

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT

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February 27, 2026

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HELD AT: 250 Broadway - 8th Floor - Hearing
Room 1

B E F O R E: Virginia Maloney,
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Public Advocate Williams
Alexa Avilés
Chris Banks
Amanda C. Farias
Jennifer Gutiérrez
Kevin C. Riley
Shanel Thomas-Henry

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

Admin

Maya Handa

World Cup Czar

Nancy Mammana

NYC Tourism + Conventions

Justin Kreamer

NYCEDC

Michael Rodriguez

Hotel Trades Council

Idelina Santiago

Hotel Trades Council

Jean-Homer Lautrice

Unite Here Local 100

Jeffrey LeFrancois

NYC BID Association

Gonzalo Casals

Culture & Arts Policy Institute

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Human Rights Watch

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NYC Footy

Michele Dottin

Independent Drivers Guild

Warren Gardner
Airbnb

Ariana Dyk
Equality League

Annabel Short
Center for Sport & Human Rights

Xiomara Loarte
NYC Central Labor Council

Vijay Dandapani
Hotel Association of NYC

Jessica Walker
Manhattan Chamber of Commerce

Alexandria Sica
DUMBO Improvement District

Sarah Bratko
American Hotel & Lodging Association

Nick Martinez
Museum of the City of New York

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2 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Mic check, mic check. This is
3 a mic check for the Committee on Economic
4 Development. Today's date is February 27, 2026,
5 recorded by Walter Lewis in HR 1.

6 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Good afternoon and welcome to
7 today's New York City Council hearing for the
8 Committee on Economics. At this time, I would like
9 to remind everyone to silence all electronic devices.
10 Also, at this point going forward, no one is to
11 approach the dais. Chair, we are ready to begin.

12 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Good morning and welcome to
13 this hearing of the New York City's Council's
14 Committee on Economic Development. Today is Friday,
15 February 27th and I am Council Member Virginia
16 Maloney.

17 I have the privilege of serving as the Chair of
18 this Committee. I want to thank the former Chair,
19 Council Member Amanda Farias for her excellent
20 leadership of the Committee during the last session
21 and also, recognize my colleagues present here today,
Council Members Kevin Riley and Council Member Shanel
Thomas-Henry. This is the first hearing of the
Committee on Economic Development this term and it's
fitting that we begin with an event of this scale and

1
2 magnitude, the 2026 FIFA World Cup. In just a few
3 months, the eyes of the world will turn to our region
4 as MetLife Stadium hosts eight matches, including the
5 final. The New York New Jersey POST Committee
6 projects that this will bring \$3.3 billion in
7 economic impact, 1.2 million visitors and more than
8 430 million in state and local tax revenue.

9 New York City is already the global capital of
10 commerce, culture, finance and media and the World
11 Cup presents an opportunity to demonstrate at scale
12 why we remain the best city in the world to host
13 events of global consequence and to strengthen that
14 position for the future. If executed well, this
15 tournament will not only bring visitors to our
16 hotels, restaurants, and small businesses, it will
17 reinforce New York's position as the premier host
18 city for global events, including future
19 opportunities. The way we perform in 2026 will shape
20 how the world evaluates our readiness for decades to
21 come.

18 This Committee's responsibility is clear, to
19 ensure that this moment of global attention
20 translates into lasting economic benefit for New
21 Yorkers.

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2 Today, we will hear from representatives from
3 NYCEDC, the World Cup Czar Maya Handa, New York City
4 Tourism, A Better New York, Manhattan Chamber of
5 Commerce, HTC, New York City Hospitality Alliance,
6 and the Hotel Association of New York and other key
7 stakeholders involved in planning and coordination.

8 Let me begin first with looking at the city's
9 investment. Last year, the Adams Administration
10 allocated \$14 million to NYCEDC for World Cup
11 promotional events and related expenditures.

12 In Fiscal Year '27 Preliminary Budget that was
13 released this month, the Mamdani Administration added
14 another \$15 million to EDC, bringing total EDC World
15 Cup funding to \$29 million.

16 The Administration also added \$4.5 million to NYC
17 Tourism and Conventions for World Cup marketing. So,
18 that represents nearly \$34 million in city tax
19 dollars that are tied to this event.

20 New Yorkers should be ambitious but also precise
21 about the expected impact of each dollar. So, today,
we'd like to understand how those funds are allocated
and structured.

Next, is transportation and regional
coordination. While the matches will take place in

1
2 MetLife Stadium in East Rutherford, New Jersey, New
3 York City is still going to be the primary gateway
4 for hundreds of thousands of fans that are moving
5 through the region. Large scale events in the past,
6 have shown that seamless transportation planning is
7 essential to protecting both visitor experience as
8 well as our city's reputation. So, coordination and
9 contingency planning are going to be very important.

10 Then there is the broader question of economic
11 participation. The World Cup should strengthen the
12 entire ecosystem of New York City's economy.

13 From major hospitality providers to small
14 neighborhood businesses, from cultural institutions
15 to commercial corridors across all five boroughs.
16 Restaurants, retailers and service providers, will
17 feel the effects of increased demand and our hotels
18 will play a critical role in hosting international
19 visitors.

20 The Hotel and Gaming Trades Council contract
21 expires on July 1st during the tournament period and
we'll need to ensure contingency plans are in place
to ensure operational security.

Beyond short-term visitor spending, this moment
should position New York City for sustained economic

1 growth. So, we should understand how the city is
2 leveraging global visibility to cultivate long term
3 business relationships, investment opportunities and
4 job creation. There is the question of accessibility
5 and public experience. Ticket prices range from
6 \$1,000 to \$3,000 on the official FIFA resale
7 Marketplace and while the city does not control
8 FIFA's ticketing and stadium operations policies,
9 we're making a public investment here in the broader
10 World Cup experience. So, it's important to
11 understand why - what publicly accessible programming
12 will be available to New Yorkers including free fan
13 events, watch parties and community activations so
14 that this tournament feels inclusive, and reflective
15 of the diverse communities that call our city home.

16 Finally, we must consider external risk factors.
17 I want to raise a concern regarding the federal
18 travel ban, which currently affects nationals of 39
19 countries. Some of whom have teams competing in the
20 World Cup. International arrivals to the United
21 States were already projected to decline by more than
six percent last year and the host committees
projected 3.3 billion of economic impact assumes that
we still have strong visitor turnout. If that

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attendance does not materialize, the return on investment would be significantly affected.

In closing, I want to recognize the Economic Development Committee Staff for their hard work in preparing for today's hearing. Thank you to Senior Counsel Alex Paulenoff, Senior Policy Analyst William Hongach, and Financial Analyst Spencer Kuhn.

Our role today is to ensure that planning matches the goal and that the World Cup will be a moment where New York City shows the world what we do best. I'll now turn to the Committee Counsel to administer the oath.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Madam Chair. Alex Paulenoff, Senior Counsel. Will all members of the Administration testifying today, please raise your right hands? Do you swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in your testimony today and to respond honestly to Council Member questions?

Thank you. You may begin when ready.

MAYA HANDA: Is this working? Yes. Good afternoon Chair Maloney and Members of the Committee on Economic Development. My name is Maya Handa and I serve as the Mayor's World Cup Czar. This role

1
2 exists for a simple reason. A tournament of this
3 scale only goes well if city agencies, mayoral
4 offices, and outside partners are working in close
5 coordination early, with clear responsibilities and
6 clear communication to the public.

7 The World Cup will not be felt only inside of the
8 stadium. It will be felt on subway platforms, on
9 buses, on sidewalks, in parks, and on neighborhood
10 commercial corridors across all five boroughs. Our
11 job is to keep the city functioning during a period
12 of intense demand while also making sure that New
13 Yorkers can participate and benefit from what is
14 happening.

15 The web was only appointed a few weeks ago. The
16 talented public servants in our city agencies have
17 been convening regular working sessions for almost
18 two years, across the agencies and mayoral offices
19 that will be central to this effort. Including
20 transportation, public safety, emergency management,
21 sanitation, parks and public space, accessibility,
tourism, economic development and communications. We
are clarifying roles, setting timelines and doing the
practical coordination needed to prepare early,
rather than scramble late. That includes advanced

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2 planning and on the ground coordination so we can
3 spot challenges early and make adjustments well
4 before the busiest days.

5 Besides advance and contingency planning, our
6 World Cup team is responsible for pulling together
7 and executing on the mayor's vision for a vibrant,
8 joyful celebration that is accessible to every New
9 Yorker. The Mayor looks forward to announcing more
10 specifics related to his World Cup plans in the
11 coming weeks.

12 I am also in regular communication with FIFA and
13 the regional host planning effort, the Host
14 Committee. A tournament like this stretches across
15 jurisdiction and good coordination helps reduce
16 confusion and disruption for the public. Our focus
17 is straight forward. Clear information, steady
18 operations and a public experience that feels
19 predictable and manageable. Language access and
20 accessibility are part of that work from the start.
21 This is also a tremendous economic opportunity for
New York City. Following the successful bid to have
New York New Jersey selected as a World Cup host, the
New York City Economic Development Corporation
supported NYC tourism and conventions in the effort

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2 to bring the final match to our region. According to
3 the Host Committee, posting eight matches is
4 projected to generate \$3.3 billion in economic impact
5 across the region.

6 Our responsibility now is to help make sure that
7 this global event delivers real civic and economic
8 value here in New York City, especially for working
9 class New Yorkers and for neighborhoods beyond the
10 match venue. EDC is supporting that effort in
11 several ways. First, it is using city connected
12 assets to help promote community focused activities
13 and build excitement citywide.

14 Host Committee materials have been and will
15 continue to be featured across high visibility assets
16 that reach residents and visitors alike.

17 Second, EDC is evaluating a range of sites across
18 the city that may be able to support fan and
19 community activations. And third, EDC is preparing
20 for the business side of the World Cup. Delegations
21 from around the world will be in New York during the
22 tournament and that creates a real opportunity to
23 show that New York City is open for business and
24 remains a strong place to invest, grow and hire.

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2 EDC's business development team is preparing to
3 meet with visiting companies and participate in
4 related events tied to that work.

5 Tourism is another major piece of the picture.
6 The World Cup is a major draw on its own but our goal
7 is not simply to welcome people for a match and send
8 them home. Our goal is to encourage visitors to stay
9 longer, spend money across all five boroughs and
10 leave with a reason to come back. From the tourism
11 side, the strategy is centered on three outcomes,
12 lengthening visitor stays, increasing and disbursing
13 spending across all five boroughs and converting
14 first time visitors into repeat travelers.

15 All of that matters because tourism is not a side
16 issue in New York City's economy. It supports hotel
17 workers, restaurant workers, retail workers, cultural
18 institutions, transportation workers and thousands of
19 small business owners. When the city markets itself
20 well during a global event, that has real
21 consequences for jobs, tax revenue and neighborhood
commercial life.

22 At the same time, we are planning with New
23 Yorkers in mind. Big global events can too easily
24 become something that feels designed only for

1 visitors while residents absorb the inconvenience.
2 Our goal is a World Cup that feels accessible to New
3 Yorkers across the city, families, young people,
4 seniors, working people and community in every
5 borough. That means thinking seriously about public
6 space, neighborhood participation and how local
7 businesses and workers have a fair shot at
8 benefitting from the global moment happening here.

9 Listening has also been a big part of this job.
10 Our World Cup team has been meeting with community
11 partners, small businesses, BIDs, cultural
12 institutions, disability advocates, and other
13 stakeholders. The questions are direct and
14 practical. Will my commute be manageable? Will my
15 neighborhood be included? Will this feel safe? Will
16 local businesses and workers benefit? That feedback
17 is shaping how we plan, coordinate and communicate.

18 The World Cup is also a chance to show who New
19 York is. This is a city of real soccer communities,
20 of supporters groups, pickup games, immigrant
21 families and neighborhoods where this sport is bound
up with memory, identity and pride.

If we do this well, people will see more than
matches. They will see New Yorkers' love of the

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2 game, the pride people carry in their countries and
3 their heritage and the way this city can hold all of
4 that at once.

5 Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.
6 I'm happy to answer your questions.

7 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Thank you so much for that
8 great overview and we share a lot of the same
9 concerns and priorities, so I appreciate the opening
10 statement.

11 I want to jump right into the city investment.
12 Uh, the \$9- or sorry, \$6 million in Fiscal Year 2025
13 and \$14 million in Fiscal Year 2026 went to EDC for
14 the World Cup and then added an additional \$15
15 million, bringing the total to about \$35 million.

16 So, can we dive into a breakdown of how that money is
17 being allocated across events, transportation,
18 security and any other categories that come to mind?

19 JUSTIN KREAMER: Yes, thank you for the question
20 and good afternoon. I just want to start off with
21 the big picture of we at EDC, along with the city are
just incredibly excited. We share the same feelings
that -

CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: The microphone.

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2 JUSTIN KREAMER: Oh sorry, oh closer got it,
3 okay. Uhm, we share the excitement that the World
4 Cup is truly a once in a generation opportunity to
5 bring economic opportunity to New York City. As you
6 mentioned before, a \$3.3 billion economic impact
7 across the City of New York and the broader
8 metropolitan area.

9 It's a chance for us to showcase our
10 neighborhoods, our communities, our cultures. It's
11 also an opportunity to really bring the World Cup to
12 New Yorkers, not just have the World Cup happen to
13 New Yorkers and to the city and it's also really a
14 chance to show and promote New York City to the
15 businesses that are going to be here over the course
16 of a month and a half. That New York is open for
17 business and we want them to open here, great jobs
18 and etc..

19 So, to answer your question more directly, so \$35
20 million. I'm going to break it up in two different
21 sections. So, the first section is \$20 million.
That \$20 million has been allocated for the use of
the Host Committee. That money is being used for a
variety of things as it relates to promotional
activities, logistics around transportation, kind of

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2 getting things organized at the lead up and during
3 the workup itself and that money was allocated
4 between Fiscal Year '25 and Fiscal Year '26.

5 The second chunk of money is \$15 million. That
6 is the amount of money that was recently allocated as
7 part of the January plan and that money is going
8 under final consideration by City Hall to determine
9 how to best use that funding and there will be more
10 details. We can share that later.

11 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Do we have more visibility
12 into how that \$15 million will be allocated or if
13 not, what date do you expect to have more
14 information?

15 JUSTIN KREAMER: I don't have a date to share at
16 this moment but of course we will have to get back
17 with you on that.

18 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: And on the \$20 million
19 that's allocated to the Host Committee, how much
20 oversight does EDC and the Czar have on how that
21 money has been spent and how much has already been
spent today?

JUSTIN KREAMER: Yeah, so the way the process
works is the money is not uhm, is not fronted for the
Host Committee. They have to show receipts to the

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2 city, specifically EDC and then once EDC reviews
3 those receipts, those are then - EDC serves as a
4 passthrough to send the funding over to the Host
Committee.

5 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: And do we have a sense of
6 how much has already been spent?

7 JUSTIN KREAMER: I'm sorry, yes, I believe the
8 \$20 million has been spent at this point.

9 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Hmm, hmm. On funding, I
10 believe that the city funding ends on June 30th but
11 the World Cup extends until July 19th. So, how does
12 that affect EDC and the Czars capability to market,
operate fan events and ensure community engagement in
that second half of the tournament.

13 JUSTIN KREAMER: Yeah, fair question. We want to
14 make sure that there are activities in funding that
15 will celebrate the World Cup from the start to the
end.

16 So, a lot of the invoices or receipts that will
17 come in as it relates to our things that are paid in
18 advance that will cover through the cost of the two
19 periods even though it cuts between two fiscal years.

20 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: In the case of the \$20
21 million that's been spent by the Host Committee, does

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2 that mean the receipts have already been reimbursed
3 by EDC thus far? And so, do you have a sense of what
4 the breakdown is from those receipts?

5 JUSTIN KREAMER: Yeah, I don't have that with me
6 but we'll put that together and share it with you
7 guys.

8 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Alright, we'll follow-up.
9 The original \$20 million that was allocated under the
10 Adams Administration, how involved was the Mamdani
11 Administration in reviewing and revising the spending
12 plan or are you executing primarily on the original
13 plan that was put in place?

14 MAYA HANDA: That \$20 million was I believe
15 allocated and spent under the Adams Administration.
16 So, the current \$15 million is undergoing our review.

17 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Great, I'm going to shift
18 gears and talk about the return on investment that we
19 expect. So, specifically, what is the projected
20 increase in revenue for small businesses across the
21 five boroughs?

JUSTIN KREAMER: So, again, see this is a massive
economic development opportunity for the city or more
broadly. Thus far, we've really been using the
analysis that was done by Tourism Economics, which is

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2 a third party organization that was hired by the Host
3 Committee. That's the \$3.3 billion we referenced
4 before. It's the 1.2 million tourists or visitors
5 who will be coming into the city. I am not an
6 economist but the economists that work for EDC have
7 told me that it could be challenging to try to
8 disaggregate information between jurisdictions and
9 get more finite information because the data will
10 become very noisy.

