

1
2 dependent on them also, it's very hard to, like, pull
3 that person out, because we want to give them a
4 subsidized employee. We tell them, you can hire them.
5 Right? And then you get into the conversation of
6 limited resources. So, you know, we're in this catch
7 22. So that's one barrier.

8 The other barrier is in the nonprofit sector,
9 it's just having employers think of older adults in a
10 very different way. We were very lucky with DCAS in
11 that we've train and retrained all of the HR workers
12 in the City workforce to let them know that part of
13 their DEI and their recruitment includes aging.

14 So, we've been very fortunate in that, and that's
15 why the Silver Stars and all of those have
16 opportunities.

17 But outside of that world, we can't even get the
18 state to do a comparable program with their
19 employees. So there is this combination of (TIMER
20 CHIMES) ageism, lack of knowledge, and lack of
21 desire.

22 So what we're looking at now is incenting and
23 showcasing, because nothing like a compliment... and
24 showcasing those employers who have done well and
25 creating some kind of something, you know, to incent

1
2 others to do as well, you know, some kind of a
3 recognition. You might want to partner with us on
4 that. You know?

5 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Love to...

6 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: You know, to be
7 real, you know, to showcase them as breakthrough. I
8 hate that word, because... but innovation, and that
9 shouldn't even be that, it should be wise business
10 practices.

11 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: I mean, I would even venture
12 to say that probably most of the people making the
13 decisions not to hire older people are older people
14 themselves.

15 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Internalized
16 oppression happens.

17 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Yeah, I mean, in the for
18 profit sector if you think about, like, the CEOs and,
19 you know, folks who are managing directors and, you
20 know... anyway, just my own...

21 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: And, it also could
22 be limited re... (CROSS-TALK)

23 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: (INAUDIBLE)

24 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: in the nonprofit.
25

1
2 Not in the for profit. A nonprofit, it's limited,
3 you know, their own resources. Right? So, they got
4 free staff support, and now it's hard...

5 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Right.

6 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: to move that.

7 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Yeah, that I understand
8 anybody wants free, you know, labor.

9 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Yeah.

10 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: I get that.

11 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: I do too, but...

12 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: I mean, we all do. Right?
13 But, I just... I understand, like, the challenge or
14 the balance of, you know, partnering in a program
15 that allows for employment of somebody that you're
16 not actually paying for versus

17 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Yeah, but...

18 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: you know, investing in...

19 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: But as a society,
20 and I think that we are a city that could be prime
21 for that, is to work with places like the Partnership
22 for New York, and get them to make a commitment.

23 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Mm-hmm, yeah.

24 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: to look at this
25 issue in a broader away. You know, I think...

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Yeah...

COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: those are the kinds of things that we need to move...

CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Totally...

COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: in terms of workforce.

CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay, great, thank you.

Does NYC Aging currently operate or work out of any existing facilities to provide older adults with information about programming and services provided by or funded by the Department?

And this is with regards to Preconsidered Introduction, uh, regarding study and report on the feasibility of creating older adult information and service centers.

COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Well, so...

CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: (INAUDIBLE) just saying that, like, physical locations, centralized locations?

COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Yeah, I know...

(CROSS-TALK)

CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: (INAUDIBLE) that...

COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: you're looking borough offices or things of that nature.

1
2 What I would say to that is, other than the
3 partnerships we have with each one of our OACs and
4 each one of our partners, we have... we do not
5 object to something boroughwide. I think there was
6 and the year somewhere back there, there were one
7 time borough offices. Although we are arranged by
8 boroughs, you know, much... of many of our services
9 are looked at by borough, so we do have a borough
10 focus. That being said, that has an overhead
11 requirement that has to come with that kind of a
12 provision.

13 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: I know, that's why this is
14 just a study. Otherwise, we're, you know, we're not
15 trying to put the cart before the horse.

16 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Right.

17 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay. And then regarding the
18 Preconsidered Introduction about a 10-year plan to
19 support aging in place, can you describe NYC Aging's
20 current long term planning efforts to serve New York
21 City's older adults and help older adults age in
22 place?

23 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: I think we've
24 discussed that at length, you know, looking at the
25 way we plan services, the way we look at services

1
2 comparing that with the growth and the demographic
3 changes.

4 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: So, you would be open to a
5 10-year plan, like, outlining...

6 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: I don't think there
7 is, uhm, any objection to a 10-year plan. It is, how
8 is it that we would grow that incrementally and what
9 are the corresponding services that are require to
10 make that, a 10-year plan.

11 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Mm-hmm

12 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: You know, that
13 caregiving, homecare, transportation are all part of
14 that...

15 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Right.

16 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: So, it's looking at
17 the investments in those areas also.

18 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Yeah. Yeah, we can't have a
19 10-year plan without investments for 10 years and
20 beyond.

21 Bear with me just one moment...

22 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Sure, thank you.

23 (PAUSE)

24 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay, I believe that
25 concludes my questions.

1
2 I am now going to open the hearing for public
3 testimony, and thank you so much, Commissioner.

4 And I will just say ,you know, I know that you
5 mentioned this in your testimony, and I know,
6 obviously, we talk about it all the time how we've
7 both... I cared for my mother, you're currently
8 caring for your mother, but I think that's also what
9 bring great value to the work that we both do every
10 day. So, thank you...

11 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Thank you, thank
12 you.

13 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Uh, I would like to...

14 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Thank you for this,
15 just remember, I leave, but there is a team that
16 listens to each one of these... Okay, so that you
17 don't think that we are...

18 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Thank you...

19 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: not listening.

20 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: I know, I know you are, thank
21 you.

