

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON HOUSING
AND BUILDINGS

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CITY HALL

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SERGEANT AT ARMS: Good morning and welcome to today's hybrid New York City Council hearing for the Committee on Housing and Buildings. To minimize disruptions on Zoom and in person, please place all electronic devices to vibrate or silent mode. If you'd like to submit testimony, please send via email to testimony@counsel.nyc.gov. Again that is testimony@counsel.nyc.gov. Thank you for your cooperation. Chair Sanchez, we are ready to begin.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much, Sargent. Good morning. I am Councilmember Pierina Sanchez, Chair of the Committee on Housing and Buildings, and I want to thank you all for joining today's oversight hearing to examine the mayor's recently released housing plan. I would like to thank first my colleagues from the Housing and Buildings Committee for being here this morning. Councilmember Crystal Hudson, Councilmember Ari Kagan, Councilmember Tiffany Cabán, and myself. I want to begin... I also want to thank the administration for... for being here to testify today.

I want to begin by acknowledging the enormity of the problem before us just last week, Council legislation and a mayoral signing extends the city

state of housing emergency and extends rent stabilization in the city of New York. Year after year, the city's affordable housing production has failed to keep up with demand, resulting in a crisis of affordability, but one that has been felt most acutely by our most vulnerable New Yorkers. As of March of this year, there were 40... over 48,000 individuals sleeping in our shelter system. About 1/3 of those were children. And those numbers don't even include homeless individuals who aren't counted because perhaps they're in a different part of the shelter system. And yet last week, the wholly, mayorally-appointed, rent guidelines board voted to allow rent hikes that many New Yorkers simply will not be able to afford. Black and brown New Yorkers are still suffering from decades-long practices of redlining and predatory practices. Our city's homeowners face escalating property taxes and maintenance costs in the face of a vastly unequal property tax structure. NYCHA properties, as we know, are in an unacceptable state of disrepair, and its residents have had little to no recourse for years. As of last month, there are over 200,000

active eviction cases in the city of New York. Big city, big problems. Unfortunately, I could go on.

Yet, let's be clear, let's not mince words, the acuteness and the unevenness of the affordable housing crisis is one that is also felt in the city, in the state, and in the nation. It has its root causes... That unevenness has its root causes in a deep inequality, a deep inequality that's caused by an ongoing history of predatory greed, blocked access to wealth-building opportunities, and particularly for people of color in this country. And so I'm glad to be here today with you all discussing the Mayor's vision, the housing blueprint for the next four to eight years. That you are here chief housing officer Katz, Leadership with the Administration, Commissioner Carreon, agencies like DHS, DSS, and NYCHA, to me and to us demonstrates the mayor's commitments to really tackling this affordability crisis. And the departure and approach for this housing plan compared to predecessor plans, prioritizing people over process, breaking down agency silos, centering homelessness and NYCHA, putting people's lived experiences at the center,

prioritizing wealth building, equity in procurement for our MWBEs, this is all laudable and appreciated.

Tackling any one of the issues even mentioned in the housing plan is a monumental undertaking. Even more so when trying to take them on in this comprehensive way, that prioritizes the needs of everyday New Yorkers. It's going to take a lot of work, a lot of collaboration, actionable strategies to take on this crisis. So earlier this month when the administration announced your final preparations for the housing plan, I was excited and hopeful. Excited at the prospect of partnering with you to best meet the city's housing needs. I've read through the plan spoke... spoke with many at length. And while I appreciate all of the work, and especially that work that included and centered homeless individuals that went into the plan, I and my colleagues are still finding the plan in its present form is frustrating. The collaboration required to truly make a dent in the housing crisis will require a kind of radical transparency, the kind of radical transparency that I've heard the mayor commit himself to many times. That is why even with the administration's new framing on equity, lived

experience and more, I must focus on the need for transparency and accountability. The plan needs to be supplemented, still at this point, with detailed policy solutions and robust funding and numeric targets for that... for those dollar amounts to reach the goal of safely Housing New Yorkers. The plan is called a blueprint. Yet, in some ways, if I handed this blueprint to builders today, Architects and Engineers, the structure that they would build might fall for lack of detail and specificity. Indeed, the plan is... is thin on details. The plan notes that the top two housing priorities for New Yorkers are affordable housing preservation and building code violation enforcement, yet shares no quantifiable affordable housing production goals.

And to be clear, I'm not advocating for the big shiny production and preservation numbers that have been put out by previous administrations. I support the change in approach away from whole numbers that leave behind so many critical elements, home closings versus home placements that are more important, for instance, a complete picture of all New Yorkers living in different conditions and more. Yet, I'm critiquing the lack of specificity with respect to

detailed policy solutions, robust funding targets, numeric goals where appropriate.

For instance, a crisis is felt most acutely -- as I will say until I'm blue in the face -- among lowest income New Yorkers, vulnerable New Yorkers. What goals will the administration strive to achieve to help those individuals? Homeownership is a critical goal. What changes in policies to open door, maybe new programs, community, land, Trust's policy, etc? What goals will the administration commit to making, when to increase these opportunities? At this stage, the plan shares general statements about zoning and regulatory reform without a lot of details for those reforms. And there's a lot of silence and how to address serious understaffing at HPD's inspection shops still, and project... project management staff. There's nothing also on cost estimates for implementing any of this.

While I recognize the importance of that flexibility without and without concrete metrics, how is the City Council and the public supposed to know when the administration is delivering on the commitments? One of the many responsibilities of the City Council is to hold the administration

accountable. When the administration makes it impossible for the Council to do to do this job, when it presents us with 94 pages of many goals? It makes this job more difficult. Instead, if the city has programs that work, can we put more resources into them? Or find a way to make them more robust? Can we evaluate programs that don't work and find a way to eliminate the waste?

But finally, I want to recognize that it is early. And as a former staffer within an administration, I understand that there's always this tension between releasing a plan early and releasing a plan that is more holistic. And then there's all the approval processes. I understand.

Thus today. I'm calling attention to these issues of specificity, detail and transparency, with an acknowledgement that these are all surmountable, and that there's an eagerness from this Council to partner on those specifics and drive a truly successful plan forward. Transparency will be critical for the Council's oversight function, so that New York has received the best possible from all of its leaders.

So, to reiterate, I recognize the solving the housing problem, housing crisis, is a Herculean task. The problems we face are immense. But we have a government that is willing to make these changes. I'm looking forward to a productive discussion today, and to really begin to dig into the details here.

With that, I'd like to acknowledge any additional colleagues that were able to join, Councilmember Aviles. And I'm going to turn it over to our committee... and Councilmember Carr. I couldn't see you. And I'm going to turn it over to our Committee Counsel to administer the oath.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. We will now hear testimony from representatives of the administration. Before we begin, I will administer the affirmation. To all members of the administration who will be offering testimony or will be available for questions please raise your right hands. And when I call your name, if you're sitting behind the panel, you could just approach and give your affirmation into the microphone for the for the record. I will call each of you one by one.

Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth before this committee and

1 COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS 14
2 to respond honestly to Councilmember questions?
3 Jessica Katz?
4 CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: I do.
5 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Adolfo Carrión?
6 COMMISSIONER CARRIÓN: I do.
7 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Brian Honan?
8 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: I do.
9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Molly Park.
10 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER PARK: I do.
11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Kim Darga.
12 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER DARGA: I do.
13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: AnneMarie Santiago.
14 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SANTIAGO: I do.
15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Brendan McLaughlin.
16 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MCLAUGHLIN: I do.
17 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Ahmed Tigani.
18 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER TIGANI: I do.
19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Eva Trimble.
20 CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRIMBLE: I do.
21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: And Ryan Murray.
22 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MURRAY: I do.
23 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. You may begin
24 when ready.
25

CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: Good morning. Good morning Chair Sanchez, members of the Committee on Housing and Buildings, other distinguished members of the City Council and members of the public. My name is Jessica Katz, New York City Chief Housing Officer. Joining me today are Adolfo Carrión Jr., Commissioner for Housing Preservation and Development, Molly Park, First Deputy Commissioner for the Department of Homeless Services, Ryan Murray, First Deputy Commissioner for the Human Resources Administration, and NYCHA Executive Vice President Eva Trimble and Senior Vice President, Brian Honan.

Thank you for this opportunity to discuss Housing Our Neighbors, a blueprint for housing and homelessness. We all know that housing is a top concern for New Yorkers. I've worked in housing my entire career, including 12 years in city government where I primarily focused on supportive housing. This is my third mayoral administration, and Housing Our Neighbors is my third housing plan. When I joined the Adams administration, I made it clear to my colleagues that I wanted to take a new approach to tackling the housing shortage, affordability, and homelessness crises. I'm proud that we were able to

create a vision for housing that sets ambitious goals and harnesses all the benefits that housing can provide. The city has spent many decades and billions of dollars investing in the creation and preservation of affordable housing. We must and will continue this critical work. But we must also ensure that our public housing is stable, that the housing we create serves New Yorkers who need it most, and that every resident has access to a safe healthy home. Housing Our Neighbors takes an integrated holistic approach that strives to meet all these critical goals.

A key goal for the housing blueprint was to outline a shared vision that reflects the knowledge, insight and ideas of our community and neighbors. Over the course of 10 weeks, we held a series of roundtables with over 100 advocates, affordable housing developers, and homeless shelter providers. We sought ideas from their staff, colleagues, and tenants through an online forum for open submissions. We invited dozens of agencies and offices from across city government to highlight their existing housing-related initiatives and to propose new ones. This process allowed us to capture invaluable input from

our city's leaders in housing and government. But New Yorkers who have been directly impacted by our housing and homelessness crisis know better than anyone where our systems are helping and where they need to improve. For this reason, our greatest priority and focus was to position directly impacted New Yorkers in the driver's seat. We asked NYCHA residents about how we should invest in their homes, and what they want the rehabilitation process to look like. We analyzed survey responses from over 72,000 New Yorkers about their housing priorities collected through NYC Speaks. And for the first time in history, we invited homeless and formerly homeless New Yorkers to City Hall to meet with the mayor and weigh in directly on the citywide housing plan. These meetings marked a major milestone and laid the groundwork to improve our approach to addressing homelessness that elevates the expert insight of New Yorkers who have lived experience. We are extremely grateful to everyone who contributed their time and energy to this blueprint and look forward to continuing these partnerships to implement the plan.

I would like to walk you through the housing blueprint, but first, I want to explain the intention

behind it. Over the past months, we have heard loud and clear from residents, advocates, and housing providers alike that a new approach to the housing crisis is needed. Tens of thousands of New Yorkers are living in shelter. Countless families are struggling to keep up with rent or living in unsafe or unhealthy conditions. Aspiring homeowners are leaving the city in order to find a home they can afford. New Yorkers asked for a new approach and that is what our blueprint delivers. At \$22 billion over 10 years, this administration has made the most robust housing investment our city has ever seen. This capital investment combined with new authority of the recently created NYCHA Trust to borrow up to \$10 billion represents the Adams administration's unprecedented commitment to affordable housing. This unprecedented capital investment will allow us to continue creating and preserving affordable housing at similar rates to recent years. Housing Our Neighbors provides a broader framework for housing to shape those investments and to ensure the housing we create truly serves New Yorkers.

For the first time ever, we are prioritizing NYCHA in our efforts to create and preserve

affordable units. For too long, we excluded NYCHA from our citywide housing plans, allowing our most critical source of deeply affordable housing to be seen as someone else's problem. But the hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers who live in NYCHA apartments deserve better. Our administration is committed to doing better. Beyond preserving NYCHA, Housing Our Neighbors both invest in more affordable units and encourages more housing production overall. We cannot solve the affordability and homelessness crisis without building significantly more housing. From extremely-low-income housing to market rate units, our city has not produced enough new housing to meet the needs of growing population for generations. We must close that gap to ensure that homes are affordable and protect communities from rising costs. This means growing the overall supply of housing, not just HPD financed housing. That is why Mayor Adams announced his City Of Yes Plan on June 1, and why Housing Our Neighbors calls for changes to our zoning, construction and maintenance codes to streamline housing production of all types. We will leverage zoning and regulatory reform to increase citywide supply and ease pressure on renters

across income levels. The Blueprint also shifts the way we measure the success of our investments in affordable housing. Traditionally, city backed affordable units have been counted at the moment when the financing for a project is confirmed, when the bankers developers and lawyers are aligned. But this moment comes long before construction starts, the units become ready, or leases get offered. Too little attention has been paid to these next steps in the process of Housing New Yorkers, causing families to wait longer for a home and delaying the impact of our investments. The Adams administration is shifting our focus to measure not just how much housing we produce, but also how many New Yorkers have been able to move into those units. We will begin measuring our success based on when we house New Yorkers, not just when we close the deal, to prioritize getting people into homes faster. That includes our neighbors experiencing homelessness. For years, we have used the DHS shelter census to measure homelessness and our progress towards ending it. But that metric doesn't tell the full story. It obscures thousands of New Yorkers in other shelter systems from view, and excludes them from access to

the housing and resources they need. Housing Our Neighbors holds us accountable to every New Yorker experiencing homelessness. We will introduce an accurate homeless census that incorporates all shelter systems, and reform our policies so that New Yorkers can access resources like rental assistance and homeless set-aside units regardless of what shelter system they are in. Finally, Housing Our Neighbors embraces that housing is much more than just a roof over your head. Housing can give New Yorkers so much of what they need to thrive, from access to transit and jobs to improve safety during storms, to better health outcomes. The blueprint focuses on all these goals, it prioritizes stability for renters, while promoting homeownership to increase racial equity and help families generate wealth. It directs the jobs and economic development created by housing into communities that have historically benefited less. It confronts climate change to build a healthier, more sustainable city that keeps New Yorkers safe during disasters and extreme weather. The blueprint incorporates every aspect of our housing ecosystem to both build additional housing and ensure that our housing helps

New Yorkers to thrive. We worked with partners across government to reach that goal. I want to thank our Chief Climate Officer, City Planning Chair Garodnick, New York City's Health and Hospitals Dr. Katz, DOHMH, Commissioner Vasan, and the Deputy Mayors across City Hall for their support.

Traditionally, our city's housing plans have been focused on financing affordable housing through both new construction and preservation. This administration will make every effort to continue building at the same rate as recent years to ease the housing shortage, but we are also going to move beyond the singular focus. Rather than focusing solely on a top line financing number. We will incorporate new metrics that more clearly demonstrate our priorities and more effectively measure progress. Housing Our Neighbors will measure the number of affordable units created and preserved with city financing, but for the first time, that annual unit count will also include NYCHA units preserved and rehabbed. Housing Our Neighbors will also measure how many of our supportive units are occupied (earlier this year, there was an approximately 10% vacancy rate), how many new affordable and supportive

units we fill, and how long it takes to lease up new, affordable and supportive units.

I will now walk you through each of the five policy chapters in the blueprint and highlight some of the key initiatives described in each.

NYCHA is the first chapter in Housing Our Neighbors. We are committed to finally making the necessary changes to preserve this vital housing resource for generations to come. The team at NYCHA has worked incredibly hard over the last three years since the signing of the federal agreement to address physical issues across the portfolio. From lead and mold to broken boilers and elevators, there's a long road ahead to bring our public housing stock up to the standard that New Yorkers deserve. We are advancing many operational changes to improve quality of life for residents in the near term.

Traditionally, NYCHA operated in an overly centralized manner, which meant that the unique needs of a community the size and layout of a development were not considered in day to day operations. By rolling out the neighborhood model, we are bringing decision making power to development staff who know their residents and buildings the best and shifting

authority to the local level, so that decisions can be made faster based on neighborhood needs.

Similarly, we are shifting how work orders are completed to expedite repairs and prioritize residence schedules. Residents will now be able to see every step in the repair process from the start. They will be able to call one central number for their neighborhood to schedule appointments, ask questions, and access other forms of support. Beyond giving NYCHA residents more flexibility and control, work order reform also introduces new efficiencies to ease the pressure on NYCHA's most critical skilled trades, such as plumbers, plasterers and painters.

We are also improving sanitation and janitorial services at NYCHA, which have been raised by residents as key quality of life concerns. Because of its unique size and scale, NYCHA is well positioned to test new strategies for providing and operating housing that could eventually be scaled up to serve more New Yorkers. In partnership with the Department of Sanitation, NYCHA is leading the way on a pilot for mechanical waste collection, which is a method of waste containerization and collection that keeps trash and recycling off the sidewalk and

street. Alongside efforts to improve quality of life for residents in the short term, we are setting NYCHA up for long term financial stability through processes that give residents an active say over the future of their homes. Through both the PACT RAD Program and the forthcoming Preservation Trust, NYCHA is allowing residents to select which preservation tool, if any, is used to rehabilitate their development. The state law enabling the creation of the trust requires an opt-in for residents to affirmatively choose the trust or another preservation route. For PACT RAD projects, residents are being given a seat at the table every step of the way, from selecting the development partner to participating in long term property management.

Finally, the blueprint commits to improving safety and security at NYCHA, which was a key priority for residents when asked what they want to see in a city wide housing plan. In partnership with the Mayor's Office for criminal justice, we are proud to be expanding the mayor's action plan for neighborhood safety. The neighborhood STAT program from 15 NYCHA sights to 30 in the coming months, with \$10.9 million in funding. This engages NYCHA

residents and MAP partners in identifying public safety priorities and implementing solutions and provides new resources to enhance accountability.

Homelessness is a housing issue. Housing Our Neighbors is the first city-wide housing plan to truly embrace this and put forward integrated solutions for both housing and homelessness. The Blueprint includes a wide range of strategies to break the cycle of housing instability and homelessness from helping New Yorkers stay housed to reducing the risk of returning to shelter. The first step is to acknowledge the full reality and scope of this crisis. Regardless of whether they are escaping an abusive partner, have had to vacate their home due to a fire, or any number of other circumstances. New Yorkers without permanent stable housing must be acknowledged and given access to the full range of options for housing and support. In the coming weeks, we will be publishing a new daily shelter census that includes New Yorkers in the city administered shelter systems, and finally holds us accountable to the full scope of need.

All too often, New Yorkers are forced to make an impossible choice between staying with an abusive

partner or losing their housing. Domestic violence is a leading cause of homelessness in New York City, as too many survivors do not get a chance to heal and get back on their feet. We are committing new funds to expand a program at the mayor's office to end domestic and gender based violence that provides survivors with low barrier emergency grants to cover rent, moving costs, and other urgent expenses. The program is expected to serve over 700 households per year, with crucial resources to help survivors avoid shelter entry and find a safe new home. We are also launching an effort to prevent housing instability and homelessness among new migrants. Although we pride ourselves on being a microcosm of the world's many communities, according to HUD guidelines, New York City is not an option for newly arriving refugees due to the lack of affordable housing. Undocumented New Yorkers, refugees and asylum seekers alike face many barriers to housing access related to eligibility, language access needs, and more. In partnership with the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs, we're launching a working group to identify and break down those barriers so that our immigrant communities can thrive.

