

Testimony of the New York City Economic Development Corporation
New York City Council, Committees on Economic Development and State and Local
Legislation

Hearing: Oversight—New York City Heliports

November 29, 2022

Good morning, Chairs Fariás and Abreu, and members of the Economic Development and the State and Federal Legislation Committee. My name is Andrew Genn and I serve as the Senior Vice President of Transportation for the New York City Economic Development Corporation (“EDC”). I am joined by my colleague Mikelle Adgate, Senior Vice President in our Government and Community Relations department.

I will give a brief overview of EDC’s oversight of the tour helicopter industry and its management of two of the City’s heliports. After my testimony, we will be glad to answer any questions you may have.

The City of New York owns two heliports—the East 34th Street Heliport and the Downtown Manhattan Heliport (“DMH”). Both heliports are “public use heliports,” an FAA designation meaning “a heliport available for use by the general public without a requirement for prior approval of the owner or operator.” Public use facilities operate as the refueling stations for helicopters traversing throughout the northeast and tri-state area. As public use facilities, we cannot turn a helicopter away—for example, one that took off from outside New York City—that wants to land at one of our heliports, even if there is no prior approval.

These facilities are used by a wide range of entities for a wide range of purposes, including hospitals for organ transplants, news agencies reporting on breaking news, the New York City Police and Fire Departments responding to emergency calls, chartered and private flights, tour flights, and other critical City operations.

The Downtown Manhattan Heliport, by design, is the only heliport that permits tour flights. It also serves chartered and private flights, NYPD and other emergency services. It is the only heliport in New York City that can accommodate Presidential flights by Marine One and its supporting aircraft.

The East 34th Street Heliport focuses on emergency services, essential organ transport to nearby hospitals, chartered and private flights, City operations, and media. We believe that

organizations like NYU Langone Medical Center and Mount Sinai will be submitting written testimony in connection with today's hearing highlighting the critical role that the East 34th Street Heliport plays in supporting their life-saving medical operations.

At both heliports, EDC acts as a contract administrator for the concession agreements between the City and the heliport operators.

Day-to-day management of heliport operations is handled by Atlantic Aviation at E. 34th St. and Saker Aviation at the DMH. The concession agreements set forth the terms and conditions under which each facility operates, hours of operation, maximum annual flight volumes, insurance levels, reporting requirements, including air quality monitoring and route compliance, and terms of payment, among others.

The East 34th Street Heliport is open on weekdays from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. and is closed on Saturday and Sunday, except for emergency flights.

The Downtown Manhattan Heliport is open to general traffic from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. on weekdays and 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Saturday, and 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday. However, DMH limits tour flights to Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. and does not permit tour flights on Sundays.

From October 2021 to October 2022, E. 34th Street Heliport handled 6,507 flights and DMH handled 23,499 flights.

EDC is committed to being good stewards of the City's heliport assets. We support innovation across this sector while ensuring New Yorkers' quality of life and safety remain top of mind. In our role as stewards, for example, we work to promote more rapid adoption of electric helicopters, which are quieter and greener. Our team regularly meets with organizations that are advancing these technologies to understand the current technological landscape and how EDC can incentivize quicker adoption. As you may have seen in recent news reports, start-up helicopter manufacturers are partnering with established air carriers to introduce new shuttle services from our heliports to local airports on quiet and green electric helicopters. Our understanding, per our conversations with the industry, is that these electric helicopters could be available for commercial use within five years.

In addition, we are looking to better leverage our heliport assets by diversifying uses. For example, we are committed to the Blue Highway by introducing marine freight at our heliports, which will reduce polluting truck trips from the outer boroughs into Manhattan. We are working

with companies that are actively piloting waterborne freight concepts in Hunts Point in the Bronx, and in Sunset Park and Red Hook in Brooklyn. We are pleased to have been recently awarded a \$5.1M federal grant to advance infrastructure improvements at up to six landings, including at DMH, to support this waterborne freight network. New York City will be the first U.S. city to introduce last-mile waterborne freight delivery, and we are excited to work with you to implement this groundbreaking vision.