11 And so, what we do know is that \$3.3 billion is a
12 huge amount of money and that we know that people are
13 going to be coming to New York City and will be
14 booking hotel rooms. They will be organizing events
15 all across the city. People will be visiting the
16 five boroughs using resources that the city will
17 produce to help make sure people go across the entire
18 city, spend money at restaurants, uh cultural
19 institutions, small businesses, etc..

20 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Did EDC do any internal
21 validation of the number to independently support it?

JUSTIN KREAMER: I'll have to double check that
one I'm sure and get back to you on that.

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2 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: And one other question on
3 revenue, has EDC to help fund some of the Cup
4 activities?

5 JUSTIN KREAMER: So, uhm as part of the
6 responsibility of the Host Committee, they are
7 responsible for doing fund raising more broadly to do
8 the various activities across the city, including the
9 events, the fans zones, etc.. So, EDC specifically
10 has not participated in that.

11 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Will uh, I guess, will we
12 have a sense of what percentage of the \$35 million is
13 going towards these free publicly accessible events
14 that we both prioritize or want to prioritize?

15 MAYA HANDA: Yes, we can get back to you on that
16 but the intention very much is for our investment as
17 a city to support both you know free and accessible
18 public programming but also sort of activities that
19 will promote you know tourism in the five boroughs,
20 support small businesses and so on.

21 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Do we have additional
information on what events to expect and if not, when
would we have more details?

MAYA HANDA: It's a great question. So, uhm, I
actually want to point to the Administration's

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2 hosting of the AFCON final, as a really good example
3 of the Ethos with which we want to approach the kind
4 of programming that will benefit New Yorkers. So,
5 the Mayor very much understands that you know eight
6 million people in New York should be celebrating the
7 World Cup experiencing it, not just the few who can
8 buy tickets. And so, our intention is to have
9 affordable and accessible programming across the five
10 boroughs.

11 In particular, we want to support community watch
12 parties that are hosted by BIDs and community based
13 organizations. And so, part of what we are
14 considering is how we can best support them with
15 resources, support them in getting viewing licenses,
16 and support them in ensuring that they can create
17 safe and joyful events for New Yorkers across the
18 five boroughs, and the Mayor is very, very excited to
19 announce more specifics around his plan in the coming
20 weeks.

21 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Looking forward to that.
Looking forward to more details. One more question
on the budget and then I'll pass to my colleague
Council Member Riley.

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2 The Fiscal '27 budget added \$4.5 million for NYC
3 Tourism. So, how is NYC Tourism coordinating with
4 the Host Committee and EDC and what are the
5 distribution of responsibilities between those
6 different agencies?

6 NANCY MAMMANA: Thank you for the question.
7 We're very excited because we have no shortage of
8 products in New York City in experiences and that's
9 one of the reasons we were chosen as the host of the
10 finals in particular. What we were lacking were the
11 media dollars to reach the right travelers who would
12 be more apt to visit those experiences throughout the
13 boroughs.

12 So, the lionshare of the investment is going
13 toward media but largely digital and then streaming
14 TV through a partnership that we are looking to
15 establish with Telemondo in Spanish and NBC New York,
16 which would give us both regional exposure, as well
17 as national in key domestic feeder markets.

17 So, we are breaking the spend down. We learned
18 that we were receiving this money last week, so we
19 are actively planning now. We're looking at it in
20 layers and phases. We want to make sure we're
21 inspiring people to know what's happening throughout

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2 the tournament. We also want to get them navigating
3 the city while we're here and there are a variety of
4 ways we are doing that. And then also create a
5 longer tail so that we can in fact retarget those
6 folks. We don't want to just spend it and we're done
7 in July. We're going to be taking the lionshare of
8 the effort to create a data bank, then we can
9 retarget these very high intent travelers for the
10 next couple of years.

11 Through digital, we're able to really target very
12 surgically with people that are showing intent to
13 travel to New York City this summer. Those who tend
14 to travel for sports, who travel for big events that
15 we're getting are ripe target and then we're breaking
16 that down against our key international markets that
17 are typical high market, high volume markets in spend
18 and in visitation internationally, even if they're
19 not coming for World Cup, it's another touchpoint to
20 those high value travelers. Long haul domestic as
21 well. Even those cities that also have their own
matches like San Francisco and LA because high volume
comes from those cities.

We also know that folks in Philly and Boston,
this is not a typical World Cup as you know. There's

1 not a playbook for the flow of traffic but we know
2 that in the groups age matches happening in Boston
3 just prior to New York. Some of those teams may be
4 coming to New York following Boston. So, we're
5 hoping to get the connectivity advantage as well.

6 So, a fair amount of domestic long haul and then very
7 heavy regional and local. We want to make sure we're
8 blanketing the city. We do have an allocation of out
9 of home media through our city contract with JC Deco,
10 which we're fully leveraging, but also, we want to
11 purchase additional out of home taxi tops, airport
12 media.

13 So, we want to make sure we're just playing
14 welcome and all of the traffic we draft to our
15 website is going to a landing page where a calendar
16 will be featured for all the small businesses that
17 would like to participate and commemorate the World
18 Cup can submit their events and offers, and we will
19 be lifting that up.

20 So, I would say the majority of the money, let's
21 say \$3.5 to \$4 is going toward media in those
categories. We'll have some for content creation and
we're looking to employ influencers and creators both
here and out of the market. The NBC partnership,

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2 again that will be on Telemondo as well as New York
3 Live. And the toolkit that we will develop for local
4 businesses as well, which may have things like window
5 decals but also design templates that they can use
6 just to make it a little bit easier to follow our
7 campaign which is called Where the World Comes to
8 Play. And we have been running that internationally
9 and then we're just extending that into the World Cup
10 and we'll look forward to showing you what that looks
11 like.

12 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Thank you.

13 NANCY MAMMANA: Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Council Member Riley.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER RILEY: Thank you so much Chair
16 Maloney. I'm looking forward to your leadership
17 within this new Committee. Good afternoon. You
18 share something very inspirational when you're saying
19 this is a once in a lifetime opportunity for New York
20 City and I'm kind of looking past that because I want
21 opportunities like this to come to New York more.
So, I want to kind of talk about the economic impact
that it's going to have on small businesses. Are
there any benchmarks that you guys kind of have to
kind of justify or see how the revenue is going to

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2 benefit a lot of the small businesses in the outer
3 boroughs?

4 JUSTIN KREAMER: I don't have that data at the
5 tip of my fingers right now but happy to circle back
6 with you and see if we can provide you something. I
7 would say also just more broadly, I do share the
8 feeling that this is a once and a lifetime
9 opportunity and there are - this will lead to other
10 opportunities for the city to host big events like
11 this. One of the things that EDC and the city is
12 doing, which you are well aware of is the NYC FC
13 Stadium in Queens. We're very excited that during
14 the Olympics in 2028, group stages are going to be
15 taking place at that stadium. That's going to be
16 another opportunity where we get to kind of play back
17 this playbook from the World Cup in a bit of a
18 smaller scale but nonetheless, we'll have people in
19 New York City and it will be a chance for them to go
20 out and shop at our local businesses, go to cultural
21 institutions, etc..

18 COUNCIL MEMBER RILEY: Thank you. I'm looking
19 forward to that data. Will there be a procurement
20 goal for MWBE's and local vendors tied to
21 specifically World Cup related contracts?

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2 JUSTIN KREAMER: Yeah, I can take a crack at it
3 from an EDC perspective. So, we always have MWBE
4 goals with our work. To give you some benchmarking
5 information, if that's helpful, is when you look at
6 our assets, our real estate assets and that's where
7 we're working very closely with the Czar and her team
8 as she - and the team, kind of consider what is the
9 broader portfolio of assets the city will be looking
10 to activate including EDC ones.

11 For EDC assets this past year, about 36 percent
12 of our spend went to MWBE businesses, \$38 million.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER RILEY: That's good. Uhm, you
14 talk about job creation and you talk about content
15 creation. Is there any other job creation that you
16 foresee that the city will be kind of hiring during
17 this World Cup process?

18 MAYA HANDA: The responsibility is directly
19 related to putting the World Cup on or all sitting
20 within the Host Committee but we do what we do to
21 support tourism hospitality workers every day.
There's 387,000 roughly in total and that's why we
focus on the work we do to make sure that we've got
ongoing robust traffic and sales. So, that's
something we are completely focused on every day but

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2 especially the additional workers that are coming in
3 for the World Cup, which could be another 15,000 to
4 25,000 workers just for the World Cup.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER RILEY: And out of the 15,000,
6 25,000 do you have a percentage? If you don't,
7 that's fine, you could get back to me. Which are
8 temporary? Which ones are going to be permanent?

9 MAYA HANDA: I can follow-up with the Host
10 Committee on that.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER RILEY: Okay. Uhm, speaking about
12 the outer boroughs, can you speak a little bit about
13 the BIDs and how you're going to have the BIDs being
14 a part of the World Cup? I know you talked about
15 hosting some games, maybe watch parties but are there
16 any other opportunities for BIDs to kind of explore
17 during the World Cup?

18 MAYA HANDA: Absolutely so, uhm I can take this
19 and others, feel free to chime in. We have been
20 meeting with BIDs in the Chambers. I think there's
21 kind of the external piece and the internal piece.
So, externally obviously we want to support any and
all opportunities to be outside and get folks out
there and we want to make sure for example that
restaurants and members of Chambers are able to

1 participate in our outdoor dining program. We just
2 really anticipate, you know, a joyful celebration
3 this summer and so we want to make sure that small
4 businesses really understand what's possible and are
5 participating in kind of the celebrations. And then
6 from the internal perspective, working with them to
7 make sure that they have resources that they need.
8 For example tourism surges, like understanding what
9 it means to have increased visitors to the city and
10 what that looks like. And so, that's kind of taking
11 the form I believe of some webinars and resources as
12 well. So, very much excited about that opportunity
13 and are working closely with them.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER RILEY: Will there be any grant
13 programs or technical assistance programs with small
14 businesses during this process. For example,
15 translation support or extended guidance or any
16 marketing coordination?

16 MAYA HANDA: We are looking into that. Out of
17 our allocation of funds. Ways that we can directly
18 help support small businesses, so those plans are
19 still in development and we want to make sure that we
20 have tools on our site that allow for translation.
21 Over 60 languages, there's a tool that we're going to

1
2 also residents uhm experience you know no
3 interruptions and really good service throughout the
4 summer. So, that coordination has been ongoing and
5 conversations will continue.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER RILEY: Okay and Chair, I just
7 have a couple more questions. Uhm, public safety,
8 I'm pretty sure during this time, there's going to be
9 a lot of movement within New York City. Has the
10 Administration been coordinating with NYPD, FDNY,
11 just to make sure that they're controlling a lot of
12 the chaos that's going to be coming to New York City
13 this summer?

14 MAYA HANDA: Absolutely. NYPD, FDNY, and NJSPD
15 have designated working groups that convene regularly
16 to discuss kind of overall safety and security
17 measures during the duration of the World Cup but
18 also they are developing a plan to kind of
19 specifically address disorderly behavior, any type of
20 incidents. And then very much separately but wanted
21 to call it out, PD will conduct threat assessments to
identify kind of primary risks to World Cup and
associated fan parties and PD will also kind of
deploy counter terrorism assets that they would for

1
2 any kind of major event with any large public
3 presence.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER RILEY: Okay and lastly,
5 affordability. This is going to be an extremely
6 costly experience here in New York City. We have
7 spoken about this day. Currently, right now, hotels
8 are extremely expensive. Is there any opportunity
9 for the Administration to think of creative ways they
10 could kind of bring down some of that cost? Whether
11 it's hotels, whether it's having resources there for
12 anyone who wants to utilize the short-term rental
13 systems in New York? Is there anything that the
14 Administration can do to kind of pick that up?

15 MAYA HANDA: Thank you for the question, Council
16 Member. Our focus right now is on making sure that
17 the 8 million New York residents who are here and
18 visitors who come can experience affordable and
19 accessible programming in every dimension. And so,
20 that is what we're working on. We're very excited to
21 kind of bring forward more specifics soon. Uhm, and
happy to also follow up with that.

COUNCIL MEMBER RILEY: Okay and one more. My
last question. Uhm, I think this role is extremely
important. I notice - you're just - Maya, you're as

1
2 the World Cup Czar but like I said, there are great
3 opportunities for us to actually go out there and
4 look for other events that we can kind of bring to
5 New York City. So, does the Administration have any
6 plan to kind of make it a little more permanent or
7 change the name of this so we could kind of be more
8 aggressive out there to find different opportunities
9 that we can bring here to New York City?

8 MAYA HANDA: It's a great question. I
9 unfortunately cannot speak to my role but I do know
10 that it is very much the Mayor's intention that New
11 Yorkers not just feel that their city is more
12 affordable under the Mamdani Administration but feel
13 celebrated as a city and feel that we can host the
14 world successfully and that folks really across the
15 world understand that New York is the best city in
16 the world. And so, very much the intention is to
17 continue that work without being able to say with
18 certainty exactly what shape it will take for now but
19 I do think this is an exciting opportunity to build
20 out what that could look like.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER RILEY: Thank you so much for your
20 time.

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2 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: I want to recognize Council
3 Member Avilés for joining us and piggyback on Council
4 Member Riley's questions around security.

5 I know the state secured funding for federal
6 counter drone efforts specific to the World Cup and
7 curious how the Czar and the Administration is
8 coordinating with State Police, MTA Police and then
9 of course Port Authority on the security planning.

10 MAYA HANDA: Absolutely. Uhm, PD, FDNY, and
11 NJSPD, Port Authority and others have all been in
12 really close coordination around transit, mobility
13 and safety insecurity uhm as far as the Drone
14 program. And I'll just say there's working groups
15 and the conversations have been ongoing for the past
16 two years. So, feeling very confident about both the
17 preparedness and then also preparation for
18 contingency and far as specifics on the Drone
19 program, that is something we can get back about.

20 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: And does the city have a
21 plan to increase the security budget around the World
22 Cup independent from these other efforts?

23 MAYA HANDA: That is something I can get back to
24 you on.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Sounds good. I want to
3 acknowledge Council Member Shanel Thomas-Henry to ask
4 any questions she may have.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: Thank you. Thank
6 you Chair. I have a couple. So, I represent the
7 21st Council District where the Queens Fair Zone will
8 be. So, my first question is, who is managing that
9 experience? Is it the USTA, is it EDC? Who will be
10 responsible for everything from hiring, programming
11 and the like?

12 MAYA HANDA: That would be the FIFA Host
13 Committee.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: And is there a cost
15 for that event?

16 MAYA HANDA: Well, as in for New Yorkers to
17 attend?

18 COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: Yes.

19 MAYA HANDA: Uhm, we are having conversations
20 with the Host Committee to make sure that the event
21 is as affordable and accessible as possible to every
New Yorker.

COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: Okay and do we have
any idea how those tickets would be distributed?
Because oftentimes when they are - like, just from

1
2 experience, we have the U.S. open every year.
3 Usually when those tickets are open, a lot of our
4 residents who literally live walking distance, miss
5 out. So, is there anything being put in place to
6 make sure that residents that are like surrounding
7 this area have either first access or to those
8 tickets?

9 MAYA HANDA: We are negotiating all of the
10 details and it's not locked yet but very much the
11 intention is affordability, accessibility and
12 obviously tourists going to the five boroughs but
13 also New Yorkers in the five boroughs being able to
14 take advantage of it, which is why we're very excited
15 that one of the major events is going to be in
16 Queens. So, very much something we're working on.
17 It's a priority and can get back to you on the
18 details, which we hope to have quite soon.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: And is FIFA also
20 responsible for doing the hiring for that event? And
21 if so, do we know when that is going to start?

MAYA HANDA: Yes, they are - they are hosting
funding and you know contracting and so, they should
be. I'm not quite sure when that will begin.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: Okay, I'd like if
3 we could have coordination with my other office
4 because again, it's literally in the district, in our
5 backyard. From a transportation perspective, what is
6 the plan for transit and traffic mitigation? Keeping
7 in mind for the law at least a week of these events,
8 the METS are playing at home.

9 MAYA HANDA: Absolutely. Uhm, I can speak kind
10 of more broadly to our transit coordination and then
11 on the specifics of coordinating related to METS
12 games. I know that those conversations are very much
13 in progress and so, we can and will coordinate with
14 your office to understand more what the nitty gritty
15 details will be.

16 Uhm, I think so on the overall kind of transit
17 piece, obviously first and foremost, our goal is to
18 move people via mass transit. We know that that is
19 going to be either way the majority of fans reach
20 matches and also travel throughout the city and we
21 plan to highly, highly encourage the use of mass
transit.