For New Yorkers already living in shelter, Housing Our Neighbors offers new resources and strategies to help households moving into housing faster. Supportive housing is a critical resource for many New Yorkers exiting shelter, who need services and support to remain stably housed. The city previously committed to creating 15,000 new units of supportive housing by 2030. Our administration is accelerating supportive housing production to meet that target by 2028, two years earlier than originally planned. At the same time, we have already begun the important work of expanding and streamlining access to supportive housing. These efforts will help New Yorkers who need supportive housing access it faster and ensure that desperately needed supportive units do not sit vacant for protracted periods of time.

Housing vouchers offer another important pathway out of shelter, but too often households with vouchers cannot find an apartment to move into. This is due in part to the lack of low cost housing options, but also persistent source of income discrimination against voucher holders. This administration has no tolerance for discrimination

and is committed to ending this violation. The Mayor's 2023 adopted budget restored funding for lawyers at the New York City Commission on Human Rights to investigate and litigate against discriminating landlords. Housing Our Neighbors commits additional funding to combat source of income discrimination through proactive testing, enforcement, litigation and more. This will be a coordinated effort across agencies and city hall that brings in expert nonprofit partners to ramp up capacity and broaden our reach. Overall, the blueprint commits \$35 million to support tenant rights and protections so that New Yorkers can become and remain stably housed. These funds will support efforts ranging from source of income discrimination to enforcement against tenant harassment to support for at-risk tenants. This plan also commits \$25 million to homelessness prevention services and stabilization services for formerly homeless households.

Finally, the blueprint provides a wider range of shelter and service options and commits new resources to improve quality of life and shelter. These include medical respite beds for homeless patients

exiting hospitals, new services at drop in centers for homeless youth and telehealth mental health services for children in shelter. These efforts build on recent DHS work to strengthen service provision in the shelter system. Housing Our Neighbors commits \$5 million to create a new pre development shelter and acquisition fund, which will help nonprofit shelter providers develop their own facilities and increased capacity so that aging lower quality shelters can close.

The third chapter of Housing Our Neighbors is focused on creating and preserving affordable housing. This has been the heart and primary strategy of housing plans from past administrations, and it is a goal that we must continue to advance in the years ahead. With \$22 billion committed over the next 10 years, we have the largest capital plan for housing that the city has ever seen. The Adams administration is committed to building new affordable housing and preserving existing affordable homes. But we are also committing to shaping development to fit the right context and meet the right needs. Whether that means shifting the balance between rental and homeownership, creating more units

to serve lower income households, prioritizing projects and areas with fewer affordable homes, or numerous other strategies to help meet the moment. Housing Our Neighbors aims to serve New Yorkers diverse household needs by creating more flexibility for housing sizes and types. We will continue to advocate for state legislation that provides the relief we need to provide New Yorkers in basement apartments. People are living in basements whether we like it or not, and we cannot ensure that the units are healthy and safe without a pathway to legalization. We will also eliminate barriers to the creation of small units, convert underutilized hotels to supportive and affordable housing and advanced other innovative strategies to meet diverse household needs. Every neighborhood must be held accountable for meeting the need for new housing supply. To spur new developments citywide. We will work with the Department of City Planning to pursue zoning changes that allow greater square footage for all types of affordable housing, including senior, supportive and other affordable housing. This is a key part of The Mayor's City Of Yes Plan and is aligned with other strategies to help the city Thrive post pandemic.

Finally, we will leverage land use and financing tools to increase the supply of affordable housing in areas with good access to transit jobs, schools, and other resources that help New Yorkers thrive.

Housing Our Neighbors prioritizes affordable stable housing for renters, including those who need ongoing services and support to remain housed. Rent is the single greatest monthly cost for most low income households, leaving households with less money to pay for childcare, groceries, and other daily necessities. Our administration is committed to reducing rent burden, especially for low income households who are struggling the most. One strategy is to expand and streamline access to the senior citizen rent increase exemption or SCRI Program, and the disability rent increase exemption or DRIE, which freezes the rents of seniors and people with disabilities who are living in rent regulated apartments. We will also work to place new affordable childcare centers into the ground floors of affordable housing to alleviate the competing financial pressures of childcare and rent.

Housing Our Neighbors also places a renewed focus on homeownership to help households build and

generate wealth and address long standing racial disparities in our city. Homeownership is the single greatest contributor to household wealth and America, but only 32% of New York City households own their homes less than half the national rate. The cost of purchasing and maintaining a home have soared, putting homeownership further out of reach for renters and threatening the stability of low income owners. We must provide the help that both aspiring and existing homeowners need. Housing Our Neighbors commits \$44 million in new funds for critical homeownership programs to help reach that goal. To increase access to homeownership, we are significantly expanding HPDs home first program, which helps low and moderate income households buy their first home. With new resources committed, the program will provide up to \$100,000 in downpayment assistance to an estimated 300 households each year. We're also shifting capital resources to support the construction of more affordable homes for low and middle income first time homebuyers. It is equally important to ensure that low and moderate income homeowners can stay in and maintain their homes, especially now, as inflation and rising maintenance

costs are compounding the economic impacts of COVID-19. We are launching two new programs to support homeowners with a multitude of resources. Building on the successful Home Fix Pilot, we are launching a permanent version of the program called Home Fix 2.0. The program will provide homeowners who cannot access traditional loans with financial assistance and technical support to make repairs and renovation, sustainability and resiliency upgrades and accessibility improvements for seniors aging in place. We will also launch a citywide homeowner help desk to support homeowners who are at risk of displacement from foreclosure scams, tax liens, rising costs, or lack of estate planning. The help desk will provide over 1000 homeowners each year with financial housing and legal counseling and connections to additional services and support. It is imperative that we aggressively pursue the creation and preservation of high-quality homes that New Yorkers can afford.

Beyond these items that I've highlighted today, we have an extensive list of other programs and initiatives that will help New Yorkers in the years ahead.

The fourth chapter of Housing Our Neighbors focuses on improving the health and safety of New Yorkers. Housing plays a crucial role in determining health outcomes. Poor housing conditions put New Yorkers at greater risk of health problems, including asthma and lead poisoning. Substandard housing quality can also increase the risk of fire and other safety concerns, especially in the face of extreme weather and climate change. At the same time, much of the work that is needed to advance our ambitious decarbonization goals can also provide safer and healthier living conditions for residents. We have worked extensively with The Chief climate officer FDNY, HPD, NYCHA, DOHMH, and DCP to create a roadmap toward building safer, healthier and more sustainable homes. To ensure healthy and safe living conditions in our affordable housing, we will ramp up enforcement against owners who neglect their buildings and education and assistance for owners who need additional resources and support to make repairs. Housing Our Neighbors includes \$9 million for programs to improve enforcement and promote healthy housing conditions. Mayor Adams 2023 Executive Budget funds 27 new lead inspectors at HPD.

We are also investing new resources to improve HPD enforcement, operations, technology, and capacity.

We are working across agencies to increase proactive inspections, which allow us to root out and address housing quality issues, even if the city has not received a complaint. We are also expanding 2 DOHMH programs to reduce home based asthma triggers and risk by providing integrated pest management services or education and assistance for both tenants and landlords.

With climate change upon us, keeping New Yorkers safe in their homes is even more urgent than ever before. Again and again. We have seen our neighbors tragically lose their lives to hurricanes, floods, and heatwaves. Extreme weather events will only grow more frequent in the years ahead. Housing Our Neighbors outlines a suite of tools to increase awareness and help residents help keep themselves safe from extreme weather. We are expanding FloodHelpNY, an online platform where residents can access information and resources about flood insurance and other tools to address flood risk. As we continue fighting for state legislation to allow for safe and legal basement apartments, we are also

increasing Strategic Community Outreach to protect New Yorkers in basements ahead of flooding events. To this end, the city has engaged the deliveristas Uber Eats, GrubHub, and DoorDash in a working group to develop new strategies for communicating with New Yorkers in basement apartments about potential floods.

In addition to awareness and education initiatives, Housing Our Neighbors confronts the need for resiliency in our homes and neighborhoods over the long term. In the coming months, HPD will establish new design guidelines and ensure that new affordable housing is climate resilient. The agency will also begin incorporating resiliency screenings into assessments for retrofits, so that existing buildings can become safer and more resilient. We will work across government and City Hall to develop better long term systems for disaster recovery so that we are more prepared in the aftermath of the next major storm.

Alongside these efforts, Housing Our Neighbors strives to make our homes healthier and more sustainable for generations to come. We must develop new tools and practices to help the building stock

meet our city's ambitious decarbonization goals, and provide owners with the resources and education they need to comply with Local Law 97. We are advancing zoning changes that will clear a pathway for better building performance, pilot programs for electrification and weatherization in multifamily buildings, and strategies to make better use of state and federal funds among other tools. With over 300,000 units, NYCHA provides a unique opportunity to develop and test new tools that can then be applied to the broader housing stock. Housing Our Neighbors supports NYCHA as a leader in sustainability, including through feasibility studies for a new geothermal heating district that includes several public housing developments, a first of its kind model for New York City.

The final chapter of Housing Our Neighbors focuses on administrative burden, something that has long been overlooked and city government yet has a very real impact on New Yorkers in need. All too often, residents are forced to go through time consuming stressful and traumatizing processes in order to get the affordable housing and the help they need. Our administration is committed to reducing as

many of these bureaucratic hurdles as possible. Our goal is to reorient how we provide housing and services to focus on the resident experience. Housing Our Neighbors outlined several actions that can be taken immediately to reduce administrative burden and streamline access to housing and services. For example, we are working to implement a back end audit for income verification in the HPD affordable housing lottery. This will allow New Yorkers to move into affordable housing units sooner without having to wait until their income information has been reviewed and confirmed multiple times.

Another priority that we are accomplishing this summer is removing the absent parent form from the Section Eight application process. The absent parent form requires households applying for Section Eight to provide personal contact and income information for the parents of any children in the household who will not be living with them in the apartment. The form was designed to prevent fraud and ensure that all household income is being reported. In practice though, it creates extra paperwork, stigmatizes single parents, and potentially puts families who have left abusive situations at risk. As well as

describing improvements that can be made in the near term Housing Our Neighbors commits to doing the hard work that is needed to identify and remove countless other burdens and barriers. We will work across agencies and City Hall to examine the processes that New Yorkers must go through to apply for and obtain affordable housing, rental assistance and other housing supports. Our goal is to eliminate any barriers that we have sole authority over while partnering with the state and federal government to eliminate those we do not.

Thank you very much for this opportunity to share the vision and ideas behind Housing Our Neighbors. The initiatives I have highlighted here today are only a few of many included in the blueprint to create a healthier, safer and more affordable city. We look forward to partnering with you and your colleagues to better serve New Yorkers in the days ahead. I'm happy to answer any questions.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you so much Chief Officer Katz, and it did not go unnoticed that there were some good numbers in there and dollar estimate. So that is very helpful. And I really

look continue to look forward to advancing the details of the housing plan.

So I'm going to ask just to a short round of questions, and colleagues, shoot me a text or give me a nod if you want to ask questions.

So just... just to start, you know, picking up on... on my points that I made about transparency and details and specific policies: Does the administration plan to release an update to the plan that lists more... more detail regarding goals of the services, quantifiable affordable housing production goals, and... Maybe not production, but as you've said, in the plan in here today, placement goals, and other measurable metrics?

CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: Yes, absolutely. Thank you for that question. We are absolutely going to provide regular updates as to our progress under the plan. And as we incorporate new metrics and develop the data systems in order to collect that data, we can be... we will be updating the Council and the public regularly.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: And there... there is mention of over a dozen agencies that were involved in the creation of the plan. So can you talk to us

about how you will internally be monitoring progress being made under the plan?

CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: Sure. So for the first time ever, there's a position in City Hall that's exclusively focused on housing, which is me. So that gives me more freedom and flexibility to work across different agencies and across silos. And we found that there are housing policies across many agencies that don't have housing in their name. So for the first time, we've talked to the Department of Sanitation about housing policy and work together with them and with NYCHA in order to create our waste containerization pilot. So we're really excited about the holistic NYCHA of this plan and working across agencies to meet all those different goals.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. And moving to the subject of supportive housing units, it was widely reported that there were some 2500 units sitting vacant as of earlier this year. Can you give us an update on how many supportive housing units are currently vacant and available for use and how long you anticipate it will take to tenant these units?

CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: Sure. So this is one of the reasons why this pivot to a new reporting

structure is going to be so important. So for more than a decade, I was responsible for supportive housing creation. And every day someone asked me if I signed the loan documents and closed the deal, but very rarely was I ever asked to be accountable for filling those units at the end of the day, which is at the end, finally, what is going to help New Yorkers actually be housed. So we really want to make sure that we're creating the data systems and processes that allow us to track that, and to really hold ourselves accountable to that number. And I can defer to my colleagues at HRA for the specifics.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MURRAY: Thank you, Chief Katz. Good morning, Council. Good morning Chair, and everyone watching at home. So I'll give you the number, and I'll tell you how we got there, which I think exemplifies all the points that The Chief has made about our partnership and collaboration.

So we're... When it was reported early in the year around March that we're at 2500, or thereabouts north of that, we're now below 1500 units that are available to move in. So that represents a significant amount of effort, I think, across the administration.

The other thing I would note is I would be remiss if I didn't pause to say, advocates obviously brought attention to this matter, and then partnered with us, right? That... And that's the kind of government and collaboration we want. In speaking about transparency and accountability, it is important, of course, as you're saying, to think about numbers, and you've heard several of those from The Chief already. When we focused in on this number our Commissioner and The Chief and The Mayor wanted us to really look at each pain point in the process, and we didn't do it alone. So I want to call out Shetty in particular at the Board of Housing Network of New York. I think colleagues from there are testifying today. They worked with us, with folks who are housing providers. We worked very closely, while Molly park and I switch seats here. We're under one umbrella. This is the DSS umbrella and it was important for us to collaborate, and make sure we look at how folks in shelter are moving out. We needed to get a handle on our data, right. So it's not enough to just make sure we're monitoring metrics, but that we're looking at the process by which folks might have barriers to keeping that data updated. Providers have to enter

that information. We do have a centralized system in place. And as you can imagine, folks are very focused on getting people moved. So it was important for us and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, who holds the contracts, to (1) make sure that we're referring as many people making sure that folks who are eligible are being seen. We are... This is client choice. And we want to make... And thinking about supportive housing, you're talking about folks who need additional support. That is the point of support is housing. So it's not one-time engagement, but ongoing engagement to move people from one place to another. So the number I think that that you've heard, moved down significantly in three months, isn't just the metric behind it, it pushed us to look at the how we manage data, it pushed us to partner very closely with everyone.

And then the other thing that we are committed to ongoing is making sure that there's education around what it means to get support while living in community, which is the whole point of supportive housing. So it's an integrated approach to tackling this issue, making sure the units get filled, and bringing units online.

2 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you so
3 much.

4 CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: I'll also add that
5 this was an area where our collaboration with New
6 Yorkers with lived experience of homelessness was
7 really, really critical. So each agency in the
8 process -- and there are many in the supportive
9 housing eligibility and placement process -- kind of
10 understands their own process and their own systems,
11 and their own forms. But it was really only the New
12 Yorkers who have lived it and been there, that were
13 able to talk us through what it feels like to move
14 through the process, kind of being bounced from
15 agency to agency. So that was a really amazing
16 process, and we'll continue to work with our partners
17 with lived experience to make sure that they both
18 partner with us, but also push us to do better, and
19 really learn from them about what that process feels
20 like on the ground.

21 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much.
22 That's... That's really helpful. I'll ask one more,
23 and then I'll turn it over to my colleague,
24 Councilmember Hudson.

So as far as source of income discrimination, the... in the budget that passed, of course, there are additional funds for this source of income discrimination units, which we understand had gone down to zero staffers, just at the end of this year, or at the end of this fiscal year. So can you can... Do you have today... Could you provide us a breakdown of the status of complaints? How many complaints were received this year? 2021? 2020? And 2019? What is the status of those complaints? And what... what... How have we been working through those complaints, given the staffing shortage at CCHR?

CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: Sure. So I will... we will get back to with numbers from CCHR for the past few years, but I will say that this current Executive Budget restores the funds to CCHR, and then there's also new funding coming in in the future budget plan to make sure that we really can make sure to combat source of income discrimination, both in terms of discovering where it happens, and then prosecuting the landlords who refuse to stop.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: I look forward to that. Thank you so much. I'm going to turn it over to Councilmember Hudson.

COUNCILMEMBER HUDSON: Thank you so much, Chair Sanchez. Thank you all for your willingness to be here to answer your questions. I have several, I'm just going to ask a couple. And then I have to step out for a meeting, and then I'll be back to ask many more. But one of the first ones I wanted to ask is just, you know, by 2040, the population of New Yorkers, aged 65-plus will increase by 30% compared to the general population of only 3%. And you mentioned exploring pathways to automatic enrollment for SCRIE injury. But this is something that's required at the state level. I introduced a bill to require the creation of an online portal to more quickly facilitate renewal and enrollment. What specifically is the administration exploring to bolster enrollment that's within the city's jurisdiction? And can you talk specifically about your plan to create affordable housing for older New Yorkers who are living on a fixed income and are low income?

CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: Sure, Councilmember Hudson. Thanks for asking. And I'm also a constituent, so it's been a pleasure having you represent our district.

COUNCILMEMBER HUDSON: Thank you.

CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: So seniors are oftentimes the most low income members of any given community. As you stated, they're on a fixed income, and so as rents go up, and as their... as other costs go up, their ability to pay for their housing is more... more difficult. They also oftentimes have accessibility needs that need to be addressed. So keeping senior New Yorkers safely in their homes, and also making sure that they... that the housing that they have meets their needs isn't really a top priority for this plan and for this administration. I'm going to defer to Councilmember Carrión to talk a little bit about the specific programs for seniors in the plan.

COMMISSIONER CARRIÓN: Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER HUDSON: He's one of us.

COMMISSIONER CARRIÓN: Thank you, Chief. I haven't been called Councilmember in a long, long time. But it's an honor, and being back in this hall. Yes, the best job I ever had... Grilling agencies. And I have not been on this side of this equation. So it feels good to be here. Good to be back home, Councilmembers, and thank you for your

partnership, and the work that you do and advocating and holding any administration accountable.

You know, seniors are a priority for HPD and for this administration, and throughout the... the housing ecosystem, if you will. And so they are a part and a priority in every manifestation, whether it's new construction, preservation, or homeownership or even our interventions in dealing with those that are homeless. So, you know, when... whenever we invest in a new development, seniors are in mind. Whenever we preserve a housing unit... And we have programs for new construction for seniors. Whenever we preserve, we have the opportunity to keep housing affordable for seniors, to keep it safe, to provide additional funding to outfit their housing units, to ensure that their bathrooms are safe, their kitchens are safe, that the building systems work for them, both the in unit and the common areas. There... HPD has programs to support that. And when it comes to homeownership, we also have a suite of programs to... to deal with folks who are on fixed income and are in homes or are even senior aspiring homeowners who can take advantage of what The Chief Housing Officer

referenced earlier, which is a home mortgages
downpayment assistance program.

