

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING

Jointly with

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

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June 21, 2022
Start: 10:10 a.m.
Recess: 1:50 p.m.

HELD AT: Hybrid Hearing - Committee Room
City Hall

B E F O R E: Alexa Avilés
Chairperson

Sandy Nurse
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Diana Ayala
Charles Barron
Carmen N. De La Rosa
Darlene Mealy
Chi A. Ossé
Lincoln Restler
Rafael Salamanca, Jr.
Pierina Ana Sanchez
Julie Won
Erik D. Bottcher

Amanda Farías
James F. Gennaro
Julie Menin
Kristin Richardson Jordan
Marjorie Velázquez
Nantasha N. Williams

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

Keith Grossman
NYCHA Senior Vice President for Operations and
Support Services

Vlada Kenniff
NYCHA Senior Vice President for Sustainability

Josephine Bartlett
NYCHA Senior Director of Pest Control

Alfred Ferguson
NYCHA Senior Director of Waste Management

Corinne Schiff
Health Department Deputy Commissioner for
Environmental Health

Gregory Anderson
Department of Sanitation Deputy Commissioner

Eric Goldstein
Natural Resource Defense Council

Allison Allen

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2 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT 4

3 SERGEANT AT ARMS: And once again, good
4 morning and welcome to the Committees on Sanitation
5 jointly with Public Housing. At this time, we ask if
6 you could please silence or vibrate your phone, and
7 we are ready to begin.

8 [gavel]

9 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Good morning. This
10 hearing is coming to order. Good morning, and thank
11 you for coming to today's joint hearing by the
12 Committee on Public Housing and the Committee on
13 Sanitation and Solid Waste Management. I am Council
14 Member Alexa Avilés and I am the Chair of the Public
15 Housing Committee. I would like to thank my
16 colleagues, Council Member Nurse for co-chairing this
17 hearing today. We are being joined by Council Member
18 Abreu, Council Member Ossé, Council Member Williams,-
19 - is there anyone else? Okay. At this point. Thank
20 you colleagues for being here today. The purpose of
21 today's hearing is to closely examine issues relating
22 to sanitation, waste management and pest control
23 across NYCHA's portfolio. NYCHA is home to over
24 339,000 authorized residents in traditional public
25 housing where the mandate to provide decent
affordable housing for low and moderate income New

3 Yorkers. When we say decent housing that means
4 housing that is clean with an effective system for
5 storing and removing trash. That means housing that
6 is free of rats, roaches, and other pests, free from
7 health hazards and these kinds of conditions that are
8 present. This is the bare minimum for any person to
9 live with dignity and certainly for our city's NYCHA
10 residents, but NYCHA hasn't always met its obligation
11 on this front. I don't need to get into the horrid-
12 - horrifying details. We all know that NYCHA has
13 long struggled to get a handle on infestation of
14 pests to manage large volumes of waste. In Red Hook
15 Houses within my district residents have had to sue
16 NYCHA for compactors that was filled with trash for
17 months on end. It's very common to see mops and
18 brooms that residents purchase out of their own
19 pocket and clean hallways to ensure that they are
20 living in dignified spaces. And of course, we will
21 talk about the rat bonanza festivities that happen
22 with trash that is on the curb waiting to be
23 collected for what sometimes feels like years on end.
24 These problems are part of why a Federal Monitor had
25 to step in, and why oversight by this Council is so
critical. In January of 2021, NYCHA released its

3 Pest and Waste Management Action Plan which was
4 approved by the Federal Monitor. About a year ago,
5 this committee held a hearing to explore the details
6 of that plan and to interrogate NYCHA on its
7 implementation efforts. Now, a year later, this
8 committee is ready for updates to the questions we
9 ask them and to see what progress NYCHA has made in
10 getting their development closer to the standards of
11 livability that residents deserve. This year we are
12 also joined by the Committee on Sanitation and Solid
13 Waste Management with the hope that this will provide
14 even greater clarity on the coordination of waste
15 management efforts between NYCHA and DSNY. NYCHA has
16 reported a very productive relationship with the
17 agency which we are heartened to hear, and we know
18 that there has been much work and we are intending to
19 dive more deeply. However, I must put it on the
20 record that it is imperative that all city agencies
21 remember that public housing residents are New York
22 City taxpayers and are due full scope of quality
23 services and not skirt their responsibility and
24 solely leave it to NYCHA to provide those services.
25 So within that vein, I am happy to be here today to
dig into these issues that are so important to public

3 housing residents. And with that, I will turn it
4 over to my Co-chair Council Member Nurse for her
5 opening remarks.

6 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Thank you, Chair
7 Alexa, and thank you Council Member Diana Ayala for
8 joining us. You're helping us reach our quorum
9 today. Good afternoon everyone. Good morning
10 everyone. Thank you for committee members. Thank
11 you to NYCHA, DSNY and the Department of Health
12 representatives and leadership for joining us here
13 today. Today is our first joint hearing for the
14 Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management
15 and the Committee on Public Housing focused on
16 sanitation in NYCHA as well as growing rat issues New
17 Yorkers are facing. I'd like to give a special thanks
18 to Public Housing Chair Council Member Alexa Avilés
19 for partnering with me on these issues. For years,
20 our public housing residents have had subpar waste
21 management systems, coupled with constant rodent
22 infestations. I won't rehash all the testimony that
23 Council Member Avilés put out, but as NYCHA moves to
24 private management, the lines of accountability have
25 become even more unclear than they were in the past.
Our public housing residents deserve clean

3 developments and to participate in our city's Zero
4 Waste programs. We hope to get clear answers from
5 NYCHA on their concrete plans to improve sanitation
6 for public housing. Some particular areas I'm
7 interested in are PACT, NYCHA, and 311, and really
8 just trying to open up to understand and get on the
9 record who is responsible ultimately for some of
10 these decisions, particularly when it comes to
11 dealing with private management companies at NYCHA
12 and their relationship to Council Members and the
13 Department of Sanitation, since many members have
14 expressed a lot of frustration and trying to figure
15 out who ultimately is the person we can speak to on
16 these issues. We have also heard New Yorkers don't
17 feel safe when their trash piles up on the streets
18 and rats rip through the garbage. It's really clear
19 that the City is experiencing a rodents and rat
20 issues. And so to address this, over the past weeks,
21 the past few weeks, I have co-primed various rat
22 mitigation bills with Council Members Chi Ossé,
23 Council Member Eric Bottcher, and Council Member
24 Shaun Abreu to help address the exploding rat problem
25 in New York City. So this hearing, also in addition
to being oversight, does have four bills that will be

3 heard. These bills include Intro 414. The bill
4 would require the Department of Health and Mental
5 Hygiene to issue an annual report on the success of
6 rat mitigation measures in rat mitigation zones.
7 Additionally, the Department would report on the
8 metrics that are being used to create or eliminate
9 rat mitigation zones. Intro 442, this bill would
10 mandate that a permit-- that before a permit
11 authorizing certain building alterations in a rat
12 mitigation zone, the applicant must demonstrate that
13 rat mitigation measures have been taken. intro 459,
14 this bill would allow for the designation of rat
15 mitigation zones by the Department of Health and
16 Mental Hygiene, and Intro 460, the bill would require
17 trash receptacles in buildings identified as having a
18 high concentration of repeated rodent infestation to
19 be made of a material or design to minimize rodent
20 infestation. Collectively, this is the Rat Action
21 Plan. So, today, we will hear testimony from NYCHA
22 community leaders, city residents, and advocates on
23 the extraordinary need for protecting and expanding
24 vital sanitation services for NYCHA residents and
25 impacted neighborhoods across the City. We hope the
testimonies here today will support the need to

3 advance more equitable and urgent sanitation
4 operations. I want to thank everybody, my team
5 Anelle Hernandez [sp?], Mohammad Kahn [sp?], Ryan
6 Hickey [sp?] for their hard work. Also, as usual, I
7 want to thank Jessica Albin [sp?], John Salter [sp?],
8 and Ricki Choula [sp?] for supporting me as Chair,
9 and thank you to all New Yorkers who are joining
10 today. So, before we get into questions, we're going
11 to turn it over to Council Member Abreu followed by
12 Council Member Chi Ossé to discuss or testify on
13 their bills.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER ABREU: Good morning, and
15 thank you Chair Nurse and Avilés. Today, I'm
16 thrilled to be speaking at this committee meeting in
17 support of introductions 459 and 460. Together these
18 bills seek to introduce a more aggressive rat
19 mitigation strategy in New York. Introduction 459
20 will allow for the designation of rat mitigation
21 zones by DOHMH. It will ensure that trash is being
22 stored properly and collected in timely manner
23 between the hours of 4:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m.
24 Introduction 460 will require trash receptacles in
25 buildings with a high concentration of rats be made
of a material or design that keeps food inaccessible

3 to rats. Rat infestations are a huge quality of life
4 issue, but they also pose health risks as well. Rat
5 populations have surged in large part due to the
6 pandemic, but as we try to work towards a new normal,
7 there has to be tangible actions to mitigate this
8 issue. Last year, complaints of rat sightings were
9 up more than two-thirds, compared to the same period
10 prior to the pandemic. That trend is continuing this
11 year. Rodent problems especially worsen during the
12 summer months, and so we are paying attention. It is
13 therefore essential to act now and find solutions to
14 this problem before it gets worse. I am grateful for
15 having this opportunity to present these two bills
16 before this committee as well as for the support
17 received from my colleagues on this very relevant
18 issue for the City. I am deeply thankful to Chair
19 Nurse and Council Member Bottcher for their support
20 of this attempt to try to curb the rodent population
21 of New York City and secure healthier and cleaner
22 city for all. I'm also in support of my colleague
23 Chi Ossé's bills as well that speak to rat mitigation
24 issues. Thank you so much, Chair. Looking forward
25 to this conversation.

3 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Thank you. We'll now
4 hear from Council Member Ossé.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER OSSÉ: Well, Council
6 Member Abreu stole the words out of my mouth in
7 regards to rats. Happy Tuesday, good morning. We're
8 talking about rodents. Rats are a huge public health
9 and sanitation crisis in our city. Rats are not only
10 an unpleasant site and nuisance, but they bring
11 serious health risks to our neighborhoods. Carrying
12 a wealth of diseases and parasites, last year, 13 New
13 Yorkers were hospitalized with this disease that I
14 can't pronounce, a kidney and liver disease spread by
15 rats, and the pandemic has only exacerbated this
16 crisis. In 2021, complaints of rat sightings were up
17 more than two-thirds compared to 2019. Despite the
18 de Blasio Administration's efforts to tackle the rat
19 crisis, the pause in rat mitigation efforts during
20 COVID and previous cuts to the Department of
21 Sanitation resulted in this increase of rodents in
22 our city. The neighborhoods that bear the brunt of
23 this rodent crisis are predominantly black and brown
24 neighborhoods, like the one I represent in Bed-Stuy,
25 and it is predominantly black and brown public
housing residents that have to deal with the rodent

3 issue in their homes. Our communities deserve to
4 have clean and healthy streets free from such pests.
5 Now that the Council has restored funds back into rat
6 mitigation efforts, it is not only crucial to back
7 the rat mitigation program in full force, but to
8 ensure that the Council has enough information and
9 transparency on how effective this program is.
10 today, I'm excited that we as the Committee on
11 Sanitation and Solid Waste Management are holding a
12 hearing on my bill, one I'm re-introducing on behalf
13 of Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso, Intro
14 414, a bill that will require the Department of
15 Health and Mental Hygiene to ensure an annual report
16 on the success of rat mitigation measure in rat
17 mitigation zones. When we as the Council have access
18 to annual reports on rat mitigation measures, we're
19 able to gain a full picture of how well the City is
20 tackling the rodent crisis, we can determine what
21 further steps we will need to take to do better. In
22 our communities, especially our black and brown
23 communities who have seen nothing but underinvestment
24 from our city deserve better. I'd like to thank
25 Borough President Reynoso for his work and support on
the bill, and I'd like to thank Chair Nurse for

3 holding this hearing and for being a co-prime sponsor
4 on Intro 414. I urge the Council to pass this
5 crucial bill as soon as possible to ensure that every
6 New Yorker has clean streets and neighborhood they
7 can live and thrive in. I'm so excited to be working
8 alongside my colleagues, Council Member Abreu,
9 Council Member Bottcher, and Council Member Nurse on
10 taking a firm stance against our furry friends.
11 Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Thank you, Council
13 Members Abreu and Ossé. Very excited to be working
14 with you on this Rat Action Plan. We're taking on
15 New York rats. No simple-- no simple task. So now
16 we're going to hand it back over to Council Member
17 Avilés.

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. We will
19 now turn to testimony from the Administration, which
20 today is represented by Vlada Kenniff, Keith
21 Grossman, Alfred Ferguson, Josephine Bartlett,
22 Corinne Schiff, Greg Anderson, and Guillermo Patino.
23 I will now administer the oath, and I will call each
24 of you by name. Once I call your name, please speak
25 into the microphone your affirmation. Please raise

2 your right hand. Do you affirm to tell the truth--

3 oh, sorry. Can you hear me a little better now?

4 UNIDENTIFIED: Better.

5 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Great thank you.

6 Please raise your right hands. Do you affirm to tell

7 the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth

8 before this committee and to response honestly to

9 Council Member questions? Greg Anderson [sp?]?

10 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER ANDERSON:

11 [inaudible]

12 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Corinne Schiff?

13 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SCHIFF: [inaudible]

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Josephine Bartlett?

15 SENIOR DIRECTOR BARTLETT: [inaudible]

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Alfred Ferguson?

17 SENIOR DIRECTOR FERGUSON: I do.

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Keith Grossman?

19 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: I do.

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Vlada Kenniff?

21 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: I do.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: And Guillermo Patino?

23 GUILLERMO PATINO: [inaudible]

24 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. You may

25 begin when ready.

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2 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT 16

3 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Thank you. You can
4 hear me okay? I have a loud-- yeah, I have a-- I'll
5 probably over-speak the microphone a little bit, so.

6 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: It's okay. Louder is
7 always better. We've had-- the last hearing we had
8 people couldn't hear online, so just--

9 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Okay.

10 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Feel free to go in.

11 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Yeah, Lincoln
12 Center [sic]. Chairs Alexa Avilés and Sandy Nurse,
13 Members of the Committees on Public Housing and
14 Sanitation and Solid Waste Management, other
15 distinguished members of the City Council, NYCHA
16 residents and members of the public, good morning. I
17 am Keith Grossman, NYCHA's Senior Vice President for
18 Operations Support Services. Joining me are Vlada
19 Kenniff, Vice President for Sustainability; Josephine
20 Bartlett, Senior Director of Pest Control; and Al
21 Ferguson, Senior Director of Waste Management. We
22 are pleased to have our partners at the NYC
23 Department of Sanitation with us today as well. Our
24 colleagues from the Health Department are also with
25 us to discuss Intro. 414, pertaining to reporting on
rat mitigation zones. The Administration supports

3 the intent of this bill and looks forward to working
4 with the Council to align this with available data. I
5 joined NYCHA this April from the New York City
6 Department of Education, where I oversaw the
7 emergency management program and the accessibility
8 remediation program for all of the DOE's
9 approximately 1,900 schools. Before that, I was the
10 Director of Emergency Management and Safety at
11 Brookdale University Hospital and Medical Center. It
12 is an honor to bring my passion for managing complex
13 organizations, complex operations, and vital services
14 to the NYCHA community. Thank you for this
15 opportunity to discuss the Authority's progress in
16 improving the quality of life for residents through
17 better waste management and pest control. We know how
18 impactful these areas are for NYCHA residents, and
19 making sure that our buildings and grounds are clean
20 and pest free as possible is one of our top
21 priorities. We have made significant changes to
22 ensure that our waste management and pest control
23 methods are comprehensive, modern, and effective, and
24 we continue to apply the latest technologies and
25 strategies to further our work in service to
residents. Organizational improvements: For

3 instance, after an extensive analysis, NYCHA divided
4 Waste Management and Pest Control into two separate
5 departments, which are now under the oversight of the
6 new Operations Support Services Division. This
7 separation allows us to have better control over all
8 pest and waste remediations throughout NYCHA's
9 portfolio. We also implemented IT enhancements that
10 facilitate our work and we trained our staff on
11 Integrated Pest Management, or IPM. In the past few
12 years, we added a number of exterminators to our
13 team, meaning that we now have a total of 124
14 exterminators who work hard to provide safe and clean
15 homes, buildings, and grounds for residents. We also
16 increased our caretaker staff, who help keep our
17 buildings and grounds clean, bringing the total
18 number of caretakers to nearly 4,500. NYCHA's action
19 plan on [inaudible] pest and waste, not paste and
20 waste, sorry. Under the leadership of Chair Greg
21 Russ, and in accordance with the 2019 HUD Agreement,
22 we are transforming our organization to improve how
23 we provide services to residents, and we are making
24 the investments necessary for success. The Federal
25 Monitor, Bart Schwartz, approved our Pest and Waste
Management Action Plan in January 2021. The Action

3 Plan is our roadmap for more effective waste
4 management and pest control. It is centered around
5 the use of IPM and development-specific waste
6 management plans for every NYCHA property, and it is
7 supported by capital upgrades and new approaches to
8 pest and waste management. A key focus of the Action
9 Plan involves improving the way NYCHA collects,
10 stores, and removes waste to meet our goal to remove
11 or store all waste in sealed, rodent-resistant
12 containers every 24 hours. This is critical because
13 better waste management means fewer pests, as we're
14 eliminating their habits and sources of food. Today
15 I'll go into detail about some of the waste
16 infrastructure upgrades and programmatic improvements
17 that are enabling us to deliver better for residents.
18 Combatting paste and west-- pest and waste through
19 sustainable improvements. I'm going to get that right
20 before the end of this, I promise. Infrastructure
21 upgrades: NYCHA's current waste infrastructure,
22 which handles over 200,000 tons of waste every year,
23 is outdated. Since NYCHA's developments were built,
24 the amount of waste generated by Americans has
25 tripled; at the same time, NYCHA's infrastructure
hasn't received the investments it's needed to keep

3 up with the increase. In fact, more than 90 percent
4 of our waste assets are past their life cycle and
5 need immediate replacement. The Federal Monitor
6 approved NYCHA's City Capital Action Plan last year,
7 which unlocks over \$563 million in funding to help
8 the Authority fully upgrade and modernize its waste
9 infrastructure. That's coupled with an investment of
10 \$56 million toward the City's Neighborhood Rat
11 Reduction plan-- Rad Reduction Program, which has
12 enabled us to accomplish the following: Install
13 larger trash chute doors that can accommodate a
14 standard 13-gallon tall kitchen garbage bag on the
15 first level of 60 developments, which helps residents
16 dispose of trash properly; install new interior trash
17 compactors at 51 developments, exterior compactors at
18 18 developments, five bulk crushers, and 39 cardboard
19 compacting baling machines, all of which enable us to
20 manage waste more effectively and efficiently;
21 install over 8,000 door sweeps and seal over 600
22 window wells to prevent pests from getting into our
23 buildings; and Install 27 of 50 identified rat slabs
24 that eliminate places for rodents to live, eat, and
25 breed by replacing the original dirt basement floors
with concrete. With this total funding of more than

3 \$619 million, we'll be able to replace aging waste,
4 recycling, and bulk waste equipment across 194
5 developments. The procurement process is currently
6 underway for the next round of projects at 64
7 developments. In 2019, the Authority released the
8 NYCHA 2.0 Waste Management Plan, a comprehensive set
9 of strategies for delivering state-of-the-art
10 infrastructure and providing residents with
11 convenient locations for disposing recyclables and
12 food waste, all to greatly reduce pests and make our
13 developments cleaner. To advance the Waste
14 Management Plan, last year we released Requests for
15 Proposals for the redesign of seven waste yards, and
16 for new pneumatic waste collection systems at Polo
17 Grounds Towers and Rangel Houses. We expect to
18 finish design and start construction on these
19 projects this year. By 2028, a complete overhaul of
20 the waste yards at up to 194 developments will be
21 underway. The new waste yards will feature more
22 operational functionality for staff, recycling
23 infrastructure, and reliable compactors, making waste
24 handling more efficient and benefitting residents'
25 quality of life. The new waste yards will also
incorporate resident feedback in their design and

3 will be more aesthetically pleasing. The pneumatic
4 waste collection systems at Polo Grounds and Rangel
5 Houses will transport waste underground from each
6 building to a centralized facility, where it will be
7 compacted in a sealed, pest-resistant container. The
8 new system will produce the labor involved-- will
9 reduce the labor involved with transporting waste and
10 minimize pests. Innovative and sustainable
11 initiatives: We are also implementing programmatic
12 improvements. For example, our Clean Curbs for All
13 initiative with the Sanitation Department will pilot
14 mechanically collected curbside containers for refuse
15 and recyclables, resulting in more efficient waste
16 collection and cleaner grounds. We expect to release
17 a Request for Proposals by the end of the summer. We
18 worked with the Sanitation Department to obtain a
19 significant increase in the number of DSNY-funded
20 bulk container dump tickets. This enabled us to
21 remove over 15,000 additional tons of bulk waste from
22 NYCHA developments in 2021. And we worked with the
23 carting vendors who currently service most of our
24 bulk containers to increase the frequency of bulk
25 waste removal at our developments. To demonstrate the
benefits of increased waste collection frequency at a