22 COMMISSIONER CORTÉS-VAZQUEZ: Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Thank you so much, thanks,
24 everyone for being here.
25

1
2 Okay, I am now opening the hearing for public
3 testimony. I remind members of the public that this
4 is a government proceeding, and that decorum shall be
5 observed at all times. As such, members of the public
6 shall remain silent at all times.

7 The witness table is reserved for people who wish
8 to testify. No video recording or photography is
9 allowed from the witness table. Further, members of
10 the public may not present audio or video recordings
11 as testimony, but may submit transcripts of such
12 recordings to the Sergeant at Arms for inclusion in
13 the hearing record.

14 If you wish to speak at today's hearing, please
15 fill out an appearance card with the Sergeant at Arms
16 and wait to be recognized. When recognized, you will
17 have two minutes to speak on today's oversight topic:
18 *Community Care Plan*, and related legislation, thank
19 you.

20 (PAUSE)

21 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: If you have a written
22 statement or additional written testimony you wish to
23 submit for the record, please provide a copy of that
24 testimony to the Sergeant at Arms. You may also email
25 written testimony to testimony@council.nyc.gov within

1
2 in 72 hours after the close of this hearing. Audio
3 and video recordings will not be accepted.

4 And, I will turn it to counsel to call the first
5 panel, thank you.

6 (PAUSE)

7 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay, just kidding, I'm
8 calling the first panel, uh, Tara Klein, Kevin
9 Kiproviski, and Molly Krakowski.

10 (PAUSE)

11 Tara, we can start with you, and then just move
12 down the line, whenever you're ready - or actually,
13 sorry, when the sergeant... Ready to go? Okay, thank
14 you.

15 DEPUTY DIRECTOR KLEIN: Good afternoon, thank you
16 for holding today's oversight hearing on the
17 Community Care Plan.

18 My name is Tara Klein, I'm the Deputy Director of
19 Policy and Advocacy for United Neighborhood Houses.

20 UNH is a policy and social change organization
21 that represents neighborhood settlement houses in New
22 York. And our members run a lot of programs that
23 serve older adults, including OACs, NORCS, home
24 delivered meals, and a lot of other things.

1
2 So, UNH continues to support the core principles
3 of the Community Care Plan. We know that the older
4 adult population is growing rapidly in New York City.
5 And we need to build out and invest in the City's
6 network of older adult services to match that growth.

7 Through the opening of new centers and enhanced
8 funding for existing programs, the Community Care
9 Plan has been a success thus far. They're growing
10 number of OACs, and NORCS has been good for the City,
11 and its older adult population.

12 Several UNH members have opened new OACs and
13 NORCS, thanks to that expansion, and they've built
14 out those programs, and they've seen a large number
15 of older adults receive essential services and social
16 connection who otherwise would not have had that
17 access.

18 We continue to emphasize that there is a need for
19 more funding to realize the Plan's full vision, but
20 it has been moving our city in the right direction to
21 grow older adult services and investments.

22 Now, unfortunately, it all comes down to money.
23 Right? And, I'm so grateful for the line of
24 questioning earlier about what's going on with the
25 budget.

1
2 What we know now is that there is a large fiscal
3 cliff that begins in FY26. I also want to call
4 attention that there have been several PEG cuts to
5 NYC Aging's budget over the last several years in FY
6 24-25. There's one plan for FY27. There's a lot of
7 confusion around what the numbers surely are. So
8 thank you for helping us get to the bottom of those.

9 But, you know, I...

10 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: I don't know that we did,
11 but...

12 DEPUTY DIRECTOR KLEIN: (LAUGHS) thank you for
13 trying...

14 We've also heard the COLA might be part of those
15 numbers, so that's something else to look into. But,
16 you know, it comes down to this, uhm, you know, we
17 cannot take (TIMER CHIMES) city agencies at their
18 word that these funds are going to be restored.

19 We heard promises that those funds were going to
20 be put back in during the last budget hearing in May.
21 They were not put back in in June. And so we really
22 need to make a big push to make sure those funds get
23 back in.

24 You know, we've heard that centers could close.
25 We've heard the number 60 thrown around. Any programs

1
2 that shrink or close are catastrophic for New York's
3 older adult population who use those centers and
4 services. And, you know, we really need investments,
5 not cuts. I think it's quite simple and clear.

6 That is what we need. So thank you for your time.

7 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Thank you so much. And, then
8 you just started to get into this a little bit, and I
9 know, you know, two minutes is a lot. We do obviously
10 have the written testimony that will be submitted for
11 the record, but I do want to just ask, you have a
12 line here that says the Adams' administration is
13 sacrificing the goals of the Community Care Plan by
14 not addressing the fiscal cliff in New York City
15 Aging's budget.

16 Can you just talk a little bit more about that
17 and any specifics that you can get into?

18 DEPUTY DIRECTOR KLEIN: Yes, absolutely, and thank
19 you for the extra time.

20 You know, I think that it's clear, you know,
21 these decisions are made, you know, from the City,
22 from the Mayor's administration. We've actually seen
23 many of the other agencies in the City that support
24 children and youth and adults actually had a lot of
25

1
2 their fiscal cliffs addressed in this last budget,
3 and some of their PEG cuts restored.

4 We did have a couple of the PEGS restored for NYC
5 Aging, but there are still existing cuts in there.
6 So, you know, the budget decisions really make it
7 clear that the Mayor does not prioritize older New
8 Yorkers. I think it's simple to see in the numbers.

9 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Couldn't have said it better
10 myself. Thank you so much, Tara.

11 Kevin?

12 DIRECTOR KEVIN KIPROVSKI: Good afternoon,
13 everybody, My name is Kevin Kuprowski, and I'm the
14 director of public policy at LiveOn New York. Thank
15 you so much for your continued work and for the
16 opportunity to testify here.