So, transportation planning has been kind of one
of our earliest and most intensive coordination
areas.

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2 We also want to ensure that we are not clogging
3 the street with additional private vehicles where
4 possible, because we really want to make sure that
5 streets are moving for every day workers to get to
6 work and school and causing as little disruption as
7 possible.

8 We've been working very closely with the Host
9 Committee and all city and state and federal partners
10 on transportation planning for over two years. Kind
11 of meeting regularly with MTA, New Jersey Transit,
12 Amtrac, Port Authority, all the partners and I'll say
13 New Jersey Transit is managed by the state of New
14 Jersey and they are actively developing their plans
15 but as far as uhm, kind of the coordination happening
16 internally, that is very much in progress and can
17 speak with the Committee about more details.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: A recommendation
19 would be something to consider as well. Just keep in
20 mind that the 7 Train on a good day is overcrowded.
21 LIR and have you guys explored possible ferry
service?

JUSTIN KREAMER: Yup and I can take that very
question. Uhm, so first off, we're very proud of our
ferry system of course. We've had two really great

1
2 milestones recently. One is we had our 50 millionth
3 customer since the formation of the system. And then
4 two, we announced that we reached all time records
5 last year in terms of ridership. So, it will be part
6 of the overall infrastructure of public
7 transportation for the city and for presidents and
8 visitors alike during the World Cup. The summer is
9 our peak season, so our ferries will be out in full
10 force throughout the entire summer.

11 As of right now, that is our plan. Should there
12 be other needs that arise, we will work very closely
13 with the Czar and her team to figure out what we can
14 do.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: But keep in mind,
16 currently we don't have a ferry stop at this
17 location. So, it would be put in the infras- making
18 sure that you guys route. So, currently there's no
19 route to this location via the ferry service. I mean
20 it's accessible and it's something that we would like
21 to see, not just for that but permanently. So, if
you guys can explore that as a transit option, it
would be greatly appreciated.

I want to move into small businesses, have you
guys or have you recommended to FIFA to coordinate

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2 with some of our locals like the Queens Economic
3 Development Corporation, the Chambers of the like, to
4 help support small businesses in the surrounding
5 area? And by support, I mean everything from I know
6 there were dollars uhm, slated toward marketing and
7 branding. So, going back to Council uhm Chair
8 Maloney's point of, do we have opportunities for
9 revenue generation? Like, is EDC or whomever
10 creating something that comes from New York that we
11 can start marketing and selling to generate revenue.
12 We have both airports in Queens. So, as soon as
13 someone gets off the plane, they can buy something,
14 brand it right here in New York for our small
15 businesses who are wanting to buy from random
16 wholesalers knockoff merchandise. We can create a
17 system that they're buying it from the City of New
18 York and expanding their business opportunities. So,
19 is that something from a creative standpoint that you
20 guys may have considered?

17 NANCY MAMMANA: We have explored that and we also
18 are having new conversations because in the past
19 there were always licensees and existing retail
20 outlets. They've been playing a little bit with La
21 Guardia with small businesses and local makers but we

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have some upcoming conversations to just revisit that in the next two weeks just to see how it could be physically placed in the airport.

COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: I can definitely help with that, I just came from the airport. No, but I really want to explain upon that conversation because again, it is something that will support our small businesses. It would be revenue generating for our city and it's a win-win opportunity that I don't want us to lose sight of.

Will the fan experience disrupt the Queens night market in any way and will there be, have you considered any additional support to those businesses that are at the Queens night market?

MAYA HANDA: The fan experience currently does not disrupt the Queens night market. I can get you the exact details but I believe that's the case and we are in coordination with the Queens night market and USTA in Flushing to kind of make sure that all of the jenga makes sense.

COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: Okay, I just have two more questions Chair, if that's okay. Uhm, what percentage of the media that is being spent is being spent with ethnic and community media outlets?

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2 MAYA HANDA: We're taking a programmatic approach
3 because it allows us to target based on the behavior
4 of the consumer. So, we want to make sure it's a
5 good budget. It's not a budget that we can just
6 throw you know widely. So, we're trying to target
7 those folks who are showing intent to travel, who
8 want to travel for big events. And then when we
9 bring them to our website, they're seeing all the
10 neighborhood content and our small business content
11 and the calendar that drives. So, we've got to get
12 them to our page and then drive them deep into
13 neighborhood guides, where those businesses are
14 featured. That's the way we can best track it
15 because we also now are able to bring a tool on that
16 will show us who came to the website, who saw the
17 media and then we were - we'll identify points of
18 interest across all five boroughs. We'll be able to
19 see if they in fact went to those places and the only
20 way we can do that is through programmatic buys,
21 which really target the person based on what behavior
they're showing. So, we're doing - we're always open
to adding to other outlets but because we're trying
to bring people in and get them disbursed, that's the
most surgical way of doing it but we haven't - we are

1
2 only now just planning so we're always open to more
3 neighborhood outlets as well.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: Okay and just the
5 last thing going back to transportation, two comments
6 in terms of traffic management because now you have
7 two major fan fare events that are in New York. Have
8 you had discussions with the NYPD for increased
9 traffic management? Again, from experience we have
10 these open every year.

11 MAYA HANDA: Yes, uhm, thank you for your
12 question. Absolutely uhm and those conversations
13 have been ongoing for the past two years both in
14 terms of traffic management but also security in
15 general because those two events have been I believe
16 it's Rockefeller Center and USTA. Those events have
17 been in the works for awhile, so those conversations
18 are ongoing. And then we are also having kind of
19 coordination meetings regarding other summer events
20 and just making sure that there's appropriate
21 capacity to make sure that everything is safe and
moving smoothly.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: And would also
23 recommend coordination with MTA because the two
24 closest stops, 103rd and 111th are under major

1 construction. One of those - at least one of those
2 you can't even get off on one, so there's no access.
3 So, if that work could be expedited or worked out in
4 some way, it would be great.

5 MAYA HANDA: Thank you.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: And final, sorry,
7 this is my final question. The park, where residents
8 have complete and full access unimpeded to Flushing
9 Meadows Corona Park during this entire experience.

10 MAYA HANDA: I can get you more details on that.
11 I believe so but I need to get you more details.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER THOMAS-HENRY: Okay, thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Thank you. I want to
14 acknowledge we've been joined by Public Advocate
15 Jumaane Williams and Council Member Banks.

16 On the transportation theme, the 2014 Superbowl
17 at MetLife Stadium is the most comparable recent
18 event, mega event that the New York area has hosted
19 and was widely seen as a logistical disappointment.
20 So, what specifically with Transportation, so what
21 has EDC or the Czar done to examine that event and
what are we going to be doing differently this time?

MAYA HANDA: Thank you. The region has
definitely learned from past high demand events at

1 MetLife, including the Superbowl and others. New
2 Jersey transit is led by New Jersey and they are
3 responsible for their service planning and operations
4 for MetLife related event travel. We have been
5 coordinating with them together for the past two
6 years and from the city side, our focus is making
7 sure that New York City system, subways, buses,
8 streets, public space management, way finding and
9 public information are ready for surges and clearer
10 to the public. And more specifically, NYPD is
11 working alongside DOT to provide easy mobility for
12 ticket holders to be transported by a bus to New
13 Jersey's MetLife Stadium. And so, we have kind of
14 multimobile options and we know that at least as a
15 beginning level of detail, a code and lane will be
16 constructed along a dedicated route for restricted
17 access to MTA buses only, as well as first responders
18 and FIFA shuttles that are also planning to bring
19 fans to the matches.

20 So, multimodal options and then ensuring that
21 there are contingency plans in case any of you know -
any issues arise and then of course clear,
multilingual communication around the whole thing.

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2 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: One contingency plan, New
3 York - sorry, New Jersey transit is expected to
4 complete the transit way right before the tournament
5 begins. So, do we have a contingency plan if that's
6 not operational?

7 MAYA HANDA: That's a good question. We can get
8 back to you with that.

9 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: And are there any
10 additional preparations that you as the Czar are
11 making with DOT for traffic management on the New
12 York City side?

13 MAYA HANDA: Absolutely. We, uhm, understand
14 that not only is the World Cup happening this summer
15 but also a variety of other events are happening.
16 And so, these conversations have been happening for
17 two years and again, really want to emphasize MTA,
18 New Jersey Transit, Port Authority, regional
19 partners, all involved and we can absolutely kind of
20 make sure to update the Committee on more detail
21 around those plans, so.

22 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: One of the proposals from
23 the mayoral administration is a five week free bus
24 pilot during the people World Cup and from a
25 logistical and operational standpoint, we are dealing

1
2 with so much other complexity, how feasible is it
3 going to be to implement this systemwide free bus
4 service during that period?

5 MAYA HANDA: Thank you for the question. We are
6 continuing to have conversations internally and with
7 the Governor on what it would look like to make buses
8 fare free and we will keep the Council updated as
9 those conversations progress.

10 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: How does your office
11 anticipate that this might impact New Yorkers who are
12 relying on those buses for their regular daily
13 commutes? Especially, when we're already concerned
14 about overcrowding and ridership and maintaining
15 reliable service.

16 MAYA HANDA: Absolutely, I can say that over the
17 past couple of years, a top priority has really been
18 understanding how the tourism surge will affect
19 transit through the city and then also making sure
20 that New Yorkers themselves do not face disruption.
21 And we're happy to you know after this, kind of
follow up with more details as well.

CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Then the last question on
that theme is, what would the expected revenue loss
be when you know, we have this opportunity for

1 massive economic benefit if we were to lose that
2 revenue from tourists.

3 MAYA HANDA: For the bus fare. I can get back to
4 you on that. Thank you for the question.

5 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: I want to pass to our
6 Public Advocate to say a few words.

7 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JUMAANE WILLIAMS: Thank you so
8 much Madam Chair, appreciate it. Thank you for
9 allowing me to give an opening statement in the
10 middle of the hearing. Much appreciated and thank
11 you for being here.

12 As mentioned, my name is Jumaane Williams and I'm
13 Public Advocate for the City of New York. I'd like
14 to thank Chair Maloney and the Members of the
15 Committee on Economic Development for holding this
16 timely hearing. I just wanted to make sure some of
17 my thoughts were on the record.

18 New York City and much of the area, including
19 both New York City and parts of New Jersey, is
20 gearing up to host a significant portion of the 2026
21 FIFA World Cup. This includes eight matches, most
notably the final one July 19, 2026, which will be
held at MetLife Stadium.

1
2 New York City anticipates welcoming and
3 additional 1.2 million visitors for the event. An
4 event so large with an unprecedented influx of
5 national and international visitors, these games
6 would require extensive collaboration with state and
7 federal government partners.

8 These visitors and events surrounding the World
9 Cup are projected to drastically increase pressure on
10 Port Authority, Trans, Hudson Path Trains, New Jersey
11 Transit, and MTA subways particularly around Midtown
12 bus tunnels.

13 The Mamdani Administration is pushing a five week
14 free bus pileup during the World Cup, which I think
15 is great but the plan hinges on state approval and
16 MTA support because no parking will be available at
17 the stadium itself, the MTA is correlating with New
18 Jersey Transit and Port Authority to manage increased
19 traffic.

20 We can easily assume also that hotel numbers will
21 reach capacity with Time Square likely serving as the
major planning zone. Furthermore, cultural
institutions throughout the city such as the Whitman
Museum are planning to customize events to coincide

1 with the tournament and many other museums,
2 restaurants or businesses will likely do the same.

3 Rockefeller Center will host a major fan village
4 with additional activities at Louis Armstrong Stadium
5 in Queens. Port Authority plans to help manage
6 traffic flow, especially through the Midtown bus
7 tunnel and New York City health officials have begun
8 running drills for potential infectious disease
9 outbreaks, including sites at La Guardia Airport.

10 New Yorkers, particularly those with mixed status
11 families or without legal authorization and the
12 international tourists, should be aware that U.S.
13 Immigration Custom Enforcement, also known as ICE,
14 will play a "key role" in 2026 FIFA World Cup
15 security in New York, New Jersey. ICE's acting
16 director Todd Lyons told the House Homeland Security
17 Committee on February 10th that "the agency's
18 Homeland Security Investigations, HSI's, is
19 "essential" for securing stadiums and protecting
20 visitors."

21 The Department of Homeland Security DHS, put out
a statement suggesting that "legally visiting fans
had "nothing" to worry about." Since federal law
enforcement routinely secures major events like the

1
2 Superbowl, also "without conducting indiscriminate
3 immigration sweeps." And particularly what we saw
4 yesterday with Columbia. I think that raises even
5 more concern.

6 Mayor Mamdani recently signed Executive Order 13
7 in a good faith effort to reinforce New York City
8 Sanction laws and city protections to protect
9 residents privacy and ensure continued access to city
10 services for all New Yorkers. Regardless of
11 immigration status, this order, a necessary response
12 to current federal immigrant enforcement strategy,
13 previous as from entering city owned properties. So,
14 I'm hoping we have a plan to make sure people feel
15 secure.

16 I'm also very excited about the plan to try to
17 deal with the cost of tickets. I hope we can do even
18 more, so everyone can enjoy. And lastly, I just want
19 to make sure that the - uh, it can be very
20 mahacentric, which I understand but there are other
21 parts of the city and other parts of the borough and
we want to make sure we also enjoy some of the
economic prosperity, including those mentioned when
it come to advertisement and other ways that we can

1
2 make sure no parts of the city is left behind in
3 enjoying what should be an awesome time.

4 Thank you so much Madam Chair. Appreciate it and
5 thank you for being here as well.

6 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Thank you very much.
7 Council Member Avilés.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Thank you so much CHair
9 and thank you to the Administration for being here.
10 Apologies if this is a question you've answered 12
11 times but uhm, such as the life of hearings. Uhm, so
12 I guess first I'd like to you know I think cities
13 across the country uhm, who will be hosting FIFA
14 World Cup are obviously in various stages of planning
15 and agreement and certainly one of the things that
16 cities are joining in are ways to ensure that we are
17 are safeguards around workers rights, around public
18 safety, around impacts for vulnerable communities in
19 particular.

20 And so, I guess I'd love to understand about in
21 particular, oh, I just lost my question, excuse me.
I'd love to know around who in the city will be
responsible for monitoring labor violations during
tournament preparation and delivery. And what kind

1
2 of penalties will vendors face for wage theft as
3 classification or unsafe working conditions.

4 MAYA HANDA: Thank you Council Member. We are
5 very proud to be a city that has strong labor
6 standards and we will be ensuring those standards are
7 met and that workers know their rights.

8 We're very excited to have Deputy Mayor for
9 Economic Justice and strong advocates in the city.
10 Strong worker protections and empowered workers who
11 are supported by the city to know and exercise their
12 rights benefit us all. Laws in particular like fair
13 scheduling laws which impact the food service
14 industry, uhm, the Safe Hotels Act, which requires
15 panic buttons for staff and human trafficking
16 training are two examples of the many laws that we
17 will continue to ensure are met.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: And so, will New York
19 State - who is the accountability force here that
20 will be monitoring and engaging in oversight around
21 violations?

MAYA HANDA: Uhm, the city - City Hall is
coordinating and I can get back to you on exactly the
levels of enforcement.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: And in terms of ensuring,
3 we are - New York is a proud union town and we want
4 to ensure that we have good union jobs and certainly
5 pathways into those jobs, not only for this
6 particular opportunity but ways that more of our
7 communities can be long-lasting union workers. What
8 kinds of models are you engaging in or developing to
9 make sure that this is not just a one shot economic
10 deal but that people are getting longer term union
11 wage work?

12 JUSTIN KREAMER: Yeah hi, happy to take that
13 question and thank you for the question. So again,
14 big picture, we see this as an immense economic
15 opportunity for the city. Uhm, not only for today
16 but for you know as you said post World Cup as well.
17 And so, one of the things that we are very focused on
18 is there is going to be a large amount of businesses,
19 large and small, who will be visiting New York City
20 from all across the world. That is a very unique
21 opportunity for us to go out and explain that New
York City is open for business, here are the
resources that are available for businesses who are
considering opening up a facility in New York City
and how the city can be supportive. And so, we are

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2 aware of many different places that are bringing
3 delegations here of businesses. For example, we know
4 that Germans are, the French are, just to give two
5 quick examples, and uh, we are working very closely
6 and kind of touching up on a point of two of the
7 other Council Members before, working very closely
8 with the business improvement districts and also the
9 Chambers of Commerce to making sure that when we meet
10 with businesses who are going to be here, who are
11 considering New York City for expansion, who will
12 hire New York City should they come here that we're
13 bringing in are local partners, the BIDs, the
14 Chambers to help sell. It's too premature to say
15 what type of businesses that will be here in terms of
16 who will want to expand here but we anticipate it
17 will be a mixture of places that will be hiring union
18 jobs and otherwise.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Great, I think you know
17 we certainly want to learn from the lessons of the
18 past where much of these kinds of events well brought
19 economic opportunity were rife with exploitation of
20 individuals. So, we want to make sure that all the
21 agreements that we are thinking through not only
ensuring that we're doing great, project labor

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2 agreements, but also we are engaging our small
3 businesses and providing them with real opportunity
4 but making sure first and foremost that our workers
5 are protected and not exploited.