But in that regard, as... as we address seniors,
we have... You're all familiar with the Senior
Affordable Rental Apartments program, otherwise known
as SARA, and this is for older adults, I like to call
them, that are older than 62 years old and are on low
incomes. Here in these projects, and many of you are
familiar with the SARA deals, and you try to get them
into your districts because they address a growing
need.

We're also partnering with NYCHA, and NYCHA is
making available land on their, on their sites, on
their campuses, and over 500 homes are now under
construction or in the planning phases for seniors on
NYCHA land, and that's going to continue. We support
our seniors through our preservation work. We have
170 buildings that were created through the HUD
Section 202 program with 14,000 apartments, and we
are giving them special attention to ensure that we
preserve them going into the future. We help seniors
age in place. Is that like a time bell for me?

COUNCILMEMBER HUDSON: Well, it's more so for me,
but...

COMMISSIONER CARRIÓN: Did I eat up your time Councilmember?

COUNCILMEMBER HUDSON: I mean, yes, but...

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: You can wrap up, Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER CARRIÓN: Yes, I will. I will. And... and we also support seniors in our homeownership programs, and SCRIE was mentioned, the Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption Program. So seniors are at the center of the work that we do.

COUNCILMEMBER HUDSON: Thank you. I will leave it there for now. I'll be back to ask several other questions. But the point that I would really like to drive home is the fact that I don't believe this administration is prepared for the increase in the senior population that we're going to be experiencing over the next couple of decades. And if we don't actually make plans now, it's going to be too late once the population boom has already occurred. So I would strongly encourage you all to have specific plans to address the needs of the growing population. I know that there are programs in place to address the needs of the current older adult population that we have, but like I said, it's going to grow 25

percent by 2040, and that's compared to only a 3% increase in the general population. And I just want to make sure that we're actually prioritizing the needs of older New Yorkers. So thank you. Yeah. And thank you, Chair.

CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: Councilmember Hudson, I'll just add also while you're here, the administrative burdens that haunt seniors more than most for anyone who's ever helped an aging parent or grandparent help fill out a million forms. And to that end, as you said, there's many aspects of the SCRIE Program that do require state legislation. And we look forward to partnering with you on figuring out the best path forward for those. There are, however, things that we believe we can do with better collaboration between DOF and HPD, for seniors who move into HPD finance properties, where we're already collecting a ton of information about those seniors, to be able to more readily introduce them into the SCRIE program without having to duplicate efforts across multiple agencies.

COUNCILMEMBER HUDSON: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Great, thank you. Thank you Councilmember Hudson.

COMMISSIONER CARRIÓN: Chair, let me... Chair, let me just add that we have \$761 million dedicated to SARA projects already in our budget. So just in terms of... of numbers and forecasting the need.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: And those \$761 million are projects that are already in the pipeline?

COMMISSIONER CARRIÓN: Uh, I'll have to get back to you on that.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you, Commissioner. I want to acknowledge that we've been joined by Councilmember Dinowitz and Public Advocate Williams. Public Advocate, would you would you like to speak next?

PUBLIC ADVOCATE WILLIAMS: Oh, sorry. Thank you, Madam Chair. I have more of a... more of a statement if that's okay. Thank you so much. As mentioned, my name is Jumaane Williams, the Public Advocate of the City of New York. Thank you, Chair and members of the Committee of Housing and Buildings for holding this hearing and allowing me the opportunity to provide testimony. Thank you to The Administration. After the reviewing the Housing Our Neighbors, A Blueprint On Housing and Homelessness, our office has concluded that the blueprint puts together in one

place, all that we already know, but unfortunately does not include the specifics of what we need to know and analysis of why certain affordable housing programs are not delivering what we need, when we need it, and not in the numbers that we need in New York City. My office, by the way, still awaiting a briefing on the blueprint. Hopefully we get that soon. I'm thankful that Council is holding this hearing and hope it will illuminate many unanswered questions. I also understand that in the... the survey that was done, most New Yorkers thought housing was the number one thing that we can do to provide public safety, yet I think the policing aspect of many of the plans have the most detail. So I hope that changes.

The Blueprint does tell us that 90% more New Yorkers are rent burdened today than one year ago. We can assume that the financial stresses of the pandemic that cause loss of life and work are responsible. But there's nothing in the paper that elaborates on any other potential issues that would have caused this number to rise so drastically in one year, the issues tenants had with affordable units when I was an organizer, unfortunately, still exists

today. We need solutions to stop this crisis from getting worse. I am left to wonder if the request for a briefing has yet to happen due to details still needed on concrete plans about fixing NYCHA, creating and preserving affordable housing and greater numbers than before, and eradicating homelessness. But for NYCHA blueprint commenced this discussion on public housing by discussing the transformation plan of 2021. That will bring improvements to the day to day operations of NYCHA, while meeting the requirements of the 2019 HUD agreement. The plan is to bring local site based management as opposed to the current central model. This sounds like a great idea. I do have some concerns, because it does not address the fact NYCHA created in 1935 did have local base management for many decades, but changed in central management because of corruption and other problems that exist, we do want to know if in changing back will we address some of those issues that were there before. The report points out that NYCHA's current work order systems backlogged over 600K work orders. Moreover, there are wait times of what 300 days for work performed by workers. The report goes on to say that the administration will implement work order

reform that addresses duplicative or unnecessary work orders and scheduling repairs around a resident's availability. My primary question still exist as to how, regarding NYCHA STAT, everyone wants true accountability, including some at NYCHA. How is NYCHA STAT going to work, and when will it be implemented?

The report speaks about infill housing and Transferable Development Rights (TDRs) as a way of bringing money to address capital needs, understanding that we definitely this funding. There are concerns. Before Mayor Bloomberg left office in 2013, there was a proposal to do the same. NYCHA residents and advocates really pushed back against this plan, because there was no mechanism to ensure that the plan did not have a two-tier system of the haves and have nots. There must be specific assurances that the additional funding that will be put into NYCHA buildings immediately and/or before any development breaks ground.

In terms of creating and preserving affordable housing, after close analysis of the blueprint, my office noticed that nothing is called to go into effect or be implemented immediately. I've yet to

see any real numbers or real execution plan about how the administration plans to move forward. The under-supply of housing causes an increase in costs for everyone. We could have reconciled this issue much earlier by converting those vacant luxury apartments into affordable and supportive housing.

I'd like to know from administration if this would apply... if some of the discussions would apply to 421-A exemption apartments, since it was not directly mentioned. The city continues to lose millions of dollars each year from vacant 421-A apartment exemptions that are either taking too long to finish construction or just left unoccupied. I support pathways to bring basement apartments into safe and legal use.

Since it is mentioned that the city will pursue a package of zoning and regulatory changes to encourage a wider range of unit sizes, I hope we can have the administration support on our reso to do the same. We do know that many New Yorkers are rent burdened, and even more face this issue since the rent guidelines board voted to increase rent for the living in rent stabilized apartments. Sadly, under this administration, the board implemented the

highest rent increase in a decade, even though we have the highest rents in the country. The administration's plan to leverage non-residential spaces and affordable housing to meet community needs is a very great start. At the same time based on previous administration efforts that ends up being added into the community as an investment to creating community space is something that has not been useful in the city, and ends up wasting billions of dollars. A great example is Hudson Yards Vessel.

Childcare was... was highlighted in this section as well, where the administration will spearhead two new tax incentives. Additionally, property owners who pay for construction with creation of new seats for childcare are eligible for tax exemption, which can cause potential loopholes like the 421-A exemption. There are various mentions of supportive affordable housing like Community Land Trust. Many of these are great ideas, but the question is specifics frustratingly linger about how they will actually be implemented. When it comes to homelessness, I am very glad that the blueprint rightfully discusses housing and homelessness together. They're too often inexplicably discussed

separately. Unfortunately, noticeably absent from the plan is any comment on the administration's current plan of sweeps and harassment of homeless individuals on New York City streets and subways, something that I've said is doing the last thing first. Without a place for these New Yorkers to go, it is inhumane policy that continues the conflation of fixing the homelessness crisis with not seeing homeless people in specific areas.

The starting point to ending homelessness is to ensure every interaction between the unhoused person in this city and a representative of this government is respectfully and culturally sensitive. The administration's approach didn't either when it came to those suites as the first way to go, and the forced removal of unhoused from subways, platforms and camps, with no real place to go drives a wedge between the city's government and our unhoused residents. The administration's over-policing of unhoused New Yorkers stand in stark contrast of the stated blueprint's goals work with the state to address the prison-to-shelter pipeline. Reducing this pipeline can start here and it can start now. We're in the Fourth of July weekend. We'll see New

York experience extreme heat. Unhoused individuals should not be faced with fear of being arrested or harassed to try to get air conditioned.

At the same time administration must address the prison-to-shelter pipeline through a comprehensive transitional housing program for returning citizens. For instance, the Women's Prison Association provides up to 28 families affected by maternal incarceration through its Sara Powell Huntington house. You need more of this supportive housing, wraparound services, and personalized care. The Blueprint calls for shelter predevelopment acquisition fund. Not-for-profit shelter operators would receive public and philanthropic funds to meet the upfront costs associated with acquiring and developing new infrastructure. I agree that as a city we must do more to ensure that shelters have the funds needed to develop service-rich shelter sites, even as permanent homes are the true goal. However, the blueprint calls for shelter providers to pay the fund back through shelter contracts. The mechanics of such an arrangement should immediately raise concerns. The only true return on investment for shelter service is the well-being of our current and future unhoused

population. The housing crisis is happening right now. New York City currently is the most expensive place to live with hundreds of thousands facing eviction or are currently homeless.

At the same time administration's blueprint does not provide information on widely reported policies. For instance, there is no update on the use of hotels for temporary shelters. It does not seek to provide guidance on ensuring shelter stability while unhoused individuals utilize services to move into transitional supportive or permanent housing. Those who utilize our shelter system deserve assurances that their care and safety is consistent and predictable. The administration correctly noted an increased need to combat tenant harassment, expanding the partners in the preservation pilot is a good step. I'm glad the Mayor's public engagement unit will be enhancing the PIP's visibility alongside a growing campaign from right to counsel. At the same time without resources is a toothless right. The Legal Aid Society, Bronx Defenders, and Neighbors Defender Services of Harlem are struggling to staff their organizations, as their services are stretched thin. The Office of Court Administration has

rejected a call for eviction cases to be slowed until counselors are made available to tenants and housing courts. The administration must do more to ensure right to counsel. I am glad to see the blueprint includes expanding a pilot program (crosstalk)...

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Public Advocate, I'm so sorry... if you can...

PUBLIC ADVOCATE WILLIAMS: Oh sorry. Yeah. I'll end it now. I'm proud to co-sponsor of many of these Intros because they're low-barrier grants, proven measures to restore the dignity, safety, and stability for survivors of violence. I am hopeful that passages like Intro 153.

I was waiting for the beep, so I didn't know it wasn't on. But, my apologies. But thank you for the time. I really appreciate it.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: No, thank you so much public advocate for being here, and for those details remarks. I think they're... they will be very helpful. Thank you.

I next want to call on Councilmember Carr.

COUNCILMEMBER CARR: Thank you, Chair Sanchez.

Good morning, everyone. So, you know, I represent a community that I think according to the latest

surveys is about two thirds of families or households are owner-occupants of their of their households... of their properties rather. And so affordability means to them, you know, access to financing for home purchases, but also in the long run, you know, their tax levels. And so I know The Mayor is a committed proponent of property tax reform. And we had a property tax commission sponsored by this Council in the previous term that gave a blueprint for how we might work with our Albany partners to make our tax system more understandable and more equitable across the city. And so to me, that's a key component of any housing affordability conversation. Unfortunately, Albany didn't take up that report this year. And so I was wondering if you could talk about you know, what you're going to be doing as we approach the new session in January, working with our legislative leaders to make sure that is on the agenda.

CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: Sure. Thank you so much, Councilmember.

So for... especially for communities like yours that do have a preponderance of homeowners, we really wanted to make sure that there was a strong emphasis

on homeownership in this plan. So we have a variety of different tools to help existing homeowners and to help new New Yorkers become homeowners as well. One of the things we hear routinely from homeowners is how complex our permitting and land use processes are to make sure that they can... if they want to make a repair, if they want to make a change, those are incredibly difficult. So we're really focusing on the administrative burdens of some of our processes, and working in collaboration with our chief efficiency officer on a process to really streamline all those processes that have been driving New Yorkers crazy for so many years. So we really appreciate your input on that.

As to property tax reform, there is meant to be a commission over the summer with Albany. I'm going to sit on that commission, and we hopefully will take some of those challenges on head on.

COUNCILMEMBER CARR: Okay, appreciate that. And so in terms of the financing component, you mentioned in your testimony, a line item for helping with down payments. Can you get a little bit more into detail about what that is? I think that was like \$100,000 for a prospective 300 families citywide? What's the

cutoffs for that for... in terms of eligibility?

And... And are you looking to maybe expand that when we talk about the FY 24 budget?

CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: Sure. We're going to be taking a look at the term sheet and the eligibility criteria for all those homeownership assistance programs. We really want to make sure that they capture as many of the New Yorkers who need them. And again, just to summarize our homeownership strategy, we're creating programs that create downpayment assistance, home repair for existing homeowners, and then also to create new homeownership projects in the past. So the hope is to drastically expand those programs so that we can get more homeowners and really have more New Yorkers benefit from that wealth creation that homeownership can provide.

COMMISSIONER CARRIÓN: If I may, another aspect of this is ensuring that homeowners have access to help, right? So we're expanding the Homeownership Help Desk. Advancing that program. I think we're dedicating about \$44 million to the suite of programs that deal with homeowners and small-building owners. So, we also lend to homeowners to fix their homes.

And a lot of homeowners in New York City are older adults who need help and are on fixed incomes, even on Staten Island. And so I think that... that's an important aspect of this initiative.

COUNCILMEMBER CARR: No, I appreciate that.

Especially, you know, you mentioned older adults, you know, my district has always rated in top five in terms of the aging population. Just... I'm coming to the end, so I'll just ask my last question, which is, again, related to this, this financing issue. You know, what I hear from folks of my generation and those in that ballpark, who are now first-time homebuyers: What previously had been a very affordable market for housing on Staten Island is increasingly getting unaffordable. Some of that's because of appreciation of home values. But some of it's also because home construction, as you referenced is getting more expensive. And a lot of that is due to burdens placed on construction, particularly stormwater runoff requirements with MS4 permitting that the city just entered into at the beginning of the year. And these are increasing costs that are being passed on to prospective homebuyers. So as we're considering eligibility for

some of these assistance programs for homebuyers, downpayment subsidies and the like, I think we really have to look at the eligibility requirements to make sure that you know, my constituents are kind of in the game for that kind of a program.

CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: Yeah, I think it's important to mention that traditionally, HPD focuses on as many of the lowest income New Yorkers as we possibly can. But then when you get into the homeownership space, the cost of homeownership have risen so much that even New Yorkers who make a little bit more money than the lowest income New Yorkers also we're going to need that support. So we definitely want to try to provide that.

COUNCILMEMBER CARR: For sure. Particularly, again, as my point is, a lot of that increase in cost is because of government and not necessarily just market forces. But I appreciate your comments. And I thank you, to the Chair for my time.

CHAIRPERSON SANCEHZ: Thank you so much, Councilmember. And I just want to underscore the importance of these homeownership programs and supports. And one area in particular that I've heard from many colleagues that have districts that have

many more homeowners than mine. I only have... I have 6% of my district is homeowner. But I've heard a lot about a request for other supports, right? So supports with dealing with the Department of Sanitation with, you know, the environmental control board and things like that. So it would be helpful to hear about that. But I'm going to turn it over now to Councilmember Kagan.

COUNCILMEMBER KAGAN: Thank you Chair. So I will ask my three questions right away, both to NYCHA and to HPD. So this will be easier for you to figure out the answers. So I will focus on the issue of how to avoid homelessness in the first place. Because this way, it is one of the ways to prevent more people to become homeless in the first place. So first of all about NYCHA: It's not a secret, and I've worked before for City Comptroller, it was an audit of vacant apartments in NYCHA. So NYCHA has a lot of vacant apartments. Some of them are unlivable. Some of them require a lot of repairs, but a lot of them are vacant even now. So what should be done to prevent this situation, when we have like 270,000 people on vacant lease for NYCHA, and we have vacant apartments?

Also, every time I'm in NYCHA buildings, I see that NYCHA clearly doesn't have -- I would not call it inventory, but at least a list of people who are supposed to live in NYCHA, who should live in NYCHA, and who should not live in NYCHA, and something should be done about it. And if you talk to every president of tenant association, they will tell you who should not live in their buildings and still living there. That's why they're breaking entrance doors, locks, and everything else because they don't have keys because they should not be there in the first place. While people whose income is very low, they cannot get in. So people who shouldn't be there are living there. And people who should be there are still waiting. That's NYCHA.

In terms of HPD, I also have tons of questions, but it's interrelated with NYCHA. We mentioned today a lot of times about Section Eight. You know, the story, just recently our beautiful NYCHA sent thousands of termination letters, thousands and thousands, of termination letters to Section Eight recipients and then apologized and said, "It is a computer who is to blame," not the person who did but the computer is to blame for sending thousands of

1 letters of termination, creating havoc in the lives
2 of so many residents of New York City and social
3 workers as well. So... But the main reason why many
4 landlords do not want to accept Section Eight very,
5 very often is not being greedy. But Section Eight
6 very often pays so late for Section Eight, that
7 nobody wants to deal with it. Very often, it's the
8 late payments from Section Eight, that's the reason
9 why many landlords do not want to take Section Eight
10 vouchers. So that's also should be looked at like,
11 how often is the late payments for Section Eight to
12 landlords. That issue alone can help a lot.

14 And finally, HPD: As a former journalist, I can
15 tell you that many, many existing... today existing
16 housing programs are totally unknown to hundreds of
17 thousands of people... not thousands... hundreds of
18 thousands. I love Housing Connect Program, by the
19 way. It's very useful. But many, many people are
20 not aware how to apply for the DRI Program, for the
21 SCRIE Program, for the Federal 202 Program, for
22 Federal 811 Program, and like Mitchell-Lama programs,
23 and of course, lotteries... Like people are learning
24 about lotteries three months after it's finished, you
25 know, like so... Just by informing people, including

seniors, including people like low income, informing New Yorkers, better information through all possibilities about existing rental assistance programs, you will avoid a lot of evictions and a lot of homelessness in our city. Thank you for all of these questions... and answers.

CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: Thank you so much, Councilmember Kagan. I'll send it to my colleagues on the panel. But before I do, your... your hearing you speak is making me homesick. [Speaks Russian for 5 seconds.]