3 small group of developments, we purchased two six-
4 yard rear-loader compacting garbage trucks that can
5 each hold approximately three tons of household
6 refuse per load. These trucks are equipped with the
7 latest in Vision Zero safety designs, including 360-
8 degree cameras for enhanced driver awareness, and
9 have the latest in hybrid, diesel and electric,
10 technology. NYCHA also worked with our Sanitation
11 Department partners to develop a Recycling Reset
12 pilot program in 2020 to improve recycling rates at
13 12 sites: Baruch and Baruch Addition, Bushwick,
14 Hylan, Butler, Marcy, Morris I and II, Riis I and II,
15 Webster, and Morrisania. Several sites, such as
16 Baruch Houses and Riis Houses, are recycling at
17 record high rates. In September 2021, we rolled out
18 the Recycle First Initiative in Staten Island, a
19 mindset change that prioritizes recycling when it
20 comes to waste management operations. Working with
21 DSNY and development staff, we improved recycling
22 rates at all 10 Staten Island sites, Berry, Cassidy-
23 Lafayette, Mariner's Harbor, New Lane Area, Richmond
24 Terrace, South Beach, Stapleton, Todt Hill, West
25 Brighton I, and West Brighton II. This May, we rolled
the initiative-- we rolled out the initiative to

3 Queens at Queensbridge North, Queensbridge South, and
4 Ravenswood. We are also working with DSNY to develop
5 a Caretakers Recycling Guidebook that will facilitate
6 our caretakers' management of recyclables. Informed
7 by the Recycle First mindset, the Guidebook will
8 provide reference-- will provide the reference point
9 for all caretaker training on waste management
10 operations. We are also developing a training that
11 will inform staff about our sustainable waste
12 management programs and infrastructure, such as
13 cardboard balers and mattress recycling. We
14 developed Individual Action Plans that present short,
15 medium, and long-term goals to improve waste
16 management at each of our developments, such as
17 additional monthly bulk tickets or expedited
18 compactor replacement. All the plans are posted on
19 our website. With the assistance of the Federal
20 Monitor, we are finalizing a Scorecard Cleanliness
21 Rating System that identifies where we need to focus
22 our resources at our developments. Last year, we
23 launched NYC's first and only mattress recycling
24 program. To date, we've recycled over 6,000
25 mattresses at 39 developments across all five
boroughs. We worked with DSNY to convert under-used

3 trash compactors into cardboard compactors at three
4 developments, Marcy, Morris I, and Queensbridge
5 South, which collects from a total-- which collects
6 cardboard from a total of 16 neighboring
7 developments. More than 200 tons of cardboard have
8 been recycled at these sites, and we're working with
9 DSNY to expand the program. As outlined in NYCHA's
10 2021 Sustainability Agenda, the Authority is
11 committed to removing organic waste from household
12 waste streams, eliminating food sources for pests,
13 and diverting organic materials from landfills. Our
14 farms at NYCHA sites are helping to achieve these
15 goals. Since 2016, our lead partner, Green City
16 Force, has collected over 32,000 pounds, or 16 tons,
17 of compostable food scraps from NYCHA residents. One
18 Green City Force alum and former NYCHA resident,
19 Domingo Morales, is working to expand composting at
20 NYCHA developments through an initiative he started
21 called Compost Power. In 2020, Compost Power
22 organized composting at five NYCHA developments that
23 can now process at least 50 tons of organic waste per
24 year. Compost Power provides NYCHA residents with the
25 opportunity to reduce waste from landfills while
creating eco-friendly jobs. Additionally, DSNY

3 placed a compost bin at Ravenswood Houses; NYCHA and
4 DSNY will engage residents for their input on where
5 additional compost bins could be placed. Our waste
6 management efforts are being carried out in
7 partnership with residents and other stakeholders.
8 For example, NYCHA is developing a Campaign for a
9 Clean NYCHA to better communicate with, and engage,
10 residents on proper waste management and recycling
11 programs. The Campaign was piloted at five
12 developments last year; pilot evaluation and the
13 development of a rollout plan is underway. The
14 Campaign applies the tools of public awareness and
15 behavior change to define and promote a positive
16 waste culture at NYCHA. Thanks to the City Cleanup
17 Corps initiative, we were able to hire more than
18 1,300 seasonal workers, of whom nearly half were
19 NYCHA residents, to help keep our grounds,
20 playgrounds, and buildings clean and to assist with
21 pest control. Over 400 of these workers were hired
22 for permanent roles. Integrated Pest Management or
23 IPM is the cornerstone of our new approach to pest
24 management. IPM focuses on long-term, sustainable
25 solutions that target the underlying causes of pest
infestations. Exterminators minimize pesticide use

3 and focus on non-toxic pest control methods. They
4 perform a thorough inspection, removing sources of
5 food and water, sealing any points of entry through
6 caulking, and installation of escutcheon plates. We
7 rolled out IPM Authority-wide, incorporated IPM
8 protocols into our IT systems, and issued updated
9 standard procedures and guidance regarding IPM to our
10 staff. We trained over 900 staff, exterminators,
11 caretakers, supervisors, and other property
12 management staff on the fundamentals of IPM. We
13 launched quarterly trainings on IPM topics, including
14 trainings for new hires. Since education is an
15 essential part of pest control, we provided residents
16 with informative materials on pest prevention, such
17 as handouts, rent inserts, and a comprehensive pest
18 control NYCHA webpage. To aid our work, we also
19 developed a model for tracking and measuring pest
20 data. This involves determining an estimate of the
21 pest population. To date, we've conducted nearly
22 2,100 inspections to establish this baseline. Our
23 commitment to residents, in closing: While we
24 acknowledge that more work needs to be done to
25 provide residents with the homes they deserve, we are
making progress to become a better landlord, through

3 targeted investments with the limited resources we
4 have, as well as innovative programs and strategies.
5 By working together with residents, agency partners,
6 and other stakeholders, we can continue to improve
7 pest and waste management and make a difference for
8 residents. Thank you for your support as we strive
9 to improve residents' quality of life. We're happy
10 to answer any questions you may have.

11 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Great. Thank you so
12 much for your testimony, and thank everyone for being
13 here today. I failed to do that in my opening
14 remarks. Before we begin questions, I'd like to
15 acknowledge Council Member Darlene Mealy. Thank you
16 for joining us, and Council Member Lincoln Restler,
17 thank you for joining us. Oh, and Council Member Ari
18 Kagan is joining us online, as well. So I guess as
19 we jump into questions, in September 2021, the NYCHA
20 sustainability agenda laid out a vision for
21 addressing the climate crisis while also solving
22 long-standing quality of life issues at NYCHA homes.
23 Can you describe the agenda's vision and progress on
24 revisioning waste management and recycling? And I
25 understand some of that was encapsulated in your

3 comments, but if you could just speak a little bit
4 more towards that agenda?

5 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: Thank you, Chair
6 Avilés. The sustainability agenda is a five-year
7 update to the original sustainability agenda which
8 committed to developing a comprehensive waste
9 management plan in its original state and recommit
10 it. Certain things we've been able to accomplish,
11 like we did develop the Comprehensive Waste
12 Management Plan and allowed us to advocate for over a
13 half a billion dollars in waste management funding
14 that will replace critical systems that have not been
15 replaced since the buildings have been built. And
16 that was a baseline decision that we made at the time
17 that the building infrastructure that is in critical
18 need of upgrading as well as the outside exterior
19 compactors need to be upgraded. Those were targeted
20 very heavily in the comprehensive plan. I am proud
21 to say that work is funded. The City Capital Action
22 Plan was passed or approved in 2021 of March of last
23 year, and we are underway, on our way to issue the
24 procurements and start the immense amount of capital
25 work that is absolutely needed. My team, since we've
accomplished this work, and again, we're very, very,

3 very proud of being able to both advocate and receive
4 and start this work on the capital side of things has
5 refocused and that's the reason we have recommitted
6 to certain things in the sustainability agenda, like
7 focusing on the organics and the recycling
8 infrastructure, like getting us to the Zero Waste
9 vision. Are you able to hear me? Yeah, and so a lot
10 of the work in the next iteration, and I hope in the
11 next Council hearings will be focused on the
12 sustainability aspect of waste management
13 infrastructure. We did feel that the baseline needed
14 to be addressed, and that's why the capital work is
15 absolutely necessary. When I first came to NYCHA
16 five years ago, the thing that the residents, Karen
17 Blondell [sp?] in particular, would say to me is,
18 "Waste is everywhere and it's disorganized." And we
19 really needed to focus on the containerization. So,
20 now that that work is underway, we will be focusing
21 more on the sustainability aspect of waste
22 management.

22 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Thank you so much.
23 In terms of, could you talk a little bit about how
24 the NYCHA Waste Management Plan 2.0 intersects with
25 the Federal Monitor's Strategic Action Plan?

3 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Thank you,
4 Chair. So, the Action Plan was approved by the
5 Federal Monitor, but it was actually written by us at
6 NYCHA. What the-- they essentially approved our
7 existing plan, which sets up deadlines for us. So,
8 basically, the waste management plan allows us to
9 establish these individual action plans for each
10 development, set positive norms like the Campaign for
11 a Clean NYCHA and encourages us to do outreach and
12 educate our residents. It makes proper waste
13 disposal more convenient, trash chutes, new
14 collection technology, provision of receptacles, and
15 improve our bulk waste collection and
16 containerization. It reduces our land fill bound
17 trash by increasing diversion through recycling and
18 eliminates food and garbage through composting.

19 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Thank you for those
20 answers. We're going to move to talk about some rat
21 mitigation stuff, because I know the DOH rep has to
22 leave, so we want to do that. We're just going to
23 ask a few questions. Then we'll kick it over to
24 other Council Members so you all can ask your
25 questions. You can go on with your day, and then we
have a whole longer list. We're going to try to

3 accommodate everybody. So just on rat mitigation-- I
4 just have a series of kind of like shorter questions.
5 Are NYCHA rat complaints recorded on the DOHMH rat
6 information portal?

7 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Thank you,
8 Chair, we'll allow-- defer to our colleagues at
9 Department of Health.

10 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SCHIFF: Good
11 morning. I'm Corinne Schiff. I'm the Deputy
12 Commissioner for Environmental Health at the Health
13 Department. Thank you for inviting me. The rat
14 information portal is part of the Health Department's
15 commitment to transparency, and we hope that you
16 consult it and share that with your constituents.
17 What we offer there is information about our
18 inspections.

19 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: So, NYCHA rat
20 complaints are recorded on it?

21 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SCHIFF: Complaints,
22 citywide complaints are not on the portal. It is our
23 inspection information is on our portal.

24 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: I'm sorry, I'm just-

25 -

UNIDENTIFIED: I can't hear.

3 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: This room is not set
4 up for this [inaudible].

5 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SCHIFF: Yeah, yeah,
6 is this better if I hold the mic closer?

7 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Yes.

8 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SCHIFF: Is that
9 better? The rat information portal has our
10 inspection information, not complaint information.

11 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Got it. Okay. Can
12 you describe what interventions were made at NYCHA
13 developments within rat mitigation zones?

14 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SCHIFF: So, the
15 Health Department's role with respect to NYCHA, we're
16 working very closely with NYCHA, particularly in the
17 rat mitigation zones, but also in developments that
18 are outside the mitigation zones, and our role has
19 been to provide technical assistance to NYCHA to do
20 training for NYCHA, and we're also conducting surveys
21 of rat conditions on NYCHA property and doing walk-
22 throughs with NYCHA so that they can see what we're
23 seeing and can target their mitigation strategies to
24 those-- to the areas that we identify for attention.

25 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: So for those
26 trainings and surveys, is that-- are trainings

3 something that you do upon request? Is there like an
4 annual calendar of trainings that you do? And then
5 for surveys, you know, roughly how many do you do per
6 year?

7 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SCHIFF: The surveys
8 are monthly. The trainings, I don't have a training
9 schedule. You-- my NYCHA colleagues may have the
10 training schedule, but we've been doing training with
11 their staff, and I just want to take the opportunity
12 to note that our training program is available to all
13 parts of the City, and we've worked with some of you
14 already to offer our Rodent Academy to people in your
15 districts, and we would be really happy to work with
16 you to set up Rodent Academies. That's how we train
17 property managers and city residents on best
18 practices for pest control. And as part of the
19 City's effort to get back to where we were in pre-
20 pandemic days where we had started to see real
21 improvements in our rat control outcomes. We would
22 really welcome the opportunity to work with you on
23 Rodent Academies. But for actual-- I don't have the
24 actual training schedule with NYCHA. If NYCHA
25 doesn't have it, we can get back to you with that.

3 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Is it something that
4 you do by request, or is it something you're mandated
5 to do?

6 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SCHIFF: I don't
7 think we're mandated to do the training. We are
8 working very closely as agency colleagues. We are
9 really the City's experts in integrated pest
10 management and rat control measures, and we have been
11 working closely with NYCHA and our other city
12 colleagues to offer trainings to make sure that we're
13 sharing that expertise. What I don't have is the
14 exact schedule. If NYCHA doesn't have the exact
15 schedule, we can get back to you with that.

16 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: that'd be great. And
17 how does that work additionally with privately
18 managed NYCHA developments?

19 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SCHIFF: I'm going to
20 have to defer to NYCHA on how they're manage-- how
21 they're handling that when they switch over to
22 private management.

23 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: It would be good to
24 know if residents have complaints at a privately
25 managed NYCHA development and want DOH to come and
get involved and help out. How can-- you know, who

3 makes that call? Is it NYCHA? Is it the private
4 management company communicates to NYCHA? Just to
5 understand a little bit more the lines of
6 responsibility for engaging DOH in that situation.

7 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Thank you. So,
8 as far as RAD and PACT properties, we work through a
9 transition with the private vendor that will take
10 over the management of the property. There is a unit
11 within NYCHA that provides oversight to that unit and
12 escalation. There's an open line of communication
13 between our operational resources and the private
14 vendor. If there's any specific questions, we can
15 take them back with us. Any specific questions
16 regarding a specific property, we can take those back
17 with us. We're happy to do so.

18 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Does the Compliance
19 Department provide regular updates to the waste
20 management team around how the private managers are
21 doing in terms of waste management practices?

22 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: So, I know for
23 non-RAD/PACT properties, I see those reports. I'd
24 have to check on that answer and get back to you.

25 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: I guess--

3 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: [interposing]

4 Just the get the exact-- exact [inaudible]

5 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: [interposing] Yeah,
6 in a specific context of RAD and PACT properties, I
7 guess if the Compliance Team is, you know, working
8 with a private manager is, I was wondering what the
9 feedback loop was back to the larger waste management
10 team or if it just stays and gets mitigated within
11 compliance.

12 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Yeah, so I
13 mean, we're-- we, like I said, we work with them
14 regularly. Before there's a hand-off we make sure
15 that, you know, especially-- specifically in response
16 to, you know, like our containerization. We'll pull
17 our containers out, allow them to put their
18 containers in. We'll make sure that they're
19 providing enough containerization for their folks,
20 and there is an open line of communication to our
21 pest control and waste management experts at all
22 times.

23 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Just a few more on
24 this, and alright-- I was-- I think I'll come back to
25 follow up on that. So, has DSNY provided additional

3 trash pick-up at NYCHA developments within rat
4 mitigation zones? Sorry, there's not enough seats.

5 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER ANDERSON: Good
6 morning, Council Members, and for the record, Gregory
7 Anderson Deputy Commissioner at Sanitation. So, we,
8 we provide a substantial amount of collection to
9 NYCHA properties, a majority of properties,
10 especially larger campus-style properties are
11 containerized. So they have a regular trash
12 collection cycle as well as on-call pick-up whenever--
13 -- you know, if one of their local property managers
14 or headquarters, these folks to my left, if they have
15 an issue they can escalate it to us and we'll provide
16 a response within 24 hours. If one of those
17 compactors goes down, we work with NYCHA to try to
18 identify additional services that we can offer,
19 whether that's providing additional service at a
20 compactor nearby. They can go from say Queensbridge
21 South to Queensbridge North, for example, or
22 providing supplemental curbside service until that
23 compactor is repaired. So we do-- we do provide
24 additional service where it's warranted, not
25 necessarily additional service in the rat mitigation
zones, specifically.

3 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: The Neighborhood Rat
4 Reduction Program that began in 2017 with a goal to
5 reduce the rat population by 70 percent at 110 sites
6 within the rat mitigation zones. Could you give a
7 brief overview of the program? And it would be great
8 if you could talk about, you know, if you've met or
9 come close to the goals that were set. How much does
10 it cost? And if you are considering expanding the
11 program to other developments?

12 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Yeah, thank
13 you. So, currently there are 101 development in the
14 NRR program. As of the end of May 2022, NYCHA has
15 seen a 48 percent decrease in rat population at those
16 developments that are currently-- the 101 that are
17 currently in there. I'll pass it to Vlada for the
18 capital.

19 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: Maybe I'll have
20 Josie [sic] quickly talk about the work that you've
21 been doing.

22 SENIOR DIRECTOR BARTLETT: Hi. I'm Josie
23 Bartlett. I'm the Senior Director of Pest Control.
24 So, the 48 percent, we're working really hard on the
25 Neighborhood Rat Reduction sites. We have 31
dedicated exterminators that just do rats in grounds

3 and basements. That's what they're dedicated on, but
4 we also have a lot of support staff that are working
5 on getting these numbers down. We have a burrows
6 collapsing team that their whole job is to go around
7 collapse rat burrows, and this is very important
8 because it disrupts where the rats are living. And I
9 like to say that rats make 80 babies in a year, so if
10 we can slow that down, it makes it better. So we--
11 they collapse their holes, but also it's an important
12 IPM method, because they collapse about six to seven
13 days after the exterminator has treated. If the hole
14 does not reopen, the exterminator knows that they
15 don't need to put poison down into that hole, so it
16 allows us to reduce our pesticide usage as well. We
17 also have a team that we call the exclusion team.
18 They're going around and their putting wire lath on
19 the window wells. Those are the kind of cement boxes
20 that help our basements breathe, but also rats are
21 able to sometimes squeezed down into the basements.
22 We're putting wire lath over that so they can't get
23 in. The exclusion team is also putting wire lth in
24 the ground around the foundations of the buildings
25 and around the exterior compactors. Seen it at--
you'll see at Marci [sp?]. You'll see it at

3 Mitchell, at your developments. So, it makes it so
4 that it's harder for the rat to come up and again, we
5 get to use less poison. We also through the Clean
6 Core program that Keith mentioned, we had seasonals
7 [sic] that are doing a lot of the work that helps
8 complement the extermination work. So they're
9 scrubbing down compactors, the giving caretakers who
10 do such a tremendous amount of work. A lot of extra
11 help also doing a lot of the hard work of picking up
12 dead rats, getting rid of rodent poop that, you know,
13 attracts rodents back to spaces. So, and doing a
14 little bit of trash policing but also scrubbing down
15 exterior trash bins where there's, you know, muck and
16 stuff that rats are attracted to. So, we have a lot
17 of different ways. It's not just the exterminators,
18 and you know, the developments do a tremendous amount
19 of work as well to make it all work.

20 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Did you all
21 successfully install the 50 rat slabs across the nine
22 developments that were mentioned in the plan?

23 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: We have 27 that
24 are done--

25 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: [interposing] 27
[inaudible]

3 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: [inaudible] are
4 in progress.

5 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: And there's plans to
6 do more this year?

7 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: Yeah.

8 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Okay. Do you know
9 how many more this year will be done?

10 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: I will find out
11 and get back to you.

12 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: My last question. I
13 know we have a lot of members here so I want to let
14 them ask all the questions. Can you kind of give us
15 a sense between 2019, 2020, 21, are we-- how many
16 complaints did we get? Like, are we growing up? Are
17 we going down? Are we steady? What's the percent
18 decrease or increase of complaints over a three-year
19 period the last three years?

20 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Yeah, thank
21 you. Thank you, Chair Nurse. So, Josie will give
22 specifics, but I do want to say we've seen a decrease
23 in resident complaints and increase in exterminator-
24 generated work orders, which is a demonstration of
25 the culture change, right? It's-- every work order
requires-- there's no close-out of an extermination

3 complaint, right? There's consistent follow-ups and
4 constant follow-ups. So the fact that we're seeing
5 increased follow-ups is a positive sign along with
6 decreased resident complaints. We can give you
7 approximate numbers, and we'll come back to you with
8 exact.

9 SENIOR DIRECTOR BARTLETT: Yeah, so back
10 in 2019 we're seeing month-to-month about 4,000
11 resident complaints. Right now we're about 2,000
12 resident complaints per month. Obviously in 2020
13 numbers were skewed.

14 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Right, so in 2019
15 about 4,000 complaints a month, and this-- and in
16 last year about 2,000 complaints a month. I'm going
17 to end my questions for now, but--

18 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Just a quick follow-
19 up. In terms of complaints, are these complaints that
20 are going directly to NYCHA or these include 311
21 complaints?

22 SENIOR DIRECTOR BARTLETT: This is
23 straight to NYCHA to our CCC. So, when a resident
24 calls in a work order is created and that's how we
25 schedule the work and track the work in everything.

3 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: So this might not
4 necessarily reflect all of the complaints that might
5 be given. Some people who might do it through 311
6 and then they get cut off because they say, "Oh,
7 actually you got to deal with NYCHA." And maybe they
8 don't actually follow up. So we're not-- it's not
9 necessarily reflective of fully how many complaints
10 there would be.

11 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: so, I believe
12 it is, right? There's multiple ways to make a
13 complaint, and we look at that through a lens of work
14 orders generated through via a resident complaint,
15 right? So however it comes in we will generate.

16 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: But you don't have a
17 sense of how much 311--

18 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: [interposing]
19 Oh, the breakdown?

20 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Yeah.

21 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Okay.

22 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: If I may, just one
24 question.

25 SENIOR DIRECTOR BARTLETT: Chair?

CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Yeah.