6 So, we'll definitely continue to keep track of
7 that. In terms of public space and I heard you and
8 transportation, I think what we have learned from our
9 district, we have a cruise terminal and when the
10 giant cruise terminal comes in, our residents get
11 pushed aside. They can't get to work because the
12 5,000 new arrivals want to get on the ferry to
13 quickly get to Manhattan.

14 We've said to the city, you can create a visitor
15 line and a resident line to make sure that residents
16 can get access to go to work during these times.
17 They've never actually implemented anything like that
18 but we are going to have the same problem again
19 because we are a city of 8 million people and people
20 need to get to work.

21 So, what kind of uhm, in addition to increasing
service, the truth of the matter is, we're probably
not going to meet that. So, what kinds of programs
are you thinking that we could ensure that our
residents can get to where they need to go. Uhm,

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2 because if you're visiting for FIFA, then leave
3 earlier but if you're here for work, we got to
4 support our residents first and foremost. So, are
5 you guys thinking of any other kinds of ways to make
6 sure that our residents can get to where they need to
7 go?

8 JUSTIN KREAMER: Yeah, that's a fantastic
9 question. Thank you for it and specific to the
10 cruise terminals that you mentioned before. Let me
11 circle back at the team at EDC and we'll follow up on
12 that.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Great. In terms of
14 public space activation and tourism, I think
15 something we've also seen in other jurisdictions with
16 mass occasions like this is people get displaced. We
17 see serious homeless sweeps. We see displacement of
18 local vendors. We see local businesses also getting
19 pushed aside for whatever manner of uhm, things are
20 coming in.

21 So, I guess I'd love to understand like how are
you planning to make sure that we are not displacing
local businesses, local vendors and we're certainly
not sweeping unhoused New Yorkers to make things look
pretty in a way that is undignified.

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2 MAYA HANDA: Thank you for your question. Uhm,
3 it is our top priority to ensure that residents can
4 celebrate the World Cup and benefit from it. And so,
5 all of our plans are made with that in mind and uh we
6 are very excited to share more specific plans related
7 to activations and public space and use of public
8 space in the coming weeks but that is absolutely top
9 of mind for us as we are planning.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: And in that vein, are
11 there resources for - our public spaces are severely
12 underfunded. In particular our park spaces. We
13 don't have enough workers to keep parks clean on a
14 day to day basis. Is there going to be an infusion
15 of funding to make sure that we have personnel to
16 meet the demand of you know having so many new people
17 for these events?

18 MAYA HANDA: We are exploring different options
19 for you know staffing amidst the infusion and the
20 surge and can follow up with more details.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Is there funding, I've
seen funding for advertisement. I have not seen
funding for operational purposes for New York City
staff. Like Parks cleaning staff, like the whole

1 workforce that we need, that is going to support this
2 whole ecosystem and infrastructure.

3 We see a huge advertising budget in the
4 preliminary. I was just curious if you are intending
5 on adding some additional resources, particularly for
6 New York City workers who are going to need to be
7 part of this effort.

8 JUSTIN KREAMER: Yes, it sounds like you're
9 asking about will it be an increase of budget for any
10 of the city agencies. Is that right?

11 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Yeah, yeah.

12 JUSTIN KREAMER: Yeah, uhm, let us circle back
13 with you on that one.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Okay and lastly, in terms
15 of the transportation, I think something we've seen
16 is these giants events really depend heavily on NYPD,
17 who also doesn't have enough traffic agents. Is
18 there an intention on bringing supplemental, private,
19 traffic people to help during this time or will it be
20 solely dependent on NYPD?

21 MAYA HANDA: We can get back to you with more on
that. Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Thank you and Chair, just
so you know, we're going to be submitting testimony

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2 from Council Member Teresa Mosqueda who is a Council
3 Member in Kings County and they've been doing also a
4 lot of work on making sure that uh as a host city as
5 well that you know that these - that this event
6 doesn't leave people behind and negatively affect
7 their city and making sure that workers are
8 absolutely protected during these things. So, we're
9 happy to submit it. Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Thank you very much Council
11 Member. I echo the themes of the demands that this
12 influx of people is going to place on our city
13 agencies. We've talked about transportation, NYPD
14 and security, I'd add sanitation to that list. Uhm,
15 and also wanted to talk about the expected demands on
16 our hotel economy. So, we have slowed hotel
17 development in recent years. How do we expect hotels
18 to be utilized during the Cup?

19 NANCY MAMMANA: I think one of our strong points
20 as a destination that we talk about often is our
21 diversity of product and our diversity of hotel
experiences. So, we are promoting all of our hotels.
We are obviously featuring the fan zones and the
anchor points but we understand that there is a wide
variety of consumer and fan coming here hopefully.

1 Uhm, but also a wide variety of products available.
2 So, we know that consumers are looking for affordable
3 options. They exist all throughout the five
4 boroughs. So, that's how we're promoting the
5 offering.

6 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Is there concern that
7 predicted elevated hotel pricing during the World Cup
8 will displace traditional summer tourists who
9 traditionally come to New York during that period?

10 MAYA HANDA: In July and August, we typically do
11 a lot of our programming in July and August.
12 Certainly we have a tourist coming here but it isn't
13 the peak season. So, we will have to monitor things
14 as it gets a little bit closer but we don't feel that
15 that's an immediate danger.

16 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: One other point I want to
17 raise is the federal travel ban, which I mentioned in
18 my opening statement of 39 countries, including many
19 of the teams that are participating. How does the
20 city account for the potential impact of those user
21 restrictions and immigration enforcement concerns on
attendance projections and the broader tourism
environment.

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2 And I also wonder if you've had any communication
3 with the federal government regarding the travel ban
4 and the World Cup.

5 MAYA HANDA: Thank you. We are very much aware
6 of concerns about potential, both federal enforcement
7 activity and the impact of the travel ban during the
8 World Cup. Really our top priority is the safety of
9 everyone in New York City, residents, workers and
10 visitors alike. You know whether you were born here
11 or not and so, the administration is in touch with
12 the federal government and all relevant partners to
13 ensure safety for all attendees of the World Cup.
14 From our internal perspective, we will continue to
15 focus on really clear and multilingual communication,
16 coordination with our partners and ensuring that
17 public safety operations are centered on keeping
18 people safe and maintaining trust across communities.

19 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Thank you. Council Member
20 Banks, if you'd like to ask a few questions.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Thank you Chair and
congratulations for this Committee hearing. Uh, with
the proposed or projected \$3.3 billion regional
economic impact that was put forward by the New York
New Jersey Host Committee. What I wanted to know was

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2 EDC able to independently validate these numbers and
3 if so, what sectors of the business area does the EDC
4 anticipate will be - will benefit most from this
5 activity?

6 JUSTIN KREAMER: Thank you for the question,
7 Council Member. Uhm, we have not done an analysis
8 yet. This question did come up earlier and so, we
9 said we would look into it and get back.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: And does the
11 Administration estimate the portion of the projected
12 region of economic revenue at which actually it will
13 be revenue that will come from this will directly
14 flow to any of the city businesses and as far as
15 local tax collection, any projections on that?

16 JUSTIN KREAMER: Uhm, so yes, as you said, \$3.3
17 billion is the regional economic impact that's
18 expected. We have not done an analysis of New York
19 City specifically. In part, because it's just very
20 noisy data to look at. It's hard to see if somebody
21 is in New York City staying at a hotel here, then
they go watch a game there but they come back or
someone is doing the opposite. What we do know is
that people are going to be here renting hotel rooms.
There's going to be a lot of events that will be

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2 happening. They'll be creating you know spend across
3 the city and then working very closely with you know
4 across the very city agencies. NYC Tourism is going
5 to be publishing things online where small businesses
6 can direct people where to go etc..

6 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Thank you. When it comes
7 to transportation, I think this was asked a little
8 earlier but I want to know what investments when it
9 comes to all operational adjustments have been made
10 to prepare New York City's public transportation
11 system for the anticipated surge of visitors we're
12 going to have to the city, and also to you know
13 between the five boroughs and particularly to MetLife
14 Stadium area?

13 MAYA HANDA: Thank you Council Member. We
14 touched on it a little bit earlier but we really
15 understand that mass transit is going to be the way
16 that the majority of fans reach games and move
17 through the city and we will be encouraging the use
18 of mass transit rather than private cars. And so,
19 it's two fold. It's both ensuring that everyone can
20 move around the city safely, you know visitors,
21 tourists, but then also ensuring that residents face
minimal disruption amidst the surge. And so, our

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2 DOT, MTA, and kind of relevant city agencies have
3 been working with folks on the other side of the
4 river for the past two years both you know New Jersey
5 Transit and Amtrak but also Port Authority, kind of
6 the state of New Jersey and there are extensive
7 mobility planning pieces in place.

8 As far as moving folks to games; I have it here
9 but uhm, there's going to be kind of multimodal
10 efforts, so you know traditionally there would be
11 just the emergency transit to MetLife. We also plan,
12 I believe, the FIFA Host Committee plans to do
13 shuttle buses and there will be a dedicated lane that
14 is dedicated to MTA buses, first responders and these
15 FIFA shuttles. So, the idea is multimodal options
16 and making sure that there is clear contingency
17 planning for if there are issues with these options
18 and then making sure that we have a really good
19 communication system set up to ensure that residents,
20 visitors, tourists understand what options are
21 available to them early and then what options are
available to them in the event of a need for a
change.

COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: And are there any
projections on the revenue laws from the free

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2 so, we are working very closely with those various
3 groups that bringing those businesses here so that
4 way we can get in front of them and pitch them that
5 New York City is open for business. New York City is
6 here to support them and identifying how they come to
7 New York City, great jobs etc.. So, that is one of
8 our big focuses on how do we actually squeeze the
9 juice out of this long term and create jobs for New
10 Yorkers and Host.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Thank you for that. What
12 strategies are being implemented to connect New York
13 City residents, in particular young people and
14 individuals from unrepresented communities to
15 employment opportunities tied to the World Cup games?

16 MAYA HANDA: We uh - that is obviously a priority
17 related to the World Cup and we will have more to
18 share on that coming soon but appreciate it.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Well, well, I mean, will
20 there be any recruitment campaigns, actions to -

21 JUSTIN KREAMER: So, a lot of the work is being
done in coordination with the Host Committee and so,
allow us a moment to go back to the Host Committee
and touch base with them and come back to you with a
more thorough answer.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Okay and are there any
3 outreach strategies? Is EDC using any partner,
4 Council Members, BIDs, or Borough Chambers of the
5 Commerce, community based organizations to ensure
6 broader awareness? I mean, is there any - is there
7 intention to work with those partners?

8 MAYA HANDA: Yes, absolutely. We have been
9 meeting with BIDs and Chambers to make both that we
10 can support them in executing on community watch
11 parties and making sure that their regions are able
12 to benefit from the tourism and also benefit from
13 residents being out and so, we are working closely
14 with them to make sure we can support those efforts.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Okay, well, this is a
16 great opportunity and it's obviously being treated as
17 a once in a lifetime. So, hopefully this can be an
18 opportunity to improve some of the infrastructure,
19 transportation infrastructure issues we have in some
20 of the outer boroughs.

21 So, I'm hoping that the whatever - the impact
that comes, that it's spread throughout the entire
city and it's just not concentrated in one particular
area. Thank you Madam Chair.

MAYA HANDA: Thank you.

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2 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Thank you so much Council
3 Member. Part of my interest in this event is that it
4 sets the stage for New York to be the home for
5 international events like this in the future, global
6 events like this in the future. So, I guess how are
7 you as the Czar thinking about this opportunity as a
8 platform to position New York to bid and host future
9 global events.

10 MAYA HANDA: Absolutely, I really appreciate that
11 question Chair. Uhm, we are working through our -
12 obviously like coordination has been you know ongoing
13 for the past couple of years and so, I think that
14 obviously also informs how we see our readiness and
15 you know what our capacity is for these major events
16 but we also see the Mayor's plans and visions, which
17 we will be announcing in the coming weeks as
18 potential pilots and kind of experiments for how we
19 can you know use public space, activate public space,
20 engage with communities across the five boroughs,
21 support BIDs and make sure that small businesses
really benefit from this and so, I think part of this
will be that process of kind of learning from the
experience and figuring out how we can grow and make

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2 sure that we are getting the maximum benefit and then
3 also positioning ourselves for future events.

4 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: So, to that question, what
5 infrastructure capacity are we building now that we
6 can leverage in the future?

7 MAYA HANDA: When - sorry go ahead.

8 NANCY MAMMANA: Pardon?

9 MAYA HANDA: Did I cut you off? Sorry.

10 NANCY MAMMANA: No, no. No, no.

11 MAYA HANDA: Okay, fantastic. Appreciate the
12 question. I think a major part of this is going to
13 be the relationship building and coordination with
14 BIDs, SBS, Chambers of Commerce, all of this uhm work
15 that we're doing and you tourism has also been doing
16 around building those relationships, understanding
17 how we can activate for major events and then, kind
18 of - like having the city support with resources and
19 facilitation to make sure that across the five
20 boroughs, particular in the outer boroughs, we are
21 pushing people to the outer boroughs and then also,
providing the resources and facilitation needed, such
that residents can benefit and small businesses can
benefit.

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2 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: So, beyond the
3 institutional and kind of the relationship capacity,
4 do we also expect infrastructure, more physical
5 benefits for the city in the future?

6 MAYA HANDA: We can get back to you with more on
7 that.

8 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: I also wanted to circle
9 back on the - oh, actually Council Member Avilés, you
10 had one more question.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Thank you, that's right,
12 very generous Chair. I wanted to know in terms of
13 uhm, engagements back to the union, uhm what has been
14 the engagement so far with labor unions that
15 represent the workforces that might be impacted by
16 the tournament?

17 MAYA HANDA: Thank you. We are in conversation
18 with unions and we are proud to be a city that has
19 strong labor standards and we are really committed to
20 ensuring that those standards are met and that
21 workers know their rights throughout this process.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: And is it your office
that is doing the direct engagement with the unions?

MAYA HANDA: Yes.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: And can you tell me a
3 little bit about what that has looked like? Which
4 unions have you been most in touch with around this
5 planning effort?

6 MAYA HANDA: We can get back to you with more
7 details on the specifics of that. My office, I
8 started two weeks ago, so we've been having - we've
9 had a couple of meetings and more meetings are in the
10 works.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Okay, great, I'll circle
12 back to get another report back and then, squeezing
13 one more in because I can't help myself. We're all
14 afflicted by so many questions.

15 In terms of this issue of work and temporary
16 workers in particular, what is the city's plan to
17 ensure that companies either are incentivized to use,
18 to not use temporary kind of low wrong workforces,
19 rather than uhm, you know better permanent jobs for
20 people and/or - I'm sorry, that's a convoluted
21 question a little bit. Uhm, and also, will you plan
to engage our Workforce One centers, where we have so
many people waiting for work who are primed and how
will we manage both? Both incentivizing the use of

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2 New Yorkers and good paying jobs? And I'll leave it
3 there.

4 MAYA HANDA: Absolutely. That is absolutely a
5 priority for us and we can work with the Council on
6 more details about how to make that possible, so.

7 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: I wanted to also talk about
8 dynamic pricing, where FIFA is using dynamic pricing
9 for the first time in World Cup history here and uh
10 the range of ticket prices is from \$1,000 to \$3,000.
11 So, I guess what is the full range of face value
12 ticket prices for the MetLife matches?

13 MAYA HANDA: Uhm, we can get back to you on that.
14 Thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: And I know the Mayor and
16 the Administration has been very vocal on this point
17 and wondering what some of the actions that are being
18 taken by the Administration are.

19 MAYA HANDA: We appreciate that. We are in close
20 conversation with FIFA. The Mayor has made it very
21 clear that he believes the tickets are very expensive
and not necessarily accessible to particularly
working class New Yorkers.

We are in ongoing conversations with FIFA and the
Host Committee to ensure that every attempt is made

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to make sure that working class New Yorkers can access games and then also, we understand of course that the \$8 million people in New York City who will not fit the stadium should also have accessible, affordable and fun engagement this summer and so, that is really a priority for the city in particular because we know we can also - uhm benefit New Yorkers at scale.

CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Thank you for that and for those soccer fans who won't actually be able to attend the Cup but are you know but are here in New York. We already have millions of soccer fans located in the city. Uh, how are we planning on activating them sort of beyond the community events that we'll get more details on soon. Just wondering if you can provide any further details on how you're planning on making sure that our local communities are able to play along.