COUNCILMEMBER RUSSIAN: I hope you understand my questions.

CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: Yeah, ask them in Russian. Ask them in Russian. Even better.

So as you stated, the administrative burdens of some of our rental assistance programs are really a barrier to homeowners... to building owners who want to participate in the process. And it also makes it very, very difficult for the New Yorkers who need that housing support the most. We make people prove over and over again, in fact, how desperate they are for the help, when we know that they're struggling. So that's why we really wanted to make sure this plan

tackled that head on. And that's the way we measure success. So that's a really important aspect of the plan, so I'm glad that you brought that up. And I'll have my colleagues at NYCHA answer some of the rest of your questions.

VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Thank you so much, Councilmember, I really appreciate it. In terms of vacancies at NYCHA, our vacancy rate is way lower than the city's vacancy rate, it still remains about 1%. At any given time of our about 179,000 units, we have about 1600 units that are off the rent roll. They are in... Just because an apartment is vacant doesn't mean it's not going to be rented. It does take a considerable amount of time to get an apartment in a rentable condition. The average NYCHA tenant lives in their apartment for about 20 years. Before an apartment is turned over, it needs to be fully abated. It needs to be you know, upgraded significantly before it is put back in the rent roll. So that is why you do see vacancies at NYCHA. It's not... you know, it is not for... you know there is no like warehousing or anything like that going on. In terms of folks who are living in apartments who are not on the lease, it is our... Population at

NYCHA is about 400,000. And everybody knows that it's significantly higher than that, because there are people living on the lease... living in apartments off the lease. Over the last year or so we have created ways that make it easier for tenants to get on leases. So this way... And that would be the best for everybody, for people to step forward. And also to make sure that people know that getting on the lease gives you security. It gives you automatic... the ability to have succession rights, the ability to stay in your community, and folks who are on the lease will respect that community more too as well. But at the same time too, the fact that there are people who are not on a lease living in apartments is just another symptom of the housing crisis that we have in New York. They're living in apartments off the lease, maybe longer than they would like to because they don't have other places to go. So this is, you know, part of a larger problem, but it is a problem that we're you know, we're aware of, and we're working through.

COUNCILMEMBER KAGAN: Thank you.

2 COUNCILMEMBER SANCHEZ: Thank you so much,
3 Councilmember Kagan. I next want to turn it over to
4 our Chair of Public Housing, Councilmember Avilés.

5 COUNCILMEMBER AVILÉS: Good afternoon, everyone.
6 So I guess I'd like to start some questions with
7 Commissioner Carrión. Thank you for your testimony,
8 and the work on the plan. Is NYCHA exempted from
9 being listed on the HPD DOB violation database?

10 COMMISSIONER CARRIÓN: Can you repeat that
11 question just so I can make sure I give it to the
12 right person

13 COUNCILMEMBER AVILÉS: Yeah, sure. Is NYCHA
14 exempted from being listed on the HPD DOB violations
15 database?

16 COMMISSIONER CARRIÓN: I'm not sure...
17 (crosstalk)

18 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: I can answer this. The
19 answer is no. Code violations are listed on both DOB
20 and... and HPD's waiting list. You'd have... You
21 wouldn't search by development. You search by
22 address. Recently there was a bill passed in Albany
23 by your Assemblymember, and which now we will also
24 list it on our website too, so it'll be easier for
25 NYCHA residents to be able to search for their

development to see the code violations, both HPD and
DOB.

COUNCILMEMBER AVILÉS: Great. And as you know,
Commissioner Carrión, you've heard a backlog of work
orders of 633,000 with over 300 days of backlog. Are
you aware that the only way for a NYCHA resident to
get an HPD inspection is through doing an HP action
in court?

COMMISSIONER CARRIÓN: Let me bring up Deputy
Commissioner for Enforcement, that deals with these
issues and in fact is in active conversations with
NYCHA at the moment, AnneMarie Santiago. I think she
can be most helpful.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SANTIAGO: Good morning.
Good afternoon, everyone. Thank you for your
question. So that's correct. HPD inspection
resources are focused on privately-owned housing. We
generally do not do inspections at NYCHA facilities.
If you call 311 to file a complaint, your complaint
will go to the NYCHA center, because they're better
resourced, and they have the staff who will go out,
identify what the problem is, and follow up with the
repairs. If a tenant does file a complaint in

housing court, HPD does respond, but we only return those violations to the housing court.

COUNCILMEMBER AVILÉS: So would you agree, given the 633,000 backlog with a 300-day average wait for remedy that this feels like an onerous process for a NYCHA tenant to have to go through a court process, unlike private tenants, to get some relief? Or to get an actual inspection in their apartments?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SANTIAGO: So private tenants call 311, file a complaint and have the city respond so that we can pursue enforcement if necessary against the owner. In the case of NYCHA, NYCHA is the owner. And they're the best positioned as they have tons of oversight as you know, federal oversight as well as city oversight to do the repairs. And I think the... the most resource... the most... the way to best use our resources is to ensure that NYCHA has the resources to respond when tenants complain.

COUNCILMEMBER AVILÉS: Does the city also have an equivalent number of backlog cases with an average remedy of over 300 days?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SANTIAGO: HPD doesn't do the repairs, so I think the 300 days that you're referring to is the repair timeline.

COUNCILMEMBER AVILÉS: (inaudible)

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SANTIAGO: I'm not sure what the NYCHA number represents.

COUNCILMEMBER AVILÉS: Great. Let me just quickly read some... some testimony that I think what would be helpful:

"At the Red Hook Community Justice Center NYCHA tenants have filed this year alone 54 HP actions that has resulted in HPD, citing NYCHA with an alarming 401 violations of the housing maintenance code, notably, HPD code enforcement inspectors have discovered 46 immediately hazardous Class C violations at the Red Hook houses as well as home health related hazards including 44 violations related to water leaks within the walls, ceilings, 20 violations on mold, 164 violations on peeling paint and plaster.

"Tenants living in this unlawful conditions often have had open NYCHA tickets reported for months if not years. Unlike private tenants. HPD does not appear in housing court to support public housing tenants with their repairs or complaints and does not provide direct notice to NYCHA of cited violations as they do all other landlords. More concerningly the

HPD administratively cancels public housing (Chair if I may just finish)... cancels public housing complaints reported to the agency, does not currently maintain public data of the cited code violations, and does not maintain accurate residential addresses of NYCHA buildings.

"HPD code enforcement inspectors are regularly sent into the field with wrong AKA addresses of NYCHA buildings, showing up at apartments of a neighbor or submitting a wrong tenant report to the court, causing frustration for tenants.

"NYCHA staff and court alike, and wasting valuable city inspector time. When HPD does not complete an inspection they do not follow up to ensure cited violations are cured, even immediate hazardous Class C violations that private landlords are required by law to address within 24 hours.

"In Red Hook, we see the health and safety effects of this neglect and lack of oversight on a daily basis."

Can you respond?

CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: I'll respond to that, Councilmember. Thank you so much for your question, and I think you will find broad full

throated agreement that the conditions that NYCHA are unacceptable, and that's why we wanted to focus on NYCHA squarely in this housing blueprint, really, for the first time, where past plans have assumed that we are waiting around for the federal government to fix it.

I also think that we are past the time to diagnose the problems in NYCHA. I think there's broad agreement in this room on all sides of the table, that the conditions at are desperately in need of repair. And now is the time to try to move forward with some tools to do that, which is why that was our top priority when we came in, in this new administration, to make sure that the NYCHA tenants had the tools that they needed, and the choices that they could make in order to move forward for a full renovation of each one of those buildings. And I'll pass it off to NYCHA to speak to more of the specifics.

VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Sure. Thanks so much, Councilmember. And I truly respect the work that Commissioner Santiago does, and the HPD team. And I thought... if I... if I believed that, you know, they're inspecting our apartments would get work done

quicker, I would welcome in the minute. However, as you know, in Red Hook, we have over \$500 million in capital needs just for your two developments alone, Red Hook east and west. Red Hook houses were built in 1939, it still has much of the same infrastructure. A lot of the issues that you see in Red Hook are water related. They're related to the original plumbing. And it literally... I sometimes say it, the apartments are literally eating themselves from the inside.

Until we get significant investment, we are going to continue to have the same problems at Red Hook Houses. I think the plan addresses that. I think the plan that we came up with in Albany too can potentially address that. And I look forward to engaging the residents in Red Hook. Some of the tenant association presidents in your district supported it strongly, and we look forward to starting a new path, you know, to actually get repairs.

COUNCILMEMBER AVILÉS: So I appreciate your response. But it doesn't quite address the situation that... I think the one thing we applaud it certainly with the with The Chief Housing Officer is

definitely pulling in public housing, pulling in homelessness, and... and having a more comprehensive view of how to address this critical issue. Nevertheless, it does not... and this is not a matter of respect. We respect the work of all of our city colleagues who... who are grinding every single day for our residents. This is a matter of service level, and what is not happening. So my question is why New York City public housing residents continue to be treated as second class citizens and not given the full throated support of every other city agency, including HPD.

If HPD is the agency to put the fire under NYCHA, or needs to actually do something quite different, because NYCHA is either incapable or unwilling or doesn't have the money for it, we are in a position to have to demand that every single city agency weigh in to ensure appropriate levels of support for our New York City residents. So that's really what is underneath here is how is NYCHA, and HPD, and DOH all putting the full weight of their agencies behind the most vulnerable New Yorkers. And yes, we are well aware of the capital backlog.

And there is another question around what happens to those developments that are not -- when the trust gets developed -- in the trust that are not privatized? Where's the capital investment for those New Yorkers that are that are aging buildings that are crumbling. That we have not seen. We have seen no plan to address that either. So those are all elements that are connected here.

VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: So again, Councilmember, and we work really closely with the delegation on a build-back better plan, that we really thought that would bring the investment that we needed into this portfolio. Unfortunately, it did not happen. It can... you know, for decades.

COUNCILMEMBER AVILÉS: This is a decades long, decades-long problem that we don't need to rehash. We understand. Here we are at the city government of New York. So the question remains: How will the city government of New York provide the best quality housing for its New York City public housing residents? We are long past understanding that the state government is not here to save public housing. The federal government has walked away. The question

on the table is: How will New York City fully invest in protecting public housing, right?

CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: And Councilmember, if we thought for a second -- as my colleague at NYCHA said -- that having HPD's resources to do... do inspection by inspection, violation by violation, would be a support to NYCHA, and help NYCHA move faster in that, we would do it in a second. But the \$40 billion capital backlog means that the time has passed for looking at this and diagnosing problems one by one and apartment by apartment. All these buildings really need a comprehensive renovation. And that's what this plan is going to deliver.

COUNCILMEMBER AVILÉS: I hear that. But I will tell you that tenants that do HP actions get remedies much quicker than they do when they're... when they're just in the NYCHA mill. And I think that really remains to be explored.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you so much Chair Avilés. I'm always going to call you Chair because you're my Public Housing Chair. No, thank you for those questions. And just a quick tag... tag on to Councilmember Avilés' question and line of questioning: So, NYCHA, the transformation

plan, NYCHA 2.0, all of these plans that... that NYCHA and the administration... previous administration have put forward and now are being supplemented by the blueprint, what is the number of units that are not addressed by either the PACT RAD pipeline, or the trust's, or... et cetera?

VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Sure. So our portfolio has 179,000 units. The plan is to address 62,000 units using RAT or PACT. The legislation that we got passed in Albany allows for 25,000 units. That we can always go back to Albany and expand on that. And that is our plan to do in the future. So we have a lot to prove over the next few years to show New Yorkers, to show NYCHA residents, to show legislators that this is a successful model, and we will be going back to Albany to actually expand. The plan is for every unit to have investment and to have investment that comprehensive... comprehensively modernizes their development

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Got it. So 94,000 units are not addressed by the current pipeline and availability of...

VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Not immediately. Correct. That's correct.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: ... the transfer. Okay.

Thank you. Thank you so much. NYCHA. Thank you so much, Chair Avilés. I'm next going to turn it over to Councilmember Dinowitz. And then I have a billion questions for you all, but I wanted to be respectful of my colleagues who came to the hearing early. And so we'll continue from there. But Councilmember Dinowitz?

COUNCILMEMBER DINOWITZ: I'm looking forward to your billion questions. [laughter] I have four. The first... and I know we've discussed this privately, but Chief Katz... is that your title Chief? All right, Chief Katz. As... On page 67, it talks about, you're going to partner with HPD, Department of Finance, the Mayor's Community Affairs Unit and People With Disabilities, to ensure more eligible individuals benefit from SCRIE. You know, I think, for example, of Mitchell Lama housing, and city run Mitchell Lama sites where residents are already declaring their income and their age on the form. So as part of the plan going to be for the Department of Finance to pre-fill out an application and send it... and send it back to the residents? So that is that going to be one of the plans?

CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: So we're working on the specific process of how that's going to work. But as you stated, many tenants in HPD Finance and State Finance properties already declare their income, their age, their identifying information over and over to the city agencies. So we want to make sure that we're utilizing that and reducing the administrative burdens, particularly on seniors and people with disabilities who may be least-well-suited to fill out this mountain of paperwork, particularly where there's another agency that already has that information.

COUNCILMEMBER DINOWITZ: Right. I mean, we want the same thing. I get... I just try to be like very clear. Will seniors automatically be enrolled in these programs, if they're declaring their income on another form for another agency? Is it going to be automatic? What's going to... like... What's... What's the plan? Because we all want... We all want housing affordability. So what's actually going to happen?

CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: So as you pointed out, and the... the subtext here is that there's so many seniors who... we can freeze their rent going

forward, but there's a limit to which how far back they can go. And too many times people apply for SCRIE only when it's far too late, and their rent burden is already overwhelming. And then we can freeze their rent in place, but that doesn't necessarily guarantee affordability. So we're going to push it as absolutely as far as we can go and... (crosstalk)

COUNCILMEMBER DINOWITZ: I'm just saying, like now going forward, is it something that seniors could look forward to, if they fill out the form for, again, because I've... You know, we've spoken about Tracy Towers as the... as one of the examples in my district, that they're, you know, hundreds and hundreds of residents filling out this form. What is the... What can we expect? Is it that they're automatically going to be enrolled going forward? Let's pretend we can't look back. Let's look forward. Will they automatically be enrolled? Will they automatically get something in the mail saying, "Hey, here's a pre filled out form. Just sign here, and you're good."

CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: So that's absolutely the aspiration. And we're working with the

Department of Finance to push that as far as we can with as much data sharing and backing up technology to try to make it as seamless as possible for our seniors.

COUNCILMEMBER DINOWITZ: Okay, I'm looking forward to that for my... for the older adults in... in those buildings and a number of these buildings. I'm going to come back to Tracy. Can... Can you... Can you guys define what the city views as "transit rich"? You have a section here about... You phrase it as "people over cars" or something like that. You said in transit-rich areas, you know, eliminating... I don't want to misquote it. So I won't, and I'll just say it's something like no more parking requirements in and transit-rich areas. And what... so I'm, I have what I think is a disagreement, but I want to know what the city considers a transit-rich environment.

CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: So we should set up some time with the Department of City Planning to get a full briefing on the City of Yes zoning text amendment. But I'll say that the zoning resolution already has a definition of what a transit zone is embedded in it in terms of places where parts of the

city that are very heavily served by transit that could rely less on cars.

COUNCILMEMBER DINOWITZ: And I love that I'm talking to... that someone from the Bronx is on this panel who knows the Bronx really well. And I know it's zoning, and I understand how the zoning works. It just happens to be... It doesn't meet the needs of people in the Bronx. So I just did you know, a quick Google Map. You know, Google Maps technology. It's great. In my district, if I'm around 242nd Street and Broadway, which is the 1 train is the 9 bus. Some may consider that transit rich. But if I want to get from that part of my district, which isn't even the most far the farthest west of my district, to the Wakefield campus of Montefiore, which is just outside my district, or to the Nereid Avenue Rain Senior Center, it takes about an hour. Takes about an hour. It's just about... It takes that long to get from City Hall to those two places, takes about an hour. Right? And from City Hall, Times Square, Union Square, you can roughly get to most places in the city in about an hour. Lots of train lines, geographical history, lots of bus lines, it's not the same when you have one, one train line going north

and south, maybe a bus that rarely goes east and west. I'm just are you going to specifically rely on the zoning? Or will you have your own definition that actually meets the needs of different communities throughout the city?

CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: So the zoning is one aspect. And we also take a look at car ownership rates, which vary widely across cities. And there's many places and many demographics in New York City that have a much lower rate of car ownership, but that also have the greatest need for affordable housing. So we want to make sure that we lower the cost of that affordable housing, particularly in neighborhoods that rely less on car ownership.

COUNCILMEMBER DINOWITZ: I would just ask that you define neighborhoods that rely on car ownership, as those neighborhoods that require car ownership. There's about to be a school that's coming up on the Land Use Committee to be heard, and it's defined as being in a transit-rich zone. But the students who are going to have to go there... who are going to get to go there rather, are not going to have easy accessibility to transit because there's no good east west travel in the Bronx. (inaudible) Thank you.

Just going back to my first question. This is really quick. As you're working with other agencies, I hope you exclude the Department of Veterans Services in your... It's not listed here. I don't know if that was by design, or just because you were naming a few of the agencies. But of course our veterans receive services from the city, the state, the federal government, and can certainly use the support of our city administration in collaborating to get those services.

So two more questions. One is about homeless -- okay, one more question -- homelessness and homeless shelters. You say the city commits to supporting the health of New Yorkers experiencing homelessness by providing better access to health care, services and support. We're in the midst of dealing with a potential shelter provider in our... in district 11 who was not given clear goals and clear communication about what services are going to be provided for the high-need community that is potentially going to move in to the shelter. And so are... are there going to be clear guidelines for what... better access to health care services and support looks like? Is there going to be clear guidelines shared with the

community? And are there going to be clear expectations for the shelter for the homeless... the shelter providers? Because to my knowledge right now, and from what I observe going on in the community, there are no clear guidelines for the services that needs to be provided, because if there were, the residents of shelters would get the services they need.

CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: Sure. Thank you so much for your questions. So I'll start with the conversation around veterans. And I really appreciate you bringing up the Department of Veterans Services. That department and veterans homelessness in general is...