Against the backdrop of these benefits, we recognize that members of our community have raised quality-of-life concerns about helicopter uses. We have always sought to address these concerns with a spirit of transparency, collaboration, and partnership with the Council.

In 2016, for example, we worked with the City Council, the DMH operator, tour flight companies, and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), to creatively reduce the number of tour flights operating out of DMH from 60,000 flights per year to 30,000 flights per year—a 50% reduction. Additionally, we eliminated one of the tour routes that flew over a section of northern Manhattan and the Bronx, and tour helicopters are no longer permitted to fly over land and must at all time fly over the water. Moreover, we banned tour helicopters that do not have doors; and tour flights are not permitted on Sundays. Lastly, we overhauled our 311-noise complaint review process and added review by an independent third-party consultant. The Council's partnership was crucial to helping push forward these improvements.

At both DMH and E. 34th Street, there are annual flight caps. 30,000 tour flights at DMH, as previously mentioned, and 28,000 flights at E. 34th Street.

EDC regularly monitors compliance with these annual volume caps, the operating hour restrictions, and adherence to the over-water-only tour routes. We take our responsibility very seriously, and we are committed to working with the Council to address noise impacts from helicopter operations

To this end, EDC monitors public complaints related to all helicopter flights over New York City, not just flights to and from the two EDC-run heliports. Under our process, after a member of the public lodges a complaint through the City's 311 portal, this data is transmitted to EDC and the DMH operator for review. The 311 data then undergoes two rounds of analysis: first by our DMH operator—and then by an independent third-party consultant with expertise in analyzing flight paths. Once both rounds of analysis are complete, EDC compiles reports that are transmitted to the City Council, elected officials, and relevant community boards on a

monthly basis. We welcome the opportunity to work with Council on how the data is presented in these reports. In addition, we are committed to responding individually to each and every complaint.

To give some context for this, let's look at the 311-complaint data for October 2022. We received 1,917 311 noise complaints. After the two rounds of analysis were completed, it was found that:

- 57 percent of complaints concern helicopter flights that take off from New Jersey;
- 38 percent concern "other" flights, which include private and charter flights, New York State Police, among others;
- 2 percent concern NYPD flights; and
- 2 percent concern media flights.

In addition, it was found that there was one substantiated complaint of a tour flight that went over land. Pursuant to established protocol, Saker advised us that they issued a warning to the operator, and the next violation will result in a fine.

Historically, less than 5 percent of the 311 noise complaints are due to tour flights originating at the Downtown Manhattan Heliport. We believe that the low number of complaints from DMH-based tour flights is due to the requirement these tours fly over water, not land.

We are committed to continuing to work with the Council to achieve our shared goals and address the quality-of-life concerns that have been voiced by communities adjacent to the heliports and tour routes that we are able to regulate.

EDC currently has an open procurement for an operator of the Downtown Manhattan Heliport, as the current Concession Agreement expires in April 2023. EDC issued a Request for Proposals last summer. We have received a robust response. We are now in the selection phase, with the aim to give New York City the maximum control over tour flights operations to advance post-pandemic business recovery while continuing to prioritize quality-of-life concerns and ensure safe operations. Our goal is to select an operator with the highest and safest quality aviation services.

In addition, through the RFP, EDC explicitly sought innovative responses that would provide the basis for introducing quieter and greener electric helicopters. Finally, the RFP sought information on exploring additional uses for the heliports for public benefit, including

(1) waterborne freight to reduce local truck traffic, (2) cinematography, and (3) community-focused events.

We look forward to updating you once a new concession agreement is finalized and an operator is selected.

NYC's City-run heliports are a critical component of our transportation network and are essential for business and the growth of the local economy. We are committed to continuing our partnership with the Council to ensure the usage of our heliports for the public benefit, while also addressing the quality-of-life concerns. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today, and Mikelle and I are happy to answer any questions you may have.



**THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY**

JO ANNE SIMON
Assemblymember 52nd District

COMMITTEES
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Education
Higher Education
Labor
Transportation

CHAIR
Committee on Ethics and Guidance

CO-CHAIR
Legislative Ethics Commission

November 2022

To the Members of the New York City Council and the Committee on Economic Development:

As both an elected official and New York City metropolitan area resident, thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding T2022-2453, Oversight - New York City Heliport Operations.

On behalf of my constituents, I strongly urge the Council and Committee to take immediate action to address the relentless safety and public health issues that helicopter traffic over our area causes. The problem is worsening, and my constituents are rightfully apoplectic. They regularly call, email, and speak with me in the community, begging the government to take action to address their concerns regarding helicopters overhead:

- Noise and Air Pollution
- Environmental Impacts
- Health & Safety
- Negative Impact on Parks
- Terrorism Risks

Helicopter traffic over many neighborhoods - Brooklyn Bridge Park, downtown Brooklyn, Carroll Gardens, Boerum Hill, Cobble Hill, Prospect Heights, Gowanus, Park Slope, and the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, - especially the non-essential flight path from lower Manhattan to the airports and the east end of Long Island, is near-constant. Data collected by advocates confirms that helicopters often fly at altitudes too low (thus noisier & more unsafe/polluting) over neighborhoods when their flight path should be over water.

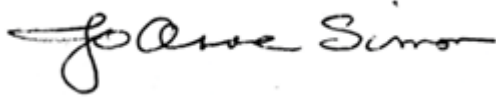
This is not just a near-constant annoyance, disruptive to sleep (the flights start early in the morning) and learning (children and schools are often negatively affected) but also is totally in contravention to our climate goals. This is inconsistent with the CLCPA mandates, adding to the deterioration of our planet's environment.

In seeking to ban or curtail nonessential helicopter flights due to ever-increasing public complaints and numerous recent fatal helicopter crashes, elected officials have introduced legislation at all levels of government: Congressional bills H.R. 1643 and H.R. 7769, the New York State "Stop the Chop" bill currently awaiting the Governor's signature that I support, and at least four separate bills currently pending in the chambers of the New York City Council, as you know.

See <https://stopthechopnynj.org/legislation/>

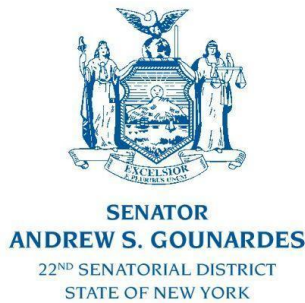
On behalf of my constituents, I urge the City Council to take the necessary and proper steps to institute oversight on NYC heliports, reduce overall helicopter traffic over New York City, and ban non-essential helicopter flights from the skies over New York City.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jo Anne Simon". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jo Anne Simon

CHAIRMAN
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December 1, 2022

**Written Testimony on New York City Heliport Operations
New York City Council Committee on Economic Development**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on the incessant helicopter noise pollution plaguing the residents of Brooklyn Heights, Cobble Hill, and DUMBO whom I proudly represent as part of the new 26th District in the New York State Senate. I write today with a simple request: that the City Council take every possible action to mitigate the impacts of tourist helicopter flights wherever possible, closing the book on this pestilence imperiling the health and safety of both ground-level New Yorkers and flight passengers.

There are roughly 30,000 city-based heliport flights a year out of the Downtown Manhattan Heliport alone, only one of three helipads in the City of New York. In 2021, the city's 311 call center received 25,281 complaints about helicopter noise - a staggering increase of 14,922 from the prior year. The 311 system has experienced a 2,329% increase in helicopter noise complaints over the past five years yet has an extremely spotty track record in resolving them, closing only 152 of the more than 20,000 received this year alone.