MAYA HANDA: I appreciate that question Chair. We are very much in conversation with everyone from soccer leagues to CBO's, to fan groups and very excited to activate them and ensure that they have access to all of the opportunities that are to come

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2 this summer and again, excited to share more details
3 soon, so.

4 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: We're eagerly waiting. Did
5 my Council Member colleagues have any further,
6 Avilés, it looks like she does.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: I wanted to just follow
8 up to make sure I was understanding uhm, the
9 response. In terms of - my understanding is that the
10 city is also I guess paying into the Host Committee.
11 Now, does this allow us to set uhm metrics around
12 either our labor agreements or the kinds of workers
13 or ensuring that FIFA vendors or however you call
14 them are actually working with our workforce centers
15 and placing like a certain number of New Yorkers? I
16 guess I'm hungering for where does that agreement
17 lie? Is there a real agreement there to be had given
18 our investment?

19 JUSTIN KREAMER: Yeah, that's a really good
20 question and thank you for asking it. So, the way
21 that it is structured is because EDC is responsible
for paying or providing the money to the Host
Committee. There is a contractual agreement with
them. I don't have that with me. We will follow up

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2 with you on that and share with you the details on
3 that. It's an important point.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Does it include metrics
5 of that nature in terms of like high road agreements
6 around you know the kinds of companies and
7 expectations around jobs and placement? Does it -

8 JUSTIN KREAMER: Yeah, unfortunately I wasn't
9 involved in the contract process, so -

10 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Oh okay. I would love to
11 receive it to better understand where those
12 mechanisms lie because of course, I think you know
13 the concern is that what we will see in practice is
14 New Yorkers not getting jobs. We have a whole
15 infrastructure here of people waiting to work, ready
16 to work. We have a pipeline for that and not getting
17 those placements, especially people in the outer
18 boroughs. Small businesses not getting the
19 placements that they need or they deserve as the host
20 city and seeing outside corporations come in and do
21 their general extraction and obviously just you know
protecting uh our residents in terms of making sure
they can participate and they can go on with their
daily lives. So, I would love to see that contract
and understand how we can make sure we put things

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clearly, specified, expectations in those agreements around how we can do better in this - for this participation.

JUSTIN KREAMER: Yeah, absolutely. We share those values with you. More broadly speaking, I can say that as an example, as part of our asset portfolio, our public markets. We have run about 145 events last year through those and there's about 40,000 people who attended those events and there's about 80 local businesses who participated in those events, so we again share the value of wanting to replicate something like that for World Cup activities.

COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Yeah, with the notion of course, advancing equity also as a very critical lens to hold to all of this because we always see big guys get all their money and the rest of us are fighting for \$10. Thank you so much.

MAYA HANDA: We appreciate that Council Member and share your values there and I can also say we're working with the FIFA Host Committee to ensure that they are using small, like local small business vendors for their activations as well, so that is in process.

1 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Thank you Council Member.
2 We've chatted about the themes of labor, transit,
3 hotels and security. I want to move to parks. We've
4 talked about how there will be public spaces
5 hopefully where we're leveraging public parks for
6 viewing. Is that right and we'll get more details
7 shortly?

8 And then, I guess I'm moving to the other side of
9 play. So, how are we making sure that we're using
10 our parks and making sure that fields are accessible
11 when the demand to participate in this sport is
12 presumably going to be higher with the excitement of
13 the Cup.

14 MAYA HANDA: We are very excited about this and
15 we will have more specific details to share shortly
16 but very much share your excitement and really hoping
17 to activate in public space and kind of leverage our
18 parks but also unique and creative ways to activate
19 public space to ensure that young people and everyone
20 can play, so.

21 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: And last question from me
but we talked a bit about how your working closely
with the business improvement districts and I'm
wondering if you could share a bit more information

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2 about in what context, are permits being issued, are
3 resources being offered to these communities or to
4 these parks that are going to be activating local
5 events? Just given how close we are to the Cup.

6 MAYA HANDA: Yes, I can speak a little bit to
7 this and then uhm from our perspective, we've been
8 meeting with BIDs and Chambers and as mentioned, I
9 think really want to focus on enabling them to be
10 able to activate you know their areas and so, that
11 will look like hopefully the facilitation of permits
12 and viewing licenses but also hopefully, some level
13 of resources and those details will be shared shortly
14 and also on the internal side, it is coordination and
15 you know webinars and kind of educational resources
16 around how to plan for tourism surges, how to make
17 sure that businesses are ready, how they can take
18 advantage of the outdoor dining program and pieces
19 like that.

20 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Yeah, thank you. We also
21 are in regular communication with the BIDs and
22 Chambers on a couple of fronts. We want to make sure
23 that the content that we have on our site is robust,
24 refreshed, updated, are we highlighting every
25 business that wants to be involved. We want to make

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different offerings, diverse offerings and disbursing them appropriately. So, the BIDs and the Chambers are a great partner for us in ensuring that that happens and it happens, we've been in active dialogue with them over for the greater part of the last year, getting ready for World Cup.

JUSTIN KREAMER: And I realize this may be a bit redundant but uhm, BIDs are such an important local partners for us and so, we've been talking a lot about tourists and the visitors are going to be visiting New York City over the course of the World Cup but there's also the businesses are going to be here as well.

So, again, as we learn about businesses who are going to be visiting New York City, we are in very regular contact with the BIDs to say, hey we think this business might be a good uhm candidate for a potential location within your BID, let's work together to pitch them on New York City, pitch them on your neighborhood and so we will do that throughout the World Cup as well.

CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Thank you.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: You mentioned several
3 times the BIDs. Are you talking about a specific set
4 of BIDs? I'm just curious or are they -

5 JUSTIN KREAMER: No, we work with BIDs all across
6 the city so, uhm, SBS as you may know oversees the
7 overall BID community, so we work closely with them
8 and whenever there's opportunities we will go join
9 their regular uhm uh meetings and present
10 opportunities to them.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Are there - but in the
12 context of the tournament and given that you know
13 it's a New York New Jersey situation going on, are
14 you prioritizing specific BIDs that are maybe
15 geographically closer? I just wonder how you're
16 handling the large city and the thousands of -
17 probably thousands of BIDs we have maybe.

18 MAYA HANDA: Right now there are no plans to
19 prioritize geographically closer BIDs. Uhm, it's
20 very, very important to the Mayor that the
21 celebrations of the World Cup are felt and benefitted
from across the five boroughs, particularly in outer
boroughs as well that could often be overlooked in an
event of this size and so, we're really committed to
working with BIDs across the whole city.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Got it and I was not at
3 all suggesting I would want you to prioritize, I just
4 wanted to understand if that was implied in your
5 response.

6 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Great, thank you so much
7 for being here. I think the World Cup and we all
8 agree is an extraordinary opportunity for the city
9 and you all being here. Mayor Mamdani's appointment
10 of a dedicated World Cup Czar is a testament to the
11 seriousness with which the Administration supports
12 the Cup. I do want to point out that the first
13 match is going to be on June 13th. So, we are very
14 close to the Cup kicking off and want to stress the
15 urgency of getting much crisper in the organizational
16 details coordinating with our BIDs and local
17 communities and giving the public information about
18 how we'll be able to publicly engage and more details
19 around some of the themes with operations that we've
20 highlighted in this conversation.

21 So, we'll be following up in the upcoming weeks
and want to acknowledge Council Member Gutiérrez for
joining. Do you have any questions before we wrap
up? We're about to open up to public testimony.

COUNCIL MEMBER GUTIÉRREZ: Oh no.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Alright, okay, excellent so
3 thank you so much and looking forward to the impact
4 that this will have.

4 MAYA HANDA: Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: I now open the hearing for
6 public testimony. I remind members of the public
7 that this is a formal government proceeding and that
8 decorum should be observed at all times. As such,
9 members of the public shall remain silent at all
10 times. The witness table is reserved for people who
11 wish to testify. No video recording or photography
12 is allowed from the witness table.

12 Further, members of the public may not present
13 audio or video recordings as testimony but may submit
14 transcripts of such recordings to the Sergeant at
15 Arms for inclusion in the hearing record. If you
16 wish to speak at today's hearing, please fill out an
17 appearance card with the Sergeant at Arms and wait to
18 be recognized. When recognized, you will have two
19 minutes to speak and we ask you, please keep topics
20 focused on today's hearing topic, the 2026 FIFA World
21 Cup preparations. If you have a written statement or
additional written testimony you wish to submit for
the record, please provide a copy of that testimony

1
2 to the Sergeant at Arms. You may also email written
3 testimony to testimony@council.nyc.gov within 72
4 hours of this hearing.

5 Again, audio and video recordings will not be
6 accepted. First up, we have the Hotel Trades
7 Council, Michael Rodriguez. Thank you, okay great
8 sorry, everyone is coming up. Uhm, Idelina Santiago,
9 Jean-Homer Lautrice, and Jeffrey LeFrancois. Thank
10 you.

11 You can begin when ready.

12 MICHAEL RODRIGUEZ: Hi everyone. I'm Mike
13 Rodriguez, I'm the Contract Fight Director with the
14 Hotel Trades Council and I am reading testimony on
15 behalf of Rich Maroko, the President of the Hotel
16 Trades Council.

17 My name is Rich Maroko, I am the President of the
18 Hotel Trades Council, which represents more than
19 40,000 hotel and gaming workers across New York and
20 Northern New Jersey. Our members are the
21 housekeepers, front desk agents, cooks, bartenders,
bell staff, servers and maintenance workers who make
New York's hospitality industry run every single day.

In 2026, New York will host the world for the
World Cup. The games are projected to bring over one

1 million visitors to our region with room rates
2 reaching record highs. The games will generate
3 millions in revenue for hotel owners, hotel operators
4 and real estate investors. We believe that hotel
5 companies and investors should not be the only
6 beneficiaries of this global event.

7 Working New Yorkers are facing an unprecedented
8 affordability crisis and the hotel workers who will
9 welcome the world to New York, who will clean the
10 rooms, prepare the food, maintain the buildings and
11 deliver the services that define this city, need
12 significant wage and benefit increases just to afford
13 living in the city where they work. This master
14 contract covers 30,000 workers at 250 hotels across
15 New York City. It sets wage standards, health
16 coverage, pension contributions and working
17 conditions across the city's flagship hotels. The
18 agreement expires July 1st, just days before the
19 World Cup finals.

20 As we approach that expiration date, negotiations
21 between our union and the hotel industry will
determine whether New York host the World Cup with
stability and shared prosperity. Let me be clear, we
do not want a strike that will shut down the city's

1
2 hotel industry during the World Cup but we will not
3 accept a contract that asks workers to subsidize
4 record hotel revenues while struggling themselves
5 with rising rents, inflation, skyrocketing childcare
6 costs and the overall costs of living in this city.
7 If hotel owners choose confrontation over fairness,
8 they will be choosing to start a disruptive fight
9 during the largest global event New York has ever
10 hosted.

11 Like the Mayor and this Council our union
12 believes that the prosperity generated by the World
13 Cup must be shared with New Yorkers, not just the
14 wealthy. That's why I'm here today to let you know
15 what's on the line, not just today but in the coming
16 months as we go to the bargaining table. We will do
17 whatever it takes to stand up for hospitality workers
18 that make these games possible and we hope we can
19 count on you to be by our side as workers fight for
20 the contract they deserve. Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Thank you. A reminder to
keep comments within two minutes. Thank you.

IDELINA SANTIAGO: Good afternoon. My name is
Idelina Santiago and I'm a proud member of the Hotel
Gaming Trade Council. I have worked as a room

1 attendant in 29 East, 29 Hotel for 19 years. I love
2 my job. Let me play a part of how visitors
3 experience New York. With the World Cup this summer,
4 I am excited to be on the frontline to make sure that
5 people coming from around the world see how great our
6 city is. This is once in a lifetime experience, so
7 many people and me and my brothers and sisters in the
8 hospitality industry are ready to do everything we
9 can to make sure one, that they remember but with a
10 million visitors set to pour into the city, it's also
11 important that elected officials are doing what they
12 can to make sure we are protected.

12 As a union member, I know ATC has my back but we
13 still need to make sure hotels are following the
14 rules to keep us safe. That means making sure hotel
15 licenses required are properly enforced to keep
16 hotels safe for both workers and guests and ensure
17 that labor rights are properly respected across the
18 five boroughs, especially with our contract expiring
19 on July 1st, we are counting on you to have our back.

18 We are all excited about the World Cup and all
19 that it has to offer but we - also much excitement -
20 it is easy for the city's more notable workers. New
21 York City is better than that. You have the resource

1
2 and law in place to make sure workers like me are not
3 exposed to potentially abuse or wage theft a major
4 event like this can cause.

5 We need your help to do our job safely and with
6 the dignity we deserve. So, please while we prepare
7 us for this historic event, I ask the City Council to
8 take care of us just like we are looking forward to
9 take care of our guests.

10 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Thank you.

11 JEAN-HOMER LAUTRICE: Good afternoon. My name is
12 Jean-Homer Lautrice. I do have a written statement
13 that I'd like to submit.

14 Okay, my name is Jean-Homer Lautrice. I'm an
15 organizer with Unite Here Local 100. We represent
16 tons of thousands of hospitality workers in New York
17 City and the surrounding region.

18 Our diverse members span many of the iconic sites
19 New Yorkers know and love, large stadiums where staff
20 create new experiences for all who attend. Our
21 members will be the people who will be on the ground
when the global communities arrive for the FIFA 2026
World Cup in New York.

1
2 Our members want this tournament to go well for
3 visitors and leave thinking New York delivered
4 something special.

5 What we're asking for isn't complicated nor
6 difficult. Our concerns boil down to this, if a
7 contractor is doing World Cup related work, there
8 needs to be enforceable labor standards attached to
9 that contract. Existing collective bargaining
10 agreements must be honored. Workers who want to
11 organize shouldn't face interference and
12 subcontracting chains need to be transparent so that
13 there's no question about who employs them and who is
14 responsible when something goes wrong.

15 What we're saying and asking for can't be
16 aspirational statements buried in a press release.
17 The things we're concerned with are critical for the
18 wellbeing of our members. That families have
19 sustainable jobs. They need to be binding, legally
20 enforceable with real oversight behind them.

21 We would be doing a disservice to our members
through this process in the City of New York if we
didn't say plainly that we see what we've seen happen
before.

1
2 Multinational events generally have a low road
3 track record. Large groups will say the right thing
4 to secure RFP and then leave the communities that
5 made big promises behind. In the element of that is
6 low road subcontracting, a practice where wage
7 structures that don't come close to matching the
8 scale of the event along with health and safety
9 conditions nobody would expect if cameras were
10 pointed at them.

11 New York should not be the next city where this
12 happens. A World class event requires wage and hour
13 standards commiserate with global excellence. These
14 aren't abstract concerns. The people we represent
15 will staff the stadiums. Our members will prepare
16 their food, run the concessions, clean the
17 facilities. They will be the first face a visitor
18 sees and the last person to leave when the night is
19 over.

20 The work our members perform because they are
21 also on stage, takes skill, training, and deserves
stability. Treating these jobs as interchangeable or
temporary bodies to fill schedules during the busy
week is not acceptable. Beyond that, it is not
consistent with what the CD says it stands for. New

1
2 York has an opportunity here to not just host a
3 successful tournament but demonstrate a city can do
4 this right.

5 With that you can run a mega event without
6 running over the people who make it happen and who
7 make it work. This is not abstract. Just last week,
8 FIFA cancelled their firm festival in Liberty State
9 Park, sacrificing thousands of hours for hardworking
10 union members and undermining the wage floor for the
11 writ large - for the event with large.

12 Unite Here Local 100 is prepared to be a
13 proactive partner but partnership is predicated up on
14 our members interest in the room, on paper and
15 demoralizing a contract. Thank you.

16 JEFFREY LEFRANCOIS: Good afternoon Madam Chair
17 Congratulations on your first hearing members of the
18 Committee. I'm Jeff LeFrancois, Executive Director
19 of the Meat Packing District Management Association
20 and today, I'm also here as Co-Chair of the New York
21 City BID Association, which is the member
organization for the city's 78 business improvement
districts with representation across the five
boroughs for Meat Packing to Montague street and up
to Morris Park, Flatbush to Flatiron and in Chinatown

1
2 and now at the beach at Coney Island. BIDs are a
3 direct reflection of their communities and
4 collectively invest over \$200 million in private
5 assessment funds in their communities each year.

6 BIDs are not just neighborhood managers. We are
7 proven partners in bringing public spaces to life.
8 Our programs help to find the city's cultural
9 calendar from the ball drop to sprawling art
10 installations, holiday lights, and organized tastes
11 of our districts.