A lot of the work that we're doing around streamlining the placement process was really born in something we did several years ago where we tried to create a rapid response specifically for homeless veterans. So that really tested and stretched the capacity of a lot of our programs and really tested the flexibility of those programs in our effort to house veterans as quickly as possible. And we saw a drastic reduction, through that really consorted effort through amongst all the different agencies,

which is actually how the Department of Veterans Services was born in the first place to make sure that we reduced veterans homelessness. So that was a great inspiration for if we can do it for veterans, why can't we bring to bear a better interagency coordination, to have a more concerted effort to reduce homelessness across the board? And then the... Something that we've noticed in our discussions with the Health and Hospitals Corporation as we develop this plan, and they were really willing and excited collaborators on the creation of the plan, because of all the medical services in the world, we heard over and over from H&H providers that if someone doesn't have a stable roof over their head, all the medication and all the hospitalizations in the world are not going to help resolve that. And there's a base of homeless tenants and New Yorkers who are bouncing back and forth between the hospital system and the shelter system. And the shelter system isn't always the best place to recover from your medical needs. So we really want to make sure that we push in some health services to help people recover faster and prevent people from bouncing around. And also, Molly Park is here from the

Department of Homeless Services to speak more to that.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER PARK: Yeah, thank you so much. I'm more than happy to talk about the services that we provide in shelter. Because providing high-quality social services within the shelter setting is really important to us. There are baseline services that are consistent across every site. So every site has caseworkers. It is a mandate, both from our state oversight agency, but important to us that every client is working with their caseworker on an independent living plan that... so that is the... addressing their various needs. And these are very personal plans that each individual, each family is putting together to think about their own path to permanency and their own needs. Caseworkers are there to support them. Housing specialists are there to support them. And then beyond that the services that are provided vary... can vary by shelter. So there are sites with... that are very employment focused. There are employment specialists. There are mental health shelters that have a high level of mental health services. Many of our families with children sites have on-site childcare. There is a

range, but there are social services, wraparound social services in every site that we provide.

And... But lastly, it is always very important to us that... that there is an emphasis on connecting clients to services in the community. The intent behind the homelessness is that... in the homeless services that we provide is that... that a stay in shelter should be short. There's room to work on... on our length of stay, but for sure, but emergency shelter is intended to serve people in an emergency situation. And we want... we don't want people to be connected to services only while they are in the shelter system. So referrals out to community-based services is an incredibly important part of what we do because it provides for better continuity. With respect to certain... to any given shelter, happy to follow up offline. But, you know, while a shelter is in the planning process, it is the responsibility of the provider and DHS to work together to put together the full complement of services to make sure that it is ready to open the that will be, um...

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you, Deputy Commissioner. I'm so sorry...

COUNCILMEMBER DINOWITZ: Thank you. I'll just say thank you. I...

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: we don't have the room for very much longer.

COUNCILMEMBER DINOWITZ: Alright. Thank you very much. Thank you Chair.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: So, if you want to follow up that you know, I'm happy to, you know, have you do that.

Okay, thank you. Thank you so much. I want to turn it to Councilmember Brewer and then I'll...

COUNCILMEMBER BREWER: Thank you. I've been listening, so I'm not new to being here this morning. And Jessica Katz, that was an amazingly fabulous statement. I got five questions and you can decide what to answer, or you can get back to me later.

Harborview is sitting there in NYCHA. When I was on the city Council 20 years ago, I signed off on affordable housing there. And I haven't heard a word sense, except I know that Trinity has made an offer. That is a lot of units of affordable housing based on Hudson Yards. What happened?

Number two, the TILL program. I know that may not be the discussion today, but in Manhattan, some

folks want to go to HDFC. They don't want to hear about ANC, or whatever that initial is. How can we figure out what to do... And give us some numbers in Manhattan as to the status of the TILLs that are not yet converted to homeownership?

Number three, I'm a big fan of Rosanne Haggerty. I believe in right to shelter. But are we ever going to pay people's rent so they stay with their... in their apartment and not have to just deal with third party, and all the one shots? How are we going to keep people in their homes before they end up homeless?

Number four, the hotels. We got The Maxwell, The Paramount. I'll work with the union. What are the hotels are available in the role of Manhattan to be converted under all the opportunities that exist? And I also want to say Ward's Island. This is my idea. It should be a Mitchell Lama program, lots of land. It's in Manhattan. Why are we not converting it to similar... as we did with used to be Welfare Island, now called Roosevelt. I've been there when it was Welfare Island, and keep it affordable, working, of course, with the institutions are there and the state. Those are my... Oh. How many more do

we need to buy? Some of the SROs on the Upper West Side... Some of them are for sale. They make easy housing, why are we not doing that? Thank you very much.

CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: Thank you so...

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you and Administration, I'm just going to keep you to her clock. So anything else we can follow up afterwards.

COUNCILMEMBER BREWER: That's fine with me.

CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: Alright, so I'll try to go quick.

COUNCILMEMBER BREWER: I could do another 30, but... [laughter]

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Yes, I guess we know. [laughs]

CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: Thank you so much, Councilmember Brewer. Let's see where to start. So on the SROs for sale, you know, that's a project that's near and dear to my heart. So when there's one that comes up for sale, or one that you think that sale can be negotiated, please, absolutely let us know. Or let the Supportive Housing Network of New York know when we can make sure to pair those up.

1 COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS

100

2 COUNCILMEMBER BREWER: 83rd Street and 111th
3 Street. We'll talk.

4 CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: Great, fantastic.

5 On the hotel conversions: We were very lucky to
6 get the hotel conversions bill this year that
7 provides both the funding from last year's budget
8 that we are not able to spend because we got the...
9 we did not have the regulatory relief that we needed
10 to convert the hotels. So now we're able and eager
11 to do that. And we're actively seeking proposals to
12 do so.

13 On the right to shelter and on tenant
14 protections: We were happy in this plan to be able
15 to announce that we have \$35 million in tenant
16 protections. So that includes more neighborhoods for
17 the HPD partners and preservation program, new staff
18 and more resources for HPDs anti-harassment unit to
19 keep people in their home.

20 COUNCILMEMBER BREWER: But do you pay the rent
21 without a third party? Yes or no?

22 CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: We are... We have a
23 variety of different rental subsidy programs in New
24 York City. We have many more than in most cities.

25 COUNCILMEMBER BREWER: I know the all.

2 CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: Yes. And the
3 problem here is a couple of different things: One is
4 the administrative burdens of using those programs.
5 So sometimes landlords refuse to rent to them. So we
6 want to make sure that we poured a ton of resources
7 into source-of-income discrimination, so that people
8 who have those rental subsidies are able to find
9 units as quickly as...

10 COUNCILMEMBER BREWER: I'm saying pay the rent so
11 they don't get evicted.

12 CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: Agreed. And what
13 else? I think for the...

14 COUNCILMEMBER BREWER: Harborview.

15 CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: For the individual
16 programs, I think we should have a conversation
17 offline with Commissioner Carrión about specific
18 projects.

19 COUNCILMEMBER BREWER: Harborview?

20 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Councilmember, I think we
21 should meet soon to talk about Harborview and to talk
22 about, you know, the history of the project. I mean,
23 as you know... you know it better than anyone...

24 COUNCILMEMBER BREWER: Where's my housing?
25

VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: You know, what better than anyone. That's correct.

COUNCILMEMBER BREWER: I do.

VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: There was... there was a plan under the last administration.

COUNCILMEMBER BREWER: Yeah, yeah yeah.

VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: So let's... let's just go...

COUNCILMEMBER BREWER: Ward's Island?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER PARK: I can jump in on Ward's island just because we are there. There are hugely complicated intergovernmental land use issues there. I'm happy to put heads together with colleagues, but I would flag that it's a really complicated one.

COUNCILMEMBER BREWER: And so was Roosevelt Island. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER CARRIÓN: Councilmember Brewer.

COUNCILMEMBER BREWER: Yes, Commissioner?

COMMISSIONER CARRIÓN: Yeah, you asked about TILL and it's new iteration in 2012, ANCP. We financed 22 ANCP projects in 47 buildings, 46 of them were TILL buildings. These buildings have been have completed renovations or are now undergoing renovations, and

we're working very closely with... with a lot... a lot of others.

COUNCILMEMBER BREWER: Okay. Just... you know, in Harlem, they were People who do not want to go from TILT to NCP, they want to go to HDFC.

COMMISSIONER CARRIÓN: Well, the...

COUNCILMEMBER BREWER: That's the short version. I put a lot of money in to help them with their mortgage.

COMMISSIONER CARRIÓN: Yup.

COUNCILMEMBER BREWER: Can you do it?

COMMISSIONER CARRIÓN: What the program does is it converts them into HDFC's.

COUNCILMEMBER BREWER: That... it isn't. You might know, there's a mortgage there that adds to their burden. So you know that there are groups who don't want to do it. So, I'm...

COMMISSIONER CARRIÓN: Yeah, but the ultimate goal is to convert to HDFC.

COUNCILMEMBER BREWER: I know, but people are not going to... \$250, fix it up, and then give it to them. That's what they want. So we can have an offline conversation. I just wanted to say they're not going to move until they have that program.

COMMISSIONER CARRIÓN: And we're about to celebrate some victories in ANCP that we...

COUNCILMEMBER BREWER: But they don't care about those victories.

COMMISSIONER CARRIÓN: [chuckles] No.

COUNCILMEMBER BREWER: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER CARRIÓN: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you so much. I'm going to... I'm going to next turn it over to Councilmember Cabán. And again, I apologize, we only have the room until one because there's a subsequent hearing. So if we can just keep our answers short and questions short, um... because she, she's chairing the hearing next.

COUNCILMEMBER CABÁN: Awesome. Thank you. I appreciate that. Thank you, Chair.

So I'll dive right in. I want to talk about the CLT. So Community Land Trust, a proven scalable model for housing preservation and development that keeps land and housing out of the speculative market, you know, keeps it truly affordable. And in democratic hands. Arguably, two of the biggest hurdles that we're facing are funding and site acquisition.

So my first question is this: Knowing that... that HPDs contracting systems are slow and cumbersome, leading to months, and sometimes years of delays in distributing funds to CLTs and other nonprofits, what's HPD going to do to streamline the contracting process to reduce and eliminate funding delays?

And then the second question is: While public land is scarce, it's still available in some areas of the city. And this should be prioritized for CLT. So how will HPD work to get this land under CLT Control? Will you sole source the land? Will you have RFPs with community and nonprofit preferences? Do we need to reform land procurement guidelines? So I... I think that this is as good a place as any to stop.

COMMISSIONER CARRIÓN: I'm going to let the Deputy Mayor... uh... Deputy Commissioner Ahmed Tigani address this. That's in the future.

CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: It's foreshadowing

COMMISSIONER CARRIÓN: Yeah.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER TIGANI: Hi. Good morning.

Good afternoon. I'll try to be very quick, Councilmember. Those are very good questions.

So CLTs are actually an integral part of our strategy. We have 1000 in the pipeline, and we've put money in the last administration. And it's part of the centerpiece of our work here. I oversee the office of neighborhood strategies. We oversee planning, neighborhood stabilization, a lot of the work where we connect both people in the communities tent organizers, legal aid organizations, around the work we tried to do to build on public land, HPD, public land, and land owned by other city agencies.

We have in the last eight years put together 38 RFPs that built 13,000 units of housing. And we'd love to do more. And we're going to continue to do more under the new rubric of this blueprint. And in fact, you can see a taste of our new strategy by what we're doing in Edgemere. In Edgemere, we have a resiliency based rezoning that goes... and coincides with our RFEI (Request For Expression of Interest) that is looking for a new CLT. That CLT will ultimately be responsible for eight acres of a plan where we are, big picture, looking to build new housing for rental apartments, new homeownership opportunities, resiliency measures that brings people

from the waterfront and protects and creates a hard edge. Sorry. So And just to finish up the... Yeah?

COUNCILMEMBER CABÁN: Can I clarify? Just because the time is limited, and so I want to make sure that that the answer is really hitting the... the scope... the narrow scope of my question. Like, it's good to hear what's in the pipeline, but what... you know, what exactly is going to be done to streamline some of those processes...

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER TIGANI: On the contracting side?

COUNCILMEMBER CABÁN: ...in the face of the delays that we're seeing?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER TIGANI: Absolutely. The Comptroller and the Mayor right now has put together a task force looking at the contracting process. And we are actually -- and from the HPD end -- we are involved in looking for ways to streamline the piece when it comes to discretionary grants so that our nonprofits get their money faster and do the work.

COUNCILMEMBER CABÁN: Okay, so to be clear: You're... You have a task force, you're looking into it, and nothing has been quite executed yet. And so my request, or... you know, for myself and my

colleagues, is to like be aware... We want to be aware of what that plan is and what the progress is on the execution of that plan.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER TIGANI: Absolutely.

COUNCILMEMBER CABÁN: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much, Councilmember Cabán, and I think Councilmember Hudson had one more question.

COUNCILMEMBER HUDSON: Yes, thank you. And I will limit it and be fairly quick.

This is regarding the Neighborhood Development Fund and rezonings. The plan mentioned a proposed package of zoning changes to encourage more affordable and supportive housing. Can you provide some insight as to what this will likely entail and whether it will include measures for deeper affordability. And I also didn't see a mention of a Neighborhood Development Fund or a similar measure in the Housing Plan, which was previously used for public realm improvements in affordable housing and neighborhood rezonings, and I'm wondering if the administration is planning on creating a similar fund for future rezonings to ensure they incorporate necessary capital improvements.

And then also just regarding government owned land for extremely and very low income housing: Many districts like mine have limited city-owned property, and I want to know how we can ensure that we equitably allocate housing for folks earning 40%, AMI and under. Thank you.

CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: Sure, thank you. So to start with the zoning initiatives, we have the series of citywide zoning initiatives that we proposed and our City Of Yes Plan, we have a large handful of the eight city agencies that have worked on the housing Blueprint here today, Department of City Planning is not among them, but we should definitely come back and chat with you about the City Of Yes Plan, in collaboration with the Department of City Planning, but we're reviewing a variety of things with the goal of supporting small businesses, and creating new housing and promoting sustainability, and all of that through making the zoning resolution smoother and easier to work with so that we can create more. We did speak in the plan about a seed fund to invest in neighborhoods. So that... that type of framework will continue as we talk about the zoning resolution.

COUNCILMEMBER HUDSON: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: I also want to get make sure we get her NDF question... the Neighborhood Development Fund.

CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: So the... the way that we refer to it in the plan is through the seed funds. So we will continue to utilize that framework for to invest in neighborhoods as we move forward with zoning changes as well.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Right. Thank you. Thank you to my colleagues.

Okay, so if we can do these sort of, you know, rapid fire, that... that would be awesome. I know, you know all the answers, but I just want to make sure that we have a chance to publicly discuss on the record.

So, Chief Katz, one of the things that you talk about in the plan is getting more transparency for the total number... the total census of people who are in shelter. So we wanted to understand... Local Law 37 of 1998 actually requires this census already in this transparency. So what exactly is going to be changing in what is being reported?

CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: So as we've talked about, there's a variety of different shelter systems. So at HPD, there's a shelter system that is not included in the daily census, and the length of stay there is actually longer than what it is in the DHS system. So we really wanted to make sure that we have full accountability and transparency for the Council, for ourselves, and for the general public, about the full scope of homelessness, and that we're more better able to address homelessness, regardless of the route that you got there... you know, the pathway that you got there, or the shelter system, or whose door you walk through. So we want to really make sure we do that, because we think that transparency and accountability has to be a hallmark of this if we're going to put a dent into homelessness.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. And next question. You've talked a lot about how we're trying to prevent homelessness to begin with, right? You know, making sure we're lifting administrative burdens for folks that have to go through... through the system. But can you talk about homelessness

diversion tactics and programs that will be used by the administration?

CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: Sure. So one of the... Most of our social safety net programs that we talked about have these tremendous administrative burdens. So the moment that you need help, you have to run around to 20 million different city agencies and try to collect paperwork. So we're hoping that by streamlining that process, by making it easier for New Yorkers to... who are seeking help to get the help that they need, that will in itself be a homelessness prevention measure, and certainly make the lives of people who need it and who are at risk of homelessness easier. We're also putting in the emergency micro-grants for domestic violence survivors who we've seen are at high risk of entering the homeless shelter system to try to -- before that happens, and before they take that scary step of moving into a homeless shelter -- to provide them with an emergency micro-grant so that they can just do whatever it takes whatever they need in order to solve their immediate crisis situation, in the hopes that that will be a homelessness prevention measure as well.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. And I've mentioned this to you before, but I've also heard it from so many colleagues, Homebase just doesn't answer our calls. We as Councilmembers, we call Homebases and we try to get our... our constituents help to divert them to have Homebase help folks from ever entering the system. What in what ways are Homebases going to be changing the ways that they provide service to the public, but also are responsive to elected officials?

CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: Sure. So Homebase has been an incredibly important prevention tool, and it's in many ways a victim of its own success in how many people have been moving through the Homebase program. So we've also incorporated millions of dollars in the plan in terms of expanding our prevention processes as well.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MURRAY: Thank you, Chair, for the question. I think, Chief Katz covered the big top lines. I think one of the other things that we are working very carefully with the Homebase providers on is making sure that the outreach is stronger, and we're looking to strengthen the program even more. So I look forward to making sure that the

wraparound services and stabilization... additional stabilization work that we're going to be invested in has that impact.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: And we can call you when we're having issues with our Homebases?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MURRAY: You can absolutely call me.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER MURRAY: Always.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you. So next question.

So moving to creating and preserving affordable housing: The role of predatory equity, and predatory landlords, and folks who just aren't doing what they need to be doing. It... I didn't see a whole lot in the plan around tackling and fighting predatory equity, beside expanding the Partners and Preservation Neighborhood Pillars Program. So can you... can you tell us first about the approach to predatory equity, predatory landlords? How is the city going to sort of weaponize the tools that we have? What is your plan to fight back on these fronts.

And then picking up on Councilmember Cabán's questions on CLTs: Understanding that there are restrictions because of state law around how much we can dispose of... "dispose" in the land use term, but give... give properties over to these mission-driven CLTs and other nonprofit sort of development organizations. Why do we need Affordability Plus? And what are your hopes... What do you need from the Council? How can we help you with Affordability Plus?

CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: Sure. Thank you so much. So our suite of homeownership programs are designed to try to level the playing field for homeowners who are struggling, who then sometimes may fall victim to these predatory equity schemes. So making sure that HPD has the programs in place for a struggling homeowner who can't get a traditional loan will help address that fact. We also are creating and continuing our work with the Center for New York City Neighborhoods on a Homeowner Help Desk that we hope will serve 1000 homeowners a year. So if they have questions or concerns or aren't sure if something is legitimate process, financial tool or a scam, they'll have somebody who they can call and

support them, who will in turn forward them over to the Department of Housing Preservation and Development, to the tools that are there for homeowners who need help. [speaking to Commissioner Carrión] Do you want to talk about Affordability Plus.

COMMISSIONER CARRIÓN: And on Affordability Plus, I think everybody knows that we went up to fight in Albany to expand our loan authority, that would help us be more creative in how we finance deals... smaller deals, more complicated deals, deals that include community facility spaces where... where we can do daycare centers at the base of buildings. CLTs fall into that basket as well. It gives us a lot of flexibility.