17 Just for context, LiveOn's members include more
18 than a 110 community based nonprofits that provide
19 core services under the NYC Aging portfolio and many
20 other home and community based aging services in our
21 city.

22 I just want to open by saying, we all know what
23 the problem is. The that the Community Care Plan
24 document was written years ago and outlines the fact
25 that our demographics are changing and there's huge

1
2 needs that comes with it means that the background I
3 have written here is just kind of already accepted in
4 this hearing. So that's good that we're all on the
5 same page here. But we really need the Mayor to make
6 bold new investments now. I feel like for the past
7 couple of years, we've been talking about a precipice
8 about, you know, a crisis that's coming. But I think
9 we're kind of starting to hit that, especially when
10 it comes to housing as an issue. I am mentioning that
11 with the Community Care Plan, because a lot of these
12 services become moot if people don't have places to
13 live. You can have a homecare aid if you don't have a
14 home, which is a huge problem that we're facing. I
15 mean, right now, the rate of homelessness for older
16 adults is at an all-time high and growing at a rate
17 three times higher than any other population.

18 So one thing that we would recommend is that any
19 future work with the Community Care Plan in the next
20 decade shows a lot more work with HPD to understand
21 how we can ensure older adults can stay in their
22 homes. Because without a housing component, there is
23 no community. We're gonna have a lot of folks on the
24 street.

25

1
2 We're also, just like Tara was talking about,
3 fighting to make sure that we don't cut the already
4 low budgets for any of our service programs - \$80
5 million, \$71 million, a \$121 million - any of those
6 numbers for the fiscal cliff could... catastrophic
7 the budget's \$460 million, all of those are on an
8 entire quarter of the budget. So we absolutely cannot
9 make that cut.

10 If we're talking about meeting the upcoming
11 needs, we actually need an incredible investment and,
12 Chair Hudson, you've called for this as well, and
13 we're so grateful to have your leadership on this is
14 just doubling, tripling the DFTA budget and also all
15 budgets for aging services. We're gonna be doing a
16 lot more work in that, so stay tuned for that.

17 Next is creating a dedicated City pot of capital
18 funding to keep centers in good repair. (TIMER
19 CHIMES) If you don't have a place to provide
20 services, you can't provide services. A lot of
21 centers, like Council Member Banks was saying
22 earlier, are falling apart and there's actually no
23 way to repair them, because, as our next
24 recommendation says, capital funding rules don't
25 actually allow people to get money. There's a lot of

1
2 site control issues, which means that if you don't
3 have specific leases with specific people, you can't
4 actually get money.

5 We have places who have gotten tens of millions
6 of dollars from outside actors, but can't use it
7 through their DFTA contracts because of these arcane
8 rules. So even if we are able to get a capital pot,
9 we have to make sure people can use it, otherwise,
10 we're gonna fall into the, "oh, people aren't using
11 money, so we have to take it away from them" line
12 that OMB loves to say so much.

13 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Yes.

14 DIRECTOR KEVIN KIPROVSKI: So we need to make
15 sure... oh, sorry.

16 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: No, I was just saying, yes,
17 yeah...

18 DIRECTOR KEVIN KIPROVSKI: Oh, yeah, absolutely, I
19 think we all are in that boat, too.

20 The last two things I want to say is, one, we
21 really need to look at our case management program,
22 that was mentioned in the Community Care Plan as
23 well. But the reality now is different than three
24 years ago, where we have some really high needs
25 clients, and we have folks who are spending most of

1
2 their times on clients who are released from the
3 hospital to homes that have fallen apart, and then
4 they're expected to do 70 to 85 clients a year when
5 they can't even, you know, meet the needs of that one
6 client.

7 So we're calling for a reassessment of the case
8 management caseloads down from one to 72, but also
9 having a special program for high needs clients that
10 gets as low as one to 20.

11 And the last one is reforming nutritional
12 programs to match the reality of those using them. I
13 think we've really been fighting around the edges of
14 nutrition issues over the last couple of years, and
15 we talk about increasing rates, but we really need to
16 increase the number of meals. Homebound New Yorkers
17 only get five meals a week from the City and are
18 usually unable to get more food. And a lot of folks
19 who go to centers, that meal is the only meal they
20 get in a day. And I don't know about anyone else
21 here, but I usually three meals a day, and we really
22 need to take that seriously for everyone in our city,
23 especially when we know that a lot of folks aren't
24 getting any more food than that. So...

1
2 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: I'm just going to ask you to
3 wrap up.

4 DIRECTOR KEVIN KIPROVSKI: Yes, absolutely, yeah,
5 I was just done there.

6 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Thank you, okay.

7 DIRECTOR KEVIN KIPROVSKI: So, I was going to say,
8 thank you so much for the opportunity, I know that
9 you are an incredible champion for Aging, and we are
10 so lucky that we get to work with you.

11 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Thank you.

12 DIRECTOR KEVIN KIPROVSKI: Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Thank you so much.

14 Molly?

15 DIRECTOR MOLLY KRAKOWSKI: Hi, my name is Molly
16 Krakowski, I'm Senior Director of Government Affairs
17 at JASA, and I just thank you, Chair Hudson and the
18 Committee, for today's hearing.

19 I'm going to jump right ahead since I have my two
20 trusted friends here.

21 JASA currently provides NORC supported services
22 among a million other services provide. I'm gonna go
23 straight to some of the specific Intros today.

24 We currently provide NORC ported services at 14
25 different locations, including six NORCS funded by

1
2 New York State Office for the Aging and NYC Aging,
3 three exclusively supported by New York City Council
4 allocations, and then five that are a combination of
5 housing partners and NYC Council discretionary
6 grants.