12 We make it happen. Every day BIDs of all sizes
13 are partners with the city in providing supplemental
14 city services to keep our commercial corridors clean,
15 safe, beautiful and indeed bustling, while also
16 working to bring world class programming to our
17 neighborhoods. BIDs want to do big things. We were
18 referenced many times today and as managers of the
19 public realm, we are required to apply for permits
20 through the street activities permit office.

21 However, there is currently a moratorium on Plaza
activations from June 1, to July 18th because of the
World Cup. This moratorium is preventing us from
being able to move forward with any programming
whatsoever, including things like lunchtime concerts

1
2 and free workout classes, soccer centric programming
3 aside.

4 While City Hall has indicated that they are
5 working to find a solution and that SAPA will be
6 reformed, planning takes time for organizations no
7 matter their size, so guidance on how BIDs can
8 participate and apply for permits cannot come soon
9 enough.

10 As we also prepare to welcome millions of
11 visitors, we know our hotel supply will not meet
12 demand. The city's expensive onerous special permit
13 process has all but halted the development of new
14 hotels while simultaneously undermining membership
15 growth for our unions. Our ever more expensive hotel
16 rates are eliminating huge swaths of travelers from
17 picking NYC as their preferred destination for the
18 Cup. And while that change won't happen overnight,
19 it's something the Council should seriously consider.
20 Public transit must also be prioritized. Nobody
21 wants to miss a goal because of a double parked car
in a bus lane or because of a delayed train. We
really look forward to working with this Committee.
I really appreciate the opportunity today and of
course with City Hall to ensure success across every

1
2 corner of this city and then no matter the team we
3 support, there's a great program at which you can
4 experience the best of NYC.

5 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Thank you so much. We'll
6 jump into questions starting with the first set of
7 speakers from HTC. Some economists have cautioned
8 that hotel prices could displace traditional
9 tourists. Is that something that HTC is also
10 concerned about?

11 MICHAEL RODRIGUEZ: So it's about demand this
12 summer.

13 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: And displacing traditional
14 summer tourists.

15 MICHAEL RODRIGUEZ: Placing traditional summer
16 tourists. It's an interesting question. I would
17 have to study it more and get back to you.

18 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: We can expect a large
19 influx of people and my question is around hotel
20 workers and what you expect in terms of workload,
21 scheduling, staffing levels to shift during the World
Cup period.

MICHEAL RODRIGUEZ: Yeah, that's a great
question. Yeah, we recently did a survey of our
membership and we found that 40 percent of our

1
2 members don't have enough say to cover a \$400
3 emergency expense. About half are spending more than
4 half of their monthly income on housing and about
5 one-third have fallen behind on rents or mortgage
6 payments in the last year. So, our members, despite
7 our great contract, are struggling with affordability
8 like other New Yorkers and also struggling with work
9 loads. Work intensity in the hotel industry has gone
10 up in the post pandemic era as hotels are
11 experimenting in various ways to computerize and
12 automate and increase the workload. And yeah, we
13 expect a busy summer and hope to be able to meet the
14 influx in tourist demands with a fair contract and a
15 professional workforce.

16 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Can you add more details of
17 what hotel workers are fighting for in the new
18 contract?

19 MICHEAL RODRIGUEZ: Yeah uhm, it's a great
20 question. We're fighting for a number of measures to
21 make New York more affordable for our members. We're
fighting to protect our family healthcare plan to
protect and improve our pension. To have wages that
have caught up with the rising cost of living and to
win some of the things we've won in New Jersey

1 including, you know, a childcare fund and other
2 measures to make the work more sustainable and so
3 that our workers can afford to live in the city that
4 they work.

5 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: And what is the risk? I
6 know the contract is expiring July 1st. What is the
7 risk that the World Cup operations could be impacted?

8 MICHEAL RODRIGUEZ: Yeah, it's a great question.
9 You know our members are professional. They love the
10 work that they do and they want to keep doing it,
11 especially during such a you know a high profile
12 events. Everyone is excited to be a part of it and
13 so, the hope is that the industry comes to the table
14 and uhm, you know agrees to terms that help our
15 members do that. Help them serve the influx of
16 tourists that they would love to meet and to welcome
17 to our city.

18 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Council Member Gutiérrez.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER GUTIÉRREZ: Thank you so much
20 Chair. Thank you for your testimony. I have two
21 questions. One is for you, you mentioned that you -
what is your profession at one of the hotels, my
apologies.

IDELINA SANTIAGO: Housekeeping.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER GUTIÉRREZ: Housekeeping. Do you
3 have - do you have any concerns or have expressed any
4 interest in additional training? Obviously we're
5 anticipating an influx of people from all over but as
6 a housekeeper, do you have any concern just for your
7 own personal safety, considering the magnitude of
8 people that will be coming in and out potentially for
9 your personal safety or has your hotel instituted any
10 additional training for you all? You know my mother
11 was a housekeeper. My mother in law was a hotel
12 housekeeper, retired from the union, so all my
13 respect goes to you all and oftentimes, you all are
14 the frontlines, right? And so, what are some of the
15 concerns that you and other housekeepers have for you
16 know this magnitude of potential guests that you'll
17 be having.

18 Are there tools that you all have to be able to
19 identify certain issues and I don't mean to put any
20 pressure on you. I know you guys are expected to do
21 the job and identify other, you know trafficking
potentially. What are some of those tools that you
have and/or are you expecting to get that training?
And then the next question is for you. Sorry, thank
you.

1
2 IDELINA SANTIAGO: I would say our safety or
3 housekeeping safety of the hotel. That's my concern.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER GUTIÉRREZ: That's your main
5 concern and has there been a response from the hotel
6 or is there an expectation of additional training or
7 what other safety precautions would you like to see
8 to be able to protect you all?

9 IDELINA SANTIAGO: We have training about
10 trafficking, human trafficking.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER GUTIÉRREZ: Okay, you've already
12 done the training? Are they doing more training or?

13 IDELINA SANTIAGO: I don't know.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER GUTIÉRREZ: No, okay, alright.
15 Well something I continue to raise with folks. And
16 then and I apologize, the gentleman from Unite Here.
17 Thank you so much for your testimony.

18 Uhm, my question is, your testimony is great. I
19 think it really captures the fact that there's a - or
20 maybe an event that's temporary. There is a much
21 longer standing impact and I know you mentioned in
22 your testimony about the festival that was cancelled
23 last minute.

24 Uhm, what is - what do you think the leverage
25 that we have is for some of these like permanent jobs

1 that you're speaking about and how will you all - are
2 you able to bring on more people at this point? Like
3 what is the best thing to do for workers and like the
4 economically responsible thing to do to prepare. And
5 I'm sorry if it's a loaded question but I'm genuinely
6 curious because I think we all see this and go like,
7 oh this means jobs but it doesn't always mean jobs.
8 It may not always mean jobs beyond the event. So,
9 kind of how have you thought that through and what
10 are some of the things that like we can help in
asking for and leveraging? Thank you Chair.

11 MICHEAL RODRIGUEZ: Very loaded but awesome
12 question. Well, I think we have the past to look
13 back to learn from. We've had even it's like this,
14 not in New York but in other parts of our country
15 where the investment became long term where we saw
16 benefits going beyond that calendar where the city
17 and the state and so on benefitted in very long term
18 greatly from you know not just tourists coming into
19 visit but where there's sustainable visits and return
20 visits and industries that can actually not just born
21 in services but also that can grow from it. So, I
think we need to look at not just labor but the City
of New York and partners, how do we benefit? How do

1 we capitalize on the opportunities that are coming
2 but from labor, we have to look at how do we make
3 these jobs sustainable? How do we make sure that our
4 members, whether it's HTC, Unite Here Local 100, and
5 other unions in other trades, how do we make sure
6 that our members are benefitting? Not just in this
7 contract but long term and what part of the growth of
8 New York City because New York City is going to be
9 greatly benefitting from this opportunity and we're
10 going to grow from it but we're interested in all of
11 us going together. I think that's New York's -
12 that's one of the things that makes New York great,
13 right. When we are all growing together, we become
14 even a greater and a better city, not that that's the
15 interest is how do we look beyond this event which is
16 awesome and once in a lifetime. Uhm, but what are
17 the industries that are going to benefit long term,
18 serve as an industry that may even be born out of
19 this event and how do we work together to make sure
20 that labor is not forgotten and left behind?

18 COUNCIL MEMBER GUTIÉRREZ: Absolutely, I mean
19 it's almost March, so we got to work together quickly
20 to brainstorm but uhm, thank you all so much for your
21 testimony. Thank you Chair.

1 MICHAEL RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

2 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Everyone feels the urgency.
3 Uhm, I wanted to speak a bit about the BIDs. What
4 engagement have you had to date with the
5 Administration? Or have BIDs-

6 MICHAEL RODRIGUEZ: Sure, there's been some large
7 scale, the webinar is a reference, sort of like
8 putting out the information that the city appears to
9 have thus far. You know this restriction on our
10 ability to get permits. It seems to be a deference
11 to FIFA and their desire of what they do and do not
12 want to do across the city and like I said, that's
13 not just preventing us from planning World Cup
14 specific activations but the lunch time stuff, the
15 free workout classes. All the other things that we
16 do in that prime two month timeframe.

17 So, we've been told that the Administration is
18 keen to get us information on how we can begin to
19 apply for permits and there have been a number of
20 meetings like I said, mostly large scale as it
21 relates to sort of them putting out information.

Uhm, Council Member Gutiérrez just said it's
March, that is very true and it makes me very nervous
given this is you know happening in June. So, we are

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eager to be at the table getting real information on how we can make this stuff happen.

CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: And typically when you're planning for summer events, how much lead time do you usually have?

MICHEAL RODRIGUEZ: The city mandates depending on the size of the event. If it's a neighborhood activation, they want at least for the permit to be in the system at least two months prior to but sometimes for us, like if we know we have a big event coming, we're putting that in six months in advance right and then, coordination across numerous agencies to make these things happen.

So, right now it's that you know some of us have big, big teams that can do this stuff. Some BIDs are a staff of one or two people making these things happen. So, it's the coordination internally and then how and whether or not the city and its agencies will be able to meet the demand of what we hope is you know activations across all five boroughs.

CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: So, you mentioned a multiweek moratorium on events?

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2 MICHAEL RODRIGUEZ: Yes, right now, we cannot put
3 permits in the system for June 1 to July 18th at all
4 for anything.

5 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: And what is the rationale
6 you've been told on that?

7 MICHAEL RODRIGUEZ: Our understanding is that
8 went into effect in the previous Administration and
9 that uhm that was to give the city the ability to
10 have FIFA uhm choose where they would like to
11 activate. I think for the record, I don't think this
12 is unreasonable. What's unreasonable is that it's
13 March and we don't have an indication of what FIFA
14 even wants to do across the five boroughs. So, that
15 is our sort of eagerness and the desire to you know
16 let's - we want to make big things happen I think as
17 you in all your opening remarks acknowledged.
18 There's a huge benefit to gain from this.

19 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Certainly understand the
20 urgency and the need for more clarity here. Beyond
21 clarity on the permits, what other resources or
information do you need from the city to create the
great programming that we all know and love.

MICHAEL RODRIGUEZ: Absolutely, I mentioned the
private resources that BIDs invest in their

1 communities but again, you know we heard a lot about
2 the public dollars that are being spent on this. How
3 will those be allocated across not just BID districts
4 but community organizations as well, right? You
5 know, I have colleagues whose annual budget is less
6 than half a million dollars. What is that
7 organization going to do as it relates to a program
8 in their community? Is the city going to be willing
9 to bring money to that community or not based on
10 everything they've laid out. You know if we're going
11 to talk about equity, how will that be looked at
12 across all five boroughs, I think is really important
13 as well. I think many of us who have the ability,
14 understanding of events, want just the ability to do
15 just that and then be permitted and allowed to do so
16 and plan accordingly.

17 So, really considering the full gamut of what we
18 can offer and how the city can get behind it is
19 what's most important.

20 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Thank you so much.

21 MICHAEL RODRIGUEZ: Absolutely, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Any further questions?

Alright, thank you so much for your testimony, really
informative and I appreciate you being here. Next,

1
2 we have Tarek Pertew from Footy, uhm, Minky Worden
3 from Human Rights Watch, uhm, Gonzalo Casals from
4 Culture and Arts Policy Institute, and Michele Dottin
5 from Independent Drivers Guild.

6 Thank you very much for being here and we can
7 begin testimony, whoever would like to start. Go
8 ahead, yeah.

9 Thank you, yeah -

10 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Two minutes each.

11 GONZALO CASALS: I'm going to rush through it.
12 Thank you Madam Chair. Congratulations on your first
13 hearing. My name is Gonzalo Casals. I'm the
14 Co-Director of the Culture and Arts Policy Institute.
15 I'm also - was the former, I'm former Commissioner
16 for the Department of Cultural Affairs during the
17 last Administration.

18 The New York City Comptroller's Office
19 established that the creative sector generates \$110
20 billion annually, 13 percent of the city's total
21 economic output and we employ over 326,000 people
paying out \$30 billion in wages. New York City hosts
an astonishing 12 percent of all those U.S. clear
industry jobs, despite accounting only for less than
three percent of total national employment.

1
2 All this to say that you know we're a big
3 industry in New York City and [INAUDIBLE 119:04] on
4 this May, the cultural organizations, all these
5 cultural workers have not been mentioned at all in
6 this hearing as potential partners for this work.

7 The question before this Committee is whether the
8 city will leverage this global tournament on our
9 local culturing sector to drive core economic
10 development or leave money on the table by training
11 culture as merely peripheral to programming.

12 The World Cup is projected to generate a massive
13 \$3.3 billion in economic activity for New York and
14 New Jersey and over \$1.2 million BCR's and generate
15 \$431 million in state and local tax revenues.

16 To maximize this, we recommend that the city use
17 the World Cup as a coordinator, cultural catalyst,
18 especially the city should partner with civil
19 society, cultural organizations to be specific, to
20 extend FIFA 2026 BM stadiums into citywide cultural
21 celebration rooted in neighborhoods across all five
22 boroughs.

23 Throughout the tournament, New Yorkers and
24 visitors should experience hundreds of free concerts,
25 events in parks and plazas, open street libraries,

1 cultural institutions and beads of course. This
2 approach will generate an immediate neighborhood
3 level economic impact by capturing visitor foot
4 traffic across all five boroughs, supporting small
5 businesses and strengthening the hospitality sector.

6 To understand this potential, consider the local
7 multiplier effect. A study of New York City theaters
8 found that the economic multipliers 2.2. That means
9 for every dollar that we generate by a local cultural
10 venue, 1.20 cents circulates in surrounding
11 neighborhood businesses. A return significantly
12 higher than the 1.65 multiplier city median
13 entertainment.

14 Crucially, the city would also create paid
15 opportunities for artists and cultural workers. The
16 tournament is expected to support over 26,000 jobs
17 and generate \$1.3 million in labor income. We must
18 ensure that this wealth is distributed equitably to
19 workers across the city.

20 Implementation through a city led public private
21 partnership with much in funds and defined roles for
[INAUDIBLE 121:15]. One designated organization per
portal will provide fiscal sponsorship, coordination

1
2 and set sublets to local partners to ensure coherence
3 and equitable distribution.

4 Centralized branding and streamlined permitting
5 would [INAUDIBLE 121:31]. Would ensure local
6 relevance and accountability.

7 The city and I'm done with this. The city has
8 committed \$34 million in FY26 Executive Budget,
9 especially designated for FIFA World Cup planning.
10 That investment must generate measurable citywide
11 economic returns. If structured intentionally, this
12 tournament can strengthen neighborhood commercial
13 corridors, bolster the hospitality industry and
14 invested equitably in New York's creative workforce.

15 The World Cup will come and go. What remains is
16 the city infrastructure we build. If the city treats
17 culture as economic development infrastructure
18 designed, funded and governed intentionally, the
19 benefits will extend far beyond the final match.
20 Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Thank you.

MINKY WORDEN: Greetings. I'm Minky Worden and I
work at Human Rights Watch, where I oversee all of
our work on sport and human rights worldwide. Human
Rights Watch is monitored, human rights abuses and

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the run up to the Russia World Cup, to the Brazil World Cup and most recently the Qatar World Cup.

We're basically at the hundred day - oh and I should also say I'm a New York City resident and taxpayer.