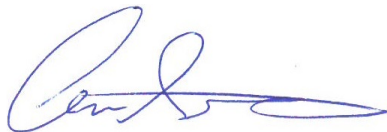
In January 2021, the US General Accountability Office (GAO) published a report finding that prolonged exposure to helicopter noise disrupts sleep, adversely affects the academic performance of children, and can even increase the risk of cardiovascular disease. Numerous other studies have found that it leads to chronic biological stress, activating the body's "fight or flight" response, raises blood pressure, and slows digestion in addition to disrupting wildlife and emitting more lead than any other source in the country. Furthermore, tourist helicopters have resulted in so many passenger injuries and deaths in recent years that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) banned all helicopters with restraints that do not allow passengers to easily free themselves in 2007. Needless to say, our city's helicopter problem is more than a minor quality of life annoyance.

That's why I was proud to support S7493A Hoylman/A8473A Gottfried in this past year's state legislative session, creating a private right of action against any individual who creates an unreasonable level of sustained noise from a helicopter while further restricting the nonessential use of helicopters in our city and am eager to see the Governor sign it soon. I also support the various actions that the city has taken over the years to cap the number of flights as well as restrict routes to maximize distance between choppers and ground-level populations. Finally, I encourage the city to explore further solutions such as noise reducing technologies and lower-emission helicopter models.

I believe the city can and must go farther, however, to tamp down on this incessant source of pollution, which is why I applaud the efforts of Council Member Lincoln Restler, via Intro No. 551, to prohibit nonessential helicopter trips out of New York City-owned helipads except in cases of emergency. If the city cannot take meaningful steps to regulate this growing nuisance in our skies, then the City should consider banning all such usage except for emergencies.

In conclusion, I thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony to the Committee on Economic Development and highlight the voices of waterfront Brooklynites who are exhausted, frustrated, and simply fed up by this seemingly interminable problem. I look forward to working with state and local partners towards further solutions to eliminating our city's helicopter problem in the coming months, and want to thank you once again for convening a hearing on this critical issue.

Sincerely,



Andrew S. Gounardes
Member of Senate



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER
BRAD LANDER

**New York City Comptroller's Office Testimony to the City Council Regarding Heliport Operations
November 29th, 2022**

On behalf of the NYC Comptroller's Office, thank you to the Committees on Economic Development and State and Federal Legislation for convening this hearing. We would also like to thank Chair Farias and Chair Abreu for the opportunity to provide testimony on heliport operations in New York City. Comptroller Lander has long called for a ban on private helicopter trips from NYC heliports, due to the established quality-of-life, safety, and climate-related costs of the industry imposed on New Yorkers. Our office continues to support an end to these flights in the city.

54,000 flights took off from city-owned heliports in 2021, nearly all of which were deemed non-essential including 30,000 tourist trips originating at the Downtown Manhattan Heliport at Pier 6. These trips are a major source of noise pollution for communities near heliports and in the vehicles' flight paths. Helicopter-related noise complaints to 311 have skyrocketed in recent years, jumping from 10,359 complaints filed with 311 in 2020, to 25,821 in 2021. This increase reflects the scale of disruption and negative impact on quality of life for residents of waterfront communities where trips and complaints are concentrated. Notably, these disruptions are generated largely by an industry accessible only to those able to pay thousands of dollars for a non-essential trip.

The use of private helicopters also imposes steep environmental costs on the City. The amount of carbon a typical charter helicopter emits in one hour is equivalent to over forty cars in the same timeframe. This translates to city heliports burning over 50,000 gallons of fuel each month, generating a disproportionate level of greenhouse gas emissions to power a relatively small number of non-essential trips. Allowing these flights to continue operating out of city-owned heliports runs counter to longstanding sustainability and greenhouse gas reduction goals.

In 2016, the City created new regulations governing helicopter trips, limiting tourist trips to the downtown heliport and flying over waterways, and banning such flights on Sundays. These restrictions do not apply to charter or commuter helicopter trips, which continue to fly unrestricted throughout city airspace.

The private helicopter industry compensates the City for the use of the heliports at Pier 6 and East 34th Street. These agreements generate about two to five million dollars in revenue for the City each year – a modest amount considering the quality of life and environmental costs and disruptions borne by residents.