7 The range of services offered through NORC
8 programs is comprehensive, addresses diverse needs of
9 senior residents, and the services include everything
10 from social programming, supportive counseling,
11 assistant with benefits and entitlements, etcetera,
12 and fostering intergenerational connections, and
13 acting as a platform for community building where
14 neighbors can share skills, exchange wisdom, and
15 actively combat ageism.

16 JASA has a longstanding commitment to serving
17 these unique communities, ensuring the older adults
18 can age successfully in their homes.

19 However, the traditional NORC model, which relies
20 on a partnership between building management, social
21 service agencies, nursing services, and residents
22 face significant challenges, the requirements
23 specifically for matching funds and in-kind services
24 as well as the high cost of nursing services, prevent
25

1
2 barriers to expanding NORC programs to other
3 communities that would greatly benefit from them.

4 We've actively advocated, along with many of the
5 people that you're seeing here, both the City and
6 State levels to support NORC programs calling for the
7 elimination of these unfunded mandates related to
8 health and removing burdensome matches for funding
9 requirements.

10 JASA fully supports Intro 1022, sponsored by
11 Council Member Gutiérrez and the Chair, which
12 mandates the needs assessment focused on NORCS (TIMER
13 CHIMES) throughout New York City.

14 We believe strongly that the NORC model improves
15 healthy outcomes, reduces health care spending, and
16 supports older adults remain in their homes.

17 We also support Intro 1025, introduced by Council
18 Member Hudson, about developing brochures and
19 informational materials for programs to distribute to
20 older adult centers and service providers.

21 We've often encountered over the years older
22 adults who are seeking employment opportunities who
23 have faced age discrimination and are struggling to
24 meet the rising cost of living in New York City.

1
2 We also support the council members Intro T2024
3 (***TRANSCRIPTION NOTE:** Intro 1053), which calls for a
4 feasibility study on the creation of older adult
5 information and service centers in relation to
6 Resolution 452, which seeks to lower the age of
7 eligibility for older Americans Act funded services
8 from 60 to 45 for individuals living with HIV. The
9 services provided through OAA are vital to older
10 adults. They offer support for nutrition, social
11 engagement, and mental economic health and also
12 provide security and legal protections.

13 JASA recognizes that medical conditions, such as
14 HIV, along with challenging life circumstances like
15 homelessness, chronic illness, prior incarceration,
16 can contribute to premature or accelerated aging.
17 However, it's just vital that any broadening of
18 eligibility is matched with increased funding and
19 resources to adequately support this wider
20 population, and I'll just jump to support what
21 everybody has said, which is basically without
22 funding, almost none of this can happen.

23 So we strongly encourage, uh, we hope that we'll
24 get all the numbers that have been promised to you,
25 and that the conversation with OMB will become more

1
2 transparent, so that we can actually hear what's
3 going on, and know that there's an infusion of cash
4 to really support all of the wonderful and potential
5 initiatives that are being put forward. Thank you...

6 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Thank you so much.

7 If you all haven't already, can you please email
8 your written testimony, so we have them?

9 PANEL: Yes.

10 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Thank you.

11 Thank you, all of you.

12 I am going to call up the next panel. Adam
13 Roberts, Linda Hoffman, Jeannine Cahill-Jackson, Po-
14 Ling Ng.

15 Okay, Adam, we will start with you, and we'll go
16 down the line.

17 ADAM ROBERTS: Thank you for holding this hearing
18 today.

19 I am Adam Roberts testifying on behalf of the New
20 York Apartment Association, also known as NYAA. NYAA
21 is a newly formed trade group representing
22 multifamily housing providers across New York City.
23 Our members provide more than 1 million units of
24 rental housing, most of which is subject to rent
25 stabilization and built before 1974, meaning they do

1
2 not receive 421-A or other subsidies. We are here to
3 testify and Introduction 1022.

4 New York's aging population is concentrated in
5 its rent stabilized housing. According to the 2023
6 Housing and Vacancy Survey also known as the HVS, 31
7 percent of rent stabilized households had older
8 adults higher than the share in free market units.

9 Meanwhile, in many rent stabilized households,
10 tenants live alone and are disabled at 41 percent and
11 25 percent, respectively.

12 Unfortunately, the HVS does not show which cross
13 section of the population is older, alone, and
14 disabled. However, it's safe to say it's a
15 significant amount and likely falls into all three
16 categories.

17 Since 2017, the City has had the Aging In Place
18 Guide for building owners on how to design existing
19 buildings, particularly affordable housing, for this
20 segment of the population.

21 These guidelines were written by the Department
22 of Aging and are the first resource listed for
23 multifamily building owners on HPD's website.

24 Since the City already has data and design
25 guidelines regarding senior housing, additional

1 studies are unnecessary. Rather, they delay the need
2 to take action. Seniors in rent stabilized housing
3 live in buildings that are increasingly defunded. The
4 Rent Guidelines Board found in its 2024 Income and
5 Expense Study that by the end of 2022, over 10
6 percent of older rent stabilized buildings were
7 distressed, meaning that their expenses were higher
8 than revenue.
9

10 These buildings are also aging and require
11 repairs. Looking at our own membership, the median
12 building was built in 1922 over 100 years ago. These
13 buildings (TIMER CHIMES) were not designed with
14 elevators, wide hallways, ramps, and other features
15 necessary for aging in place.

16 The longer the Council waits to take action, the
17 longer aging tenants will be stuck climbing the
18 stairs or struggling to fit walkers through tight
19 hallways.

20 We look forward to working with the Council to
21 fund and renovate our senior housing, particularly
22 the 300,000 rent stabilized households with elderly
23 residents. Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Thank you so much. And if I
25 can just ask ,you know, the intent of this

1
2 legislation is to identify which communities really
3 need support. Do you have any sense, and this is
4 something that you can potentially follow up with us
5 on, but, like, which specific neighborhoods or
6 communities in terms of the housing that you
7 represent, or the residents, would be most in need?