We're at the 100 day countdown mark for the World Cup, which is across the U.S., Canada and Mexico and this was supposed to be both the largest World Cup in the history of the world. The First 48 Team World Cup but it's also the first World Cup, which is governed by a human rights framework and this is a very important point. The Mayors, we applaud the Mayor's approach that the World Cup should be joyful and vibrant and affordable but we also wanted to raise the human rights concerns around the World Cup and the World Cup is supposed to be the first that has a human rights action plan. So, now three months, 100 days before the launch of the World Cup, no one has seen the Human Rights Action Plan. Has anyone in the room seen the Human Rights Action Plan? Okay no, no one seen it. This is a - the Human Rights Action Plan was mandated for all 16 host cities by FIFA and it's very important. So, we all saw the Acting ICE Director Alliance has said that ICE would be providing security for the World Cup and

1
2 no one should feel secure when ICE is providing
3 security for the World Cup. There's also no need to
4 do it. State and local law enforcement have shown
5 many times that they are fully capable of doing so.
6 Human Rights Watch documented a really worrying case
7 at MetLife Stadium in a report last December. It was
8 a father who went with his 10 and 14 year old sons.

9 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time has expired.

10 MINKY WORDEN: To the World Cup and he was
11 arrested and handed over to ICE and deported. This
12 was at the Club World Cup last summer and this
13 presents - and this was a New York resident. This
14 presents a profound risk for the World Cup coming up.
15 If the New York City area - New York, New Jersey
16 wants to see a return on investment for this World
17 Cup, fans have to feel safe and that means that this
18 World Cup cannot become an ICE enforcement zone.
19 Thank you.

20 TAREK PERTEW: Thanks for the opportunity. My
21 name is Tarek Pertew. I represent an organization
called NYC Footy, which is the largest participation
soccer league in the nation. It was founded in New
York where we have 60,000 New Yorkers participating,
New York adults participating annually in our leagues

1 and I'm here just to speak uhm first just about the
2 sport and the players. We didn't touch too much on
3 that reality the World Cup is that there are actual
4 soccer fanatics that want to experience this World
5 Cup at the height of what I call the brain, the
6 soccer brain is going to be swelling significantly
7 but the accessibility for participation in this sport
8 is extremely low and I'd say stunted with antiquated
9 policies and rules in this particular city and I want
10 to call it a few things. I want to call it a few
11 quick facts. One, soccer is overtaking baseball,
12 it's the third most popular sport in the country.
13 Soccer has seven times the demand for field space in
14 New York City over baseball and softball, which
15 currently has a significant priority over soccer.

16 40 percent of New Yorkers are foreign born. When
17 you factor that in with also soccer being in demand
18 with Americans in general, this is the perfect
19 opportunity and it's a perfect opportunity to unite
20 the entire city around this moment. It's going to be
21 the largest entertainment event in the history of the
city and uhm one thing that we've seen is the ability
to actually participate in this sport in New York.
It's difficult thinking about lighting alone.

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2 There's not a single lit field in New York City
3 between Grand Street on the Lower East Side and
4 Harlem in East Harlem. Not a single lit field. On
5 the West side there's only one on the Clinton
6 Playground and soccer only gets priority
7 considerations in the fall and winter, when there's -
8 uh when sun sets to 4 or 5 o'clock.

9 So, my ask is to make park space more accessible
10 particularly during the World Cup. Invest in
11 temporary lighting solutions for the majority of
12 fields where that is possible. We've already
13 submitted numerous proposals to the Parks Department
14 without response over the years.

15 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time is expired.

16 TAREK PERTEW: Thank you and final point is
17 equipment. The New York City Parks Department has
18 just removed equipment from the majority of fields,
19 making it to play soccer on all these large spaces
20 almost impossible for youth and adults or community
21 members that can't afford to bring their own goals to
and from fields. We as a lead can. It's extremely
difficult to transport goals to and from fields. We
think about the community that cannot participate.

1
2 And lastly, I want to echo the previous
3 gentleman's statement on the moratorium on permits.
4 While we sit and wait for FIFA to tell public spaces
5 as well as private public partnerships, like the
6 Brooklyn Bridge Park Corporation, where we don't even
7 know if we're going to have a summer league there.
8 We have 500 players playing there every single Sunday
9 because they have to wait to hear back from the Parks
10 Department. So, that's holding us back as well.

11 MICHELE DOTTIN: Good afternoon Madam Chair. My
12 name is Michele Dottin. I am the representative for
13 the Independent Drivers Guild. I am also a licensed
14 TLC driver and we are the largest driver based led
15 advocacy organization representing over 80,000 for
16 hire vehicle drivers in New York City and over
17 250,000 drivers across New York, New Jersey,
18 Connecticut, Illinois and Florida founded in 2026.
19 We are the leading driver organization in the nation.
20 Uber and Lyft workers unite for fear of the industry.
21 Our members will be a critical part of moving fans,
visitors and workers for and from MetLife Stadium and
across the region during the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

They are ready to do their part. What we're
asking today is that the city do theirs. Our

1 concerns boil down to three practical asks. First,
2 designated pick up and drop off staging areas, where
3 drivers can lawfully wait for passengers without fear
4 of being ticketed or subjected to heavy handed
5 enforcement. If the city wants for-hire vehicles to
6 efficiently move large numbers of people in and out
7 of the World Cup venues, it has to create the
8 conditions that make that possible.

9 Second, extend bus lanes access following late
10 matches. In Brooklyn, bus lane restrictions operate
11 on a weekly basis, Monday through Friday 7 a.m. to 7
12 p.m., which can give flexibility and allow the
13 drivers to move even faster, not you know, not have
14 to bottleneck. We are asking the city to alleviate
15 whether that and enforcement standard or similar
16 flexibility can be applied in corridors serving World
17 Cup venues after late matches to accelerate post
18 match disbursal and reduce good luck.

19 Third, clear advanced signage -

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time has expired.

21 MICHELE DOTTIN: Throughout the event.

Footprints of drivers low where FIFA zones are, which
lanes are available and where they can legally wait
or drop off. This is a low cost, high impact and

1
2 benefits everyone on the road. None of this is
3 unreasonable. Designating staging, extending lane
4 flexibility after late matches. The plain language
5 signage, operational decisions that can and should be
6 made before the first match kicks off. Our members
7 will be on the road before dawn and after midnight
8 making this event function.

9 We are asking only that the city meet us with the
10 same level of preparation and good faith our drivers
11 will bring to every shift. We will also help protect
12 and keep you know visitors safe. Those who want to
13 take private cars, like us, Uber and Lyft.

14 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Thank you all for your
15 testimony and for raising very important points
16 around the logistics of the Cup and the industry
17 surrounding it that are going to be impacted. I want
18 to start with the Culture and Arts policy Institute.
19 You mentioned designated anchor organizations in each
20 borough. Have those organizations been identified?

21 GONZALO CASALS: Uhm, I think that's you know for
the city to decide. In the past, when we had to move
money really fast because we're in March, right?

CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Right.

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2 GONZALO CASALS: What we do - we took advantage
3 of the partnership that the city has with CIGs that
4 really quickly can move money outside of the city
5 coffers. It could be a CIG in each borough, it could
6 be designated and then that CIG could help you know
7 the regrant money outside the other organizations.

8 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Hmm, hmm, that makes sense.
9 Thank you. Thank you for sharing. Uhm, and for the
10 IDG, uhm have you identified what you expect the
11 increase and demand will be around the cup and you
12 know what that burden will place on your drivers?

13 MICHELE DOTTIN: Yeah, actually we do expect this
14 to be high, only because we're talking about over a
15 million people right and even with subway, there I
16 guess stressing high that MTA and our buses can do
17 this job. They can't. On a regular day, we can't
18 even get space on the subway platforms, the buses,
19 they're not going to extend that much- that many more
20 buses right?

21 But what we can do, we can work together to make
it logistically possible, because there's also the
safety and also the trafficking issues that could
happen at these events, right? So, if we have proper
signage for our drivers, making sure that all the

1 participants and the visitors go to the correct
2 vehicles. You know because they've been drinking,
3 they've been doing this right, they're having a good
4 time and those little gaps. So, if you all can give
5 our members something that indicates FIFA, only those
6 cars, the riders will know to get into, we do expect
7 on a regular day, you know we can transform about
8 80,000 rides in one day. So, when you add about a
9 million visitors on top of regular public and just as
10 Council Member Avilés said, they have issues when a
11 normal event happens on them being able to get to
12 work because they have not adjusted the number of
13 riders that's going to be added to the system. So,
14 we do anticipate at least a million rides additional
15 to our drivers and currently we have 85,000 licensed
16 drivers but Uber and Lyft has another 50,000 that
17 they can activate. So, if we have the proper, you
18 know roadways and shared roadways, it will help
19 everything flow better.

17 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Thank you and I wanted to
18 ask NYC Footy - I'm interested in the players as we
19 talked about before and getting uhm, you know people
20 who weren't actually able to watch the cup,
21 participate. So, you said, the demand for soccer

1 relative to other sports. Is that just much higher
2 interest or more about a lack of space for players in
3 the city or a combination?

4 TAREK PERTEW: So, that metric is just interest
5 alone. So, that information comes from the parks
6 Department when they shared how many applications
7 came through for softball and baseball in a softball,
8 baseball priority season and soccer just blew it away
9 and they don't make space for soccer nearly as much
10 in the spring and summer. We are one of the top two
11 holders in the city and we don't have a single
12 renewable field for soccer in the spring or summer.
13 It's incredible and that's to me, it's just answering
14 the needs of New Yorkers. They're telling me they
15 want to play soccer. It's the most popular
16 participation sport in this city as players, youth
17 and adult uhm and it's obviously going to hit a head
18 here in the World Cup. So many New Yorkers are
19 already playing soccer. I think they're going to
20 really identify more strongly with the sport because
21 it's going to be on home turf. This is amazing,
again, the most largest entertainment event in
history of this city and the city is not prepared for
that at all and like folks have said, permits have

1 already gone out for spring and summer. It's too
2 late really. It's almost too late for this city to
3 solve for that part of it, the priority part but it's
4 not too late to invest in temporary lighting so that
5 you can suddenly unlock thousands of hours at fields
6 so that youth can extend their play and adults can
7 come on later and participate safely under the
8 lights. And I do want to say that on just your point
9 real quick, I uh, went to numerous Club World Cup
10 games, which was a little bit a teaser for this World
11 Cup and the transportation side, it was not ready at
12 all for what was going on there at all. Even when
13 you got to the stadium, the confusion alone, where
14 private cars were supposed to go, it was
15 unbelievable. So I just want to echo your thought on
16 that, and I do - sorry, I just want to mention one
17 thing. Why is this important economically? Each one
18 of these groups that comes together and participates
19 in a lead that they can rely on every single week,
20 that's a big component of youth and adults
21 recreational, mental, social and physical wellness on
a weekly basis.

So, they know it's going to happen every single
week. It becomes a core part of their routine, a

1
2 core part of their social lives and the economy that
3 they generate outside of soccer is significant in
4 this city. They might participate at the field, they
5 go to a café before to grab their coffee. They go to
6 a bar or restaurant later to have a meal. This- it
7 drives so much economic activity that if you do
8 unlock these fields through accessibility, it's going
9 to generate an extraordinary amount of additional
10 income for the city and for the local businesses that
11 surround these parks and fields.

12 MICHELE DOTTIN: Can I add one more thing? Our
13 drivers are all independent contractors. They are
14 single business owners. So, that's also small
15 businesses that you would be also making sure that
16 they get a decent piece of the pie in this event as
17 well.

18 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Thank you all for your
19 testimony. I really appreciate the time.

20 GONZALO CASALS: One quick thing. You know I
21 came here thinking that Arts and Culture were the
only ones left out of the planning. Well, I feel
better that you know we're not the only ones. I'm
really worried.

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CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: I don't know if I feel good about that.

GONZALO CASALS: I'm really worried that the city is not thinking of working with civil society right? They understand the size of the scale, the scale of the event and they don't understand that if we don't work with civil society we're not going to be successful in this. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Thank you all for being here and that is the goal of this hearing is to shed light on different aspects that might not be incorporated in the planning to date. Thank you so much. I know we have someone on Zoom. The President of the Hotel Association of New York. I'd like to invite you to join us for your testimony.

Okay and then we'll come back to in person.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Uh, we can't hear you.

VIJAY DANDAPANI: Can you hear me now?

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Thank you.

VIJAY DANDAPANI: Can you hear me now? Hello?

CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Yes.

VIJAY DANDAPANI: Okay, sorry about that. Thank you for holding this hearing today. I'm the Founding

1
2 President and CEO of the Hotel Association of New
3 York City, also known as HANYC. I'm here to testify
4 about the importance of the 2026 World Cup and the
5 financial health of New York's Hotel industry and
6 those employees whose livelihoods depend on it.

7 The hotel industry is critical to our city's
8 economy and the backbone of our sector. In 2024, New
9 York spent \$51 billion here directly supporting
10 thousands of hotel jobs. Visitor spending generated
11 over \$7 billion of tax revenue, helping to ensure our
12 city's government has the funds necessary to provide
13 government services all New Yorkers benefit from.

14 Unfortunately, our city's hotel in the streets
15 facing major head winds. Persistent inflation from
16 the federal government, declining tourism and rising
17 operating costs now threaten the livelihoods of hotel
18 workers who have driven the city's economy. Two
19 million fewer visitors came to the city in 2025 as
20 compared to 2019. Most notably, international
21 trailed by 8.9 percent over the same period. Not
surprisingly, hotel rooms are on a persistent
climbing trend compared to pre-COVID levels. Even as
wages are 15 percent higher than in 2019. The
decreasing earnings and rising expenses are having

1 predictably bad results and there are 24 percent
2 fewer NYC workers in the unionized hotel industry
3 today than in 2019.

4 At the same time, room supply fell 14 percent.
5 With lower earnings and higher expenses, we are
6 seeing large hotels close. One just has to look at
7 the Lexington Portal in Midtown. Each closure costs
8 hundreds of jobs and hundreds of hotel rooms and
9 millions of lost tax revenue. It is in this time a
10 decline for the hotel industry that the World Cup
11 will be coming to our city. The World Cup can
12 provide a much needed financial boost to all hotels,
13 especially those facing the potential of closure.

14 We hope this boost, like all others, will not be
15 temporary. Crucially we need to encourage potential
16 listeners attending the World Cup to stay in New York
17 City, rather than the suburbs. During the workup -

18 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time is expired.

19 VIJAY DANDAPANI: Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Please finish your
21 statement. Thank you.

22 VIJAY DANDAPANI: Okay thank you. Therefore it
23 is essential the City Council focus on ensuring this
24 quality of life issues, mass transportation and
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2 others that the Council has already addressed,
3 otherwise the prospective jobs created by this event
4 will not come to fruition. Nonetheless, even a
5 perfectly executive workup will not solve this issue.
6 No industry can remain profitable if expenses outpace
7 income and no single event will become a long term
8 trend.

9 We hope to work with the Council to fix these
10 issues and so that the World Cup can be a part of the
11 rebirth of the city's hotel industry. Thank you
12 Committee Chair and the other elected official
13 workers and I thank you for the time and the
14 opportunity to testify.

15 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Thank you so much for being
16 here. What data do you have on projections for hotel
17 occupancy or rates of this summer during the period
18 of the Cup relative to prior years?

19 VIJAY DANDAPANI: Well, as somebody from the
20 tourism body addressed Madam Chair, they said that
21 there's going to be quite obviously we expect a - if
not a surge at some level. But I think as I pointed
out in an op-ed that I wrote today in the New York
Daily News, other world events like this, the Paris
Olympics being the most recent one, what happens is

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the rates go up and as a result bookings fall off. So, we got the data most recently from a card company, I can't name them, saying that the only country that is seeing a surge so far - two countries, I take that back. One is the United Kingdom and the other is Norway. The update from Germany and other parts of Europe have not been there as yet and one of the principal reasons is what somebody earlier on in this hearing pointed to, the first time of dynamic pricing system. So, prices literally go like mad and one day it's up and then it's down depending on what the demand is. So, that is going to be a deterrent for booking. We hope that will change, although we only have just about 100 days left but at this time, those are the two countries that look like the silver lining in this horizon and we hope others will pick up.

CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Thank you so much for your testimony.

VIJAY DANDAPANI: Thank you Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Next, I'd like to invite Ariana Dyk from Equality League, Naomi Fox from Equality League, Annabel Short from IT's Material and Warren Gardner from Airbnb. Thank you very much.

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And Xiomara from New York CLC. Thank you so much and you may begin.

WARREN GARDNER: Good afternoon Chair Maloney and Members of the Committee on Economic Development. My name is Warren Gardner and I'm here representing Airbnb. The FIFA World Cup is a once in a lifetime opportunity for every New York neighborhood to share in the economic benefits. Major events succeed when their impacts reach deeply into the places where New Yorkers actually live and work.

However, the city's District of Local law 18 does not make this possible, leaving New Yorkers behind and failing to provide affordable accommodations for visitors. A report estimates that the roughly 25,000 guests who would stay in the Airbnb's during the tournament will generate approximately \$95 million in direct spending locally.

This supports over 1,000 jobs and allows Host to earn \$20 million, with those dollars flowing to restaurants, retail and small businesses citywide, especially in the outer boroughs.