So we need your help in going back to Albany which we're going to start today -- happy new year; it's the first day of the new fiscal year -- and we're... as soon as the holiday weekend is over, we're trucking up to Albany. We're going to continue, literally and figuratively, of course, to continue this... this pursuit of Affordability Plus. We absolutely needed to deliver on... on what we're trying to do.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. And by the way... Thank you, and all of the staff, and all of the staff of the Council for being here on the Friday before a holiday weekend. We really appreciate it. But that's just how much we care, right?, about housing in New York City.

Okay, so on... on zoning. Moving to zoning: So one of the things that we've talked about a lot. Advocates in your Housing Conference, for instance, has talked about the need to be producing housing and affordable housing across the City of New York. And the plan also makes mention of doing more production across the city of New York. Not every neighborhood is the same. You know, there are different transit accessibility varies. You know, the... the neighborhood character varies, but in what ways... What can we expect -- the public and the Council -- what can we expect from the administration, on requiring or asking more directly, community by community, for more affordable housing and housing production?

CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: Sure. So asking city neighborhoods across the city to participate in more housing production has a variety of different

themes to it. Zoning is definitely one of them, and we look forward to working with you over the coming months and years around the City Of Yes zoning proposal to help make that a reality. We also want to streamline the process so that it's a bit easier to do that, and then create some of the programs. Part of the issue as well is that HPD has traditionally focused on their multifamily stock. So by creating programs that are for smaller buildings, creating homeowner repair programs, we're going to be able to... and with any luck, getting some assistance from Albany to create a basement apartments legalization program, it'll create more tools for us to be able to do more housing and more affordable housing, even in those lower density districts that we've traditionally not been to.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Okay, thank you. Thank you so much. Also, so with respect to, you know, some of the flexibility changes that that are mentioned in the plan and that you've talked about facilitating studios, one bedrooms, you know, efficiencies and... et cetera. How... How is the administration thinking about these... growing this flexibility? Versus making sure that we're taking Fair Housing

considerations into account? And we're building family size units in high opportunity neighborhoods?

CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: Sure. Thank you for the question. So what we see over and over again, is that our... the zoning resolution that preferences to larger units and makes it very difficult to build a preponderance of smaller units is affecting both the single-person households and the families. So what you see in the housing market under a lot of pressure is that multiple breadwinners get together to become roommates. They would prefer potentially to have three studio apartments. Instead, they move into a three bedroom, which in turn a family with young children can't compete with those three breadwinners. So we hope that by creating a system where we can build those smaller apartments, it can act as a sponge for the single-person household that then would free up those larger apartments that do exist in our housing stock for the families that need it the most and have the most trouble affording it.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: That... That makes a lot of sense. Thank you. I think Councilmember Brewer asked about hotels, so I won't go into that area. How does the city plan to support HDFC cooperatives

that struggle so much? What is the future of the third party transfer program? And while we're on... in REM... in REM programs, how do we... how is The Administration thinking about the tax lien sale, which expired in February and municipal debt collection?

CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: Sure. So I'll let Commissioner Carrión speak to the specifics of the TPT program. But again, I'll just note that the focus on a top line, huge unit count really did sacrifice that affordability, a focus on homeownership, fixing some of the programs, and it leaves out homeownership. So I think by... by this pivot, we'll be able to focus more on the homeownership programs and closing the racial wealth gap that we're both worried about. And I'll turn it over to Commissioner Carrión for more about the program specifically.

COMMISSIONER CARRIÓN: Okay, well, I want to start by saying that we should call third party transfer, what it is: It should be called troubled property transfer. And we know that this has not been the most efficient program. While we need a robust set of tools to stabilize properties and

protect tenants, the City Council, HPD, stakeholders all got together, and at the end of last year came out with a set of recommendations about reforming the... what I'm calling the "troubled property transfer program". Let's rename it right here. And I'll probably get in trouble for that.

I intend to look very closely at those recommendations. We should revisit them. But it's important to note that... that's... this program is only one tactic that we need, as The Chief Housing Officer suggests, and is present in our plan, and is budgeted to the tune of \$44 million. We need the Downpayment Assistance Program. We need the home fix, to help people address their issues. We need the Homeowner Help Desk, which we... we will expand. And one other aspect of this is the... the owner side, right? The Owner Resource Center. We need we need to support owners and we need them to have more ready access to us and to stand up the infrastructure that they need on our side so that we can help them avoid going into the... the newly-named program. The troubled property program.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: I like it. You keep the acronym. No one will know what you're talking about.

Super helpful. So I'm hearing a focus on... on just prevention, of getting to that point. And I think on municipal debt collection that is something really important. There is a coalition: The Abolish The Lien Sale Coalition that has been working on a set of proposals. And we look forward to talking with the administration about, you know, how we can move forward, and have more of a focus on retaining the homeownership where... where possible.

Okay. So can you talk to us a little bit about which programs the city plans to expand for acquisition and stabilization of distressed apartments and homes? And particularly... You know, this... this question really stems from the focus on preservation, the focus on keeping... keeping what we have and improving what we have. You know, we haven't talked about J-51. We haven't talked about Article 11's. We haven't talked about a lot of different tools that the administration has historically had, one of which, J-51, actually expired yesterday. So what... what is The Administration thinking about in terms of dedicating real capital dollars, resources, to help distressed smaller property owners?

CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: Sure. Thank you.

Yes, the J-51 program unfortunately expired yes... yesterday. Yesterday. And we are... We had a... We had a great session in Albany with the Public Housing Trust, and with the Hotel Conversions Bill, and several other successes, but J-51 was definitely one that we're going to feel the pain on. And we want to go back to Albany and make sure that that program is renewed and refreshed in a more... in a better way.

We also are excited to work with this new City Council on a great pipeline of Article 11 projects that we've been moving forward, which is a great way for the city agencies and the Council to work together on preserving small buildings and large buildings to make sure that we provide that exemption. So that's been a really, really critical tool for tens of thousands of apartments across the city. The two programs that we're using to help not-for-profits and CBOs on the ground, work on the most distressed buildings and identify those, are the Partners in Preservation Program that helps us to identify the buildings where tenant harassment may be taking place and address it, as well as the Neighborhood Pillars Program, which we're also

bringing back that helps to preserve quality and affordability of some of the most difficult buildings and help CBOs actually purchase those buildings so that we can identify the ones that really need the help, where the tenants are motivated to work with us and work with them on creating those programs. So we've put millions of dollars into those programs. And we're really looking forward to relaunching them in this administration.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much. And I completely agree those are programs that are really important to help us identify landlords that wouldn't otherwise come to the city, and making sure that you know, they have access to the city's resources to update their buildings.

Okay, I'm going to skip ahead, because there's a lot of chapters in here.

Focusing on NYCHA for... for just a second... for just a moment. [Sergeant at Arms adjusts microphone] Thank you. Because I'm short, and I want to like sit up here. So in thinking and talking about the trust, there were remaining issues with... with the NYCHA Preservation Trust, even at the time of passage. As you know, I was... I was and continue to be

supportive of the NYCHA president. [Adjusts microphone] Right? Like isn't blocking my face? [laughter] I was going to continue to be supportive of the NYCHA Preservation Trust (congratulations on on passage) but there were outstanding questions that remain, right?, in terms of community and resident engagement, in terms of accountability, in terms of how exactly the opt-in process will... will work. So can you... can you describe for us and for the public: Where... Where's... How is The Administration, how is NYCHA thinking about how to structure the voting process? For instance, how will... how will we determine, how will NYCHA determine in the proposed rules, what is... what is significant community engagement? And what are you hearing from tenants?

CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER KATZ: Sure. So I'll start and then pass it over to NYCHA. I was so proud to work with you and our former roles on some of the early projects that kind of created the seeds of this idea that NYCHA tenants should have a say in the future of their properties. It is a very big step that we're taking, both in the trust and in the PACT program for government to frankly step back a little

bit, take away of our own... take away a little bit of our own power, and let NYCHA residents decide the future of their properties. We did not think, however, that having the specific decisions about how these elections and processes are going to work, warrants a one-size-fits-all process, and certainly not one that would be decided, you know, in the middle of the night in Albany in a rush. So we built into the legislation a process by which we create some rules around that election and opt-in process. Now I'll let NYCHA to speak to you in more detail.

VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Sure. Thank you so much, Councilmember. And the process by voting is the first of its kind in this country. And it is really exciting. So for the first time NYCHA residents will have the ability to decide what their community is going to look like. They can decide they want the trust. They can decide they want another investment strategy. Or they can decide at this time, "We are going to sit this one out. We're going to wait and see how it goes. And then you can come back to us and ask us and again in the future."

So the legislation says that by October 15th, we have to publish rules. The rules have to have some

minimum things that are very significant. Residents will be able to vote online, in person, or by mail. All good... good government ways to increase turnout. They will also have to be notified in four different ways before an election: by email, by phone calls, by snail mail, and by posting, so folks will know that there will be an election, they will be engaged. There also has to be public hearings as well, you know, at the local level, and engagement.

The way we got there was by talking to residents and by talking to community groups. The opt-in strategy was really something that was built on the ground. And the way we're going to write these rules is the same way: We are forming a committee of advocates and a residents who will work with NYCHA between now and mid-October to publish those rules, and they will be a resident-led process that will publish the rules. Once the rules are published, the public, NYCHA residents, anyone who's interested in this subject will have the opportunity to comment on them. There will also be a public hearing on those rules, and then there will be a final set of rules that will be set out in December. This has to be a collaborative process. And we will keep that going.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you so much Mr. VP... Brian. What about the... the governing structure of the trust itself? One... one criticism that I heard loud and clear throughout the process, and I want to make sure to give space to, is that residents feel like they don't... they will not have access to the governing structure. So I understand there's actually more seats for residents on the trust than on the NYCHA board. But still, there's this feeling that the residents being chosen by the Chair is not fair. That it should be something that is directly chosen by the residents. So can you speak to that?

VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Sure. And this was a criticism that we heard of the original bill that came out, and that's why we worked with the sponsors to amend it. There are four residents who will be on the board. Three of them will be nominated by residents. So the Chair and The Mayor when they go to appoint them, they will be appointing only from nominations that the resident Advisory Board and the C-COP[?], tell The Mayor and the Chair, like these are the two you have to consider. So these folks

will be truly NYCHA Reps, and truly representing the tenants who live in the developments.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you so much. And I anticipate there will be much... much more on that that you will hear from the public and from residents. I wanted to give that space here.

So last question for... for NYCHA. In face of PACT and NYCHA 2.0, and the trust, and all of these options: It is... it is important. It is an important milestone that NYCHA is creating the first ever election process for residents to be able to choose what happens in their developments. So one question that my colleagues have asked the administration before and I want to ask it today on the record again, is for residents who perhaps were in the PACT pipeline, or... or were considering something else, transfer of air rights, whatever... whatever the case may be, will those developments be given -- now that they're the trust is being created -- will those developments be again, given the option of whether they want to remain in PACT RAD, or whatever program they will be, or if they want to stay public housing or go into the trust?

VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: So for residents who are currently in PACT developments that have converted? No, they will not have the ability to, you know, to opt out of that current program. I think if you talk to a lot of those folks right now, they're seeing improvements. They're seeing, you know, things have changed. So they already have an investment strategy... (crosstalk)

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: So sorry, Brian. The question is not, "if you've already undergone conversion". The question is, "if you are in the pipeline now."

VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Okay. So if the development has been -- and this is something we've said all along -- if the development already has been announced, and engagement has begun, we're going to continue that process along. But there are still units that we have thought would be good candidates for RAD and PACT, that we would go through the larger process for those units. But anything that's been announced, and where folks are engaged, we're going to keep that process moving.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Okay. More to come, I'm sure. Okay, one thing that I forgot to ask on the...

on the HPD front, and I do not expect you to have this information today, but will be helpful for us: So as J-51 conversations continue on property tax reform, and 421-A, and everything else, could you share with this Council on the Article 11 front and J-51 front, a geography of what buildings have received the... these benefits over the past, I don't know, 10-15 years so that we can get a sense of how it's working, where... where it's working, and where the gaps are?

COMMISSIONER CARRIÓN: We'll do that. We'll make that available to the Council.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much, Commissioner.

Okay. So just so another question on municipal debt collection: So property owners with unpaid bills to the city and recorded liens from the past 25 years of lien sales, they've had unique assistance needs, some of which were addressed last year through funding that we were able to dedicate for community based organizations to do outreach. As you talk about the Homeowner Desk, and you talk about these resources, will this kind of outreach be able to continue in partnership with community organizations?

COMMISSIONER CARRIÓN: Yes, it will. Yes, it well. We've... Uh, We have... [speaking to Deputy Commissioner Tigani] Is this... Is this the... A good moment to... a good question to talk about the Landlord Ambassador Program? Overall? Yeah. Maybe you should come and talk about it. He's an expert...

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Come on down now.

COMMISSIONER CARRIÓN: ... I just got here.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER TIGANI: So, Chair, I think... Yes. So we're going to continue doing the outreach programs. In fact, more of our work is going to be rooted in our outreach in advance of moving forward with programs and specifically with people with lived experience. So throughout the plan, you see that here and the homeownership side, the networks we've built in our pilot program for our Homeowner Help Desk have helped us connect with nonprofits who are doing the work in the community and have helped us improve it... improved it, and we'll be mapping out how we expand it in the future.

I think the big thing to take away is that The Mayor wants to move away from a system that prioritizes... that moves away from a system that does NOT prioritize keeping people in their homes.

He wants us to reform and move forward with a system that protects homeowners and the people in those buildings. So that's what we'll be working on and working with the Council on.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much. Last question: Staffing. We've had a lot of conversations about staffing this year. We know that, you know, HPD, and DOB were both able to avoid the PEG, and that there are resources on hand. So can you talk to us about how staffing efforts are going? And in particular, I'd love to hear from The Administration regarding the role... the role that different factors play in the difficulty. So are their state civil service barriers? Are there issues of competitiveness with the private sector, because we don't work remotely in the city of New York and we pay less than... than other entities? Can you talk about some of the challenges and how HPD is trying to meet this moment?

COMMISSIONER CARRIÓN: Sure, I'd be happy to. Thank you. I think you know the severity of the situation, and you probably have seen it across many agencies. But the global pandemic really had a terrible impact on... on our attrition rates. And in

fact, we lost hundreds of people. You know that we're budgeted for close to 2700. And our current employee pool is about... just... just shy of 2400. So we've got a lot of hiring to do. The good news is that we got 77 new positions in this new budget, as you know, and almost \$19 million in new expense funding in the in the FY 23 budget alone to jumpstart the implementation of this Housing Our Neighbors plan. The agency's expense new needs totaled almost \$90 million across the four year financial plan. So our task right now is to accelerate hiring. We are working very closely with DCAS and with OMB on that. With DCAS, for instance, I'll give you an example, I think the last time I testified before you we had about 140 vacancies on the... in the inspector corps. We have accelerated the hiring there. We just graduated a class this week. We're having a job fair this month... in this? Yeah, it's July already. And then again in August.

We're looking at creativity in terms of bringing people in. For instance, using non-permanent positions that then folks can take the exam and become permanent inspectors. That will accelerate our ability to hire inspectors. OMB is helping us to

move the approvals process, which is... has been historically slow, so that we can hire project managers for our real estate deals, lawyers for our real estate deals. That's going to help to move this plan forward. So it's an all hands on deck.

And yes, you point something out that's important, which is the civil service law that is statute statutorily controlled by a state... by state legislation. We're going to have to talk about that. And we look forward to having a more creative conversation with the state partners, and of course, in partnership with the city agencies.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Excellent. Well, thank you so much to all for... for being here and for your testimony today. Just to say in closing, before we move to public testimony, you know, we... we at the Council, blue in the face, chanting for \$4 billion per year for... for capital dedication from the administration. One of the things that we heard very much about was limits that we have in Albany. But even before we reach those limits for volume cap in Albany, I also heard about the inability, or the historic... not... historically, not-high capital commitment rates for our city agencies.

And so this question about staffing, this question on project management is... is going to be... it's going to remain a crucial... a crucial one, a critical one that we're going to be paying a lot of attention to. We want to... we're all on the same team here, right? We're all on Team Let's-Address-The-Affordable-Housing-Crisis-in-the-City-of-New-York, and we just at the Council want to make sure that we are leaving no stone unturned. So we're going to continue harping on increased funding... capital funding for affordable housing, and for... for housing our most vulnerable New Yorkers. We're going to be your partners in the state in advocating for changes that we need so that we can do more, because New Yorkers are saying that this is number one, right? The affordable housing crisis is number one. So as we move forward, and the blueprint is further developed, and your conversations continue within agencies, please, please, please, you know, come to the Council and keep us posted on what these metrics are, what these specific programs are. You know, you mentioned some -- Chief Katz, in your in your testimony earlier -- around numbers and figures for... for increased commitments. We want to see

more of that, and we want to be able to make sure that, you know, you have... you have what you need, right? So if you give us a baseline then we can... we can work with you.

But again, thank you for being here on July 1, the first hearing of the fiscal year thank you Commissioner Carrión. We really look forward to continued partnership on all of this these fronts.

COMMISSIONER CARRIÓN: Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you very much Chair. We will now turn to testimony from members of the public. For those who are present in person please come up to the table to my right once your name has been called. For panelists who are attending virtually we will call individuals one by one to testify. We will limit public testimony to two minutes each in the interest of time. For virtual panelists, once your name is called a member of our staff will unmute you and the sergeant at arms will set the timer and give you the go ahead to begin. Please wait for the sergeant to announce that you may begin before delivering your testimony.

We will begin by hearing from Shams DaBaron who is present in person, followed by Sarah Wilson on... on Zoom.

Thank you very much. You may begin when you're ready.

Can you please just press the button to turn on your microphone?

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Me too. We're both there in spirit.

MR. DABARON: Right? I'll get there. So... If, I'm a little slow or whatever. Pardon me.

Well, good morning, or afternoon to all of you who are here on what is also the first day of July Homeless Rights Month. We... myself and another impacted advocate, Maria Teressa, declared that July would be Homeless Rights Month last year. And so we all celebrating... well, we're all acknowledging it throughout the city. To the distinguished body of City Councilmembers, the Chair of the Committee on Housing and Buildings and committee members and some of whom I know personally and I consider friends, I'm definitely grateful to be allowed to join you today and give testimony in regards to Housing Our Neighbors, a Blueprint for Housing, and Homelessness.

Housing Our Neighbors is truly a game-changing document that will forever be etched in history as one of the greatest initiatives to come forth from the leadership of the city and its beautiful citizens, myself included. As our Mayor Eric Adams said, The Blueprint reflects the hard-won wisdom and lived experiences of hundreds of New York City's leading experts on housing, including homeless and formerly homeless New Yorkers, NYCHA residents, advocates and academics, individuals who design build and operate housing of every kind. Jessica Katz, our Chief Housing Officer, says of the blueprint that it rewrites the rules of what a housing plan is by asking New Yorkers experiencing homelessness to advise... [bell dings]

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: You can wrap it up.