3 SENIOR DIRECTOR BARTLETT: I'm so sorry.
4 Chair Nurse, I just wanted to answer your question.
5 The remaining 23 RAD [inaudible] will be finished
6 this year. I got the answer.

7 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: In terms of
9 developments where there are significant construction
10 such as resiliency project that is happening in Red
11 Hook Houses, are there special rat mitigation plans
12 that are put in place in those circumstances?

13 SENIOR DIRECTOR BARTLETT: Yeah, the
14 contractor is required to have a pest plan. So every
15 construction site has either, you know, bi-weekly,
16 twice a month-- it depends on what construction
17 that's in their contract. And I know that is in the
18 Red Hook construction plan because I've seen it and
19 I've requested to see their pesticide usage report.
20 So that's something that we can also do and we do do
21 to QA when we see the rat populations that should be
22 being treated by the contractor, subcontractor,
23 whoever they're using for their pest control. If we
24 see any, you know, spikes or whatever, we ask for the
25 pesticide usage. We've done walk-throughs with the
pest professional to make sure that it's in line with

3 what we would do if we were in those construction
4 areas as well.

5 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Got it. We'll
6 follow up more specifically later on. I'd like to
7 acknowledge Council Member Eric Bottcher, Council
8 Member-- I'm losing my mind-- Council Member Julie
9 Menin, Council Member Amanda Farías. I don't know if
10 we have anybody else online. Thank you for joining
11 us Council Members. I guess with that we can turn it
12 over to Council Member questions. And first off
13 we'll have Council Member Ayala. Did I recognize
14 you, Council Member Ayala? Thank you for being here.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: Anybody here from
16 pesticide, there's a big fly [inaudible]. You might
17 want to hire me. But I have a few questions and I'll
18 try to make it as quick as possible because I know
19 that time is ticking. One of the issues that I saw,
20 and as part of the infestations in my district was
21 that many of our basements were not cemented; they
22 were still dirt, and that contributed to serious rat
23 infestations to the point the staff couldn't get into
24 the basement. Do we know how many of those basements
25 remain that way?

3 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Yeah. Thank
4 you, Council Member. So we completed 27 of the 50
5 identified. We have 23 planned projects for this
6 year. If you have a specific incident, we're more
7 than happy to follow up with you off-- later on.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: And regards to
9 this rate, I mean, it's a problem. It's a huge
10 problem and I don't think that a lot of people, you
11 know, knew or understood that that was happening. In
12 regards to the clean-up corps [sic] I know that
13 there's been a significant decrease in that program
14 this year. How many developments were being service
15 through staffing, I guess, increases in developments
16 that are NYCHA?

17 SENIOR DIRECTOR BARTLETT: I can speak
18 about the Clean Corps program for pest control. We
19 had 100 Clean Corps members, and this is a small
20 fraction of what was given to all the developments,
21 but we had 100 people and they went to about 50
22 developments, but we have a program manager who is
23 always shifting these individuals around depending on
24 DOHMH. Borough counts, our own borough counts where
25 we saw like-- in your development, we definitely had
people at Mitchell, Johnson, Jefferson, Harbor,

3 Clint-- I mean, your developments have rat issues,
4 and we made sure that the Clean Corps members were
5 there.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: Okay, that's
7 great. Yeah, I think, you know, obviously I wanted
8 to-- you can't-- you couldn't tell who was who, so I
9 wasn't sure how many, you know, additional bodies we
10 were able to get. Regarding the-- so, you know,
11 listen, this is very simple. The rats are there
12 because there's food. You get rid of the food, you
13 get rid of the garbage, you get rid of the rats. I
14 have to be honest, I think in regards to rat
15 mitigation program, the team has been pretty good
16 about following up and coming with us on tours of
17 developments that we've identified. However, the
18 shortfall, I believe, is in the cleanliness of the
19 development. They're just-- you know, I can only
20 speak to the ones that I see in my district. They're
21 horribly-- like, they're dirty, dirty, dirty.
22 There's garbage everywhere. I was at Mitchell during
23 the pandemic and there was a rat sitting in front of
24 the building eating an orange peel like nothing
25 happened. The door was opened to the building. He
could have easily gone in and out. There were-- you

3 know, he had many of his friends hanging out there as
4 well, and this is a, you know, a constant issue, but
5 the garbage is a problem, and I'm not sure that we're
6 ready to address that if we continue to see
7 shortfalls in staffing at the developments. And as
8 far as I know, we still haven't fully staffed up.

9 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Yeah, thank
10 you, Chair. We, obviously we agree and concur.

11 Specifically, as it comes to removing food waste from
12 our sites, the grounds-- as I was driving in today, I
13 noticed that, you know, it's kind of that first
14 Monday after the holiday, and while it wasn't in your
15 district, I did notice a large number of grounds
16 keepers really working-- walking through the grounds
17 clearing out the grass, clearing up the exterior
18 areas. But we do a lot of work on this, and if you
19 have some specific sites, we'd be happy to do it. I'd
20 like to have Al give you a little bit more broad
21 spectrum rundown on that. Okay?

22 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: Sure.

23 SENIOR DIRECTOR FERGUSON: Can everybody
24 hear me okay? Okay. Cleanliness at developments is,
25 you know, it's very, as you would imagine, very
development-specific. We have individual action

3 plans. One of the things that has been done recently
4 is the sun setting of the AWS program where, you
5 know, which basically frees up more people in a daily
6 basis. I have seen developments get cleaner, that
7 definitely be cleaner. I know you have specific ones
8 that-- I come from the Department of Sanitation. I
9 spent three decades with the Department of
10 Sanitation. I have-- I take my job very seriously,
11 and I'd have to say that it's, you know, it's still
12 not to my standards. You know, things are still not
13 to my standards. We've done so much. They've done
14 herculean tasks. I spent decade with the Department
15 of Sanitation. I started out as a sanitation worker,
16 worked my way up to three-star chief of Citywide
17 Collection, Recycling, and Containerization. It's
18 one of the reasons they chose me to come, you know,
19 to bring me over to NYCHA, and a lot of what Council
20 Member Avilés was mentioning about the past, and you
21 were mentioning, Council Member Nurse, about the past
22 of NYCHA, that I've seen significant changes. These--
23 - what is being done here is groundbreaking. It's
24 one of the things that really brought me here is that
25 they're truly trail blazing. I mean, they went down
this-- I know the book is quite long, the 2.0 plan

3 management. If you read it cover to cover, you get a
4 sense of that the problems were identified, residents
5 were included. They did surveys with residents that
6 were complaining about litter and day-to-day
7 conditions, and then the proposed solutions. Again,
8 coming from the background, that these solutions are
9 excellent solutions.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: I mean, I don't
11 want to contradict what you're interpretation of what
12 you read was. However, it is very different from
13 what I'm hearing and seeing on the ground. I'm not
14 seeing much community engagement. I'm not seeing
15 resident engagement at all, and I'm consistently
16 hearing the feedback that I'm getting is that there
17 aren't enough staff to clean these developments. I
18 am-- you know, I plan to visit within the next, you
19 know, two weeks. I, you know, plan to go around
20 specifically to the ones in the Bronx. I will
21 welcome you to visit Mitchell, Motthaven, Paxton,
22 Millbrook [sp?] Houses. They're disgusting and
23 they're all rat infested. We tried through
24 participatory budgeting and through my own capital
25 funds to purchase rodent-proof receptacles to put in
front of the buildings at the request of the

3 residents and we were not able to because OMB does
4 not approve those as capital-eligible. And NYCHA did
5 push back on us being able to purchase them through
6 our discretionary funds for some reason or the other.
7 I'm not sure. But I think that that is the source of
8 your problem. You know, I really just want to, you
9 know, wanted to hear that. My last question is
10 regarding-- because we're talking a lot about rats in
11 the exterior parts of the development. I live-- I
12 grew up in public housing, and I mean, it was unheard
13 of to even have a mouse. It was unheard of.
14 Everybody knew that if we lived in public housing we
15 had no mice. People have rats in their apartments
16 now. That blows my mind. One of my residents was in
17 the news the other day, I think Saturday, from Wagner
18 Houses. She-- somebody came to her house. They left
19 a big hole under the sink, and now she has rats in
20 her apartment. How quickly are you addressing that,
21 because if I saw a rat in my house, I would leave and
22 never come back? Like, I'd be sleeping in the
23 hallway. How quickly are you addressing that?

24 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: I'll just
25 quickly answer. I think that-- I started the
testimony earlier to say that the buildings are--

3 many of the systems in the buildings are at the end
4 of its use [inaudible] so those issues that you see
5 are related, some of them related to plumbing issues.
6 Some of them are related to failing systems. And so
7 I think that we can address, you know, issue to issue
8 the issues that you're describing, but we really need
9 to address the root cause and really get at the
10 systems and make sure that our buildings are rebuilt.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: Absolutely, but
12 you don't just leave a hole in somebody's wall,
13 especially if you know that there's rat, you know,
14 infestation problem in that development. Like there
15 should be, you know, some conversation happening with
16 contractors that are coming in to do this work. You
17 know, I can sit here all day, and you know,
18 sympathize with the conditions of the building, but
19 that doesn't mean for a second that I'm okay with
20 anybody living one single day with a rat running
21 around their house. It's a public health issue.

22 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Absolutely.
23 And to answer your question on our response time, it
24 obviously depends on the rodent [sic] type. The
25 Department of Health [inaudible] but we really do
appreciate hearing that, and I know you mentioned--

3 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: [interposing] But
4 if I'm calling-- if I'm calling you today, and I'm
5 sorry to interrupt, I'm calling you today and I'm
6 telling you that I have a rat in my apartment, how
7 long before you come and get rid of that rat?

8 SENIOR DIRECTOR BARTLETT: Interior rat
9 work orders are priority seven. We get there within
10 24 hours.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: And that's--

12 SENIOR DIRECTOR BARTLETT: [interposing]
13 And on average, our rat complaint response time is
14 four days, but that's including exterior rat work
15 orders and basement work orders as well. We always
16 prioritize the interior. And what we're doing with
17 integrative pest management, like what I spoke about
18 at the Johnson meeting that we were at, we're rally
19 prioritizing exterminators, finding the root cause,
20 filling holes. If there's a hole left open like
21 that, we speak to the management. There should at
22 least be a Masonite board as a temporary fix that a
23 rat could not come in, but we're always looking for
24 holes, putting wire lath, putting excluder mesh in
25 the holes so that the rodents can't get in.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: And the number--
4 I'm sorry-- you guys have been very generous. This
5 is the last question. Regarding the number of
6 complaints for indoor rat complaints, has that number
7 gone up and by how much?

8 SENIOR DIRECTOR BARTLETT: No, it has
9 not. It has not.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: Are you capturing
11 that data, because I find that really difficult to
12 believe.

13 SENIOR DIRECTOR BARTLETT: You mean
14 within the last year or like historically? Because--

15 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: [interposing] In
16 the last year. I mean--

17 SENIOR DIRECTOR BARTLETT: [interposing]
18 our interior rat complaints makes up less than one
19 percent of all work orders, and we do have that in
20 our maximum [sic] data.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: thank you.

22 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Council Member,
23 before you pass it along, I just-- I wanted to thank
24 you personally for that feedback and also you
25 mentioned that you planned on visiting some of our

3 developments, and I'd be happy to join you
4 personally.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA: Absolutely, it's
6 an open invitation.

7 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Okay, Council Member
8 Farías?

9 COUNCIL MEMBER FARÍAS: Hi, good morning
10 everyone. Thank you for being here and answering all
11 of our questions. I'm going to try to go through the
12 first couple of just like quick. Oh, sorry. Bring
13 this bad boy [sic] closer to me. Okay, so I'll do
14 the ones that are really quick that have popped up
15 from some of the questions my colleagues have asked,
16 and I just want clarification on this. Do 311
17 complaints auto-generate a NYCHA work order, or do
18 residents have to separately go to the NYCHA website
19 and put in a work order?

20 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: 311 complaints
21 are deferred to us, deferred to us through the system
22 and then it will, you know, get evaluated by our call
23 center.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER FARÍAS: Okay, so--

25 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: [interposing] So
we do-- we do acknowledge 311 complaints, but we've

3 trained our residents and we've educated our
4 residents to call the CCC and use the [inaudible].

5 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIÁS: Okay, but just
6 for clarification, it dos come into your office
7 internally, and then they're generated work orders.

8 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: It gets
9 referred to the-- it gets referred to the call
10 center.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIÁS: Yeah.

12 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: And then they
13 create a work order.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIÁS: So, it's not like
15 we're--

16 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: [interposing]
17 That's how--

18 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIÁS: we're missing--
19 we're not missing 311 data. It's still coming in and
20 then it's transferred over to work order.

21 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: right. Yeah,
22 correct. So we're not missing it. We didn't parse
23 it out as far as who generates that complaint, how it
24 is generated. We can tell you where it came from. If
25 came from the CCC or afterhours [inaudible] emergency
[inaudible].

3 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIÁS: Okay, I just
4 wanted to make sure. With the prior answer it seems
5 like as if folks still had to then pick up another
6 line and call it in, but if it's still being referred
7 to you--

8 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: [interposing]
9 Right.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIÁS: you can find out
11 connecting dots of like how-- what's the percentage
12 that came from 311. It sounds like you could make
13 those connections if we request it.

14 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: We can
15 certainly look into that, but I would say our
16 response is to always encourage residents to call the
17 CCC and utilize the application. It's just it comes
18 out, you know, the middle man [sic].

19 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIÁS: Absolutely. In
20 terms of what Deputy Speaker Ayala was just asking
21 around what the contractors on worksites, I
22 particularly am interested in knowing are the
23 contractors separate vendors, like separate
24 contractors that NYCHA hires? Are they internal
25 people that get training from NYCHA? Are they

3 unionized members? Like, who are the contractors
4 that are like opening up a sink and leaving a hole?

5 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: So, obviously
6 any contractor is, you know, fully vetted through the
7 process, but I think holes as a result of repair work
8 are typically-- I could get you the exact figure of
9 our property management, skill trades, versus an
10 outside contractor, but for more repairs, minor
11 repairs, that's-- we try to do that in-house with our
12 union trade staff.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER FARÍAS: Got it.

14 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Skilled trades.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER FARÍAS: Okay. So, for
16 me, when I usually go through most of my NYCHA's, and
17 this is somewhat connected to our rat mitigation
18 issues that we're having, a lot of our large
19 containers, you know, that are placed throughout the
20 NYCHAs to receive all of the trash are typically
21 empty or half-full, and what I hear from a lot of my
22 NYCHAs, my TAs, the managements there are that they
23 don't have enough man power to physically move the
24 trash that's in front of buildings all the way to
25 wherever the recept-- the larger containers are for
pick-up, whether it's a private waste management or

3 DSNY that's contracted out to NYCHA. So are we
4 looking at additional worker, or maybe has NYCHA ever
5 seen or looked at different ways to purchase like
6 wagons or smaller cars, like things like that to help
7 move trash through our developments faster and into
8 the containers?

9 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Yeah, so we do
10 have some of those devices throughout our
11 developments. If you have a specific thought or a
12 specific development that you're hearing that issue
13 with, Al, myself and the team will go out there.
14 We'll work with our fleet folks to purchase that
15 equipment, and that can make it easier for our
16 cleaners to-- you know, our ground-- sorry, our
17 caretakers--

18 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIÁS: [interposing]
19 Yeah.

20 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: to do that work.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIÁS: So, it's not like
22 a set standard across the board, like every NYCHA
23 that has X amount of thousands of people gets two
24 trolleys, a wagon, and a whatever? Like, we're not
25 setting up everyone the same and then adding more on?
Or is it just like request by request basis?

3 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Yeah,
4 [inaudible] I'll forward that-- I think that is
5 representative of some of our individualized, you
6 know, waste plans.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIÁS: Okay.

8 SENIOR DIRECTOR FERGUSON: It's generally
9 development-specific, but you know, again, most of
10 our-- you know, we could always use equipment. We
11 could always use more things. We prefer to have
12 mechanized equipment wherever we can, especially
13 developments that have like the larger campuses. We
14 have 20 acres, 30 acres, 40 acres. We always try to
15 keep the mechanized option, but we can look into that
16 specifically, but they should have enough equipment,
17 but we're also always trying new equipment, new
18 things that we're piloting all over the City, ways of
19 making life easier. We have one development that we
20 purchase this large container where people, the
21 residents in the morning bring their garbage out and
22 instead of putting a lot of little cans, we just had
23 one nice dumpster that stays clean, and then that can
24 actually be picked up with either a bobcat or a John
25 Deere tractor and brought directly to the container

3 itself. So, again, if you have something specific,
4 I'm more than glad to--

5 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIÁS: [interposing]

6 yeah, I mean I can definitely get back to you folks
7 on some of the larger issues, in my district

8 specifically, but I'd like to see a more

9 standardization across the board, because we all have

10 rodent issues across the board, and we all have trash

11 issues across the board, and so I feel like a lot of

12 here, and I don't want to speak for everyone, but a

13 lot of us here would want to advocate for a

14 standardization of, you know, what's at every NYCHA

15 or what is the basic foundation to make sure our

16 worker and our tenants are able to live life with

17 dignity and work in a place that's super helpful.

18 Yeah, so I'm happy to like report back on some of the

19 larger developments that I have that I know have

20 issues that are contracted with DSNY, for example,

21 and they're like we can go around there, you know,

22 two or three times a day if you want us to, but that

23 container is always half full, right, or half empty.

24 I mean, if you're optimist or pessimist. But it's

25 just moving the trash into there, that's the larger

3 problem for two or three of my developments. So I'll
4 report back to you guys offline. Thank you.

5 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Thank you,
6 Council Member. We appreciate that. I think the
7 uniformity is something that we're actually trying to
8 move away from a little bit. Each site is different,
9 right? Just amongst your three developments, right?
10 Three of your developments, they all have different
11 layouts and geography, so we're actually trying to as
12 much as we can individualize it to those developments
13 while still maintaining a level that we're making
14 sure that every development has the equipment that
15 they need for their development. So we really truly-
16 - we really truly do appreciate that and we're happy
17 to look at anything we can specifically do to do
18 that.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIÁS: Sure. I guess my
20 larger concern is it sounds like the reasoning for
21 this, it sounds like the squeaky wheel gets the oil,
22 and so people might just be used to living like this
23 and use to not putting in complaints and use to not
24 getting any answers, and so that might mean that
25 there are developments that are not being squeaky
wheels, but I hear you on it if that's where you're

3 feeling like the agency feels like it needs to go to
4 be more hyper-specific. It's good for us to know
5 that so we can be squeaky wheels.

6 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Absolutely.
7 You're not squeaky to us. We're happy to hear any
8 complaints and anything specific that you have that
9 you'd like to-- like I said to the Deputy Speaker,
10 I'll say this all the members of the hearing here,
11 we're happy to walk any site with you and look at
12 specific examples. You know, like I said, I'm fairly
13 new here. So any opportunity to go out, especially
14 with you fine folks, because it's something positive
15 [inaudible].

16 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: I just have a
17 clarifying question, and then we'll move on. So does
18 every NYCHA campus have a specific, developed,
19 approved waste management plan in place?

20 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: Yes, we do, and
21 they are public on our website.

22 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Okay, great. Just
23 wanted to clarify.

24 SENIOR DIRECTOR FERGUSON: If I could
25 add-- if I could just add, I am all about innovation.
I think it's-- especially our campuses. There are so

3 many old development campus because sometimes there
4 are-- Fred Samuels, for example, went there a couple
5 weeks ago, and there's just-- the material has to be
6 placed out on the sidewalk. So, we said that's-- the
7 curbside option is not acceptable, and we now deliver
8 the material to Hamilton [sic] which is several
9 blocks away. Something else that we have is the
10 sixth yard which was in the testimony. The six yard
11 garbage trucks, the compactor trucks, very much like
12 Sanitation but like a miniature version. They hold
13 three to three and a half tons. We have piloted
14 actually more in your district, Council Member Nurse.
15 It's in Garvey [sp?], Ocean Hill, Park Rock, Lowe
16 [sp?], Glenwell [sp?] Plaza that Sanitation provides
17 a level of service, and what we did is we said what
18 would it be-- we started in November of last year.
19 What would it be like if we did the service on the
20 opposite days? Sanitation comes Monday, Wednesday,
21 Friday. Then we'll come on Tuesday, Thursday,
22 Saturday, and that's for the curbside sites, you
23 know, the places that just-- they don't have anywhere
24 to store. They're on such a small footprint, and
25 people shouldn't have to live that way, you know. I
read a book when I got here. The first thing they

3 hand me, day one when I got here, was A Home to be
4 Proud of. It was a great book. It was a simple
5 pamphlet, but it's something that I'll I-- it's
6 burned into my memory, and that's something I want to
7 make sure that we get-- we deliver the best possible
8 service. And we pilot only the two trucks now, but I
9 definitely think that, you know, an expansion is
10 definitely worthwhile, and all of our curbside sites,
11 we're looking to either make them shared, which means
12 you move them to a container, a nearby container
13 which is an exterior compactor, or provide some other
14 kind of service. I'm very, very confident that we can
15 come up with solutions. There's a lot of good
16 technology out there, and also like a street sweeper.
17 You know, we have our own little mini sweepers which
18 you've seen in the developments, but I'd love to see
19 something get the perimeter. You know, I'm not just
20 happy with the interior, and you know, if we can get
21 the exterior ourselves and put it on the schedule, on
22 a rotation, keep it coming, and you know, kind of do
23 a thorough cleaning of developments. I just want some
24 of my ideas that-- Thank you.