The Comptroller commends the City Council, for proposing legislation to prohibit non-essential helicopter trips from taking off at city-owned heliports, limit helicopter-related noise pollution, and calling upon the Federal Aviation Administration to ban both tourist and chartered helicopter flights over New York City airspace. We would like to thank Council Member Brewer, Council Member Brooks-Powers, and Council Member Restler for their leadership on this topic. We strongly support Int. 773, Int. 0551, and Res. 0291.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony.



**City Council Committees on Economic Development and State and Federal Legislation
Oversight Hearing on NYC Heliport Operations
November 29, 2022**

Good morning Chairs Farías and Abreu and members of the committees. I am here today on behalf of Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso and Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine to express their commitment to ridding our city's skies of non-essential helicopter travel. Helicopters are simply not necessary for either tourism or commuting, and their outsized impacts on noise and air pollution far outweigh any convenience they may provide.

Even according to the helicopter industry, the noise that helicopters generate flying at 500 or even 1,000 feet over the city is well within the range considered dangerous by the Hearing Health Foundation. With thousands of non-essential helicopter trips around NYC every week, it's no wonder that New Yorkers submitted approximately 26,000 helicopter noise complaints to 311 last year. This noise is disruptive to residents who live along the flight paths – including much of Manhattan and Brooklyn's waterfronts, as well as North and Central Brooklyn along the JFK routes – and the constant exposure can cause health impacts such as stress and anxiety, in addition to quality-of-life issues.

We appreciate the changes that the City has already implemented on the helicopter tourism industry, such as reducing the number of tourist flights and restricting flight patterns to over the waterways. However, the presence of tourist helicopters along our waterfronts is still extremely disruptive. Among other issues, the noise negatively impacts the experience for residents and tourists enjoying relaxation in our city's open spaces, especially Riverside Park, Hudson River Park, Battery Park, and Brooklyn Bridge Park, where the noise from tourist helicopters is constant. New Yorkers have invested billions of public dollars into supporting and improving these parks, only to have their enjoyment of them diminished. Meanwhile, flights originating in New Jersey plague Manhattan communities and users of Central Park, and commuter flights to the airports and the Hamptons continue over Prospect Park and Brooklyn's residential neighborhoods unchecked.

Yet noise pollution is not the only issue, and so proposed regulations to noise levels only address part of the problem. Recent reports indicate that commuter helicopters use about 43-88 gallons of fuel per hour (depending on the model), which is significantly more than what an average car uses per hour. Again, with thousands of non-essential trips every day, the tourist and commuter helicopter industry is a major source of air pollution in our city. Allowing this to continue runs counter to the City's stated goals of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 80% from 2005 levels and developing strategies to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050.

We are aware that this issue requires a regional solution with many levels of government at the table. The most effective solution would be for the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to ban non-essential helicopter travel from NYC's airspace, as outlined in Council Member Brewer's Resolution 291. This would address concerns from NYCEDC that an NYC-only ban will push more traffic to heliports in New Jersey, which have less restrictive regulations. In a letter to us sent earlier this year, NYCEDC President Andrew Kimball outlined the 2016 collaborative effort between NYCEDC, the helicopter industry, the Downtown Manhattan Heliport operator, and tour flight companies, which resulted in updated regulations. They did it before, and they can do it again.

In the meantime, we must work with the tools that we have at our disposal. That is why we support Council Member Restler's Intro 551, which would ban non-essential helicopters from operating at City-owned heliports. For all the reasons outlined, the City should not be supporting this industry in its current form. Notably, the concession license agreements that allow helicopter operators to use the City's heliports do not require a cause for termination.

In conclusion, we don't believe our constituents should have to suffer from noise or air pollution for another day just so tourists can view the city from above (we suggest the Top of the Rock) or so commuters can pay over \$1000 to get to the Hamptons faster. Until such time as the helicopter industry can sufficiently demonstrate that it can operate in a way that does not disrupt residents' quality of life, does not pose a threat to public health, and does not use fossil fuels that result in carbon emissions, we support a ban of non-essential flights from our City's heliports.

Thank you again for the opportunity to speak today. Our offices look forward to working with the Council and any other necessary partners to get to a solution.