8 ADAM ROBERTS: Yes, I would say especially parts
9 of the outer boroughs, uhm, the Bronx as a whole
10 borough in particular, has a very... is an aging
11 population and its buildings are particularly
12 defunded, so 20 percent drop in that operating income
13 between 2021 and 2022. I am sure if we were able to
14 see the most up to date data, it would be far worse.
15 Also parts of Central Southern Brooklyn, Eastern
16 Queens, and Upper Manhattan, like, Inwood, Washington
17 Heights also have this combination of aging
18 residences and increasingly defunded rent stabilized
19 buildings.

20 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Thank you very much.

21 Linda?

22 PRESIDENT LINA HOFFMAN: Linda Hoffman, President
23 New York Foundation for Senior Citizens. Chair
24 Hudson, members of the Aging Committee, thank you for
25 allowing me to present today.

1
2 We at the foundation are extremely grateful to
3 each of you who for the past, present, and hopefully
4 future will support our citywide home sharing and
5 respite care program, which provides the only
6 services of their type in the city.

7 In accordance with our community... with the
8 Community Care Plan, our program services enable our
9 city's older adults to remain in place in their own
10 homes and communities. And by preventing their
11 institutionalization and nursing homes and homeless
12 shelters, our program services are both responsive to
13 the City's housing crisis as well as providing
14 significant annual savings to the City in Medicaid
15 and other expenses.

16 I could go on and explain home sharing and
17 respite care, but I know the Committee understands
18 what it's all about, because they've been always so
19 supportive of it, especially our illustrious Chair
20 who's been so helpful and supporting, which we really
21 appreciate.

22 During the past 44 years, we have successfully
23 matched over 2,500 persons and 1,200 shared living
24 arrangements. And if it's someday appropriate, we
25 would like to extend our home sharing services to

1
2 asylum seekers and match them as guests in shared
3 housing with older New York City residents.

4 Our respite care service, again, keeps people
5 out of nursing homes. It's short term in home care
6 for people above the Medicaid level at \$18.55 a day.
7 And I know we were talking about the different types
8 of home care. It's actually filling a major gap,
9 because as people who are spending down to receive
10 Medicaid (TIMER CHIMES) and it's keeping them at home
11 and rather than in institutions.

12 So we, again, certainly support the Community
13 Plan. It makes a lot of sense, and we're hoping that
14 it will continue to be in place, uh, that it will be
15 approved, and we hope that it will be possible to
16 continue funding for New York Foundation for Senior
17 Citizens Home Sharing and Respite Care Program - and
18 other programs that are keeping people at home in the
19 community.

20 And thank you very much, in advance, for
21 hopefully providing these desperately needed funds.

22 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Thank you so much.

23 PRESIDENT LINA HOFFMAN: Thank you.

24 Po-Ling? Good to see you again.

25 DIRECTOR PO-LING NG: Good afternoon.

1
2 First of all, I thank you, you know, our lovely
3 honorable, New York City Council Committee on Aging
4 Chairperson and members.

5 Thank you, you know, first of all, I my name is
6 Po-Ling Ng, I am Director of the CPC Open Door Older
7 Senior Center.

8 Today, I really, on behalf of my program, say
9 thank you, my lovely Chairperson, you know, you keep
10 promise to me, because I remember that, I testified
11 on March 8th here talking about what is our problem.
12 I opened my... my program's name is Open Door, I
13 opened the door and welcome you visit us. Definitely,
14 you are very busy, but you still take time and June
15 19th, you come to visit our center. So thank you,
16 thank you, I thank you. After you visit our center,
17 you really did understand what is our need.

18 We are at a huge facility. We had a huge number
19 of our seniors who need services. But, the one thing
20 I come over here we still not without the problem
21 yet. Just talking about the capital money, because,
22 you know, our building is the former police
23 headquarters building at 1909, but (INAUDIBLE) is 115
24 years. You know, this is landmark building. But,
25 people, thank you, you know, everyone's supporting of

1
2 us. But the major thing I really care of the senior
3 health and senior safety. But right now, our main
4 door is broken. (TIMER CHIMES) We don't have money to
5 fix. I asked the senator, I asked the congressman. I
6 understand...

7 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: I'm sorry, you said the main
8 door?

9 DIRECTOR PO-LING NG: Yeah, main door...

10 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: The front door?

11 DIRECTOR PO-LING NG: City Council, everyone, but
12 I don't (INAUDIBLE) everyone, you tried to do your
13 best, especially the Department for the Aging.
14 Unfortunately, the send a lot of contractor, a lot of
15 engineer come over, but they said that we don't have
16 money. So that's (INAUDIBLE), and you know, we still
17 cannot resolve our problem. Because I worry one day,
18 someone break our door, then up upstairs, we will
19 kick us out. But that's how we provide a quick
20 service for our senior. That's my major, major, major
21 concern. City Council, I know you have money, because
22 I check...

23 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: You've been (INAUDIBLE)...

24 DIRECTOR PO-LING NG: I check...

25 (LAUGHTER)

1
2 DIRECTOR PO-LING NG: The funding allocation,
3 except Open Door, everyone get the money. So, then
4 (INAUDIBLE)...

5 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: When I visited, I don't think
6 (INAUDIBLE)... (CROSS-TALK)

7 DIRECTOR PO-LING NG: No, no, no I checked, I do
8 my homework.

9 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Oh, no, I'm not... I'm not
10 disputing that, I'm saying when I visited, I don't
11 think the front door was broken.

12 DIRECTOR PO-LING NG: Yeah.

13 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: It wasn't an issue at the
14 time. So, I will definitely look into that, because,
15 that's about safety and security.