25 SENIOR DIRECTOR KENNIFF: I just wanted
to also build on what Al was describing. We-- to your

3 point, Council Member Fariás, some of the containers
4 that are not full, we're looking at those. My team
5 has identified three of them, and we're putting
6 cardboard. We're repurposing them for cardboard
7 only. About 15 percent of our waste is cardboard,
8 and so thinking about innovations where we have
9 equipment and it's underused, and working with the
10 Department of Sanitation to create those innovations
11 and how we containerize waste, that's one of the
12 things that is in the works.

13 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Thanks. I'm going to
14 move us on. We have a couple of people that have to
15 leave. We also want to hear-- there are some
16 questions directed towards DOHMH, so we're going to
17 kick it to Council Member Menin.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER MENIN: Thank you. I
19 first of all want to thank the Chairs for doing this
20 hearing. This is so important, and I have to say for
21 the NYCHA development in my district, and I have
22 Holmes, Isaacs, and Lexington Houses. This is
23 probably the top complaint I hear is about rat and
24 bug infestation. So, I want to echo my colleague's
25 questions about response times. I'm sorry, I'm very
skeptical about this 24-hour and four-day response

3 times, because that's certainly not what I'm hearing,
4 and I want to echo what our Deputy Speaker said about
5 that as well. I mean, the residents in the
6 developments in my area are saying literally they
7 don't even want to call 311 or NYCHA because they
8 feel like they're not getting the response. And I
9 walk in the buildings all the time and I see it
10 firsthand. So I really have two questions. First is,
11 could you send the committee, if the Chairs agree,
12 the complaints for every building in NYCHA in the
13 City and the respective response times for those
14 buildings?

15 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: So, just to
16 clarify the data you're asking for, obviously, we'd
17 have to follow up with this. You would like every
18 indoor rat complaint?

19 COUNCIL MEMBER MENIN: Yes.

20 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: And the
21 response time to those rat complaints in all NYCHA
22 properties?

23 COUNCIL MEMBER MENIN: Yes. That's
24 something we can pull together. Obviously, we don't
25 have it in front of us, but we can look at that and
circle back.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER MENIN: Okay, thank you.

4 And then the second thing is I understand it's
5 complaint-driven, but what about the proactive
6 approach? How often are you sending out inspectors
7 to various buildings across the City?

8 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: yeah,
9 absolutely. Anytime there is a complaint, that
10 require-- that requires us to do additional follow-
11 ups, right? So, the exact-- I'm going to let Josie
12 give you a rundown on exactly how those follow-ups
13 work, but part of the integrated pest management
14 program that we're implementing across the Authority
15 is that follow-ups are consistent. There's no--
16 there's no close-out, right? There's no like, we
17 came, we treated, and we're out of here. There's a
18 we came, we treated, we're going to treat that
19 apartment if the infestation level is high, we're
20 going to go to the apartments above, below, right,
21 and left. If there's an exterior infestation, we're
22 going to keep moving through the grounds until we are
23 able to close out those-- the rat population.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MENIN: Are you doing
25 spot-checks so that it's not just again complaint-

3 driven, but that you're sending inspectors out on a
4 regular basis?

5 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Go ahead Josie.

6 SENIOR DIRECTOR BARTLETT: So we have a
7 program called the NYCHA Pest Infestation Indexing
8 where we randomly sampled 2,100-- 2,072 apartments
9 this year, and this is something that we did last
10 year and we will be doing again. This isn't
11 response-- this isn't complaint-driven. This is just
12 randomly selected apartments. The inspectors go in
13 and we have a uniformed-- like, this is a low
14 infestation of roach. This is medium. This is high.
15 There's certain questions they have to ask the
16 residents, and then they spend 15 minutes looking
17 around the apartment and noting if they see any level
18 of infestation as well. So, that's something that we
19 are proactively doing as well. There's also-- and--
20 sorry. I-- other trades are able if they see any pest
21 infestation to automatically generate a work order.
22 So, like, if a resident has a mold issue, if there
23 are questions that the inspectors says, "Do you see
24 any evidence of roach? Do you see any signs of
25 rodent poop?" And that automatically generates an

3 extermination work order, and then we schedule and
4 the exterminator goes.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER MENIN: And what about
6 pesticides, because that's another issue I'm hearing
7 from residents. What kind of pesticides are you
8 using? Do they have side effects? And do you offer
9 a warning? So, particularly for families with young
10 children?

11 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Before we get
12 into pesticides, I just want to correct one small
13 thing. It was 2,071 apartments, not 2,072.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MENIN: Okay.

15 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: for the record.
16 And Josie can talk about our exact-- our pesticide
17 usage.

18 SENIOR DIRECTOR BARTLETT: So all the
19 products that we use, all the labels are on our
20 website and the notice that residents get saying you
21 have a scheduled appointment. On the bottom of the
22 notice it says, "Please come to this website to look
23 at all the labels. When the exterminator comes, you
24 can ask them for what product, and you'll be able to
25 see the label as well." For gel, we-- for roaches,
we're primarily using gel pesticides. We're also

3 using Genral [sp?] which is like a roach-- it's
4 called an insect growth regulator. It's like a birth
5 control for roaches so they're not able to reproduce
6 and grow past the stage that they're currently in.
7 For rodents, we're using First Strike which is kind
8 of like blue packets. It's rodenticide. It's used
9 in those black boxes that you'll see. The rodent
10 goes in. It eats it and then it leaves, and then it
11 will die later. Those are the primary products that
12 we're using, but you can see all the products that we
13 use on our website and what the label says they
14 should be used and what the dangers of all of them
15 are.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER MENIN: Okay, thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Council Member
18 Bottcher?

19 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: Morning. In
20 New York City, landlords, private landlords, when
21 they get a complaint from 311 called on them, the
22 Department of Health inspects, and they'll fine them
23 if they find that they're not following the law and
24 properly abating the property. When NYCHA gets
25 complaints, is the Department of Health involved at

3 all? Does the Department of Health hold NYCHA
4 accountable?

5 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Thank you,
6 Council Member. Let our colleagues from Department
7 of Health up to answer that specific question.

8 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SCHIFF: We are-- we
9 do inspections, as I noted before, of NYCHA
10 properties. We're doing monthly surveys with NYCHA
11 to identify rat conditions, and then referring those
12 over to NYCHA using actually NYCHA's technology so
13 that we can avoid a sort of bureaucratic step so that
14 NYCHA gets that information right away. I'm checking
15 on the answer to your exact question. You need to
16 give me a minute. I'll see if I can find that out.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: We partner with
18 NYCHA working hand-in-hand with NYCHA on abatement
19 issues. Private landlords get fined by the Department
20 of Health. They get held accountable by the
21 Department of Health. Does the Department of Health
22 hold NYCHA accountable? NYCHA is a landlord. How
23 are they being held accountable?

24 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SCHIFF: Yeah, so I
25 want to talk first about our approach with private
property owners, because you're right that private

3 property owners are required to maintain their
4 property pest-free, and the Health Department will do
5 inspections and response to complaints but also
6 there's been a discussion of proactive inspections,
7 and we're doing those as well, because the important
8 point was made earlier that not everybody in New York
9 is complaining. And so the Health Department's
10 approach includes a proactive inspections, and our--
11 and we've done what we call indexing all across the
12 City, and so we have a very good idea of where rats
13 are more likely-- where we are more likely to find
14 rats, and so we calibrate all of our intervention to
15 spend more time in places where we know that there re
16 rats regardless of where people are complaining. We
17 issue the summons, as to say, after we find that the
18 property owner isn't complying with our order. So,
19 our first step is to issue an order to the property
20 owner to say here's what we found, and here's what we
21 want you to do to correct the conditions. The
22 conditions could be harbridge [sic] which means that
23 there's-- it's conducive to rat populations, or
24 actual active rat signs, which they need to address
25 typically by hiring a pest management firm. With
NYCHA, we are working with them so that NYCHA can

3 take those actions on their own. There is
4 accountability in the sense that the information is
5 public. The practice across the City is not to issue
6 a violation, to sort of shift funds around. So, the
7 accountability is for NYCHA to correct the condition
8 for that information to be public, but we wouldn't
9 issue a fine to NYCHA in the way that we issue fine
10 to a property owner if they have not observed our
11 order, and we go back and we find that they've not
12 complied with our order, and then we issue a summons,
13 and then they have the opportunity to go to
14 [inaudible].

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: so, NYCHA is
16 the largest landlord in New York City by far.
17 Landlords across New York City are accountable to the
18 Department of Health to abate their property. They
19 receive summons if they fail to do so after a
20 warning. NYCHA is not subject to that kind of
21 oversight from the Department of Health. It's-- but
22 the idea is that it's public information, it's that
23 we're getting that they're accountable to. Just we
24 see the numbers and hold you accountable that way.

25 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: No, yeah,
understandable, and just want to reiterate there's a

3 tremendous amount of oversight and accountability at
4 NYCHA. We obviously, we have a federal monitor in
5 place along with action plans that we're required to
6 publicly report on. We work closely with our
7 partners at DOHMH to ensure that the issues they
8 refer are corrected. Just as, you know, we work with
9 our partners at DSNY on similar issues.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: I think the
11 frustration you're hearing in my voice and on behalf
12 of my colleagues is that for many years we've seen
13 things happen at NYCHA that would not be allowed to
14 happen elsewhere. Across the street from privately-
15 owned apartment buildings we have rat conditions that
16 would never be allowed to be allowed to stand, but
17 because it's NYCHA it's been allowed to go on for too
18 long, and I hear some good things happening from you.
19 I know many of you are new on this job and I like
20 some of what I'm hearing, but it's time for NYCHA to
21 be held to a higher standard.

22 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Thank you,
23 Council Member. We agree and we look to raise that
24 bar on a daily basis. Like I said-- like I said to
25 your colleagues, I am new as well. We are trying to

3 make some progress and I'm happy to walk any sites
4 and address any specific issues we have.

5 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Thank you. We'd
6 like to acknowledge Council Member De La Rosa who is
7 with us, and Council Member Velazquez. Thank you for
8 joining us. I think next we'll have Council Member
9 Chi Ossé.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER OSSÉ: Hey again. Just a
11 couple questions. So according to the capital
12 upgrades schedule, I know NYCHA was to complete the
13 installation of 223 new interior trash compactors, 43
14 new exterior compactors, five new bulk crushers, 47
15 new enlarged trash shuts, 676 new food waste
16 disposers at developments in the NRR zones by April
17 30th, 2021. Has NYCHA met this goal, and if not
18 where are you in those advancements?

19 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: [inaudible] I can
20 answer for Fiscal Year 22. I have those numbers in
21 front of me, and maybe I can talk about the rest of
22 it. So, Fiscal Year 2022 we have 88 million in
23 capital, total of 485 million over five years. We
24 have 18.6 million in design build waste yards. Those
25 are seven waste yards that are progressing. I just
heard this morning that the Comptroller approved 26.4

3 million design build for pneumatic system at Pole
4 Ground [sp?] and Rangel [sp?]. Thank you,
5 Comptroller Lander. Very, very excited to get
6 shovels in the ground. 5.2 million for design for
7 waste yards for 21. 18.2 million for Fiscal Year 21
8 interior compactors, and 21.1 million for Fiscal Year
9 22 interior compactors.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER OSSÉ: Okay, and I guess
11 we'll follow up question-- and if you can get me
12 specifics on, you know, just everything else on
13 there, that'd be great right after for a follow-up.
14 I wanted to ask in buildings that have received waste
15 management infrastructure upgrades, has there been a
16 reduction that you've seen in rodents and pests at
17 those developments?

18 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: I'm going to ask
19 my colleagues on the Operations side to speak to what
20 he's seeing in the field.

21 SENIOR DIRECTOR BARTLETT: We've had a 48
22 percent reduction in rat population overall in
23 neighborhood rat reduction development, and these are
24 the developments that have gotten these upgrades.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER OSSÉ: Oh, wow. And how
are you collecting that data?

3 SENIOR DIRECTOR BARTLETT: This is the
4 Department of Health monthly borough count, that's
5 how we track it.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER OSSÉ: Okay. And another
7 question that I have is in regards to RAD or PACT.
8 How is the pest and rodent situation at-- I'm not
9 sure if either of you have these. But how is the pest
10 and rodent situation at developments under RAD and
11 PACT?

12 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Yeah,
13 absolutely. Thank you, Council Member. So, as I
14 previously stated, you know, we work through a
15 transition with those developments, right? So they're
16 not alone on an island. There is a unit within NYCHA
17 within our Real Estate Department that handles the
18 transition and oversight of those property managers.
19 There is an open line of communication and then if
20 there's any specific questions on specific sites,
21 we're happy to take a look at those, but we do have
22 an open line. For example, if they were to call
23 either Departments of the departments up here in
24 Support Operations or the other three Departments
25 under my purview, we would provide assistance.

3 They're not on an island. As far as specific
4 numbers, we'd have to get back to you on those, but
5 yeah.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER OSSÉ: Okay, thank you.

7 And the last question I have is in regards to
8 recycling and composting and how it could add to a
9 reduction of waste as well as pests in our
10 communities. You know, across the board throughout
11 our city, not only pertaining to NYCHA, it does take
12 a lot of meaningful interaction to get people on
13 board with composting as well as recycling still in
14 2022. Despite NYCHA's outreach, there are still
15 issues with residents participating in NYCHA
16 Recycles. What other efforts have been done to
17 mitigate these issues amongst the residents?

18 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: Yeah, thank you
19 for that question. We have been focused as I said
20 before on the capital infrastructure. We are strongly
21 refocusing on recycling and composting. We are
22 working closely with Green City Forest [sic] and
23 other community partners. As you know, there are
24 farms across seven developments. In the
25 sustainability agenda, we're committed to 15.
Particularly at those locations there are efforts for

3 composting. Domingo Morales [sic] and Compost Power
4 have set up the three bin system that is the most
5 sustainable way to deal with organics. We also are
6 very much looking forward to the Smart Bin pilot that
7 is happening in Ravenswood. We do think that
8 organics managed in that way will be beneficial to
9 multi-family buildings, and we advocated for
10 expanding that program on the housing plan. We also
11 have Inner City Green Team at Wagner Houses that does
12 door-to-door white glove pick up of recyclables. We
13 would love to see these resident-led initiatives
14 expanded across the portfolio. And we're also
15 looking at the infrastructure, recycling
16 infrastructure, across the portfolio. In our stand-
17 alone buildings, the recycling infrastructure is
18 right outside the buildings. In the campus-style
19 por-- in the campus-style buildings they are spread
20 out, one per three buildings. We are looking at
21 expanding that infrastructure. We starting with two
22 developments. Marcy and Morris [sp?] are the two
23 developments where we're going to be looking at new
24 ways to install recycling structure.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER OSSÉ: Thanks, Chair.

3 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Thank you. Before
4 our DOH rep leaves, I just wanted to get on the
5 record if you've had the opportunity to look at the
6 bills intro-- being heard today, Intro 414, 442, 449,
7 and 460, and if you have any feedback or comment on
8 them. We just want to know if you're supportive or
9 not and if not today, that's okay. We just wanted to
10 get you before you had to leave.

11 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SCHIFF: So, on Intro
12 442, that is a bill for the Buildings Department, and
13 we look forward to working with the Council and with
14 our colleagues at DOB on that bill, but we'll leave
15 it to them to take a position. On Intro 414, we
16 appreciate the intent of that bill. The Department,
17 as I noted before, is very committed to transparency.
18 We'd like to work with you on fine-tuning that, but
19 we are aligned on the intent there. The other two
20 bills I believe we only got this morning, so we're
21 looking forward to reviewing those and getting back
22 to you with a position.

23 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Okay, thank you. And
24 you're the person to follow-up with for that fine-
25 tuning?

3 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SCHIFF: You can
4 follow up with our Intergovernmental Office and they
5 will be in touch with me and we work together. Thank
6 you.

7 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Thank you so much.
8 We're going to pass it to Council Member Carmen De La
9 Rosa. Want to recognize Council Member Gale Brewer
10 who has joined us. And just for the members who
11 joined us, we're almost-- we're-- we'll just go to
12 you two if you have questions after, and then Alexa
13 and I will resume several pages of questions.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER DE LA ROSA: Thank you so
15 much to both of our Chairs for this great hearing. I
16 had a question specifically about the trash chutes.
17 I represent specifically two development in northern
18 Manhattan, Marble Hill House and Dyckman Houses, and
19 mostly for Marble Hill Houses we get some complaints
20 about the trash chutes sometimes being inoperable or
21 tenants not throwing the garbage through the trash
22 chute and then placing them in areas where then
23 rodents have access to them outside of the building.
24 I know that the Tenants Association which we work
25 closely with has started a few years back their own
little internal campaign trying to educate the

3 tenants about where the garbage goes rather than
4 placing it outside. But I was wondering if there was
5 any interventions that NYCHA could provide some
6 supports for that type of help. It's also because
7 some of the garbage, you know, doesn't fit through
8 the chute and there isn't spaces where folks can
9 properly recycle their garbage. So I wanted to know
10 what the plan was, and what can we do to support the
11 tenants who are taking matters into their own hands
12 and trying to educate their neighbors on some of
13 these issues?

14 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: I appreciate the
15 question. It's one that I tried to answer as I was
16 developing the Comprehensive Waste Management Plan
17 when I first came to NYCHA. It became very clear that
18 the chutes are very small. They were designed for
19 something totally different than they are being used
20 for today. When the buildings were built, the waste
21 was largely organic and it used to go into the
22 incinerator and disappear. I recognized that now that
23 the waste was tripled, since the buildings were
24 built, not all of it is organic, and typically the
25 13-gallon bag that you get at a supermarket doesn't
necessarily fit into the chute. And so we have

3 worked across 60 developments to install 262 enlarged
4 trash chutes on the ground floor, and those hopefully
5 will help with the disposal of larger bags. As I
6 mentioned before, we're also, as a part of our design
7 build initiative, looking at additional
8 infrastructure that would be closer to the buildings
9 and allow our residents to dispose of their trash
10 right outside the buildings. We're also partnering
11 with the Department of Sanitation on what we're
12 calling Clean Curbs for All, and looking at
13 mechanical pick-up of containerized waste that
14 typically would go into a large garbage bag on the
15 street. We don't want to see that for many reasons.
16 Many of you mentioned pests. So that is another
17 initiative where we think that placing these outside
18 the buildings will allow residents to not have to go
19 to the chute potentially and dispose of their waste
20 and recyclables and maybe organics right outside
21 their buildings in a containerized manner and allow
22 Department of Sanitation to pick it up in a
23 mechanical manner.

24 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Council Members

25 Brewer or Velázquez?

3 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Thank you very
4 much. This is the age old problem, 40 years, same
5 issue. I hope you can solve it. But one question
6 would be for places where there's no storage,
7 [inaudible] there's no storage, 580 [inaudible] no
8 storage, would you be using some of the chutes, or
9 the-- I'm sorry, the bins that the Mayor suggested
10 for commercial? Is there something we can do? 589,
11 every day, out on the street-- it's got a little
12 fence, etcetera. So, I'm just saying sometimes
13 there's no place to put the garbage to store it. How
14 are you going to handle that?

15 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Yeah,
16 absolutely. Thank you. So we'll look at--

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: [interposing] I
18 could give you every development in Manhattan and
19 what the problem is.

20 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Well, we're--
21 we are more than happy to hear every specific issue
22 and take a look at each of them individually. They
23 are-- you know, as we were saying earlier, every
24 development has an individual need, right? What the
25 Hostos [sic] needs is different than something that
Grant needs, right? And we're happy to look at all

3 those different things. I think something that we--
4 what we have been doing, and rather successfully, is
5 taking spots with low rates of containerization, and
6 identifying spots of greater need, and we're actually
7 moving refuse between the two sites, right? So,
8 somebody's not using their containers? We'll find a
9 use for them, right? We'll take garbage from
10 somebody-- somewhere else and move it to that. I,
11 like I said, as far as the specifics, we're happy to
12 look at each site in its own light and make those
13 changes. And as I've said to all the members of the
14 committee, I'm happy to walk through--

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: [interposing]
16 Those big bins that we went to see at Times Square,
17 you know those big bins that the Mayor's paying a ton
18 of money for, why can't NYCHA get them?

19 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: you were talking
20 about the Smart Bins?

21 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: Yeah, we're

22 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: No, you're not
23 talking about the Smart Bins.

24 GALE BREWER: No, I'm talking about the
25 one that's in the commercial district that's that the
BIDs are getting.

3 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: These are the
4 mechanical collections?

5 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: With the Times Square
6 Alliance one-- they're just--

7 GALE BREWER: [interposing] I would like
8 them to also go to NYCHA, and I can give you the
9 locations.

10 UNIDENTIFIED: Yeah, thank you, Council
11 Member. So, actually, what Vlada mentioned was the
12 pilot for Clean Curbs for All which we are working
13 very closely with NYCHA on and that's for mechanized
14 containerized collection. We're doing that pilot in--
15 - very much in collaboration with them, and we hope
16 to have those bins out on the street probably in the
17 next year or so. So that's something that we're
18 looking at. In parallel to a larger initiative around
19 containerization of our trash and not just looking
20 at, you know, one-off pilots, it think what we're
21 really focused on-- and this gets back to what we--
22 what y'all were talking about earlier is a real
23 uniformed citywide approach. So that's something
24 that the Department is beginning to look at and hopes
25 to move forward with. So not just for NYCHA, but for
private residential developments as well. And you

3 know, as part of the adopted budget, we were very
4 thankful that the Administration and the Council
5 added additional funding for those programs.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I'm never
7 satisfied, but thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Great thank you. I
9 wanted to go back to Council Member De La Rosa's line
10 of questioning around the chutes. We understand that
11 there was a survey conducted of the garbage chute's
12 doors, which can obviously pose danger to children.
13 And as we learned last year after the death of a
14 child in the Bronx, they pose a unique fire hazard as
15 well. Can you tell us the results of that survey?
16 How many chutes are in that survey, and essentially
17 what is the new progress and how many are in need of
18 repair?