MR. DABARON: ...on how city programs could help better serve their needs. The Mayor, our Chief Housing Officer, Deputy Mayors, DSS, HPD, and other commissioners have done a great job in sourcing ideas on what this blueprint should entail by engaging a diverse group of stakeholders, all of whom have helped design The Blueprint to house our neighbors.

I would hope, too, that we would keep in mind as we view critique and offer feedback in the coming days and weeks, the fact that it was impacted New Yorkers who loaned so much of themselves to this blueprint.

Now, what do I have to say? Let me be straight up and speak to what I call critics, naysayers, and... and even haters.

Some have attacked the plan, despite the fact that this plan has gone further than any previous administration in terms of funding, in terms of range, in terms of cooperation between city agencies and various stakeholders, and in terms of bringing the voices of people directly impacted by homelessness into the conversation. (This is not to the city Council, of course.) But I would hope that we acknowledged the sacrifice and the tremendous input of those who have lived this life of homelessness and housing insecurity and instability. I don't care if anyone is anti-Eric-Adams, anti-black-and-brown-leadership, anti-woman, anti-woman-leadership and anti-change. I don't care if people are simply here to justify the existence of nonprofits, advocates, and activists. What we should

be careful not to do is use our privilege and platforms to administer work, contributions and impact of those of us who are homeless and formerly homeless. It is time for us to finally have a seat at the table, a voice in the discussion is a hand in the decision-making.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you. And I apologize, I just... We need to make sure everybody has a chance to speak. But I just want to acknowledge the work that you do and the advocacy that you... that we see you do every single day. We haven't met in person, but I know exactly who you are. So I just want to appreciate you and thank you for coming on down today and sharing those words.

MR. DABARON: Thank you. And thank you for all that you do as well. I watch you all closely, especially you, and I appreciate all that you do and this is... these are good conversations that will help us you know, move the needle forward, and hopefully end homelessness in the city. Thank you so much.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: I hope you make it to La República Dominicana.

MR. DABARON: Yes. Thank you. Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. We will now hear from Sarah Wilson, followed by Emily Goldstein, and Oskana Maranova.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

MS. WILSON: Hey, everyone, good afternoon.

Nobody ever wants to follow Sham. So this is going to be a little difficult. Alright, so my name is

Sarah Wilson. I do advocacy with the Safety Net

Project, at Urban Justice, Vocal New York, SHOUT, and

I've also been quite honored to be a part of The

Mayoral roundtable and have directly impacted people.

It's both an honor and a privilege to be able to work

with all of these organizations. But today, I'm here

as a representative of the directly-impacted people.

So I registered as myself, formerly homeless,

disabled, recovering person, currently in supportive

housing, part of the vulnerable population that's

often overlooked, misunderstood, miscredited, and

misrepresented.

I only became eligible for a voucher for my fixed

income, needing a fixed rent because I had to become

homeless for two years, and stay 744 consecutive days

and nights and five different shelters to be eligible

for some sort of subsidy. I say all this to say that

part of my advocacy work -- well, really all of it -- is to make sure that these conditions change. And through these organizations and the city Council, I'm quite hopeful that these changes can and will be made. (Sorry, I got a lot of notes here, as far as suggestions, because there are quite a few.) The congregate shelter system needs to be omitted from existence. I've heard talk on Jessica Katz, and I'm quite excited to hear that the doubling up of apartments, one of the asks was always to let those apartments be available for families. So that sounds quite exciting. I know two gentlemen that currently have a double. They don't know each other, but they both have restraining orders because they just can't get along. That would be much better suited for both of them and studios. And that to be opened up to a small family.

I know Jessica, and I'm going to shout you out one more time: A lot of times in these meetings she says she feel bad that she's re-traumatizing us, and I always say were re-traumatized daily through a sight, a smell, a sound. To be re-traumatized for a purposeful solution or resolution is everything...

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

MS. WILSON: I could ask for and more. I got two more seconds, then I'm going to shut up. A shout out to Sham, a shout out to my Councilmember, I see you up there Pierina. I'm so proud to be in your community. I've been a Bronx resident for four years now. It's a population that's often overlooked and has a high population of directly-impacted people but a low amount of resources.

Just the main ask and I'll shut up. Intro 276 is excellent to give training, trauma based and de-escalization, and if that could be also extended to supportive housing tenants, I know it gets difficult when it gets to state funding and city funding, but I believe that could be done. Access to CITYFEPS Vouchers. And if you're in supportive housing agencies, increase the amount of agencies that can do the housing applications, maybe make it on access HRA, do away with the 90-day eligibility criteria and the CITYFEPS Voucher, that a resident has to be a resident for 90 days in a shelter, increase the amount of very-low-income apartments, increase the amount of supportive housing, and make them able to interchange between agencies, or be able to reside in a HPD unit through the scattered site. I know I'm

missing something. Oh, and please, back to the state on the overdose prevention centers, and I think I'll got shut up, and God bless y'all. Ha.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much, Sarah. Lots of... Lots of love and appreciation. Thank you for representing District 14 today.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. We will now hear from Emily Goldstein, followed by Oksana Miranova and Jacquelyn Simone.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

MS. GOLDSTEIN: Thank you, Committee Chair Sanchez, and members of the Housing and Buildings Committee for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Emily Goldstein. I'm the Director of Organizing and Advocacy at the Association for Neighborhood and Housing Development or ANHD. For many years, ANHD has advocated for the city to move away from the problematic affordable housing unit goals of past housing plans. That metric led to a focus on so-called affordable housing solutions that really just chased after numbers instead of prioritizing the needs of struggling New Yorkers. Instead, we should be focusing on the outcomes our communities need, outcomes like ending homelessness,

preventing displacement, eliminating rent burdens, and ensuring that all New Yorkers actually have safe healthy housing.

In order to tackle our affordability and homelessness crises, we must take an integrated approach that breaks down silos across agencies and housing types. We applaud Mayor Adams and his administration for taking these leaps and we believe the framework of the Housing Our Neighbors Blueprint creates an opportunity to focus instead on the human impacts of our housing policies, with metrics that better correspond to the outcomes that actually matter in people's day-to-day lives. However, the plan published by the administration does lack clear and transparent policies, metrics, and timelines. These are essential for accountability and for evaluating progress and success. Doing away with an overarching unit count goal should not, and need not mean a lack of clarity on commitments, nor a lack of ability for the Council and the public to hold the administration accountable for success towards concrete goals. We urge the administration to center the expertise of directly impacted New Yorkers in developing more specific policies and commitments to

put meat on the bones of The Blueprint that they have set forth just as they have highlighted their engagement with a wide variety of stakeholders in developing The Blueprint itself.

Some metrics that we believe should be considered in evaluating the...

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

MS. GOLDSTEIN: ...success of this or any housing plan (I'll wrap up in one second) are reduction in rent burdened and extremely rent burdened households, reduction in homelessness, increased homeownership access for low income and BIPOC families, reduction in households experiencing health and safety dangers in their homes, matching of affordability levels of the city's term sheets to New Yorkers actual needs, and crucially, elimination of racial disparities in all measures of housing access safety. (crosstalk)

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you so much Emily.

MS. GOLDSTEIN: (inaudible) more details. Again, I appreciate the opportunity to testify and look forward to working with the Council and the administration on addressing our affordability crisis.

2 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much, Emily,
3 and thank you to ANHD for all that you do.

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. We will now hear
5 from Oksana Maranova, followed by Jacquelyn Simone
6 and Judith Goldiner.

7 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, I believe that Oksana
9 Maranova is not present on Zoom, so we will move to
10 Jacquelyn Simone.

11 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

12 MS. SIMONE: Thank you for the opportunity to
13 testify. My name is Jacquelyn Simone. I'm the
14 Policy Director with the Coalition for the Homeless.
15 We have submitted more extensive testimony which I
16 will summarize. While the housing plan includes many
17 laudable goals, more action and investment is needed
18 to actually reduce homelessness. Mayor Adams must
19 dramatically expand the supply of permanent and
20 supportive housing for homeless and extremely-low-
21 income New Yorkers.

22 First we acknowledge the plan includes several
23 important reforms. The administration deserves
24 credit for giving people with lived experience of
25 homelessness a seat at the table, and for presenting

a unified plan for homelessness and housing, including public housing. Crucially, the blueprint suggests eliminating administrative burdens, more transparently reporting on the full scope of homelessness, streamlining, supportive housing placements, and accelerating the NYC 15/15 pipeline, and enacting stronger anti-discrimination protections for people with histories of incarceration.

But although the plan states that homelessness is a housing issue, it disappointingly fails to commit the resources needed to create additional housing for homeless and extremely-low-income households. To tackle the crisis, the city must create at least 6000 new apartments per year for homeless households, and an additional 6000 new apartments per year for households with extremely low incomes. The time for incremental change has long since passed. The Adams administration's failure to articulate clear housing production goals suggest the city will merely continue the inadequate affordable housing production levels of the prior administration, levels that have not made a dent in the crisis. The situation is bleak, with more than 50,000 people sleeping in shelters each night and thousands more on the

streets. Hundreds of thousands of others disproportionately black and Latinx households are on the brink of homelessness. Mayor Adams has rightfully noted that the prior administration was overly focused on hitting top line production and preservation goals. But he has misrepresented advocates' criticisms of his predecessor. To be clear the Coalition for the Homeless and other advocates who collaborated on our multi-year House Our Future NY campaign criticized the DeBlasio administration for focusing on overall...

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

MS. SIMONE: I'll just finish this sentence. ... for focusing on overall housing targets that did not reflect the actual needs of the poorest New Yorkers. But we never suggested that the city should eliminate all production targets but rather that it should focus its production on housing for people who are homeless or extremely low income. Finally, the administration's continued criminalization of unsheltered homeless New Yorkers is both inhumane and contrary to the plan stated goals of reducing homelessness. People on the streets should instead be offered immediate placement in permanent housing.

And in the interim, they should be connected to safe low-barrier shelters with single rooms. Thank you for this important hearing.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. We will now hear from Judith Goldiner, followed by Eric Lee and Diane Prashad.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

MS. GOLDINER: Hi, it's Judith Goldiner from the Legal Aid Society. We're so happy to be here and to be talking about this important problem of the lack of affordable housing for the lowest income people. And I appreciate the... the opportunity to appear here and the leadership of Chair Sanchez. The good part of the plan, we think, is that it does include public housing and homeless issues for the first time, and that the administration intends to address bureaucratic issues that have really plagued all the programs we deal with.

However, on the homeless side, we really need more housing production that's geared to homeless New Yorkers and the lowest income New Yorkers. The prevention side is really weak. We know that we need to address the eviction crisis, that we need more

rental subsidies, that we need good-cause eviction. We know that has to be done at the Albany level, but there are many parts of the plan, that... there are many parts of the plan that talk about what we need to do in Albany and good cause is absent from that.

We agree with good... with accessory dwelling units, but only if they're safe, and if they include tenant protections like... like good cause. We're concerned about the low take-up of SCRIE and DRI, especially in the Bronx. We have a number of issues with CITYFEPS, which are addressed in our written testimony. But overall, we would like to see CITYFEPS more like Section Eight. The administration really needs to address the source of income discrimination problems, and I really disagree that they have restored enough staffing in that area.

On public housing, we do support the trust, but we think that the administration needs to include more money for tech assistance... technical assistance and for organizing tenants so they can really...

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

MS. GOLDINER: ...get to know... Just a couple more things. On RAD and PACT, if they're going to

continue to have those as options, we really need to have an opt-in like we have with the trust so that tenants have a choice. We agree with the administration on varying criminal record discrimination, and on health and safety. What the administration has put in there is really inadequate to meet the need.

Thank you so much to the Council for those issues. I urge you to look at our testimony which is a lot more detailed, and thanks so much for the opportunity.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much. I am going to step to the restroom, because baby and I have to use the best the restroom. But Councilmember Cabán is going to be here for a second.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you so much, Councilmember. We will now hear from Eric Lee, followed, by Diane Prashad and Deborah Juliez.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

MR. LEE: Hi, good morning. My name is Eric Lee. I'm Director of Policy and Planning at Homeless Services United. Thank you, Chair Sanchez and members of the House and Buildings Committee for allowing me to testify today.

I want to echo the comments from Judith and Jacquelyn around the plan. It's a bold vision to increase accessibility to housing in New York City, but there's much work to be done in order to align practice and budget with the actual plan. It's refreshing that it's a unified plan for the first time of homelessness and housing. But with regards to metrics, as mentioned, while we don't want to focus on overall high production goals, we do want to see the creation of affordable housing for deeply low income New Yorkers as well as people experiencing homelessness. Minimally, we would like to see at least 8000 units created per year. As... As chief Katz testified today, though, the capital funding in the housing budget for FY 23 does not support a substantial ramp up in the creation of affordable housing compared to previous years, so we're concerned how that's going to impact the housing plans ambitious goals to re-house as many people as possible.

A few major recommendations I want to highlight from my testimony that I will be submitting: The city should implement data tracking and reporting legislation as soon as possible to create baselines

to measure the progress of the new administration's housing plans. The Mayor just signed into law Intro 303-A on CITYFEPS voucher utilization, but the actual implementation reporting date is not until March 2024. The Council should also codify The Mayor's commitment to holding other agencies accountable for housing placements and transparency about the number of people experiencing homelessness by passing Intro 211 and 212-A. But likewise, the implementation date should be moved up from March 24 to as soon as possible.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

MR. LEE: A couple of other quick comments I just want to share: Homebase providers are working at capacity currently in the Bronx and Brooklyn. They have appointments stretching up to six weeks right now for non-emergency cases. We urge the city to increase the funding levels in the upcoming FY 23 RFP for existing home based providers to be able to staff up, as well as consider opening new Homebase locations, when existing sites aren't able to expand due to office constraints. We also want to mention a couple other major things in terms of...

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: I'm so... I'm so sorry, Eric. I'm so sorry. We can't... we don't have the space for much longer. But please do submit written testimony, and we'll definitely take a look at it. Thank you.

MR. LEE: Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. We will now hear from Diane Prashad, followed by Deborah Julius and Amelia Zurlich.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time,

MS. PRASHAD: Good afternoon all. Ms. Sanchez, I would love to have a conversation with you after this committee hearing. Thank you. I'm calling today just to say that I believe that this House Our Neighbors, it is a pipe dream that's being sold to a lot of homeowners in low-to-moderate income communities, especially of color. HPD, as you know, I've been in bad with them for going on three years now, to get... to be released on my contract, due to the lack of enforcement and monitoring, as well as corruption, fraud, abuse of power, the likes of... I'm just totally disgusted by what I'm dealing with. And currently HPD under Carrión now has allowed real estate investors to buy... purchase first-time

homeowners' home out of our program, something that was totally not supposed to be happening within our contracts. The house next... that's attached to mine, that have given my family hell for 26 months, is now occupied by a real estate investor. How can this be happening today? I... I sent a lot of applications to Gale Brewer, of course you Ms. Sanchez, and a host of other people. I would like to know why there hasn't been a heron with this matter. As you know, DOI has been doing an investigation on Edgemere By The Sea, 10 blocks from us, with real estate investors also taking over that development. How can this be happening out here? Why are we being inundated with all kinds of people in our communities with no oversight? How come we have to endure all this abuse?

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you so much.

MS. PRASHAD: No help... No help has been allowed. Like, he is flipping his house. He renovated it, disturbed us for two months, with no one's dealing with it, and HPD, all they can say is that the house is no longer in their possession? Well, it isn't in your possession no more, but it

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2 hadn't been removed from the program. And you still
3 us stuck in this program...

4 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

5 MS. PRASHAD: But no one's involved, and yet...
6 and still all you can say is that she's trying to
7 make a program house and help people find housing?
8 Are you really kidding me? All you have is...

9 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much, Miss
10 Prashad it's a little difficult to understand you
11 here in the in the chambers, but I know that you've
12 been in touch with my staff. So we'll continue to
13 follow up with you. I know you've had productive
14 conversations with them. So I hear you, and will...
15 will continue to connect with you, okay?

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. We will now hear
17 from Deborah Julius followed by a Amelia Zurlich.

18 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: I'm not seeing either witness
20 present in the Zoom. So we will move to Brendan
21 Cheney followed by James Lloyd and Katelyn Andrews.

22 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

23 MR. CHENEY: Good afternoon. My name is Brendan
24 Cheney. I'm the Director of Policy and
25 Communications at the New York Housing Conference.

I'd like to thank Committee Chair, Pierina Sanchez and the members of the committee for the opportunity to testify. The New York Housing Conference is a nonprofit affordable housing policy and advocacy organization. We also led the United Housing Coalition of more than 90 organizations to develop consensus recommendations to address the housing and homelessness crisis.

Mayor Eric Adams's new people-focused housing plans is a welcome departure from the city's previously siloed approach to housing policy. This new vision rightly centers on some of the most critical and pressing housing issues across the five boroughs, including NYCHA preservation, homelessness, and housing affordability, and this was one of the main recommendations on the United Housing Coalition.

The plan also rightly avoids setting a big numerical target for affordable housing production, which in the past has led to housing plans chasing big numbers at the expensive affordability levels and other important goals. However, we want to make sure The Administration continues to track production to maintain transparency, and we look forward to working with the administration to develop metrics that will

track whether the plan is efficient and improving housing affordability. We also want to work with the administration on affordability levels of the affordable housing. This is particularly important given the new HUD AMI levels have increased by 16% over the past year and 34% since 2018 with the Metro Area AMI of \$94,500, well beyond the median income of New York City renters of \$50,000 per year, as the official AMI levels continue to grow beyond the actual incomes of New Yorkers, we will need to work together to make sure that affordable housing is affordable to New Yorkers.

Overall, there are a lot of good strategies in The Plan. And we appreciate the administration's efforts to listen to experts, advocates, and especially NYCHA residents and people that have experienced homelessness. We also appreciate that a plan committed to addressing health and safety and housing and administrative burden burdens, and make it harder to build and access affordable housing. Now that they have a plan the work and is implementing the plan and matching it to the resources available. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I'm happy to answer any questions.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. We will now hear from James Lloyd, followed by Katelyn Andrews. And just before you begin, reminder to all remaining witnesses. First, thank you so much for your patience and for coming to testify today. As the Chair mentioned, we are strapped for time because another hearing is booked in this room. So if you could please keep your testimony to the two minute time. Thank you, you may begin.

MR. LLOYD: Afternoon Chair Sanchez. Committee Counsel has a copy of my remarks. I represent NYSFAFH, which is the affordable housing trade group with 400 members responsible for the vast majority of affordable housing built statewide. We support The Mayor's unified approach to combining the purchase to homelessness, public housing, and affordable housing. \$32 billion... 22 billion in capital plus another \$10 billion for the Preservation Trust is a record investment. It's exactly what the city needs. In addition to that, it involves serious truth telling. You know, The Administration is actually going to disclose the number of homeless for the first time. So I think that's very important to rip the band aid off. They are also investing major in efficiency.