16 DIRECTOR PO-LING NG: Yeah, because I try very
17 hard to ask, the people come over here, they said
18 that, you should replace, not repair. Repair only for
19 temporary, we solve the temporary problem. It should
20 be replaced, then you don't worry too much forever.

21 So, I fight very, very hard, I go everywhere ,you
22 know, to search for money. Unfortunately, still
23 (INAUDIBLE) no money. So, how, even when I work
24 really hard, I still cannot resolve the problem.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: If you can just try to wrap
3 up, Po-Ling...

4 DIRECTOR PO-LING NG: Yeah, please ,you know,
5 please I know you have a good heart...

6 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: I will... I will definitely
7 look into the... (CROSS-TALK)

8 DIRECTOR PO-LING NG: (INAUDIBLE) some money for
9 not only you and your team care of our seniors ,you
10 know, the poor elderly.

11 The second, last time I was talking about before
12 Margaret Chin give us, you know, and \$86,000 a year
13 regarding about that fix our facility (TIMER CHIMES)
14 and (INAUDIBLE) a lot of related services. But this
15 City Council, our lovely City Council Marte, just
16 give us zero. Even I'm already to him... I talk to
17 him. He still gives me zero. Do you think that's
18 fair? That's unfair. Because Open Door is the huge
19 run private civil service organization. We had a 53
20 years old history. We built our center since 1972.
21 But everyone treat us very well. But what's happening
22 right now? No money. See no money. Our senior
23 population is increasing. Our (INAUDIBLE) elderly is
24 going up. Why did our go from very good to zero? So,
25 I am very disappointed. Really...

1 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: I...

2 DIRECTOR PO-LING NG: I know, Chair Hudson, you
3 have the power. You not only have the women power,
4 minorities power, you have the senior power. So,
5 could you help us, and also your team?
6

7 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Thank you.

8 DIRECTOR PO-LING NG: And give us discretionary
9 fund and also capital funds. Because, I talked to the
10 (INAUDIBLE), they said that this year is very good
11 year, because they said they had the money for the
12 capital funds. But, why did Open Door get none?

13 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay, so... (CROSS-TALK)

14 DIRECTOR PO-LING NG: Even they had a lot of the
15 capital funds. Open Door (INAUDIBLE) care of our
16 seniors. We need the money. Why do we still get zero
17 funds?

18 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: That, I cannot answer,
19 because you are referring to specific council
20 members, I will follow up with my colleague, Council
21 Member Marte, I will also follow up with
22 Congressman Goldman. But, I specifically, I will
23 look into the front doors, because that is a very
24 concerning issue that you have brought to my
25 attention. Discretionary funding is separate, but I

1
2 will inquire. But, I will focus on seeing if we can
3 get the front doors fixed, okay?

4 DIRECTOR PO-LING NG: Yeah, the main door is very
5 important. I worry that someone will break in some
6 day, then we will be...

7 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Well, hopefully that...

8 DIRECTOR PO-LING NG: (INAUDIBLE) we feed the
9 homeless, okay? okay?

10 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Hopefully that doesn't
11 happen... (CROSS-TALK)

12 DIRECTOR PO-LING NG: (INAUDIBLE) (LAUGHS)

13 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Yes, thank you so much for
14 your testimony, Po-Ling, thanks for coming.

15 DIRECTOR PO-LING NG: Thank you. Thank you.

16 Thank you. Thank you. Thank you for your support.
17 Thank you, good luck to you. Good health...

18 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Thank you, if you don't...
19 (CROSS-TALK)

20 DIRECTOR PO-LING NG: Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: If you don't mind just moving
22 the microphone over, I am going to let Jeannine go
23 next.

24 DIRECTOR JEANNINE CAHILL-JACKSON: Okay, thank
25 you.

1
2 Good afternoon, Chair Hudson and members of the
3 Committee. And thank you for your commitment to
4 enhancing health and safety and the quality of life
5 for older New Yorkers.

6 I'm Jeannine Cahill-Jackson, the citywide
7 Director of Elder Law with the Legal Aid Society.

8 Legal Aid has a long history of providing
9 eviction defense services to seniors in both the
10 Bronx and Brooklyn. Currently, the Elder Law Unit is
11 comprised of a multidisciplinary team specializing in
12 eviction defense for seniors in both the Bronx and
13 Brooklyn. Our team is comprised of attorneys,
14 paralegals, and social workers, and we were recently
15 able to expand our staff doubling in each borough and
16 extending the amount of social work support each
17 eviction defense attorney gets.

18 And I just want to welcome many of our folks that
19 are here with me today.

20 So building... we're working on building a
21 specialization to help keep the most vulnerable older
22 New Yorkers in their homes. We support all of the
23 bills that are proposed today and acknowledge the
24 consistent theme of helping older adults remain in
25

1
2 the communities through strengthening and expanding
3 the services that are available to them.

4 I wanted to just note something that seemed
5 really important to raise, because while these
6 programs, the NORCS and the other enhanced services
7 for older New Yorkers that are proposed, while they
8 help them remain in place longer in many ways,
9 something that's notably absent is rental assistance
10 or affordability of the current long, uh, usually
11 long term units. There continues to be an increase in
12 the numbers of older adults entering the shelter
13 system, and as such, it's crucial that rental
14 assistance and the SCRIE rent freeze program remain
15 part of any plan to help seniors age in place.

16 First, in regards to rental assistance, we call
17 on the City Council to continue to support the
18 implementation of Local Laws 99, 100, 101, and 102 of
19 2023, which I referred to as the (INAUDIBLE)...
20 (CROSS-TALK)

21 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Sorry, can you just list
22 those again? Ninety-nine, 100? (TIMER CHIMES) Local
23 Laws 99, 100?