19 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Yes, thank you
20 Council Member. Chair, apologies. Thank you, Chair.
21 So we inspected 20,497 total doors. There were nine
22 missing doors, 0.3 percent. There were 1,400 doors
23 requiring replacement. 1,464 doors, for the exact
24 figure, requiring replacement. 1,139 doors reported
25 having chute jams or compactors out of service, which
we corrected separately. 2,032 doors were reported

3 not operating as designed. They had obstructions or
4 dirty, and 2,881 doors were reported missing decals.
5 We're still in the process of finishing this up. Our
6 goal is to have it done the end of this month, early
7 next month. We're happy to share those findings when
8 fully complete. As far as any of the issues that I
9 just mentioned, needing replacement was 7.1 percent
10 of all of our doors, 5.6 percent were jams, 10.9
11 percent were operation issues, they had obstructions,
12 and 14.1 percent had missing decals. We'll get you
13 exact numbers on what has been repaired versus what's
14 still out there, but once those surveys are
15 completed, they're submitted to property management
16 to handle.

17 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Will those results
18 be included in the individual action plan items?

19 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: So, the chute--
20 right, it's kind of two different things, right. But
21 the chute doors, obviously-- the trash chutes are a
22 part of how we do collection at that development,
23 right. They're essential. But what we-- the survey
24 creates kind of almost its own action plan, right,
25 for each development to go back and follow up on
specifically chute doors. It's a separate item.

3 Obviously, you mentioned the safety issues, and
4 there's nothing we take more seriously than our
5 residents' safety.

6 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Yeah, I appreciate
7 that, and obviously it's its own action plan as well.
8 I think part of the challenge that we see across,
9 right, the issues are layered and compounding and
10 there's so many different action plans for one
11 development. You have to kind of have an enormous
12 amount of time and a special hieroglyphics ring to
13 figure out the status of your development based on 58
14 different reports that are written in very different
15 languages. It's very hard to get a comprehensive
16 understanding for each development, what is actually
17 happening on the ground and what are the time frames
18 for all the different-- and I-- obviously, you
19 represent one element of, you know, issues that
20 developments are facing. So I appreciate the-- and
21 don't expect you to answer the big meta issue.
22 However, I guess to the extent that these action
23 plans where residents are going to go and check, they
24 need to be comprehensive and full.

25 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Yeah, and
Chair, could not agree more. Like I said previously,

3 the safety of our residents and the ability for them
4 to, you know, remove refuse from their apartments is
5 a high priority for us. Trash chute doors, the
6 reason it's kind of-- and I said-- I say action plan,
7 it's not really a true action plan. It's actually an
8 immediate follow-up. There is no real-- there's no
9 like, hey, we'll get you an action plan and we'll get
10 you an answer in a couple of months. It's your trash
11 chute door is broken. There is a safety issue. That
12 requires an immediate follow up. So, the reason for
13 separating it out is to treat it as a safety issue.
14 We want it to be separate, solely focused. There's a
15 lot of action plans, and we don't want this
16 particular safety issue to get lost in the mix.
17 Something that we are doing and we're working on
18 finalizing as I mentioned in my testimony is a new
19 score card system. That will allow us to kind of
20 look at waste management as a whole. From--
21 everything from the stairwell to the waste yards to
22 container-- any containerization we can add in the
23 play yard to, you know,-- instead of throwing the
24 item on the ground, right, you can walk over to the
25 container if you're more likely to do so. So we're
working on that, and what we-- we want to include in

3 that is actually how we do collection. There was a
4 lot of concerns raised from members of the committees
5 and that is something that we have noticed, too, this
6 didn't fall on deaf ears. So we are working through
7 that. So in that one, personally mentioned is, you
8 know, as I've gone around to a couple of-- you know,
9 I've read the original report on like the Grant
10 Houses and some issues with Parkside Houses and
11 having had to go there for different reasons, I
12 always walk around-- if I go there for elevators, I
13 go look at waste, right? If I go there for waste, I
14 go look at pests, right? And I look at all the
15 groups under my purview and see what's going on
16 there. And I think what I've noticed is from the
17 report, it was a little-- it was interesting to me,
18 and I'm not-- it's not perfect, right? All rats are
19 bad. Any rat is a bad rat. But we are making some
20 progress and seeing, you know, the-- for example,
21 like rat houses, right? We put down wire lath and
22 there's no rats in that area any more, but there are
23 rats in other area. Talking to residents,
24 understanding hey, is it getting better? Are we
25 making a dent? Really truly understanding that. And
something that's very important to me as I walk

3 through developments. So, the score-- getting back
4 to your question, the score card is something that we
5 are looking forward to. Looking at waste management
6 as a whole. Not just is it dirty in an instant
7 moment. Not just a snapshot of time. It's how are
8 they doing collection? How are they throwing out?
9 How are they-- how does it look four hours later and
10 how does it look, you know, at the end of the week,
11 right? We want to look at all aspects of that, not
12 just we approve one piece of a process and move on.

13 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: I appreciate that.
14 In terms of the chutes themselves, is capital need--
15 is capital funding needed to repair the garbage
16 chutes, or is that considered expense funding?

17 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: I think it
18 depends if there's a larger project in the
19 development. In a comprehensive betterment it would
20 be considered capital. I think one-off chutes may be
21 considered expense, but it is, you know--I think it
22 is largely an operational function, not a capital
23 function, because if it's a one-off it would be an
24 expense response or operational response.

25 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Right. So, I
guess are you asking about how we're responding to

3 the trash chute inspections? That's through our
4 expense funding. If we're doing a larger project like
5 widening or something like that, we'll refer it to
6 capital. But to correct this, the numbers I just
7 gave you, that's coming out of the expense funding.

8 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Thank you. I'd love
9 to kind of take it back a little bit in terms of-- we
10 understand the-- as a result of the Federal Monitor
11 agreement, there-- you know, there is now a new
12 centralized waste management department and there was
13 reorganization done and much of the work that you
14 discussed is a result of that reorganization. Can
15 you just clarify for us how-- like, what the budget
16 of this Department is? What the budget is for
17 resident outreach of this department? And just talk
18 to us about the-- what it actually looks like and how
19 the residents have benefitted from this kind of
20 restructuring.

21 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Yeah, so I'll
22 start with just the high-level point before we get
23 into the budget and items like that. So, obviously,
24 pest control and waste management are often roped
25 together, but I think the purpose of this, what we
have seen is that having a department solely for--

3 working together under the same umbrella, but solely
4 focused on-- as opposed to like, oh, if I do this,
5 it's going to happen. No, we want to solve both
6 problems individually, but make sure that they solve
7 the total problem, right, which is reduction of rats
8 and insects, rats and infestation. That was kind of
9 the separation of that. And we can-- I can get into
10 numbers if you give me a moment to look at the exact
11 notes. I don't want to misquote. Again, I can follow
12 up with you on exact budget and headcount at a later
13 follow-up for the sake of time if that's alright.

14 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Is the Department
15 fully staffed at this point?

16 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Yeah. You
17 know, we have some vacancies, but we're working
18 diligently to back-fill them, as far as both waste
19 and pest control. So, waste management is almost
20 fully staffed. We're working on some ways to make
21 data more readily available with using existing
22 resources. Pest control, as we may or may not have
23 previously mentioned, is-- the Pest Control
24 Department supports the borough pest control
25 operations and provides oversight as well as some
operational support to those Department. So, there--

3 our-- looking at pest control as a whole, what we
4 have as a vacancy in the centralized pest control, we
5 can speak to that, of course. But we have vacancies
6 versus what they have in field operations offices,
7 property management operations offices represent the
8 totality of our pest control [inaudible].

9 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: In terms of-- we
10 understand the Federal Monitor uses the waste
11 management measurement app to measure waste
12 conditions at NYCHA. The monitor, we understand, is
13 working to transfer this system to NYCHA. Can you
14 talk to us a little bit about where NYCHA is in that
15 process?

16 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Yeah, so we're
17 working out some of the specifics of it actually.
18 Like I said, we want it to be a more objective rating
19 system as opposed to a snapshot in time. To expand on
20 what I had answered in your last question which had
21 nothing to do with the score card, but ratings are,
22 you know, essentially based on that one to five
23 rating. So since the scorecard started, we've seen
24 our rating go-- I mean, it's not monumental, but it
25 has gone from 2.6-- 2.61 to 3.27 overall as a
cumulative rating on an average. So, we are happy to

3 see. All improvement is good improvement. Obviously,
4 we'd like to see it go from a 2.6 to a five, but it's
5 only been a year. So we'll continue to work on that
6 as it improves. And like I said, we want it to have
7 a more wide-ranging look. We want to see how-- we
8 want to monitor how collection is going. We want to
9 look at just random time during the day, are the
10 groundskeepers making their rounds and caretakers
11 making their rounds, and is what we're doing kind of
12 working, right? SO, as we work to understand a
13 little bit more the-- sorry, I have-- I'm having a
14 loss of word here, but as we want to look at the
15 points that we want to rate more properly. We look
16 at the specific points. We'll follow up with a
17 progress report on that, but I think like I said, we
18 want to look at this more objectively, not just a
19 snapshot in time how does the development look.
20 Because it's an ongoing battle.

21 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Is there a timeline
22 that you're looking to work with in terms of, you
23 know, integrating that system wholly?

24 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Like a--
25 obviously, we would love to have it already in place,
but truly I don't have an exact answer for you on

3 timeline. I can look at where we're at in the process
4 and follow up with you to give you a more exact--

5 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Great. We love clear
6 timelines.

7 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Yes, I don't
8 want to-- I don't want to say tomorrow and it's
9 really four years from now.

10 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Well, I think we
11 need it yesterday, but--

12 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: [interposing]
13 Yeah.

14 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: we'd like to hear
15 back from you on a concrete timeframe.

16 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Yeah, I can take
17 over. Give you a little bit of break. Also, I want
18 to recognize Council Member Pierina Sanchez. Thank
19 you for joining us. Do you have any questions?
20 Okay, okay. So moving just kind of continuing with
21 general sanitation operations. Can you describe
22 NYCHA's plan to pilot the pneumatic waste collections
23 and which developments are currently receiving this
24 infrastructure?

25 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: I just wanted to
acknowledge Council Member Brewer. I think that the

3 first conversation about the pneumatic system
4 happened in your office. I am proud to say that Polo
5 Grounds and Rangel, we got news this morning from the
6 Comptroller it's been approved. Those are the two
7 developments where we're designing the pneumatic
8 system, and the reasons for why we chose it is
9 because it's a high-density site. It didn't have
10 interior compactors that were operational at the time
11 that we selected it. The caretakers were shoveling
12 waste.

13 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Which site is this?
14 I didn't hear.

15 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: Polo Grounds and
16 Rangel. And it was very clear that this location
17 needed significant waste intervention. I think many
18 of you have hopped in there would agree. The reason
19 we focused on Polo Grounds in particular because it's
20 a very high-density site, tall buildings. Over 30
21 caretakers were taking care of that location, and as
22 we were figuring out a pilot location, we recognized
23 that we didn't want to pursue a lot of permits,
24 cross-streets-- trenching costs would be high if it
25 was a larger campus-type. So Polo Grounds really fit
the bill.

3 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: So right now, this is
4 currently the only pilot?

5 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: Polo Grounds and
6 Rangel, those two locations.

7 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: And just for
8 clarification, this has started or you've gotten
9 approved for--

10 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: [interposing]
11 We've gotten approval from Comptroller this morning,
12 and the work will begin this summer.

13 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Okay, great. In the
14 Mayor's Housing Plan, the City has committed to pilot
15 mechanical waste collection for NYCHA developments
16 where pest-proof containers would be emptied into a
17 truck using an automatic hoist. I know we talked a
18 little bit about mechanization. What would be in
19 this summer's requests for proposals for this pilot?

20 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: WE are targeting
21 a location, likely in Brooklyn. It will be a cluster
22 of NYCHA developments where we would install these
23 containers, whether they're above ground or
24 underground, depends on what comes through in the
25 RFP. It will all-- all of these locations will be
curbside where we have curbside pick-up at the

3 moment, and the partnership is, again, a true
4 partnership with Department of Sanitation where they
5 will be running the trucks to pick up this waste in a
6 mechanized manner.

7 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Okay. Thanks for
8 elaborating on those criteria. How frequently-- I
9 mean, this is kind of a basic question. This isn't
10 necessarily one of ours. How frequently does garbage
11 collection occur at NYCHA now, and how frequently--
12 and how is frequency determined?

13 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Could you
14 repeat the question, I'm sorry.

15 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Oh, sorry.

16 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: I missed the
17 beginning of it, sorry. Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: How frequently does
19 garbage collection occur at NYCHA, and how do you
20 determine that frequency? What sort of metrics do
21 you use? Could you tell us what developments are on
22 your list that need more trash pick-ups?

23 SENIOR DIRECTOR FERGUSON: I want to make
24 sure I answer all your questions. Excuse me. There
25 are generally-- most developments picked up three
times. It's either two or three time collection.

3 They're generally-- I'm talking from the curbside
4 angle, that they generally would be collected the
5 same as the neighborhood, you know, of which they
6 reside. But majority of our developments, which is I
7 want to say about 74-75 percent right now are either
8 containerized or shared containerized, which I had
9 mentioned before, so that we basically had service
10 on-demand. Most places have scheduled. We know much
11 is generated at each location based on past history,
12 and we-- Sanitation is always 100 percent responsive.
13 Like, for example, if we had a problem at a
14 development. We had a problem with a development
15 that had two radio-active loads of garbage, and it
16 was-- I know it automatically peaks everybody's--
17 like, why did that happen? It's generally outpatient
18 chemotherapy that, you know, some does-- they don't
19 let us know about it and it ends up in the garbage,
20 and depending on whether the garbage was picked up by
21 one person, put it one container and then the other
22 container. Generally, it's too late by the time it
23 happens, because it was in one container and another
24 container. So, the bottom line is they needed
25 alternate service, because those two containers could
be basically quarantined for as much as 30 days. So

3 we had it delivered to another development. So,
4 that's a shared development. So Sanitation
5 immediately gave us enhanced service. The other
6 development, which was only getting three days a
7 week, and then they enhanced it to like five days a
8 week or, you know, whatever service we need they
9 generally provide. So the containerization is either
10 a schedule or could be a call-in. If they don't
11 generate as much, some of the smaller developments
12 don't generate as much material, so they'll just call
13 it in as necessary.

14 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Okay, thank you for
15 illuminating that with an example. Last year, NYCHA
16 was asked how much garbage in terms of tonnage was
17 collected in 2019, 2020, and 2021 and was unable to
18 provide that number. Are you prepared to provide
19 that number today? How does DSNY track waste tonnage
20 form NYCHA in its monthly and annual reporting?

21 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Yeah, thank
22 you. We are-- we will defer to our partners as DSNY
23 for the answer to that.

24 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER ANDERSON: Good
25 afternoon. So, 2019 and-- so just an important
caveat here. What we are able to track is the

3 tonnage that we collect from NYCHA via containerized
4 service because that's dedicated service just for
5 NYCHA. What we are not able to track is where NYCHA
6 development is on a curbside route, and that material
7 is collect alongside every other apartment building
8 or house that's on that route. So we're not able to
9 get into that level of detail, but as Al mentioned
10 earlier, you know, 75-ish percent of developments are
11 containerized in some way, shape or form, so this
12 does capture a significant share of that. So, 2019
13 containerized tonnage an average 11,773 tons per
14 month. 2020 that went up to 14,211. 2021 decreased
15 to 13,423 and 2022 through May which was the last
16 full month we have is 11,547. So, you know, saw
17 definitely a big spike in 2020. More folks staying
18 at home. More folks eating at home, learning at
19 home, working at home. That spike subsided a bit in
20 a 2021, and now is back toward what we see as sort of
21 typical levels from 2019.

22 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Okay. And while we
23 have you here, or up at the mic, we understand that
24 NYCHA pays DSNY for a portion of Sanitation services.
25 There is a bill before the state right now sponsored
by Assembly Member Epstein, A8209 that would

2 eliminate NYCHA paying fees to DSNY. Can you
3 elaborate on where exactly NYCHA is paying fees to
4 the City for garbage service, and what is the cost of
5 the contracts with private waste carting entities?
6 How many contracts are represented by the total cost?
7 And I can repeat those, you know, as we're talking.

8 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER ANDERSON: Sure. And
9 I can just speak very quickly to what Sanitation is
10 paid for--

11 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: [interposing] Right.

12 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER ANDERSON: and then
13 hand it over to NYCHA to talk--

14 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: [interposing]
15 Absolutely.

16 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER ANDERSON: the bigger
17 picture. So, Sanitation does pay us for some
18 supplemental curbside collection service. So that's
19 in, you know, in a neighborhood where there might
20 only be two times a week collection. They might pay
21 for a third or fourth day of collection. That's been
22 a longstanding practice between NYCHA and the City,
23 and over the last three years it's ranged somewhere
24 between 750 and 800,000, typically around 750,000 a

3 year, and then I'll pass it over to NYCHA to speak to
4 bulk collection.

5 SENIOR DIRECTOR FERGUSON: Yeah. And so
6 for the-- you're asking for the number specifically
7 for?

8 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Yes, so can you
9 elaborate on where exactly NYCHA's paying fees to the
10 City for garbage service? I think that the was the
11 answer with the third or fourth supplemental pick-up.

12 SENIOR DIRECTOR FERGUSON: Right.

13 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: But if there's
14 anything else you want to elaborate on, that's
15 welcome. And then what is the cost of the contracts
16 with private waste carting entities, and how many
17 contracts does that total cost represent?

18 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Yeah, so we can
19 get you the exact number of contracts and exact
20 expenditure for our carting contracts. The
21 additional cost that I have for both pick-ups is just
22 about-- just over seven million dollars.

23 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Just over seven--

24 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: [interposing]
25 Million dollars, \$7,182,717.

3 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Okay. That's for the
4 private carting contracts, right?

5 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: No, that's for-
6 - yeah. You know what? Let me clarify that. Let me
7 clarify that number.

8 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Yes, can you clarify?

9 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: It's like a big
10 number. I want to clarify it and get back to you.
11 We'll follow up. Thanks.

12 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Okay. So, just-- and
13 we'll send the question for follow-up, but the
14 question is about the private carting contracts, like
15 the total of cost of, you know, all of the contracts
16 and how many does that represent.

17 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Absolutely.
18 We'll get you an exact number and exact cost of our
19 hauling contracts.

20 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: I'm going to ask one
21 more question. Do you want to--

22 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: [interposing] add to
23 that.

24 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Yeah, go ahead.

25 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: That request is
specifically for the private carting--

2 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: [interposing]

3 Yes.

4 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Private carting
5 entities? Actually, we'd also like to know in terms
6 of contracts what are the cost in kind of every
7 center of private contracts. So, like in the pace--
8 pest-- pace-- in the pest and-- in the pest area, how
9 many contracts are-- have been accepted in terms of a
10 number and like total value? And I guess in every
11 other area we'd like to know in comparison how many
12 private contractors and vendors we're using in each
13 of these areas.

14 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Understood.

15 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Great.

16 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: We will get you
17 that exact information from our finance team.

18 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Great. I just have
19 one more question, and then I-- we can [inaudible]
20 for a minute. So, in 2019 NYCHA asked DSNY to
21 increase curbside collection to seven days a week.
22 DSNY was unwilling to provide those services due to
23 cost, which I understand was mostly attributed to
24 head count. Has any thought been given to how DSNY
25

3 and NYCHA can collaborate to both meet waste
4 management goals and NYCHA resident employment goals?

5 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER ANDERSON: Sure. So,
6 you know, I think if costs were not an option, I
7 think we would love to have more service in a lot of
8 places. Unfortunately, cost is a main constraint for
9 us, and so that's something that, you know, in
10 general we're constantly looking at whether it's the
11 litter basket service side on residential collection
12 sites, collections specifically for NYCHA, etcetera.
13 We don't have any residential properties anywhere in
14 New York City that have seven day a week collection,
15 and I think with the exception of maybe a very rare
16 instance it's probably not going to have seven day a
17 week collection at the curbside. But I think this is
18 something that we're obviously working very closely
19 with NYCHA on. We want to meet their needs, whether
20 that's through containerized collection and
21 supplementing a containerized collection. Whether
22 that's through helping them out with additional
23 curbside collection where and when that's necessary,
24 and I think that's really the goal of the Clean Curbs
25 for All pilot, and you know, we're very optimistic
that the pilot is going to be a rousing success, and

3 you know, we'll be back here a year from now talking
4 about how we can expand that pilot to, you know, a
5 much larger universe of development that are
6 currently curbside.