So for instance, HPD is no longer going to re-verify the incomes of every single tenant. You know, it takes a year to rent up an affordable building due to all this bureaucracy. So that's a huge step forward.

But in terms of action, the one part of the plan that needs the Council's approval, are the zoning text amendments. So City Of Yes would be a dramatic step forward for affordable housing across the city. You know, scrapping these extremely burdensome parking requirements, and additionally making the senior housing rules, the AIRS rules, available to all the affordable buildings.

So we just say, you know, Council has always been asking for more affordable... more affordable housing everywhere. Well, this is a chance to say yes, we want the affordable housing, we want it city-wide. So it's our one ask from the Council as part of this is: Please approve that zoning text amendment when it comes to you.

And then finally, you know, you heard from the commissioner about how hard it is to staff up at HPD. How hard it is. You know, they're paying lawyers \$62 grand. And that's to put it in housing terms, right? That's 50 AMI for a family of three. So you're

asking a member of the bar to come in and work and close deals for \$62,000 starting salary, no matter what their experience is. So OMB has to get out of HPD's hair, has to let them higher up, give them the freedom to manage their own expense budget, you know, for any of this to have any chance of working. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much.

MS. ANDREWS: Hi, my name is Katelyn Andrews.

I'm the Director of Public Policy and External Affairs at LiveOn New York. LiveOn New York has more than 110 nonprofits that are our members that provide services to older adults throughout New York City.

We first and foremost are deeply appreciative of the release of The Plan and all the leadership that went into creating it as well as the collaborative spirit. We were pleased to be a part of the focus groups that led to the creation of the plan. We're also appreciative of the fact that NYCHA is included in this plan, as well as the fact that it centers homeless New Yorkers. One point of background to re-emphasize the urgency: Roughly 2000 Older New Yorkers are currently living in homeless shelters and that number is projected to triple by 2030 without

significant intervention. So the time is now for action.

Specifically, within The Plan, we are incredibly supportive of the intent to utilize zoning to encourage a wide range of housing types. We're supportive of accessory dwelling units, which offer the opportunity for caregivers to live closer to care recipients, as well as the conversion of vacant hotels into affordable housing. We're also wholeheartedly supportive of the intent to prioritize people over parking, as well as to incorporate community spaces within affordable housing, and we encourage there to be a survey to look at what existing community spaces are not currently what they could be and should be incorporated into future developments such as older adult centers. We're supportive of the automatic enrollment in SCRIE. That goal to expand that and make it less burdensome to apply for SCRIE, as well as to... to accelerate the production of supportive housing. We do hope that that extends to the senior affordable rental assistance program as well.

Beyond that, I want to emphasize that we continue to push for the \$4 billion annually in capital funding as well as the need to staff up HPD.

With that, my testimony contains a lot more but thank you for your time.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much. I appreciate LiveOn.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. We will now hear from MJ Okma, followed by Patrick Boyle, and William Spisak.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

MR. OKMA: Good afternoon, my name is MJ Okma with SAGE, the country's first and largest organization dedicated to improving the lives of LGBTQ+ and HIV affected older people. In addition to our network of older adults centers, SAGE is the onsite service provider at New York's first LGBTQ+ welcoming elder housing developments located in Brooklyn and the Bronx. Histories of trauma and systemic discrimination have deeply impacted LGBTQ+ elders and created health disparities, high poverty rates and unequal access, particularly around housing. These challenges can pound for transgender elders, and LGBTQ+ elders of color. Unless

effectively addressed, the housing pricing crisis among LGBTQ+ older people will only worsen as the population of both older New Yorkers and our LGBTQ+ elders continues to grow. SAGE is deeply appreciative of The Blueprint, and the work that has gone into it.

While many of the reforms outlined would benefit LGBTQ+ elders, their unique needs were never explicitly named in this document. To that end SAGE suggests the following additional steps: First fund the creation of affordable and affirming housing for LGBTQ+ older adults, including under the Senior Affordable Rental Assistance or SARA program. Sage also supports LiveOn's recommendation for the city to increase the per-unit reimbursement rate under SARA.

Second, fund LGBTQ+ cultural competency training for housing providers. Third, increased funding and access to LGBTQ+ friendly supportive services and residential settings and NORCs. And fourth, fund 24-hour security for SARA funded developments that cater to communities where residents are at high risk of anti-LGBTQ+ or racist violence. Thank you. SAGE deeply values our partnership with the City Council and The Administration and we look forward to working

together to ensure the housing plan supports our city's LGBTQ+ elders. More details can be found in my written testimony.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Patrick Boyle?

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

MR. BOYLE: Thank you to the Chair and to the members of the committee for the opportunity to submit these testimony today. My name is Patrick Boyle. I'm with Volunteers of America. We're one of the biggest human service providers in the region, with a focus on homelessness. We have 65 programs in the in the region and touch about 11,000 people each year. So I want to thank The Administration, and the team, and all the staff for this plan. And particularly, we want to emphasize the fact that it put the voices of people experiencing homelessness, NYCHA residents, in the formation of the plan, which we greatly credit the administration.

A few things from within The Plan that we want to call out that we thought were particularly helpful for the residences that we run around the city. So the issues with vacancies and lease up, especially for our supportive housing portfolio continues to be a major area of concern for us as a supportive

housing provider. So the emphasis on streamlining and fixing the vacancy issues and referrals is hugely important, and we look forward to seeing that... seeing that moving in the right direction. Also the Shelter Predevelopment Fund for nonprofits is something that nonprofits shelter operators have been calling for... for some time. It came out of the working group that VOA participated in. We thank The Administration for including that as well. And finally, homeownership: You know, health, housing and wealth are all an important part of ending homelessness, and the wealth component... wealth building, is so often left out of the fray. So we appreciate the focus on affordable homeownership, and... and look forward to seeing that sort of pillar be bolstered as well.

So thank you to the Chair and, and thank you for the opportunity to read this testimony. And we have more in our in our written testimony, which we've submitted.

COMMITTEE COUNSE: Thank you, William Spisak. You will be followed by Rebecca Sauer and Boris Santos.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

MR. SPISAK: Hey, good morning committee Chair Sanchez, members that Housing Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Will Spisak. I'm the Senior Program Associate at New Economy Project. New Economy Project is a city-wide organization that works with community groups to build a just economy that works for all. Among our activities, we are a founding member and co-coordinator of the New York City Community Land Initiative, or NICCLI, a city-wide coalition working to promote Community Land Trusts, or CLTs, as a strategy to address the city's affordable... affordability crisis and ensure equitable community wide decision-making over land use in New York City. New Economy Project and our allies in NICCLI were pleased to see CLTs spotlighted in The Mayor's housing plan. And we were encouraged to see a commitment from The Administration to further explore models of shared equity and community ownership as solutions to the city's affordability crisis.

However, the housing plan lacks specific targets and policy agenda describing how The Administration plans to support CLT growth and development in New York City. We urge the City Council and The

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2 Administration to implement policies to help scale
3 CLTs and other Shared Equity models in New York City.
4 Concerted policy change is needed to help CLTs
5 acquire and steward land and housing, keeping land
6 off the speculative market and out of the hands of
7 private equity firms and bad landlords. I would like
8 to highlight three elements of NICCLI's policy
9 platform for the committee today. One: Passed the
10 Community Opportunity To Purchase Act or COPA, Intro
11 196. COPA gives CLTs and other mission-driven
12 nonprofits have first right to purchase multifamily
13 buildings when landlords sell. It's modeled on
14 similar legislation from Washington and San
15 Francisco, coupled with curb speculation, and level
16 the playing field for nonprofits to expand the supply
17 of permanently affordable, community-controlled
18 housing. Two: Abolish and replace the New York City
19 lien sale. We applaud the City Council for allowing
20 the lien sale authorization to expire in February.
21 We urge the City Council to pass this legislation.

22 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

23 MR. SPISAK: Thank you. And the last thing I'll
24 highlight is just, preserve public land for sale.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. If you have written testimony, we'll we will accept that at the testimony inbox. We will now move to Rebecca Sauer followed by Boris Santos and Ara Olivaria.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

MS. SAUER: Hello, Chair Sanchez and members of the Housing and Buildings Committee. My name is Rebecca Sauer, and I'm the Director of Policy and Planning at the Supportive Housing Network of New York, a nonprofit membership organization. I do have more detailed written testimony, but would like to highlight some of our thoughts about Housing Our Neighbors. Overall were pleased to see a coordinated housing and homelessness plan and look forward to working with the city and our members on greater detail and implementation.

We're also encouraged by many specific elements of the plan, including engagement with people with lived experience of homelessness, commitment to report on the census for all homeless systems, proposals to maximize affordable and supportive housing development with zoning, streamlining the process of accessing supportive housing, addressing its 10% vacancy rate, and accelerating supportive

housing production. While we're pleased that The Blueprint included a commitment to accelerate supportive housing production, we believe it is important to adjust the city's current supportive housing program, NYC 15/15. In order to meet that goal, NYC 15/15 committed to creating 15,000 units of supportive housing over 15 years. Launched in 2017. The program is split half and half between newly developed single-site residences, otherwise known as congregate, and scattered site supportive housing, which are private apartments in which mobile services are delivered. The single-site program is going strong. 70% of the 7500 units in the congregate RFP have already been awarded. Meanwhile, the scattered site program has only awarded 17 -- one seven percent -- of its target. It has faltered due to overall challenges with the model that strain our nonprofits, a challenging rental market, and lower social services rates than the congregate program has. The network believes the city should reallocate the units from a 50/50 split to a 75/25 split in favor of single-site development. Luckily, NYC 15/15 is already producing congregate units at a rate of at least 750 units per year. But if the congregate RFP

is not right-sized to meet the demand, it will be completely depleted in the next two to three years, massively disrupting the pipeline.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

MS. SAUER: ... ensuring that programs, RFTs, and...

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thanks very much. We will now move to Boris Santos, followed by Aura Olivaria, and Craig Gurian.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

MR. SANTOS: Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Boris Santos. I am the Treasurer of the East New York Community Land Trust, which is a nonprofit that incorporated in December 2020. It consists of 30 East New York and Ocean Hill, Brownsville members. I want to first and foremost thank the Council for this opportunity on this hearing on The Mayor's plan. And also, I encourage you all to read my testimony more thoroughly. It is more thorough, but we hit on all the sections of supporting CLT that The Mayor mentioned. On the first bullet point, technical assistance and operational support, we asked specifically, and demanded for the city to support the \$1.5 million increase to the CLT Initiative Fund,

which is the best source of funding so far to directly support CLTs and their operating costs, and all their programs. That didn't get done. We're looking forward for that to get done in the next fiscal year. On identifying public sites, and transferring those sites, the CLT in East New York has done that. Please support that work. For the sake of time, I will spare the exact addresses that we're working on. We're also working on a small public and private scatter-site plan to utilize open door and the new subsidy legacy cities that the state just expanded to... to extend to the city as well. On launching new tools to help acquire private sites. Yes, yes, yes. The biggest issue is site control. Both levels of government require site control, which means really, hey you, CLT, go out there in this capitalist environment in the market and still work towards getting the loans or the products and the funding to acquire sites. We have to change that model. I know there's no there's... I know there's consequences. Or... I know that there it's not an easy fix. But we need to change that model to allow for us to really do our job of removing speculation out of the market by acquiring sites. Lastly, I want

to say please layer... look to layer on the current sources of funding that exists with HPD to the fullest extent possible with the state. There are certain term sheets that don't layer as easily. For example, open door...

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Aura Olivaria is not currently present on the zoom. So we will move to Craig Gurian, followed by Sean Campion, and Lyric Thompson.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

MR. GURIAN: Thank you. For those who don't know me, I'm the Executive Director of the Anti-Discrimination Center. You can check the tape, but I noted at 10:40am that Chief Katz said in passing that the intention was to build at the same rate as has been the case in the past. That's clearly inadequate. There was not a word from the administration this morning about housing segregation. That's scandalous in one of the most segregated big cities in the country. If the administration won't acknowledge that segregated housing patterns are unnatural and cannot be accepted, it isn't serious about a fair housing plan.

By the way, the so called diversity index actually covers up segregation in the New York City context. It was encouraging to hear Chief Katz say that every neighborhood must be held accountable. But there's reporting even today from David Friedlaender that administration officials have told advocates that they won't propose rezonings to permit more housing unless Councilmembers proposed and fight for them. A policy like that incentivizes obstruction.

If you don't have a plan to increase density in every neighborhood, not making every low-density neighborhood a carbon copy of high-rise Manhattan, but increasing density beyond what it is now, you're not serious about affordable housing everywhere.

On source of income discrimination, restoring some funding is certainly better than not, but the city has a fundamentally misguided strategy that focuses on quote, "informal resolutions" end quote. This means that violators never really get punished and there's no incentive for the industry to reform.

Lastly, there's a bold but basic social housing solution that is nowhere to be found in the plan. The city has the...

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. We will now hear from Sean Campion, followed by lyric Thomas Thompson, and Eric Rosenbaum.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

MR. CAMPION: Thank you again for the opportunity to testify. Good to see you Chair Sanchez. I'm Sean Campion, the Director of Housing and Economic Development Studies at the Citizens Budget Commission. Our testimony focuses on two points: First, that The Plan rightly concentrates on improving service delivery. But the success of it will depend on specifying specific operational changes, and then diligently managing their execution. And second, that the plan also rightly acknowledges the need to increase housing production to address the affordability crisis. But the ability to do so will depend on planning and zoning for growth. Both of those still need to be flushed out.

First, The Plan appropriately focused on getting the management basics right starting with NYCHA. But the system needs to identify specific actions needed to achieve its goals, the signing responsible party, set implementation milestones and performance

metrics, and create and implement a management accountability process to track and manage progress. Without that the plan will not succeed. And broadly, I think it's also worth noting that many goals can be accomplished within the record levels of funding already available for housing, in part by better allocating existing vacant positions and putting a greater emphasis on efficiency and effectiveness. Second on the supply of housing, the city still needs to identify how to facilitate and encourage the production that it calls for. The proposed zoning for housing opportunity texts is a good first step, but one won't generate housing committee needs for all types of housing in every neighborhood to city.

Increasing production at scale will require planning and zoning for growth, including a broad based citywide approach to rezoning to increase as growth development capacity, and on metrics rather than solely measuring the production preservation of affordable units, decisions that it's a goal for total housing production of all units, including net growth in housing units citywide and by community district. And the city should also direct outcome metrics, such as the share of rent burdened

households or homeownership for various groups, since production is only one piece of the housing policy.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

MR. CAMPION: Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Lyric Thompson?

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

MS. THOMPSON: Hi, good afternoon. My name is Lyric. Thank you for having me. The Mayor's plan is very, very bold. Specifically the improving health and safety and quality of housing. Now, if we're to do this, we need to address the inefficiencies and lack of training within HPD enforcement. HPD enforcement for the last three decades has allowed patch jobs to serve as repairs, and this drags... it creates a cycle where citizens have to continuously call 311, 311, 311. And it drags out for years. It's also very abusive and toxic to have to deal with. Specifically, it's been six months since the Twin Park fire and I am still fighting with HPD over the standards for egress doors, whether NFPA standards, if they could read them and understand them rather than actually be trained in them. So they have set up and created a dynamic where it's HPD

enforcement versus the fire department, the NFPA technical support, architects.

If we're going to talk about quality and safety, we might want to address the lack of training within HPD. Now, Council... Councilmember Sanchez, the last time we spoke, your office along with Sandy Nurse's office had sent a letter to HPD. I had to formally request a copy of that letter from my city Councilmember, but when I called your office to even discuss this, I was told by an intern to call my Councilmember. This is the type of gaslighting and toxic behavior that is not only abusive, but it frustrates actually getting things done. So my question for you, Councilmember, is how do you plan on addressing this? And I'll yield the rest of my time.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. We'll hear from Eric Rosenbaum, followed by Katrina Corbell.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

MR. ROSENBAUM: Hi, thanks for... It's really kind of a remarkable hearing The Blueprint. I'm Eric Rosenbaum, I'm president and CEO of Project Renewal, a New York City homeless services agency. We're

incredibly grateful to Chair Sanchez and the city Council for your support of our programs.

I just want to say one thing: Everybody knows that we need more deeply affordable housing, and everybody wants it as long as it's not next door to them. And since this prevents us from building housing fast enough, we ended up building shelter, and that just gets people angrier. In our experience, a very small number of people fund lawsuits that have no merit, and whose sole purpose is to delay projects in the hopes that we and everybody else will just give up. I think we need a game changer, which would be a legislative override that makes truly affordable housing easier and faster to build, that protects local elected officials against the barrage of criticism they get when they do support affordable projects in their neighborhoods, and protects nonprofit developers like us, so we can do more projects faster.

The recently enacted legislation that allows hotel conversions to support it housing is a perfect example. It's a great start. I think we need more legislation like that, that opens up more opportunities and kind of forces every neighborhood

in the city to be accountable for affordable...
deeply affordable and supportive housing production.
And I had more to say but I think you guys are tired
of listening. So I'll stop now. Thank you all.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you so much. We will
now hear from Katrina Corbell.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

MS. CORBELL: Hi, my name is Katrina. I'm with
SHOUT which is the Supportive Housing Organized
United Tenants. I'm also with the client advisory
group of Coalition for the Homeless. I'm a peer
supporter, peer counselor, and I'm with some other
groups. I will submit this in written testimony due
to the shortness of time but I wanted to share with
you guys one example I saw, which was somebody who
was street homeless that I had tried to call for
the... what might have been if BEHERD is still in
existence, otherwise I tried to call, if BEHERD is no
longer in existence, the Outreach Consortium for
Manhattan, and other people who didn't know about the
Outreach Consortium had called just 911. So the 911
call led to NYPD paramedics showing up. The
paramedics and NYPD both knew that the person was
going to say no and refuse services. But the 311

person had to look up what the Outreach Consortium was because they had never even heard of the Outreach Consortium, let alone BEHERD. The NYPD officers there had never heard of the Outreach Consortium, let alone BEHERD. The NYPD and the paramedics left and the 311 officer... or the 311 employee finally did look up and find out how to reach the Outreach Consortium and told me that it could take up to an hour. 35 minutes later, a different NYPD officer showed up and chased the person away. So then, by the time I got a text message saying that the Outreach Consortium showed up and the person wasn't there. So this is an example of how a statistic is going to say that the Outreach Consortium was unable to reach someone. When I know that it was NYPD that chased the person away that was now no longer able to access services. I also wanted to address that we've been talking about how many supportive housing units need to be built.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

MS. CORBELL: Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thanks very much. This concludes the time of public testimony. If there's anyone on Zoom that we have inadvertently missed

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2 please use the raise hand function now and we will
3 try to hear from you. Seeing no hands I will turn it
4 to Chair Sanchez to close the hearing.

5 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much to all
6 the members of the public, The Administration, and
7 all of my colleagues who are here today. This
8 hearing is now adjourned.

9 [Gavel]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date 07/15/2022