24 DIRECTOR JEANNINE CAHILL-JACKSON: 101 and 102.

25 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Thank you.

1
2 DIRECTOR JEANNINE CAHILL-JACKSON: of 2023.

3 They're what I refer to as the CityFHEPS expansion,
4 which removed the requirements that in order for a
5 senior, or any low income New Yorker, to obtain that
6 rental subsidy, they either had to have shelter
7 history or an active APS case.

8 There's a notable connection between the increase
9 in services for folks to age in place, which helps
10 them in many ways, but would actually render them
11 even less eligible under the current regimen for
12 CityFHEPS, which requires that they're in need of APS
13 services.

14 The other points, -- I realize at time -- that I
15 wanted to raise, was to call on City Council to work
16 with state legislature to enhance the SCRIE program
17 to ensure true affordability of long term regulated
18 apartments.

19 A few proposals are to set the frozen rent, uh,
20 at the rent amount the tenant pays when they turn 62
21 regardless of the year they apply.

22 Additionally, to freeze the rent at an affordable
23 amount. Often, seniors that are particularly low
24 fixed income, are unable to afford their rent by the
25

1
2 time they turn 62. So it's essentially frozen at a
3 continuously unaffordable rate.

4 Lastly, we request that it be explored to expand
5 SCRIE to be available to seniors who live in
6 apartments who are now covered by the new Good Cause
7 Law.

8 We'll be submitting written testimony to further
9 explain all of those points, and we thank you for our
10 opportunity to testify and for all the work that you
11 do on behalf of older New Yorkers.

12 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Thank you so much. And, then,
13 you mentioned APS (Adult Protective Services), and I
14 know that in the, uhm, recent MMR report, the Mayor's
15 Management Report, it talks specifically about APS
16 and fewer older adult specifically getting those
17 resources. Are you able to talk about that at all,
18 and just, like, what you're seeing in terms of APS
19 specifically. I know that's ,like, not why you're
20 here, but...

21 DIRECTOR JEANNINE CAHILL-JACKSON: I can
22 definitely speak to that, I'm not sure if gets to the
23 number. Just a little clarification as to the number,
24 because I'm not familiar with the report, it was that
25

1
2 fewer, uh, older adults are qualifying for the
3 services or applying for them, what was that?

4 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: I think more or the same
5 number are applying, but fewer are actually getting
6 the resources. And, then, also, I think case managers
7 have more people, which I guess is the reason why
8 they are getting fewer resources, they just don't
9 have the capacity to meet those needs.

10 DIRECTOR JEANNINE CAHILL-JACKSON: Yes, so we are
11 definitely seeing that on the ground. So,
12 specifically in our work trying to keep seniors in
13 their apartments, it is often either just as many of
14 the proposals are ,you know, aimed at either getting
15 them the services, so once their rent is paid, they
16 can sustainably stay in place, and/or to also get the
17 CityFHEPS rental subsidy. So, very often, we are
18 advocating to try and get our clients APS services,
19 and it has become increasingly harder to do so. Even
20 when on the face of it, they do meet the
21 qualifications standards, so it is only through
22 perhaps often a second or third referral and advocacy
23 on behalf of the clients, that we are able to get the
24 cases approved.

1
2 So, I would say, no doubt, if you were a senior
3 that didn't have a legal advocate on your side, uh,
4 helping to advocate the system and advocate on the
5 behalf of your referral, I would likely see many more
6 denials.

7 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Then, uhm, again, I
8 apologize, I know this isn't why you came, but I just
9 want to ,you know, if you are able to answer, or at
10 least give some, uhm, perspective, than I want to
11 take the opportunity to get that.

12 We are seeing, uh, from the report, a 19 percent
13 drop in referrals. Do you know if folks are being
14 given reasons for being rejected for referrals?

15 DIRECTOR JEANNINE CAHILL-JACKSON: They... So, I
16 can only speak in terms of the folks that are our
17 clients, and also subsequently become our clients. At
18 times, there have been APS referrals, uhm, perhaps
19 the court is involved or a GAL (Guardian Ad Litem),
20 and, then, once they become a client of Legal Aid,
21 were maybe informed that there were one or two
22 referrals before we came on the case.

23 In our experience, the senior isn't always given
24 the written form, and often we are able to get the
25 information, if we are able to get it, regarding why

1
2 the case was denied, uhm, through speaking directly
3 with the directors of the borough offices and APS.

4 So, we are not seeing the, uh, actually the
5 completion of the form as to why they were denied.
6 Sometimes they will receive the form saying they were
7 denied, but no reason is provided.

8 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Okay, great, thank you so
9 much, I appreciate that.

10 DIRECTOR JEANNINE CAHILL-JACKSON: Thank very you.

11 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Thank you all for your
12 testimony.

13 PANEL: Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Thank you.

15 Moving to Zoom, we have Kahlia Thompson and Darcy
16 Connors.

17 You can wait for the Sergeant at Arms, uh, to
18 call your time before testifying.

19 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

20 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Kahlia Thompson?

21 DIRECTOR KAHLIA THOMPSON: Hi, good afternoon.

22 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Good afternoon.

23 DIRECTOR KAHLIA THOMPSON: My name is Kahlia
24 Thompson, and I represent Ocean Bay Community
25 Development Corporation. We're a social service

1
2 agency that has proudly served the Rockaway Community
3 for over 20 years.

4 I am honored to testify today regarding New York
5 City Aging's Community Care Plan and the critical
6 need for continued funding for our older adult
7 centers.

8 As the director of The Older Adult Center, a New
9 York City Aging provider, I understand firsthand how
10 vital it is for our aging adults to have a welcoming
11 homelike facility where they can embrace their
12 quality of life.