7 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Great. We'll kick it
8 over to Council Member Restler, and then we'll come
9 back for some recycling questions.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Thank you.
11 Firstly is, especially good to see my friend Deputy
12 Commissioner Greg Anderson. It's fun to get to chat
13 with you even in the awkwardness of a hearing. So,
14 first and foremost, I really want to thank the
15 Chairs, Chairs Nurse and Avilés, for their leadership
16 here. The rat conditions across New York City are
17 worse than ever, certainly in my memory. During the
18 pandemic things have just gotten absolutely awful,
19 and this issue needs a great deal of attention, but
20 in no place greater than our public housing
21 developments. And you know, we go into NYCHA
22 developments and the basement floors are dirt and
23 there is no concrete that's been in place, and they
24 are just rat-infested. I walk around and there is no
25 basic garbage infrastructure to handle 500, 700 unit
developments that is functioning. And even more

3 tragically there is just fundamental lacking of a
4 waste management plan per building in the
5 development. I walk around my NYCHA developments and
6 there's just garbage bags thrown wherever they may
7 be, and often times they're directly in front of
8 people's doors which leads to high concentrations of
9 rats directly where people are walking each and every
10 day where kids have to pass where seniors have to
11 pass. It is disgusting, and our tenants deserve so
12 much better. So I just want to start with that. How
13 do we implement a waste management rat mitigation
14 plan in each of the seven developments in my
15 district?

16 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Thank you,
17 Council Member. We obviously share in your concern.
18 That's why we're here. We agree that rat mitigation
19 is something that we need to do better on. That
20 being said, each development does an individualized
21 action plan. We've made those public. For specific
22 developments-- as I said to every member of this
23 committee, both committees, I'm happy to walk through
24 every-- each specific development, walk through the
25 individualized action plan and make improvements to
that plan. This is something that we've done across

3 the Authority. Like I said, we've made this
4 individual action plans transparent, and we are happy
5 to take on any individual or specific items as a one-
6 off, walking the property with you, sir.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: I would welcome
8 the follow-up and the meeting with my tenant
9 leadership. I can tell you I brought NYCHA leadership
10 to my developments. We've looked at the trash bags
11 randomly piled up in front of people's doors, and I
12 don't see changes. And so I appreciate that there may
13 be an action plan that's sitting on a shelf. If it's
14 not actually making a difference in people's lives,
15 then it's not worth very much. So, I'm angry about
16 this because the conditions that people are
17 experiencing are totally unacceptable and they're
18 avoidable. And if we put the trash bags in the right
19 places and containerize them properly and invested in
20 the basic infrastructure that any large-scale
21 development of multiple hundreds of units should have
22 compactors an alike, then we wouldn't have these
23 issues. They are imminently avoidable. And so I will
24 follow up with you, and I would appreciate the
25 opportunity for a briefing on each our developments
on how we make that happen.

3 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: Council Member

4 Restler, I just wanted to quickly say that as we
5 developed the comprehensive waste management plan,
6 the same issues that you're describing were exactly
7 top of mind in developing that plan, and we worked
8 really hard to advocate for over half a billion
9 dollars in investments that have never been made in
10 our buildings since they were built. And so that work
11 got approved. That funding got approved in March of
12 2021, last year. We are-- my team and myself are
13 working really, really hard to move those contracts
14 to procurements and rebuild that infrastructure. I do
15 think that in a year, hopefully when we're having
16 this hearing again, we'll see the differences where
17 we have made investments. My colleagues in
18 Operations will say to you that they've seen
19 reductions of about half of the issues that we're
20 discussing. So I do want to make sure that as we
21 walk away from this hearing you are aware of all the
22 work that we're doing.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: In the

24 Neighborhood Rat Reduction model, [inaudible]-- the
25 Neighborhood Rat Reduction-- [inaudible] tell me to
shut up, right? The Neighborhood Rat Reduction

3 Program was announced with quite a bit of fanfare
4 some five years ago. Is that still the model that
5 you all are employing, or have you moved on from that
6 and it's now whatever you announced the capital plan
7 for last year?

8 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Yeah, so as far
9 as the investment, we are still working through that.
10 It's at 101 developments. There's-- we've seen a 48
11 percent reduction in those development, across those
12 101 developments. As far as our approach to pest
13 control in general, we've moved into the idea of
14 integrated-- integrated pest management. I almost
15 said paste. I was confusing pace and west before.
16 Yeah, sorry. Thank you for that, for that moment.
17 So as we've adopted IPM, we have seen our pest
18 complaints reduced and our follow-ups from
19 exterminators increase, and that's kind of the goal.
20 Obviously, the reduction in complaints is a reduction
21 in hopefully what we-- the existence of pests. But
22 there are increased follow-ups from our exterminators
23 across the Authority.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Okay. And at
25 those 101 developments where you made those major

2 investments, have we seen a significant reduction in
3 the complaints around rats? Is that the--

4 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: [interposing] 48
5 percent.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: the 48 percent
7 reduction?

8 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Yes.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: At those 101
10 developments in particular?

11 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Yes.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: And is that--
13 and that model is being expanded based on the
14 investments that were announced in 2021?

15 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: So, right.
16 It's actually-- right, as far as-- you're speaking
17 about as far as the capital program, or?

18 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Right, it was
19 the capital program, and there was a variety of
20 investments that were made that NYCHA committed to as
21 a part of [inaudible].

22 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: Precisely. So
23 we are designing new waste yards that have better
24 visual screenings. They are sized for the facilities
25 and the amount of waste that's coming in. They have

3 state-of-the-art equipment. That will make a
4 difference. We're also replacing the interior
5 compactors. That's all part of the City capital
6 action plan, over half a billion dollars that got
7 approved in capital work. And so the idea, as you
8 described, those assets have never been replaced.
9 They're all past their useful life. And so once
10 those replacements happen, we do believe in tandem
11 with the behavioral change campaign, which we've also
12 developed, a Campaign for Clean NYCHA. It's really
13 hard to ask residents to do their part when things
14 are not containerized and disorganized, but in tandem
15 with the capital investments that we've been able to
16 thankful advocate for and receive, we'll start to see
17 those differences.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: I appreciate the
19 time. I just would say NYCHA is where we should be
20 innovating and investing in future innovative
21 solutions on waste management to mitigate against
22 pest issues. And so if there's any place where we
23 should be giving that containerization and how to
24 actually get trash bags off our streets and into
25 protected areas and spaces is at NYCHA. And so I
really hope this could be an area where the

3 Department of Sanitation and Housing Authority work
4 in partnership to actually push for real solutions,
5 because there's a space, right? There's ample space.
6 There's density. It's where we should be doing this
7 and prioritizing it. I really hope you'll take that
8 seriously. Thank you.

9 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: We absolutely
10 agree. That is the reason-- As soon as Commissioner
11 Tish became available, we had a conversation with
12 her. She also agrees. She's focused on this work.
13 She's told us that, and we do also believe that our
14 scale will allow us to signal to the market. You
15 know, we can do this work here at NYCHA, but also
16 expand it to other places in New York City.

17 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Thank you. We're
18 going to hear from Council Member Sanchez.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Thank you so
20 much Chairs, and thank you so much for holding this
21 hearing. So, hello, good afternoon. I've been
22 listening in the live stream. And so I wanted to
23 follow up I think on something that Council Member
24 Nurse started to talk about earlier, which is
25 recycling. I know of developments that don't have
recycling centers, that aren't able to recycle.

3 Believe my mom's building where she lives does not
4 have a recycling center, and so they can't. So my
5 first question is, what percentage of NYCHA
6 developments have recycling centers, and what are the
7 options that residents have where there are not-- no
8 recycling centers?

9 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: Thank you for
10 that question, and I would love to find out which
11 developments don't have recycling center. Something
12 must have happened, because in 2015/2016 all NYCHA
13 developments received recycling infrastructure. For
14 standalone buildings there should be two recycling
15 bins right outside. For campus-style properties we
16 have bins for three buildings. We recognize it's not
17 always convenient to walk a distance. I know that in
18 Pomnoc [sic] we actually measured. It's about 700
19 feet to walk to a bin. We're looking at other
20 solutions. At Morsi and Morris [sp?] we are going to
21 be piloting different bins that will allow closer to
22 the building disposal of both recyclables and
23 organics. So, as we agree on sort of standardized
24 infrastructures through those two, we will begin
25 advocacy for more recycling infrastructure.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Thank you.

3 Thank you for that clarification. It might be the
4 distance that I hear mostly about it. So what
5 percentage of NYCHA residents do recycle? Do you
6 have any way of estimating that?

7 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: I will ask my
8 colleagues at the Department of Sanitation to--

9 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER ANDERSON: that's
10 okay. We're going to stay on recycling for a while,
11 I think she can take a breather. So, the question
12 was, sorry, what percentage of NYCHA residents
13 regularly recycle?

14 COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Recycling right
15 now.

16 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER ANDERSON: So, that's
17 something-- I mean, obviously, and I'm happy to have
18 a lot of weigh-in more about the resident engagement
19 that NYCHA does. What we look at when we're looking
20 at recycling is typically diversion rate, and you
21 know, like I mentioned earlier, very difficult to
22 measure diversion rate at a NYCHA, because the
23 recyclables are collected on the same truck as every
24 other recyclable in the district. So it's collected
25 once a week on the same frequency, the same route.

3 So it's difficult for us to measure diversion when we
4 have looked at it in the past and we haven't done an
5 assessment in several years. It's been relatively
6 low. I think we, you know, were very aware of the
7 fact that we have a lot more work to do, and one of
8 the things that we've worked very closely with NYCHA
9 on, and whether that's through the Inner-City Green
10 Team or Green City Forest or some of the other
11 program is really working with NYCHA residents to
12 understand what the barriers are to recycling. The
13 distance, the infrastructure, that's a huge barrier.
14 That's the biggest barrier we see in any kind of
15 housing. The harder it is to do something, the less
16 likely you are to do it. So that's, you know,
17 something that we have to solve that infrastructure
18 problem on one side as well as the resident
19 engagement and education on the other side. So it's
20 not something we have a great picture of, but there's
21 certainly more work to do.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Do you have a
22 sort of citywide NYCHA diversion rate or any sort of
23 metric? What is low?

24 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER ANDERSON: So, the
25 last time we did an assessment, and it wasn't-- it

3 wasn't a, you know, statistically valid sample like
4 the waste characterization studies we do. The last
5 time we did an assessment it was less than two
6 percent, compared to a curbside diversion rate of
7 around 17 percent for the City as a whole. So,
8 obviously, you know, 10 percent of the rate that we
9 see citywide.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Are there any
11 specific goals that NYCHA has set around diversion
12 rates? What-- how have you created any incentive
13 programs? What is being done at this point to
14 increase recycling?

15 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: No, I appreciate
16 that question and it's one that I think about
17 literally every day and night. We in the
18 sustainability agenda and in general are committed to
19 Net Zero vision. I think that the City has the same
20 vision as NYCHA residents should. We are refocusing.
21 I think earlier, you may have not been here, but I
22 talked about eh fact that we really need to address
23 the baseline and the infrastructure. My team is
24 refocusing on organics and recycling. We are
25 extremely interested in the resident-led initiatives.
So, the work that's being done by Dominga Morales

3 [sp?] and the work that's being done by Inner-City
4 Green Team, we'd love to continue to fund and
5 increase those programs. Obviously, the
6 infrastructure needs to be in place. Some of that is
7 going to happen through the newly redesigned waste
8 yards. Some of it is going to happen in the
9 pneumatic system. Some of it is going to happen in
10 the Clean Curbs for All work that we're undertaking.
11 And I think that as we are standing up this work, we
12 are thinking about the fact that we need data points.
13 I think that in the PG-- Clean Curbs for All pilot
14 will be able to measure, right? Because there will
15 be dedicated NYCHA containers and vehicles. We do
16 have a building management system in some of our
17 buildings and we're starting to think about how to
18 put sensors on some of the infrastructure, and I
19 think through the pneumatic collection we'll be able
20 to see what flows through. So I think that as we are
21 recapitalizing our assets, we do need to think about
22 data and data points. And we're actively doing that.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Thank you so
24 much, and happy third hour of your hearing. Thank
25 you, Chairs.

3 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Thank you. The waste
4 hearings go long. I don't know. People love this
5 stuff, so. We spent most of it talking about rats,
6 so really excited we got into the recycling. I do
7 have just to clarify-- I do have a couple of
8 clarifying questions to your line of questioning,
9 Council Member Sanchez. So the diversion rate for
10 recycling NYCHA-wide is roughly two percent, and then
11 there was a question about do you have target
12 diversion rates, and I didn't hear if there was a
13 percentage of a target diversion rate by a certain
14 date.

15 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER ANDERSON: So, our--
16 at Sanitation, at least, our target is just to
17 increase it. We would love to get NYCHA up to the
18 citywide average diversion rate. We'd love to get,
19 you know, far beyond that. We know from our last
20 waste characterization study that I think around-- it
21 was in front of me-- but 32-ish percent of waste is
22 organics and another 33-ish percent, and this is just
23 n NYCHA, is recyclable. So that's, you know, the
24 upward bounds of what we could achieve on a curbside
25 basis with those two programs if we had them, you
know, fully accessible, fully engaged with the

3 tenant-- or the resident population would be around
4 65 percent. So we'd love to get to something like
5 that. Obviously, the citywide diversion rate right
6 now, 17 percent curbside, 20.8 percent when you
7 include non-curbside programs. So we have a lot of
8 work to do, and we talked about this last week with
9 Council Member Tish. A lot of work to do on non-
10 NYCHA, in NYCHA across the board in terms of
11 educating and engaging the population. So, you know,
12 I don't-- I don't think we have a specific rate that
13 we'd like to target. Obviously, the goal is zero
14 waste. Any movement in that direction is productive
15 at this point.

16 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: And just before I
17 lose it in my brain, a question that I have, is the--
18 is the study of NYCHA's waste going to be included or
19 has it been historically included in the waste
20 characterization study, the last one and the one
21 coming up? Is that going to be a specific break-away
22 item?

23 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER ANDERSON: So, I know
24 it was included in the 2017 study, and I think that
25 was the first time in a while at least that NYCHA
specifically was broken out. We are planning to do a

3 larger multi-family study in the upcoming waste
4 characterization study which we will start this
5 summer. I don't know right now if there's a NYCHA-
6 specific break-out there, or if we're just looking at
7 multi-family properties in general, really trying to
8 focus our efforts on how do we improve diversion,
9 what kinds of materials can we capture from people
10 who live in apartments, specifically, compared to
11 single-family or small multi-family homes.

12 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Great. And just
13 while we're here on recycling, how many recycling
14 centers in NYCHA are indoors versus outdoors?

15 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: Council Member,
16 they're all outdoors.

17 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: All outdoors, okay.
18 It was on here. Okay, so-- and then in terms of the
19 ability to track the rates, it still was unclear to
20 me how you all are tracking the recycling diversion
21 rates.

22 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Yeah, so, I
23 mean, to our partners in Sanitation's point,
24 obviously we need to do a little more of-- you know,
25 we're part of the neighborhood, right, which we're
happy to be. But we've done some work on some

3 specific programs where we can talk about specific
4 items that-- and as far as gross tonnage that we've
5 been working on. So, cardboard, right? Reducing
6 cardboard through our cardboard compacting and
7 cardboard bailing equipment and our mattress
8 recycling program. We can cite some specific tonnage
9 on that, and we hope to do some more, you know,
10 weighing individual bags in the program. If you'd
11 like, I can have Al-- Al's prepping the kind of run-
12 down of how we-- of our different recycling programs
13 and how that translates into diversion.

13 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Okay. Last two
14 questions on this. In terms of organic/recycling or
15 any of the zero waste efforts, you know, you've
16 mentioned compost power. There was mention of Inner
17 City Green Team. Great projects, obviously, big
18 supporter of those. I am a big supporter of those,
19 but I have questions in terms of how are you
20 evaluating these programs. Do you plan on doing
21 regular evaluations or some kind of annual reporting
22 on how it's going, how the success on diversion rates
23 are increasing or decreasing? And then if you could
24 explain a little bit more. My understanding is like
25 compost power, you know, does the-- does composting

3 versus for example collections, and maybe it's taken
4 away but maybe there is some variation there. So if
5 you could just break down a little bit just because
6 obviously that's not going to be sustainable in the
7 long-run to have, you know, if we're getting higher
8 rates to have food waste be processed there. And so
9 just curious to know, one, how you're evaluating the
10 success of these program and what frequency you're
11 doing that, and then also the plan for, as hopefully
12 we succeed in this, overflow and more like--
13 obviously more sustainable plan for that?

14 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: Yeah, those are
15 great questions. We do publish an update to the
16 sustainability agenda every year on the first week,
17 and in those updates we do an evaluation of our
18 programs. So, please look forward to the
19 evaluations. We have cited the tonnages of organics
20 that have been picked up over the years from the
21 composting power of work. Inner City Green Team I
22 relatively new, so we will evaluate and report those
23 findings in the annual updates, and I think that we
24 are, you know, looking a little bit to the City to
25 see what the Smart Bin initiative is going to yield.
Obviously, multi-family recycling and organic

3 solutions are difficult. They're difficult for our
4 staff. So we are, you know, doing our own work, and
5 Clean Curbs for All is one of those examples, right?
6 The idea there is that we create a waste stream
7 separation for the waste, for organics and
8 recyclables that's easy and accessible to the
9 residents. For the campus locations, again, we'll
10 pilot the two locations and make sure that the
11 infrastructure is standardized, and we'll be
12 leveraging the Campaign for Clean NYCHA and
13 educational materials that come from DSNY to message
14 the sort separation of recyclables and organics.

15 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Okay, great. And my
16 last two questions, and then I'll be quiet on
17 recycling organics. One, do you have any recycling
18 centers in senior-only buildings?

19 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: Yes, we do. We
20 have recycling stations at every senior building.

21 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Oh, amazing. And
22 lastly, seven developments were slated to have yard
23 waste construction complete by December 31st, 2022.
24 Are those projects on-track.

25 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: Sorry, yard
waste?

2 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Yes.

3 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: Oh, waste yards.

4 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: At waste yard
5 construction.

6 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: They are-- they
7 are in the process of approval. We're moving through
8 the procurement process, and we are a little bit
9 delayed, but I think that as soon as we're able to
10 move through the procurement and approval processes
11 we'll be able to start.

12 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: And you think you'll
13 be able to be on track for then, achieving for the
14 end of the year?

15 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: Yep.

16 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Okay, thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Thank you so much
18 for bearing with us. We realize our questions are a
19 bit meander-y [sic], but we appreciate your patience.
20 I'd like to talk a little bit about resident outreach
21 and support, and obviously, again, they've been
22 integrated into many of the comments here around the
23 importance of engaging residents around waste
24 management and pest mitigation. What are some of the

25

3 educational efforts that are being implemented right
4 now, and what is the budget for those efforts?

5 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: So, I'll repeat
6 again the Campaign for Clean NYCHA. I think that's
7 our signature behavioral change campaign at the
8 moment that we completed at five developments and
9 we're evaluating the results. The idea is to scale
10 it across the developments. So, that is one effort.
11 We also engage on the capital projects. We do
12 extensive stakeholder engagement on the waste yards
13 in particular, and work with the residents on making
14 sure that they understand the infrastructure that's
15 coming that way, understand that there will be
16 improvements. There'll be construction work. So
17 those are the efforts that I'll talk about, and maybe
18 I'll pass it on to Josie and Al to talk about any of
19 the other work that's happening in their space.

20 SENIOR DIRECTOR BARTLETT: From the pest
21 side, we are engaging the residents every time we're
22 in their apartments. We've put together a check list
23 of things that residents can do to partner with us to
24 help make sure their home is pest-free. We call it
25 the pest-free checklist. Simple things like putting
lids on dog food when you go to bed, and making sure

3 like food is covered in general, things like that.

4 And we use it as a kind of a jump-off point for the
5 exterminators. They give the flier to the resident.

6 Hey, I'm here for your extermination appointing.

7 We're doing things differently. We'll be using the

8 HEPA vacuum to vacuum up roach shells. We are

9 looking for holes. We'll be caulking around your

10 cabinet. This is how to prepare for us next time. If

11 we see pests an automatic follow-up, as Keith said,

12 will be created. So that's how we're trying to

13 educate residents kind of on that one-on-one aspect.

14 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: So you mentioned--

15 you mentioned that Clean NYCHA was piloted in five

16 developments, is that correct? And you also engage

17 on education when they're capital projects, which

18 there are just a few, where NYCHA has 335

19 developments. Is there any efforts to do any

20 consistent systematic resident engagement either

21 through the TA's or not just based on, you know,

22 pilot projects?

23 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: I just want to

24 make sure it's understood that 194 developments will

25 be getting capital improvements, so that is-- will be

touching many developments across the portfolio. We

3 just started in a few, as you mentioned, seven design
4 build projects at the moment, but this will be
5 scaling. So I think that would be an opportunity,
6 and that's the reason we focused on creating the
7 Campaign for Clean NYCHA so that we have an active
8 campaign that runs in parallel with the capital
9 investments that are being made. I'll also mention
10 that the campaign is developed in the five HUD
11 languages. It's English, Spanish, Russian, simplified
12 Chinese, and Traditional Chinese. So, you know, we
13 are making sure that we're doing communication in all
14 the languages that are available, and when we scale
15 we would target, you know-- if there are additional
16 languages that need to be used for translation, we
17 would be doing that.

18 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: You read my mind.
19 Thank you for--

20 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: [interposing]
21 And to clarify your earlier question, the contract
22 for the Campaign is roughly \$240,000 dollars, but it
23 only creates the materials and the roll-- and allows
24 us to create the roll-out plan. As we scale this
25 roll-out up which we will be doing on completion of
the pilot, we'll rely on our internal resources,

3 which is our resident Engagement Department and the
4 Department of Communications to enhance those
5 materials and get the message out.

6 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: I hate to do this,
7 but could you repeat that one more time. I had a hard
8 time hearing all of it.