But under Local Law 18, with Airbnb listings done, 92 percent, visitors are being funneled into Midtown's largest hotel chains where rates have

1
2 already reached record highs. This prices out many
3 families and concentrates spending in just a few
4 districts. The result is a World Cup where big hotel
chains win and everyday New Yorkers lose.

5 Airbnb is committed to broadening access. We're
6 investing \$1 million to support local fan experiences
7 into sports legacy, including community soccer
8 pitches and fan festivals in the Bronx and Queens,
9 ensuring the World Cup leaves lasting benefits where
they are needed most.

10 Across the country, cities are preparing to
11 ensure their residents benefit from the surge in
12 visitors. New York City should do the same. By
13 thoughtfully reforming Local Law 18, we can keep
14 tourism dollars in local hands, support small
15 businesses in every borough and create safe,
16 responsible pathways for homeowners to earn
supplemental income during this unique moment.

17 Reforming Local Law 18 is a win for New York City
18 and a win for homeowners on the brink. Let's make
19 sure this once in a lifetime match becomes a once in
20 a generation boost for our neighborhoods, our small
21 businesses and our families. Thank you for this
opportunity.

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2 ARIANA DYK: Hello, my name is Ariana Dyk. I am
3 a Youth Council Ambassador with Equality League. An
4 organization dedicated to safety, equality, and
5 access in sport. I am also a high school student,
6 student athlete and New Yorker. I love sports. I
7 love this city and I am excited that the World Cup is
8 coming here but I'm also worried.

9 For the past year, we've been pressing FIFA to
10 publish a comprehensive child safeguarding policy for
11 the 2026 World Cup. So far, they haven't made one
12 public. So, I am here today to ask something simple.
13 If FIFA hasn't published a child safeguarding policy,
14 will New York City step in and protect kids?

15 Every child in New York City deserves to feel
16 safe. Whether playing in a youth tournament, walking
17 through a fan zone, or just showing up with their
18 family to be part of something exciting. We rely on
19 adults to set rules, to plan ahead, and to put
20 protection in place before something goes wrong, not
21 after.

Right now, there is no single public, enforceable
child safeguarding policy that clearly explains what
the rules are for adult behavior, who gets background
checks in training, how kids or families report

1
2 concerns, or what happens if someone breaks the
3 rules. Without one clear policy, there isn't one
4 clear standard and when there's confusion, kids are
5 the ones who are most vulnerable.

6 New York City committed to human rights
7 protections as part of bringing the World Cup here.
8 Protecting children should be a visible, public part
9 of that promise. I respectfully ask the Committee on
10 Economic Development to create a comprehensive child
11 safe running policy for the 2026 World Cup in the New
12 York City Metro area and make it public so families
13 and children can actually see how we're being
14 protected.

15 I know the World Cup will bring economic
16 opportunity to New York City but no economic benefit
17 is worth risking a child's safety. When kids feel
18 safe, families show up, communities participate,
19 businesses benefit and the city's reputation grows
20 stronger. Thank you.

21 ANNABEL SHORT: That's a hard act to follow.
Hello, uhm, and thank you for hosting this hearing
today. My name is Annabel Short. I am a Principal
at It's Material and I'm also the Youth Journalism
Lead at the Center for Sport and Human Rights and I

1
2 just wanted to emphasize the importance of one
3 element of economic development and cultural
4 development with the World Cup, which is creative in
5 youth media. The World Cup will come and go in a
6 flash but like all events, it's the memories of
7 people, uhm, who were people within the moment, where
8 they were, and the point in their lives when that
9 moment happened. I think there's a huge opportunity
10 for us to ensure that the story that's told of this
11 World Cup is one that reflects the diversity of the
12 experience of New Yorkers and beyond.

13 So, I would love to see the City and Council
14 really harness and invest in its local community
15 media outlets and its storytellers, particularly
16 young storytellers. This can be then part of the
17 World Cup legacy of continued creative media at the
18 intersection of sports, major events and people's
19 daily lives.

20 There are two ways I'm currently working on this
21 and I would love to invite you to engage. One is
through World Cup Memory, it has a particular
emphasis on Queens, given Queens is the world's
borough but people in all boroughs are welcome to
participate but through digital and in person events,

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2 gathering events, both memories of past World Cups
3 and also experiences of this one while it happens to
4 create a record for posterity.

5 And the second, is through Generation 2026, Youth
6 Media Forward with a center for sport and human
7 rights. Since 2024, we've been working with teenage
8 reporters and creators in four of the World Cup host
9 cities, New York New Jersey, Guadalajara, and Mexico,
10 Toronto and Canada and Los Angeles supporting them
11 and reporting stories about sports in their lives and
12 their neighborhoods and beyond. Their ideas and
13 perspectives are unique and inspirational and I would
14 love to see this scaled.

15 We have a guide for youth media programs in high
16 schools that I'm happy to share. The World Cup, this
17 World Cup is on an unprecedented scale. It comes
18 with a lot of risks that have to be managed and most
19 are quite a bit on that but it also comes with an
20 opportunity to expand the space or narratives that
21 engage deeply, thoughtfully, and creatively with New
Yorkers in all five boroughs. Thank you.

19 XIOMARA LOARTE: Good afternoon. My name is
20 Xiomara Loarte, a community engagement Director and
21 Chief of Staff at the New York City Central Labor

1 Council, AFLCIO, which represents over a million
2 working people and over 300 unions in the five
3 boroughs with such a large in diverse membership.
4 The affiliates we work to uplift have many different
5 stakes in the upcoming FIFA World Cup. The historic
6 event presents an opportunity to really present our
7 region's venues on the world stage and in a different
8 context. We're thrilled so many will come and enjoy
9 our world class city, our hospitality industry and
10 many offerings both related and unrelated to the
11 games.

12 In the midst of celebrating the city, the global
13 spirit of the tournaments and the athletes, we have
14 deep concerns about the employment practices FIFA and
15 their partners will observe in preparation for,
16 during and after the event. We have already seen
17 examples in neighboring jurisdictions of FIFA and
18 their partners failing to live up to their stated
19 obligations and we want to avoid that same situation
20 here.

21 In particular, we're concerned about the use of
open streets and workers rights accompanying those
spaces. The contracting practices of vendors using
temporary structures and the rest of the prosperity

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2 FIFA will provide to working New Yorkers making
3 practical sacrifices for visitor enjoyment.

4 New Yorkers have been asked to shoulder many of
5 the externality related to this event. Rents for
6 working class people have been rising in anticipation
7 of this tournament. Tickets have effectively priced
8 out locals and there's been little to no effort to
9 include every day New Yorkers in the five boroughs.

10 Public benefits have to match the private cost so
11 many working families will make during this period.
12 That's everything from transportation pressures to
13 reduced access to recreation and yet, where is the
14 plan?

15 We've also seen big plans along how public spaces
16 will be used for events. If new quasi public
17 temporary spaces are created, what rights will
18 workers in those spaces have? Though there have been
19 many promises to abide by high road labor standards,
20 the question remains how these grey public spaces
21 will be regulated and if those same protections
negotiated at large venues will hold in these spaces.

We believe it's crucial for -

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time has expired.

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2 XIOMARA LOARTE: FIFA and their partners, thank
3 you, to live up to those obligations and support New
4 York City's ecosystem. FIFA and their partners claim
5 they will support high road labor standards and
6 family sustaining jobs. At present, those are
promises and nothing more.

7 We're asking for strong labor standards and
8 floors that support the working families of this
9 region where prosperity matters and we expect FIFA to
10 honor the commitments that help secure hosting rights
to the World Cup in the first place. Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Thank you so much for your
12 testimony. Thank you all. We'll now move to Zoom.
13 First, Jessica Walker followed by Alexandria Sica,
14 Sarah Bratko and Nick Martinez. So, Jessica Walker
first.

15 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

16 JESSICA WALKER: Chair Maloney and Committee
17 Members. I am Jessica Walker, President and CEO of
18 the Manhattan Chamber of Commerce. The 2026 World
19 Cup is a once in a generation economic opportunity
20 but New York City can do more to take full advantage
and spread the love to ensure small businesses
benefit.

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2 Our most urgent challenge is a severe lodging
3 capacity gap. Hotels alone cannot absorb a 37 day
4 surge of international visitors. If visitors cannot
5 find affordable rooms in the five boroughs, they will
6 stay in New Jersey, taking their spending with them.
7 A tourist who sleeps in Hoboken will not get their
8 morning coffee or dinner in Astoria.

9 So, we are recommending a narrowly tailored
10 suspension of the short-term rental ban for the World
11 Cup window. This would be temporary and targeted,
12 applying only through June and July of this year.
13 This cost the city nothing, while preventing the loss
14 of hundreds of millions of dollars from leaking out
15 of the city. All five of the borough Chambers of
16 Commerce support this proposal.

17 We also support a temporary move to 5 a.m. for
18 liquor licenses citywide for businesses that want
19 that and a few designated 24 hour zones to maximize
20 the party. I consider it a major win if we're able
21 to successfully use this event to bring back our
city's 24/7 feel and reputation, which has waned
slightly since COVID. We are the city that never
sleeps and this is an opportunity to remind the world
of that.

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2 Finally, we must ensure this rising tide lifts
3 small businesses in every borough. This won't happen
4 without being intentional. Our citywide, Summer of
5 Opportunity Coalition, which is comprised of
6 Chambers, BIDs, Trade Associations and others, has
7 created a free summer 2026 live NYC map for visitors.
8 It's interactive to discover local store fronts and
9 watch parties throughout the five boroughs this
10 summer. This could be a real game changer for our
11 small business community.

12 So, we hope that the city government will partner
13 with us by leveraging its marketing channels to
14 promote this map, ensuring every neighborhood
15 business can be found online by visitors.

16 With that, I will say congratulations on your
17 great first hearing Madam Chair and we look forward
18 to working with you. Thank you.

19 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Thank you so much for your
20 testimony. Next, we have Alexandria Sica.

21 ALEXANDRIA SICA: Good afternoon and thank you
for the opportunity to testify today. I am
Alexandria Sica, President of the DUMBO Business
Improvement District. I'm here to give you the point
of view of BIDs like ours who would like to host free

1 community watch parties. They truly are the best way
2 for New Yorkers, especially families with children
3 who won't be heading to the bars to share this
4 moment. The DUMBO BID has actually been hosting
5 watch parties like this in the DUMBO arch way with
6 community - with SABO support for both men and
7 women's events for over a decade including 2010,
8 2014, and 2019. They've been highlights of our
9 programming bringing together so many communities.

10 However, we are now three months away and we
11 desperately need clarity and coordination from the
12 city.

13 You've heard we're in a holding pattern on
14 approvals but what does this actually mean? At this
15 point, we're weeks away from having to either spend
16 tens of thousands of dollars on screens that we've
17 already reserved or simply cancel all of our plans.
18 As a side note, screens are becoming scarce in the
19 area, as one would expect so those who have not
20 already reserved may already be out of luck.

21 Here's one example of the lack of clarity we're
dealing with. The Host Committee suggested that a
special noncommercial license would be created for
free community watch parties like ours but this

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2 doesn't even exist in the FIFA application process
3 yet. They mentioned a cost for this license but
4 still we have no specifics. Beyond permitting in
5 today's climate, security is an increased concern.
6 If you'd like these events to happen in New York
7 City, we need the NYPD to be there and we need them
8 to be talking to us right now, digging into
9 specifics.

10 We are a mighty team of four at the DUMBO BID.
11 We've already dedicated a ton of time and money to
12 this but it's on a wing and a prayer that the green
13 light and the NYPD resources will follow.

14 Switching gears for a minute to the influx of
15 tourists, specifically in DUMBO.

16 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time is expired.

17 ALEXANDRIA SICA: Are a major concern, very
18 welcome but we also have the 250th Anniversary of the
19 United States with the tall ships. The fireworks,
20 which last year shut down DUMBO, including the city
21 blocking our businesses from opening. We need real
plans and we need those to be underway right now. We
need increased and visible police patrols,
coordinated tour bus management and very clear
pedestrian flow management strategies.

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2 This is a moment that can truly uplift residents
3 that can strengthen our communities and we really
4 hope that the city after this hearing will dive full
5 force into getting it done. Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Thank you. Next up, we
7 have Sarah Bratko.

8 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

9 SARAH BRATKO: Hello, my name is Sarah Bratko,
10 I'm with the American Hotel and Lodging Association,
11 which represents all segments of the lodging
12 industry. The lodging industry is an economic
13 cornerstone of the New York City economy. We support
14 nearly 62,000 direct hotel jobs and generate
15 approximately \$5 billion annually in local, state,
16 and federal tax revenue, all of which goes to
17 directly support the community and city services.

18 As we prepare for major events, like America 250
19 and the World Cup, hoteliers are focused on
20 delivering a high quality service that's accessible
21 to everyone despite increasing operating costs that
are driven by policy and regulatory decisions largely
outside of our control.

Over the last five years, operating costs have
increased roughly four times the rate of revenue

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2 growth in nearly every category, including labor,
3 utilities, insurance, food and beverage and
4 compliance expenses.

5 This is particularly felt in New York City where
6 hotels face some of the highest operating costs in
7 the nation, including high property taxes in one of
8 the most highly regulated labor markets in the
9 country. Uncertainty and trade policy has not only
10 driven up construction and renovation costs but have
11 injected uncertainty into those renovations with 32
12 percent of AHLA members reporting that they are
13 delaying renovations. Continued declines of
14 international and federal government travel have led
15 to long term concerns about occupancy rates and
16 simply put, it's now costing us more than ever to run
17 a hotel and revenues are simply not keeping up and
18 keeping pace with those expenses.

19 These cumulative cost pressures limit
20 reinvestment, slow development and could ultimately
21 suppress job growth. The World Cup is an incredibly
important opportunity to draw in both international
and domestic travelers and should be viewed as a
vehicle to spur long term investments and policies

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2 that drive industry growth. But only if we have
3 public policies that support our industry.

4 The hotel industry stands ready to partner with
5 the City Council, Mayor, state and federal officials
6 to ensure that this unique opportunity benefits our
7 workers, small businesses in the communities that we
8 serve. We've submitted written testimony that goes
9 into more detail but we'd be happy to take any
10 questions. Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Thank you so much for your
12 testimony and last we have Nick Martinez.

13 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

14 NICK MARTINEZ: Good afternoon Chair Maloney and
15 Members of the Committee on Economic Development. My
16 name is Nick Martinez and I serve as the Vice
17 President of Education and Engagement at the Museum
18 of the City of New York. I'm here on behalf of the
19 museum to share a little bit about our plans for
20 engaging New Yorkers during the 2026 World Cup.

21 We are committed to telling the stories of the
people, places and ideas that shape the iconic
character of the city and to serving as a welcoming
space for our community.

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2 Museums and cultural institutions are economic
3 and cultural engines for cities and with millions of
4 people anticipated to come to our city for the World
5 Cup, our exhibitions, collections and programs
6 provide an important entry point for New Yorkers and
7 those visiting to explore the history and art of the
8 city, deepen their appreciation for the cultural
9 diversity that makes New York particularly unique and
10 understand what makes New York City the greatest city
11 in the world.

12 From our exhibitions to our uptown balanced block
13 parties in collaboration with El Musao and the Watch
14 Parties that we've hosted on the front terrace of the
15 Museum during the 2024 Yankees and Dodgers World
16 Series, we look for meaningful ways to bring New
17 Yorkers together and to celebrate and connect with
18 our history and sometimes commiserate on hard losses.

19 We have submitted a proposal to FIFA and are
20 awaiting approval, just as many are to serve as an
21 official public viewing site for the World Cup. Our
goal is to create a central, community focused space
that is open to all to watch matches together
throughout the tournament, celebrating both Team USA

1
2 and the many nations and communities represented in
3 this city.

4 We are committed to working with local
5 restaurants, small businesses, in support of our
6 World Cup related activities and events, which range
7 from large watch parties to family drop in days where
8 people can demonstrate their support for their
9 favorite teams.

10 The Museum of the City of New York is committed
11 to being a place that is open and accessible to
12 everyone and looks forward to working with all of you
13 and the Mayor's Office to make this an impactful
14 period for all New Yorkers and for those visiting our
15 city. Thank you for your time, your support and your
16 commitment.

17 CHAIRPERSON MALONEY: Thank you so much for your
18 testimony and appreciate after hearing from the
19 Cultural and Arts Policy Institute, that the Museum
20 of the City of New York, which is just north of my
21 district, is already thinking about how to engage the
community through culture. So, thank you.

I want to again reiterate thank you to everyone
who testified today. This was a very informative
hearing and certainly pointed out many aspects of the

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COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

FIFA World Cup planning that we need to take into consideration in the upcoming weeks. And with that, the hearing is adjourned. [GAVEL]

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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 April 3, 2026