13 Today, I want to emphasize the urgent need to
14 safeguard our seniors' futures by preventing budget
15 cuts and the potential closure of many older adult
16 centers across New York City.

17 I want to thank you for recognizing that support
18 for the aging population is leading throughout the
19 City; however, I am here to focus on the aging
20 population of the Rockaways.

21 The Rockaways, Community District 14, is an 11-
22 mile-long peninsula. It is a Majority-Minority
23 community that has endured the brunt of decades-long
24 degradation and disenfranchisement. Rockaways
25 residents often experience more intense storm effects

1
2 as evidenced by the disparate impacts of Superstorm
3 Sandy in 2012 and Ida in 2021.

4 Capital projects designed to restore
5 infrastructure damaged by Superstorm Sandy and to
6 improve the area's resilience to storms and other
7 climate events are still ongoing.

8 Residents face numerous hardships and barriers,
9 including limited access to quality food, reliance on
10 a single subway line for transportation, and frequent
11 delays in housing repairs, to name just a few.

12 Also, because of its geographical position and
13 years of disenfranchisement, our growing Aging
14 population experiences these factors daily and
15 utilizes the services provided through our Older
16 Adult program as a means of combating their
17 circumstances.

18 Our Older Adult Center @Arverne offers quality
19 (TIMER CHIMES)...

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Thank you, your time expired.

21 DIRECTOR KAHLII THOMPSON: I'm sorry?

22 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Your time is expired, but you
23 can just wrap up, and then we will have your written
24 testimony.

25 DIRECTOR KAHLII THOMPSON: You already read it.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Yes.

3 DIRECTOR KAHLII THOMPSON: Uhm, I just wanted to
4 emphasize the fact that our growing population, our
5 aging population, is growing. And more funds are
6 needed to be invested in older adult centers and
7 ensure we continue provided essential services for
8 helping seniors to maintain their independence,
9 health, and well-being.

10 Without investments, we risk leaving our most
11 vulnerable population without the care and sense of
12 community that they deserve.

13 Thank you for your time.

14 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Thank you so much, Kahlia.

15 We will move to Darcy Connors, and you can unmute
16 yourself and wait for the sergeant to call time.

17 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

18 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DARCY CONNORS: Good afternoon,
19 Chairperson Hudson, and Committee members. Thank you
20 first foremost for offering a hybrid version of
21 testimony, as our older adults enjoy as well, someone
22 who is dealing with some symptoms today, I appreciate
23 the opportunity to testify on behalf of SAGEServes.

24 My name is Darcy Connors, I use she/her pronouns,
25 and I'm the Executor Director of SageServes, serving

1
2 the needs of older LGBTQ plus adults in New York
3 City.

4 We're particularly committed to ensuring that
5 older adults, including those from marginalized
6 communities, can age with dignity, access to care,
7 and opportunities for full participation in society,
8 whether that be virtual or in person.

9 I'd like to express our support today for three
10 critical pieces of legislation that were raised here,
11 Introduction Number 1022, Introduction Number 1025,
12 and Resolution Number 452.

13 Each of these measures will help advance the
14 while being older adults in our City, but I'll focus
15 the bulk of my testimony on Resolution Number 452,
16 which holds immense importance for individuals aging
17 with HIV.

18 We support introduction number is 1025, which
19 aims to ensure older adults receive clear information
20 about employment discrimination and workforce
21 programs.

22 As we know in our older adult centers and Sage
23 Center Bronx, at Crotona Pride House in Sage Center,
24 Brooklyn at Stonewall House, in your district Council
25 Member and Chairperson, uh, the older adults in those

1
2 communities who are identifying as LGBTQ+, face
3 barriers to employment due to ageism, also compounded
4 by homophobia and transphobia.

5 Latest research from Sage found that 50 percent
6 of LGBTQ+ elders 55+ believe they will have to work
7 in their retirement years and significantly longer
8 than their heterosexual and cisgender counterparts.

9 Having clear accessible resources will not only
10 help them navigate these challenges, but also connect
11 them with the programs that can provide financial
12 sustainability and foster sense of purpose as they
13 age.

14 I would encourage you also to consider that when
15 older adults enter the workforce, (TIMER CHIMES) it
16 may jeopardize access to... (CROSS-TALK)

17 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Thank you your time has
18 expired.

19 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DARCY CONNORS: programs that
20 are financially restricted.

21 Sorry?

22 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Your time has expired, but
23 you can wrap up.

24 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DARCY CONNORS: Okay, thank
25 you, thank you Chair... (CROSS-TALK)

1
2 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: And we will have your written
3 testimony, thank you.

4 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DARCY CONNORS: Yes, written
5 testimony is attached, uh, again, firsthand dealing
6 with LGBTQ+ adults living with HIV, many are
7 isolated, lowering eligibility age for access to
8 programs to the age of 45 will help reduce that
9 stigma. I urge the Council to pass the measures that
10 were discussed today and continue to lead the way in
11 supporting our aging population across all
12 communities, thank you for your time and commitment
13 to our elders.

14 CHAIRPERSON HUDSON: Thank you so much.

15 I am just going to open for anyone else who might
16 be on Zoom or here in person to testify?

17 Okay, seeing no one, I would just like to thank
18 everybody who testified today. Thank you to
19 Commissioner Cortés-Vazquez, uh, and also to the
20 Council staff here to make today's hearing possible.
21 It is my hope that we will have more specific answers
22 with regard to funding streams and making sure that
23 initiatives like the Community Care Plan can continue
24 to the best of their ability.
25

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

COMMITTEE ON AGING

Thanks again, and this meeting is adjourned.
(GAVEL SOUND) (GAVELING OUT)

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 6, 2024