9 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Better?
10 Alright. So, the campaign contract is roughly
11 \$240,000. It only creates the materials, the tests,
12 and the roll-out plan. As we scale this roll-out up
13 on completion of the pilot, we'll rely on our
14 internal resources such as our Resident Engagement
15 Department and our Department of Communications to,
16 you know, to scale it up for us.

17 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: And this is
18 specifically for the--

19 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: [interposing]
20 Campaign for Clean NYCHA.

21 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Campaign for Clean
22 NYCHA, thank you.

23 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Gotcha [sic].

24 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Wanted to follow up
25 on something you mentioned earlier in terms of the
pest management and the pesticides that are used.

3 You mentioned that residents can go to the website
4 and actually look at stuff I'm sure is
5 incomprehensible because it's probably in scientific
6 language. Is-- are there opportunities for residents
7 who are not connected to the web and would not be
8 oriented that way that they can get access to
9 information that they could understand?

10 SENIOR DIRECTOR BARTLETT: The
11 straightforward, but yeah, if a resident ever has any
12 questions about what's being used in their apartment,
13 they should just ask the pest professional. They
14 have the label on them, and they're a professional
15 and they can speak to them in a way that they can ask
16 any question.

17 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Thank you, and I
18 think the other element to that is language
19 accessibility. So I know you can't guarantee that
20 any vendor or exterminator would come in with five
21 languages, but that certainly is a point of concern
22 that residents have, you know, live access to
23 understanding what is happening in their units.

24 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Chair, just to
25 elaborate on what Josie's saying, part of our
training program also includes our exterminators and

3 our exterminator vendors, right? We want to make
4 sure that they're aware of the level of engagement
5 that we're expecting prior to going out to the field.

6 SENIOR DIRECTOR BARTLETT: And the pest-
7 free flyer that I was saying that the exterminators
8 give out is also translated into the different
9 languages, and you can take a look at it. It's on
10 our website.

11 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Great. We will
12 definitely look at it. In terms of-- is NYCHA
13 actively conducting outreach to inform residents of
14 job opportunities that occur as a result of the waste
15 management efforts and initiatives?

16 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: So, we've used
17 obviously some of the city clean-up as a pathway.
18 We've hired some seasonals out of that initiative
19 into our ranks. We're happy to follow up on exactly
20 that number, what was NYCHA versus non-NYCHA
21 residents. Additionally, I'm going to pass it to
22 Josie to give the exact answer to this, but we have
23 been able to get some residents into the exterminator
24 ranks as well. She'll kind of go through that as the
25 caretaker to the--

3 SENIOR DIRECTOR BARTLETT: Yeah, we have
4 the resident economic development team that is always
5 doing outreach to NYCHA residents about different
6 opportunities, and they have this program that's like
7 the Resident Academy. There's different tracks.
8 There's a caretaker track. I believe there's a
9 maintenance track. And last year and the year before
10 there was an exterminator track and we were able--
11 they did a month of training on extermination. Then
12 they had to take the DAC7A exam. When they passed we
13 were able to hire them on as pest control aids. We
14 have hired about 40 people in the last couple of
15 years through this program. It's a program that we've
16 done before, and it's exciting because a few of the
17 supervisors, the exterminators that are currently
18 supervisors came on through this program about seven
19 years ago. I can think of three people. So it's a
20 nice opportunity to get into a skilled trade.

21 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Did you say 40
22 people over several years? Do you know--

23 SENIOR DIRECTOR BARTLETT: [interposing]
24 40 the last two years. Let's see. In 2020-- I'm going
25 to have to get you the exact numbers, but it was

3 about 18 or so last year and then the additional the
4 year before.

5 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Got it. And how are
6 those opportunities made available to residents? How
7 do they find out about these opportunities?

8 SENIOR DIRECTOR BARTLETT: So the Reese
9 [sic] Department does a lot of outreach to residents,
10 but I'll have to get back to you exactly how they do
11 the flyering [sic] and outreach and all of that.

12 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Have you been able
13 to track retaining or folks staying with these jobs
14 longer term?

15 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: So, you know,
16 we'd have to get back to you on exactly how long
17 folks stay, but I think the nice thing about the
18 caretaker through the waste management program and
19 the caretaker into the pest control program is that
20 these are actually-- you know, these are skilled
21 trades. They become-- in the pest control area,
22 anyway, a skilled trade union job. So hopefully
23 they're staying with us forever, but we don't have
24 the answer to that currently. We'll get that back to
25 you.

3 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Thank you. In terms
4 of-- how are residents informed about proper
5 collection sites in the developments?

6 SENIOR DIRECTOR FERGUSON: sorry, excuse
7 me. They're posted, waste asset maps, that tell, you
8 know, where everything, where all the garbage
9 containers are, where the recycling containers are.

10 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: And where would you
11 find those, posted where? In the lobbies?

12 SENIOR DIRECTOR FERGUSON: They should be
13 in the lobby. They should be prominently displayed
14 in any location, you know, even above that. If
15 there's any concerns, specific concerns you have,
16 please let me know.

17 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Oh great, I'd love
18 to find one in Red Hook. I mean, in most lobbies you
19 go into you have like kind of about 20 different like
20 long lists, tomes [sic] of rules and regulations in
21 very small font and ways that no one would ever read.
22 I wonder if that is among them.

23 SENIOR DIRECTOR FERGUSON: I-- just
24 something that we had, you know, including in the
25 technological upgrade, things that we have looked at
and considered. I'm not saying this is, again,-- we

3 have-- like at Polo Grounds we have a digital sign
4 board. I don't know if you're familiar, if you've
5 ever seen it, but again, instead of having all the
6 flyers and things that replace-- it's something
7 that's more current, you know. It's something where
8 it's dynamic. It could be changed, and you can
9 actually have today's weather so people look at it,
10 you know, to like, you know, kind of draw their
11 attention to it. So I know we had that as one of our
12 pilots and one of our considerations, but to-- I
13 agree with your assessment of-- again, I've been to
14 Red Hook East and West, you know, several times in
15 the last six months, and the amount of capital work
16 being done, the Sandy work, is exponential compared
17 to most, and I do-- again, I was there recently to
18 try to clean up as much as we can, because there's so
19 many projects going on simultaneously, as you know.
20 To complete the work-- they want to complete the work
21 so we can move on. Things that we have done there is
22 we've added specifically at Red Hook, we've added--
23 we've given more bulk tickets. We've doubled the
24 number of bulk tickets there because of the amount of
25 waste had grown exponentially. Sanitation has given
us additional service on [inaudible] compactors of

3 which they're-- they're actually one of the newer
4 ones, you know, the 2017, those compactors. But they
5 do get a lot of use. There is a lot of garbage
6 flowing through Red Hook. And again, the use of--
7 I'm just, off the top of my head, there is like
8 compactor chutes about 50 percent and then 50 percent
9 on the drop-off where people drop the material off.
10 What happens also, as capital work changes, right, as
11 the ground is-- one ground is given up and another
12 one is reclaimed, and it goes in and moves around.
13 It creates-- I agree with you. It's confusing, and I
14 definitely want to find a better way of getting that
15 done there, specifically for that location. You know,
16 it's not just general business as usual, here's your
17 development. It's ever-changing. It's so dynamic,
18 Red Hook, that the locat-- you could travel through
19 there three weeks ago and you can't today. Like, it's
20 because something is moved around. We've had to move
21 compactors, and actually we're going to move them
22 again.

22 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Yep.

23 SENIOR DIRECTOR FERGUSON: So, again, I--

24 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Can I ask, in terms
25 of-- I know other developments face this,

3 scaffolding. What we have seen is scaffolding,
4 particularly in Red Hook, but in other developments,
5 that is a trash collection item, and contractors not
6 cleaning up the trash that is collected on these
7 scaffolds. Is that something that you all have a
8 plan to address, or is there any enforcement around
9 that?

10 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Yes.

11 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: I'll just
12 quickly say that those scaffolds are required per
13 Local Law 11, a lot of times-- can you hear me now
14 better? I'm sorry.

15 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Yeah. I'm looking
16 down because I can't hear, so I'm trying to--

17 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: [interposing]
18 Yeah, no, and I'm-- I can't-- I don't know if my
19 voice is traveling, but I'll try again. So those
20 scaffolds are often required for Local Law 11 work.
21 A lot of times they're there almost permanently, and
22 the contractors are required to clean around the
23 scaffolding above-- I think that the COVID-19
24 pandemic has changed things. There may not have been
25 as much activity or construction on some of those
sits, and they may not have been cleaning as

3 frequently, but I believe that has been remedied. It
4 has come to our attention. We are working with the
5 contractors and really pushing them to do their part
6 they're required to do.

7 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Can I follow up on
8 that one?

9 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Yeah.

10 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Just because, you
11 know, before the pandemic there might be scaffolds up
12 for, you know, two years and nobody's doing any work.
13 So when people are throwing stuff out the window,
14 who's in charge of cleaning that up, and at what
15 frequency? Is it just based-- is it just complaint-
16 driven, you know, if they're just up-- if the
17 scaffolds are up for years and no works happening,
18 it's going to attract issues, so.

19 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Yeah, I mean,
20 and that's-- again, we agree with that as an issue,
21 and our monitor reports and our scorecard reports
22 include scaffold cleanliness. So while that gets
23 processed through waste management and property
24 management, we work with our partners in capital
25 projects to follow up with the contractors and clean
it up. There is a scaffolding contractor who is

3 responsible for-- under the JCE [sic] cleaning that
4 stuff up. We take that seriously. So as soon as
5 it's presented, we pass it to the appropriate
6 contractor for clean-up.

7 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Great. I'll just
8 point out that the-- however the contractor is in Red
9 Hook, all of those scaffolds are filled with trash,
10 filled. We can talk about it more specifically later.

11 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Yes. Follow up.

12 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: I think your
13 colleague wanted to mention something.

14 SENIOR DIRECTOR FERGUSON: With-- and as
15 far as just with all the contractors, especially the
16 Sandy sites, you know, that it's -- it seems like
17 it's going-- it goes on and on. That we want to get
18 relief, so we've had many conversations with capital
19 in even recent weeks about that. Just also making
20 sure that there is access, you know, that you need
21 access into the fence. Sometimes fences are put up
22 and you want to clean it, and you can't find the
23 spot. You know, you can't find the location, so they--
24 - you know, so these are things that were brought up.
25 We are actually-- we're responsible for everything.
That's our site. This is our responsibility. I just

3 want to say that outright. I accept full
4 responsibility for everything. On the inside of the
5 fence is supposed to be the contractors of which we
6 have to hold them accountable, and the outside is--
7 everything is ours. I just wanted to comment on
8 that.

9 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: I appreciate that,
10 and I think we'd love to look more about what
11 enforcement with the contractors are, because I think
12 residents have complained and complained, in the
13 circumstance of even Red Hook itself, and we see no
14 relief in terms of the contractors. Not only fixing--
15 - you know, doing their own debris, but we see
16 they're very comfortable. They get enough space that
17 they need, and yet, there's not a whole lot of relief
18 on the outside and other ways. So we can certainly
19 follow up more specifically on the contractor there.

20 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: And we're happy
21 to follow up on the specific of these--

22 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: [interposing] Yeah.

23 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Red Hook East
24 and West with you.

25 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Okay, great. I
just-- in terms of-- I'm just going to pivot really

3 quickly to-- actually, no. in terms of the Green
4 City-- the City Green Team that we've talked a lot
5 about, that seems to be a model people are very
6 excited about, and there's a lot of talk about how
7 important it is for resident engagement. What-- how
8 much is NYCHA prepared to support the expansion of
9 this pilot, and I guess how much does it cost right
10 now?

11 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: I'd have to get
12 you the exact number, while-- hopefully while we're
13 speaking. It's in a couple of hundredth K range.
14 For the single development we would love to expand
15 it, but currently this work is unfunded. I think
16 that we want to evaluate and make sure that it is
17 successful. As Chair Nurse was asking me earlier,
18 and I think that once we're-- see the results which I
19 hope it's a huge success. I think it is, it's going
20 to be. We would start advocating for dollars
21 specific to this program.

22 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Appreciate that. And
23 to do the quick pivot, and then I want to call on
24 Council Member Brewer. In terms of the capital-- in
25 terms of capital, what we see in this current budget
is the Mayor allocated its full capital commitment to

3 RAD and PACT with no capital for other work in other
4 development that are not slated for privatization.

5 How does that impact waste management programs that
6 need to be implemented in all the other developments?

7 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Yeah, so I
8 think we talked a little bit about RAD and PACT
9 previously, but they are-- the equity between the two
10 is the same, right? We support that on an op-- from
11 the support services, operation's piece and the
12 sustainability piece of NYCHA. We support those
13 residents and we support any projects going on in
14 those developments.

15 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: I guess maybe more
16 specifically what I'm asking is, with no new City
17 dollars allocated for capital for NYCHA, how does
18 that impact the waste management practices and pest
19 control that needs to get done.

20 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: You're asking
21 specifically in the PACT from MOYA?

22 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Well, all the money
23 that was dedicated in this budget was specifically
24 allocated to RAD and PACT developments. I'm asking
25 if the rest of the development have no capital-- new

3 capital allocation, how does that impact the waste
4 management plans and goals that you set forward?

5 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: So we are,
6 again, hyper-focused on the City Capital Action Plan
7 implementation that's over half a billion dollar
8 investments in our portfolio. In the cases where the
9 investments overlap with transitions to PACT, it will
10 depend on timing, right? So, if we are able to
11 perform the work ahead of the transition, it will
12 absolutely happen. If we're not able to, then it--
13 you know, we assume that the developer will pick up
14 the cost of improving the buildings.

15 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: I'm going to piggy--
16 and then it's my last question for the day. Sorry,
17 Council Member.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I think we could
19 all ask questions. I can give you millions of them,
20 but we'll see. I think we have to go development by
21 development, like you said, and then figure it out.
22 Bed bugs, I'm the bed bug queen. My question is
23 exactly how are you dealing with infestations? Do
24 you have numbers? Rats are awful. Bed bugs are
25 awful. Are they going up? Are they going down? Are
you doing top, below, both sides? And did you do-- I

3 was trying, but I didn't have enough funding as
4 Borough President to get dogs. You need two dogs.
5 Have you done anything about trying to buy two dogs?

6 SENIOR DIRECTOR BARTLETT: Hi. So, as of
7 right now, we have 266 bed bug work orders that are
8 currently open. We-- bed bugs are about one or two
9 percent of our overall pest complaints. Our biggest
10 pest complaint is roaches. With bed bugs, when we go
11 in, if the exterminator sees live, active bed bugs,
12 they put on the work order "corrective action taken."
13 They are then prompted to identify the up, down, side
14 to side of that apartment work orders--

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: [interposing]
16 They do both-- they didn't used to, but they're now
17 going upstairs and downstairs?

18 SENIOR DIRECTOR BARTLETT: Yes.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay.

20 SENIOR DIRECTOR BARTLETT: This is a new
21 IT fix that we've created. Any time the exterminator
22 puts on the work order "corrective action taken,"
23 they must put the level of infestation of the bed
24 bugs. They are then prompted to identify the up,
25 down, side to side of that apartment. This is for

3 bed bugs, in particular. Other pests, it's different
4 infestations--

5 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: [interposing] No,
6 I know. I'm talking about-- I know bed bugs.

7 SENIOR DIRECTOR BARTLETT: will trigger
8 it. So, yes, they have to do the adjacent work
9 orders. These work orders are created, and then
10 they're scheduled like any other. As far as the
11 dogs, no, at this time we are not looking into buying
12 dogs--

13 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: [interposing] Are
14 you considering? HPD has dogs, but you're
15 considering buying them? Is that something that
16 would be on your list? Because tenants complain.
17 They call me from all over the place about bed bugs.
18 You know, sometimes you don't know if they are really
19 gone.

20 SENIOR DIRECTOR BARTLETT: Right.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: The only person
22 who knows if they're really gone is that dog.

23 SENIOR DIRECTOR BARTLETT: So, we are
24 doing a lot of different things with bed bugs, not--
25 dogs are something that we can look into, but we're
buying bed bug mattresses. All of our caretaker I

3 shop [sic] have the mattress covers. We'll put them
4 on and seal up the mattress, so even if they--

5 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: [interposing] I'm
6 very--

7 SENIOR DIRECTOR BARTLETT: We don't see
8 it-- okay. So I don't have--

9 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: [interposing] I
10 know all about mattress covers.

11 SENIOR DIRECTOR BARTLETT: So we're
12 getting mattress covers. The residents can get
13 mattress covers. We have steamers. We use
14 pesticides. We use the bed bug monitors that we put
15 on the edge of the bed so we can see if it's--

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: [interposing]
17 Alright. So do you find that your one or two percent
18 numbers are going down? Are you monitoring them in
19 some way? Are they recurring, or is it unique
20 numbers? In other words, are they reoccurring
21 situations, because bed bugs do recur.

22 SENIOR DIRECTOR BARTLETT: Our bed bug
23 infestations are reducing, and this is something that
24 we talked about recently with even the federal
25 monitor about how bed bugs were reducing at NYCHA.
And this is something in the trend that is broader,

3 too. I think it was-- but yes, yes. So it's
4 reducing.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay. I still
6 think you should think about the dogs, because it
7 would give a lot of solace to the residents to know
8 that it's actually gone.

9 SENIOR DIRECTOR BARTLETT: Sure.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay, thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Thank you, Council
12 Member Brewer. I just want to acknowledge Council
13 Member Salamanca. Did you have any-- okay. So,
14 we're-- okay, just to keep them brief, just because
15 we have some people in the audience to testify. But
16 I did want to ask one final question before I forget,
17 and it was relationship to the PACT and the capital
18 program. So the-- you mentioned if the capital comes
19 and we get to the project before it goes into a
20 conversion, great. You know, if not, then it moves
21 on. But what is the consistency? Because as Council
22 Member Fariás mentioned, there isn't-- there aren't
23 necessarily universal standards happening across all
24 the developments. So there were mentions of, oh, the
25 bins get cleaned out. We know the bins don't get
cleaned out consistently on the PACT-run properties.

3 You know, things are supposed to be emptied every
4 day. They're not emptied every single day. There are
5 boarders [sic] who will leave human feces in the
6 hallways. So what is the consistency of standards
7 being held across all developments whether they are
8 managed by a private company or not? And in terms of
9 both capital, in terms of cleanliness, in terms of
10 services for the residents and response time, it just
11 feels like there are two different systems happening.
12 And when, as members we call and we're-- you all
13 attend the meetings. Like we're on these monthly
14 calls and monthly, you know, WebX [sic] meetings with
15 NYCHA, with pen- with-- well, I'm naming Penrose, but
16 with private management companies, with other elected
17 officials. We have the same list of complaints, the
18 same list of questions, the same unopened cases, and
19 I'm just wondering, you know, how is this going to be
20 addressed as we have maybe Trust and PACT and NYCHA
21 and three different types of people managing these
22 developments?

23 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Yeah,
24 absolutely. I mean, so, to be clear we still-- to be
25 clear, we still have oversight of PACT developments
and we work closely with our partners and those

3 private partners, right? If there's any specific
4 issues, like, we're happy to take them back and work
5 on them.

6 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: But you all are on
7 the calls?

8 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: What's that?

9 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: You know, you all--
10 you have NYCHA representatives on all the calls, so
11 the specific issues--

12 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: [interposing]
13 Right.

14 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: are constantly being
15 brought to the forefront. I'm just asking for greater
16 accountability and consistency, and how specifically
17 that's going to look.

18 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: Yeah, the
19 expectation is that when the property transitions to
20 PACT, they still need to be following the individual
21 action plan that's been developed for each
22 development. So that is the consistency that we look
23 for. I think that some of the issues that we're
24 discussing here are addressed by the nature of the
25 work, the comprehensive upgrades that are happening
at these developments. The walls are sealed. You

3 don't have some of the same issues that are happening
4 in all the public housing side. So, we are-- again,
5 I think time will show if the issues do subside. But
6 I think that in terms of within the buildings, the--
7 some of the issues should subside due to
8 comprehensive work. On the exterior, we recognize a
9 lot of the PACT properties are scatter sites, so
10 they're stand-alone. A lot of them are curbside
11 collection. As we talked earlier, the hope partially
12 is that Clean Curbs for All is that solution for the
13 PACT properties, and that the standard
14 containerization that we're all looking for, I think
15 that-- as managers and as members of the public that
16 you're representing, we want-- we all want to know
17 that we're getting consistent treatment across the
18 development. So I think that we are going through a
19 transformation as you know. You mentioned the Trust.
20 I think similar things will need to be figured out in
21 that portfolio, but I think that, again, to answer
22 your question, the individual action plan for each
23 development is what we would the developers
24 accountable for in the PACT portfolio.

25 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Thank you.

3 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Chair, if I may
4 to follow up. I hate to go backwards. But the Inner
5 City Green Team is budgeted for \$250,000 for 18
6 months of work. You asked the budget question
7 previously.

8 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: That's be great, and
9 it would be good to-- we can follow up with those
10 groups to see how far that funding actually goes into
11 achieving everything. So thank you so much.

12 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Absolutely.

13 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Council Member
14 Salamanca?

15 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Thank you,
16 Madam Chairs. Thank you very much for the
17 opportunity. Good afternoon. Pre-pandemic in my
18 Council District in the 17th Council District there
19 was a piece of land that was owned by NYCHA as part
20 of the Morrisania Air Rights property, where NYCHA
21 was storing their garbage for the developments.
22 NYCHA decided to take that land, and I don't know if
23 you sold it or you gave it to Services for the
24 Underserved to build affordable housing there. And
25 in return, there was a time where you wanted to take
Morrisania Air Rights garbage and put it Jackson

3 Houses garbage where their president Danny Barber
4 [sp?] is the President of Jackson Houses. There was
5 a meeting in my office. We stood up against that
6 plan because first, NYCHA doesn't pick up Jackson
7 Houses garbage on time and now you're just going to
8 compound it by adding another development on top of
9 that. And so there was resistance. And the plan,
10 what came out of the plan was that you were going to
11 install these NYCHA, these trash bins. I don't want
12 to call them bins, but the-- where you dump the
13 dumpsters at Morrisania Air Rights, which you did. I
14 was there recently. And their agreement was, because
15 you were giving away NYCHA land, that you were going
16 to build a structure at the Jackson Houses. I guess
17 three walls, right? There needed to be some opening
18 to, you know, so that the smell can come out.
19 Nothing has come. I haven't heard anything about
20 that plan. I called Danny Barber as I was driving
21 down here, and he says, "Ralph, yeah, we spoke to
22 NYCHA. They changed their plan around, but now they
23 need capital dollars. This is the first that I hear
24 that you need capital dollars. My question is, if
25 you needed capital dollars from my office, why didn't

3 NYCHA reach out to me to give me a dollar amount,
4 knowing that we just passed the budget?

5 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: thank you,
6 Council Member Salamanca. I understand the Jackson
7 Houses waste yard-- waste yards is in the seven
8 original developments that are going through with the
9 design build work, and so that restart [sic] is
10 designed. I think it meets the description that
11 you're describing it is, going to have visual
12 screening all around. It's going to have a partial
13 roof. It's going to have state of the art equipment.
14 We're waiting for approval. It's going through the
15 typical OMB Comptroller approval process. I don't
16 believe at this time we need additional dollars for
17 constructing this waste yard.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Alright. So,
19 there's no funding that's going to be needed form the
20 Council to complete this project?

21 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: In the design
22 we're discussing, it sounds we're mutually agreeing
23 on the design. Partial screening, full screening of
24 the site of partial roof coverage, new equipment, it
25 should be fully covered through the City Capital
Action Plan.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Alright, that
4 sounds great. When will this-- when will this
5 project commence, the construction?

6 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: We're waiting
7 for approval through OMB and the Comptroller. As
8 soon as we have those approvals, we'll begin the
9 work.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Alright. Do
11 you have a timeline?

12 VICE PRESIDENT KENNIFF: I will get back
13 to you with a timeline. I don't have it in front of
14 me.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Okay, thank
16 you Madam Chairs.

17 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Thank you. Just to
18 quickly segue on some staffing questions. Last year,
19 you testified that federal money had come in to hire
20 an additional 1,072 workers for a six-month period to
21 clean up the NYCHA grounds. Were all those workers
22 hired? And can you tell us what was archived with
23 those federal dollars?

24 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: So, I believe a
25 lot of those federal dollars-- we allowed-- those
staffing lines went to the CCC, you know, the call

3 center, but I'll follow up with exactly where they
4 all went.

5 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Okay, thank you. We
6 look forward to getting that report.

7 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Sorry, City
8 Clean-up Corps, not the call center. I was reading
9 an acronym. There's two CCC's, go figure.

10 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Got it.

11 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: City Clean-up
12 Corps, just wanted to clarify.

13 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Thank you. In terms
14 of-- how many staffers does NYCHA have that work on
15 pests and waste conditions? And how many of these
16 are at local developments?

17 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Can you repeat
18 the last part again?

19 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: How many are at
20 local developments?

21 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: So, I'll have
22 to [inaudible] exact work done, but there's 4,619
23 staff who work on pest and waste management issues at
24 NYCHA. Approximately 140 of those are in the Pest
25 Control Department, 33 are in the Waste Management

2 Department, the remainder are out in the
3 developments. So, I--

4 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: [interposing] Got
5 it. We could [inaudible]

6 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Might be wrong,
7 but it's about 44-50 [sic].

8 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Got it. Thank you.
9 And what unions represent these workers?

10 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: I'll have to--
11 it's obviously varying titles, exterminators, pest
12 control aids, caretakers, resident building
13 superintendents. It's all over the place. I'll have
14 to--

15 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: [interposing] Okay.
16 We can do follow-up.

17 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: we'll get you
18 back with the unions, yeah.

19 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Sure. In terms of
20 the turnover rate for NYCHA workers, specifically,
21 what is the turnover rate for NYCHA workers in the
22 sanitation fields like caretakers?

23 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: It's varying.
24 We could get you an average turnover rate. I don't
25 have that in front of me, but I'm happy to circle

3 back with it. Obviously, there are folks who stay
4 here their whole career, and there are people who
5 leave very quickly, but we'll get you that as soon as
6 we can.

7 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Okay. It
8 definitely-- you know, caretakers is one that we hear
9 a lot of spends enormous amount of time just moving
10 trash around developments. I know that's something
11 we're all working on. Is there-- and chronic
12 understaffing. I know, I look at the Red Hook Action
13 plans and both say understaffed, understaffed. What
14 is the plan to address these areas of understaffing?

15 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Yeah,
16 obviously, we're working to do consistent
17 recruitment. You know, for example, we use the
18 housing exterminator title. That's on a civil
19 service list. We're a little bit beholden to that,
20 but what we've been doing is similar to what Josie
21 said a little earlier as to bringing folks into the
22 pest control aid. They can still respond to
23 complaints. They're still a technician. And there--
24 we need to do heavy application, we'll use an
25 exterminator who is fully licensed, but we're trying

3 to fill those ranks so that we can respond to these
4 complaints as quickly as possible.

5 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Lastly, let's see,
6 hold on. Oh yeah, the resident ambassador. Can you
7 tell us a little bit more about the resident
8 ambassador program and, you know, kind of next step
9 plans for it.

10 SENIOR DIRECTOR BARTLETT: Yeah, so we're
11 using the resident ambassador program in conjunction
12 with our vendors. So we've brought-- we're using
13 three pest control vendors that we have very strong
14 oversight. We have supervisors with the
15 exterminators with them every step of the way. The
16 resident-- or not every step of the way, but we QA
17 about 80 percent of the vendor work that we're doing
18 through these vendors. The resident ambassador
19 program is an employee that is hired by the vendor
20 and they go one to two days before the scheduled
21 appointment. They go. They say, "Hi, do you know
22 you have an appointment for tomorrow? We're doing
23 pest control a little bit differently. We'll be
24 caulking around you cabinets. We'll be vacuuming.
25 We're going to be using gel and then the insect
growth regulator which is like a roach birth

3 control." We have like a script that we kind of use
4 language that, you know, everyone-- it's not upper
5 technical bugs and rodent language. And we're
6 asking, "Can you prepare for us? So, if you see
7 rodents or any sort of activity in your closets,
8 please clean out your closets. If you want us to
9 focus on the cabinets, please make sure that you have
10 your things out of your cabinets." If it is someone
11 that needs help, the resident ambassador will help
12 them prepare for the appointment, and then they say
13 thank you very much. We have a program manager on
14 the NYCHA side that has been going out a few times a
15 week to shadow, to you know, make sure that the
16 resident ambassadors are doing what we want them to
17 do. We get reports at the beginning of the-- or at
18 the end of the day. This just started in May.
19 There's definitely been some learning curves. Like,
20 we're making sure that the resident ambassadors get
21 tablets so that they can record it and it's not just
22 like paper. We're fine-tuning the script that we
23 want every resident ambassador to use. We're making
24 sure that they have all of the flyers in the
25 different languages. We're going to make it better.
It's not perfect right now. It just started. But

3 we're working with them. We think that it's an
4 interesting and valuable program.

5 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: And where are the
6 resident ambassadors working right now, what
7 developments?

8 SENIOR DIRECTOR BARTLETT: It depends
9 where vendors are.

10 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Okay. So basically--

11 SENIOR DIRECTOR BARTLETT: [interposing]
12 Yeah, it's not forever. Like, we've been at
13 Kingsborough and Reed and Sotomayor. It-- we use the
14 ven-- because the integrated pest management work
15 that we're doing with the HEPA vacuums and the
16 caulking and sealing takes a lot more time, it takes
17 us a lot more time to get through all the
18 exterminator work orders, but we still want to
19 provide extermination in a timely fashion, so that's
20 why we're bringing in vendors. So we take a look at
21 where there's the most work orders, the oldest work
22 orders, and that's where we schedule the vendors for.

23 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: So, lastly, before
24 we turn it over, and thank you again for your
25 patience. In terms of-- you know, garbage pick-up
poses unique dangers and hazards. Maintenance

3 workers aren't DSNY staff, and they often don't have
4 the same training or different training. What is
5 being done to protect maintenance workers during
6 garbage pick-ups? And I personally witnessed
7 maintenance workers trying to manage construction
8 debris in ways that [inaudible] a little shocked. So
9 how are we protecting workers' safety in this regard?

10 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Yeah,
11 absolutely, and I think, you know, as far as
12 contractor waste, I know it's very prominent in Red
13 Hook, right, as we discussed. The contractor is
14 responsible for removing their waste. Obviously, our
15 grounds folks will help because we want a clean NYCHA
16 facility, right? But ideally, the contractor is
17 responsible for that. Something that we're doing to,
18 I think, improve upon that-- like I said, I drove
19 past and through a number of developments this
20 morning purposely because it was a garbage collection
21 day and I wanted to really focus in on what we were
22 talking about today. So I think somewhere where we
23 are going to improve and see improvement is through
24 the creation of this Caretakers Guide, right,
25 enhanced safety training and recycle first mindset.
Through that guide that we're developing in

3 partnership with the Department of Sanitation. So I
4 think that there-- we acknowledge that there's room
5 for improvement, and we hope that this guide book and
6 retraining will enhance that in our maintenance
7 staff.

8 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Yeah. And when I
9 mentioned construction debris, it's like debris from,
10 you know, probably renovations in the apartment that
11 was just piled along with regular trash and workers
12 just, you know, trying their best to like get it into
13 a collection site, but totally unequipped to deal
14 with heavy wooden cabinets and other things from
15 apartments. That I've witnessed over and over again,
16 in Red Hook in particular.

17 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Yeah, and
18 really specifics, I-- we'll take those back and we'll
19 discuss--

20 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: [interposing] Yeah,
21 just--

22 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: those specifics
23 offline--

24 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: [interposing] in
25 terms of like safety.

VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Yeah.

3 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: equipment, training.
4 Most of the workers were, you know, older women with
5 brooms and construction debris. It just kind of
6 defies logic.

7 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Unacceptable,
8 and as we've said before, safety of our residents and
9 our employees are paramount to us and we want her
10 those specific examples. We'll take them back,
11 obviously specifically at Red Hook and any other
12 [inaudible] you know, specific examples.

13 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Great. Yes. Thank
14 you. So with that, I think we'd like to turn it over
15 to public testimony. Thank you again for your time,
16 patience, and work, and working with us to improve
17 conditions for the public housing residents of New
18 York City.

19 VICE PRESIDENT GROSSMAN: Yes. Thank
20 you. Thank you so much Chair Avilés and Chair Nurse
21 for having us. It was truly our pleasure to be as
22 transparent as possible with you throughout this
23 process.

24 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Thank you so much.

25 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Yeah, thank you.
Thanks for bearing with all of our questions. You

3 know, we don't get these questions answered in our
4 normal calls, so that's why we have to use this
5 opportunity to do it here. So, I think the first up
6 we're going to hear from is Eric Goldstein from
7 National Resource Defense Council who has patiently
8 waited this entire time. We really appreciate you,
9 Eric, and all of your advocacy for waste in the City.
10 So, as we clear out, you'll be first up. And if
11 there's anyone else in the room who is testifying,
12 let us know. We'll put you first. Otherwise, we have
13 very few people signed up. Do you want folks doing
14 testimony up here? Okay.

15 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Thank you, Eric. A
16 true hero. A true New York City hero. Thank you.

17 ERIC GOLDSTEIN: Good afternoon to our
18 two intrepid Committee Chairs and your dedicated
19 staffs. I'm Eric Goldstein, New York City Environment
20 Director at the Natural Resources Defense Council.
21 Operating NYCHA with its more than 400,000 residents
22 and more than 300 public housing developments in a
23 sustainable manner has been a long time challenge.
24 We know, of course, that NYCHA's difficult operating
25 environment has been only made worse by dramatic cuts
in federal funding over the decades. We understand

3 that problems extend well beyond solid waste, broken
4 elevators, peeling leaded paint, balky [sic] heating
5 systems, extensive mold problems, and on and on. But
6 despite the many challenges waste issues should not
7 be placed at the bottom of the to-do list. And for
8 more than 30 years since the passage of the 1989
9 Mandatory Recycling Law, NYCHA management has given
10 waste issues a very low priority to the detriment of
11 NYCHA residents who deserve and desire decent
12 sanitation services just like every New Yorker. On
13 waste issue after waste issue, NYCHA's performance
14 has been below expectations. For example, on the core
15 recycling program: metals, glass, and plastic, NYCHA
16 didn't even have any recycling bins available over
17 the decades until South Bronx resident Bridget
18 Vicenti [sp?] from Mothers on the Move and NRDC
19 threatened a lawsuit against NYCHA about five years
20 ago. Even then, the bins that have been installed
21 are inconvenient, not always emptied, and at least
22 anecdotally we understand that sometimes the
23 recycling waste has been mixed with regular trash.
24 Then textiles, despite the availability in New York
25 City of the Refashion New York City Textile
Collection program, only a handful of NYCHA tenants

3 have access to this service. Or take electronic
4 waste, same story. The electronic collections
5 program run by the City, the E-cycle NYC for
6 buildings with 10 or more units is free and
7 convenient, but despite that and the fact that it's
8 illegal for New York City residents and landlords to
9 dispose of electronic waste in the regular trash. The
10 E-waste program is basically not available for the
11 overwhelming bulk of NYCHA residents. Then there's
12 corrugated boxes. Again, as NYCHA itself concedes,
13 most of the corrugated is still treated as bulk waste
14 instead of being recycled as required by City law.
15 Food waste, food waste is the largest single portion
16 of the residential waste stream, and for the most
17 part it's still going to landfills and incinerators.
18 As a consequence of all of these shortcomings and
19 other poor trash handling problems, the rat privately
20 owned public spaces in many NYCHA developments is out
21 of control. Rats are living the good life at NYCHA.
22 NYCHA managers should consider these conditions
23 unacceptable, and as the City's largest landlord,
24 NYCHA needs to come into compliance with all of the
25 various sanitation and health laws and regulations
applying to solid waste. NYCHA's testimony earlier

3 today was only mildly encouraging. Again, we
4 recognize the space and financial constraints that
5 NYCHA managers face. We don't question the sincerity
6 of these officials, but I believe I speak on behalf
7 of NYCHA residents when I say we are tired of
8 waiting. And much of what we heard today are long-
9 term promises and extended time tables. For example,
10 the promise in the 2019 waste management plan 2.0 of
11 NYCHA to deliver state-of-the-art infrastructure and
12 new waste yards has moved forward at only two
13 developments, Polo Grounds and Rangel Houses. At
14 that rate, the system's conversion won't be completed
15 until the century, and the rats living in these
16 unaddressed development will have grandchildren. We
17 offer four modest recommendations. One, one piece of
18 encourage news has been the engagement of private
19 developers that have taken over the management of
20 several normal properties in East New York, including
21 the Boulevard Houses under the RAD program. We urge
22 DSNY and the Department of Health to put these
23 private property managers on notice that they will be
24 held to the highest standards of compliance with
25 respect to all recycling and pest-free requirements
of the law, applicable to every other multi-story

3 dwelling. And we expect that those laws and
4 regulations will be enforced. Second, we urge NYCHA
5 to increase support for the fledgling pilot projects
6 that have been initiated and have been working
7 successfully. Here are two examples: Bridget
8 Vicenti's 2017 recycling pilot in the Brownsville
9 Houses where recycling rates have tripled, that
10 development-- that experiment has now been expanded
11 to three developments, but it needs a major build
12 out. And if this committee and the members of this
13 committee have not yet met with Bridget Vicenti, you
14 ought to meet her firsthand and see what she has been
15 accomplishing and see the potential that exists there
16 that has not yet been fully exploited by NYCHA.
17 Again, Domingo Morales [sp?] has this wonderful
18 compost power project at five NYCHA sites. This too
19 should be greatly expanded, and the Committee should
20 work with Domingo and his team, and work with
21 talented NYCHA residents to build out these programs
22 so that they are more than pilots. Third, NYCHA must
23 be held accountable. They must be held to all of the
24 commitments in their previous sustainability plans,
25 their reports, their testimonies. NYCHA ought to be
coming back here every six months and give full

3 accounting of their compliance on the recycling and
4 rat and rodent programs, and present evidence of the
5 monthly NYCHA rat compliance tallies so we know
6 whether in fact these programs are succeeding or
7 whether the promises are just being pushed into the
8 uncertain future. Finally, again, in terms of rat
9 mitigation, although we haven't had the opportunity
10 to review the proposed legislation in detail, we
11 support their thrust and intent. And we reaffirm our
12 previous testimony that among the most helpful things
13 we can do to address the City's never-ending rat
14 problems would be to pass Intro 244, the Universal
15 Curbside Composting Program, since among its many
16 benefits it will require residents and building
17 managers to place their putrescible trash in rat-
18 proof containers rather than easy to tear through
19 plastic bags. We have been at hearings just like
20 this for years and years and years, and we so
21 appreciate the fact that this new City Council with
22 its vibrant new leadership is calling NYCHA managers
23 to task. Understanding the challenges they face, but
24 unwilling to accept continued delays. Thank you for
25 your testimony-- for your attention.

3 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Thank you, Eric.

4 And thank you as always for your thoughtful remarks
5 and recommendations. We definitely listen and people
6 listen and call me and say, "We got to listen to
7 Eric's amendments." People from the Administration.

8 ERIC GOLDSTEIN: Thank you very much,
9 Chair Nurse.

10 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Thank you so much. I
11 think we have one other person online to testify,
12 Allison Allen [sp?], if you're there you can come on.

13 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

14 ALLISON ALLEN: Yes, hi. Can you hear
15 me?

16 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: We can hear you.

17 ALLISON ALLEN: Oh, thank you, thank you,
18 and thank you. I-- at least week's hearing on zero
19 waste bills, I talked about rats because there had
20 been much attention focused on our litter problem and
21 our rat problem and overall support of waste
22 containerization pilots, but there's very little
23 mention that we already have this existing free food
24 waste containerization program, the DSNY's Brown Bin
25 program, and there is a direct correlation between
litter rats and food waste collected in the brown

3 bins that should be highlighted and stressed in all
4 communication. I'm aware that the brown bin presents
5 challenges for NYCHA. My comments mostly relate to
6 New York City residents overall. I support all the
7 rat mitigation bills, because they're a great step.
8 And as Council Members are out discussing these bills
9 I hope you all add a talking point or two about how
10 important it is to also enroll in the Brown Bin
11 program as a major part of the Rat Action Plan. It's
12 great to see the ask for reporting requirements from
13 the Department of Health in these new bills. As DOH
14 could be doing much more to promote brown bins to
15 combat rats. For example, anyone who calls 311 with
16 a rat complaint and anyone who has received a rat
17 violation, should be told about the brown bin program
18 and urge to enroll. The brown bin program should be
19 promoted throughout the DOH RAD portal on multiple
20 web pages. I've asked, and it hasn't been done. So
21 I'm hoping perhaps Council Members can help with
22 that. I'd like to see the Department of Health's
23 budget allocation for rat mitigation and hope you
24 will consider adding our request for budget details
25 to reporting requirements to see how much of a budget
they have for individual, you know, marketing and

3 outreach tactics that potentially DSNY can leverage
4 since I'm not sure they have adequate budgets for
5 marketing and communication.

6 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

7 ALLISON ALLEN: In my written testimony--
8 I'm sorry, just a couple things. You'll see a letter
9 sent by Department of Health to a neighbor alerting
10 her to the high level of rat sightings in her area.
11 That was a missed opportunity to promote the brown
12 bins. I'll just skip to my last ask which is an
13 update on rat contraception measures. There was
14 apparently a successful tactic used by MTA in the
15 subway system in 2017, and I'd like more information
16 on why it is has not been expanded. Rats live for a
17 year, they give birth and produce 84 offspring.
18 Contraception may very well be more effective than
19 extermination and is less dangerous to other animals
20 and people. So I ask you to find out what happened
21 to this program and see if it makes sense to
22 reintroduced or reinstate additional pilot tests and
23 NYCHA would be a great place to start. So thank you
24 for this opportunity.

25 CHAIRPERSON NURSE: Thank you so much
Allison. I believe that is it for folks to testify.

3 That's it. I want to thank Co-Chair Alexa Avilés,
4 Chair of Public housing and your team and everyone in
5 this room for all your help, Counsel, and all of the
6 staff here in the room holding it down, and the tech-
7 - and the tech folks, too, on the back. So thank you
8 so much.

9 CHAIRPERSON AVILÉS: Yes. Thank you. I
10 think I would just add there is an enormous amount of
11 work that remains to be done, and I think we will
12 absolutely follow up on the remaining unanswered
13 questions and certainly take to hear the testimony
14 that was given here today and those which we receive
15 on a daily basis from residents throughout public
16 housing in New York City. this is a critical issue,
17 and we will continue to forge ahead to ensure that
18 there's accountability, but that there's true level
19 of service that residents are feeling relief and
20 improvements around waste conditions in public
21 housing. So thank you so much for your work and
22 participation, and thank you again to all the staff
23 who make this possible. Oh, and-- meeting adjourned.

24 [gave]
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COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING JOINTLY WITH
COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

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COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING JOINTLY WITH
COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

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 August 3, 2022