OVERSIGHT - NEW YORK CITY HELIPORT OPERATIONS

Helicopter Association International
November 29, 2022

Thank you, members of the Committee on Economic Development and State & Federal Legislation, for convening this oversight hearing today. My name is Katia Veraza, and I am the Manager of Government Affairs and Regional Relations for Helicopter Association International (HAI). I appreciate the opportunity to speak on behalf of the vertical flight industry today.

For more than 70 years, HAI has provided support, services and set the industry safety guidelines for the international helicopter community. We leverage, innovate, advocate, and expand the unique operational abilities of vertical flight on behalf of our members and for the benefit of society. The unique capabilities of vertical flight mean we can accomplish missions that no other aircraft can. Our members perform services including air medical, law enforcement, firefighting, heavy construction, utility patrol and maintenance, urban air mobility, and more. Across the country, from densely populated urban communities – like New York City – to isolated rural areas, helicopters are used to save lives, serve & protect our country.

Just as helicopter services are extremely important across the country, they are also a central element in the transportation infrastructure that links New York City to the surrounding region and the nation. The City's three public-use heliports constitute an aviation system that supports the City's economy, emergency services, and security network.

- **West 30th Street** serves corporate users, charter, medical, emergency management, law enforcement and government operators 24/7.
- **East 34th Street** similarly serves corporate users, charter operators, and other helicopter users. But it is subject to a city-imposed timeframe and operational cap.
- **Downtown Manhattan Heliport** is the only heliport that can accommodate the president of the United States and other dignitaries requiring special security measures. It is also the only facility available for air tour operators. A key source of revenue for this city.

New York City is increasingly linked to the global economy through the diverse character of its population and through its concentration of global enterprises and the nation's leading financial service firms. The three heliports of New York City are part of the vast, complex systems of transportation that connects New York City to the global economy. Heliports also provide valuable revenue and employment to New York City. Heliports are used by small businesses that provide high-paying jobs to New Yorkers in all 5 boroughs. There are a wide variety of positions--from pilots to mechanics to promoters-- that support the vertical flight industry. It is important to recognize that the rapid and efficient flow of people in and out of New York City requires multiple modes and services that can meet the time requirements of different industries. Helicopters are essential for those time-sensitive industries and activities that place a premium on avoiding the uncertain patterns of congestion that characterize conventional surface modes of travel — and for the same reason, they are essential for emergencies uses.

All three heliports are essential to the overall operations of the helicopter aviation system in New York City. Government agencies and the city's police department use helicopters to manage all types of emergencies, monitor the City's airspace, and gather information. In emergency situations, helicopter services are virtually irreplaceable. As observed during the pandemic, helicopters played an essential role

in the city's efforts to combat the virus, helping hospitals and government provide air medical transport and other critical services. Operators changed their daily routines to meet the unprecedented challenge. The pandemic proved once again that helicopters are irreplaceable when it comes to saving lives.

Now, we understand that noise is a common concern associated with heliports; therefore, HAI constantly seeks to forge relationships between communities and helicopter operators. Together, we focus on establishing noise mitigation techniques and innovating solutions to fly neighborly. Our industry is bringing innovative technology such as (AAM) and (eVTOL) to improve community compatibility and overall accessibility. Technology such as eVTOL will revolutionize transportation and generate good quality jobs. Investment in AAM infrastructure, backed up by community engagement, will support New York City's comprehensive efforts to meet the transportation needs of tomorrow.

New York is competing with jurisdictions around the world for continued prominence as a global center of finance and innovation. The City's diverse transportation assets make New York an attractive location for major corporations, small businesses, and AAM. We firmly believe that Manhattan's heliports are a critical component of New York's transportation network and support the operation of the City's businesses and the growth of the economy.



Robert S. Wiesenthal
Founder and CEO
BLADE Urban Air Mobility, Inc.
31 Hudson Yards, 11th Floor
New York, NY 10001

November 28, 2022

New York City Council Member Amanda Farías, Chair of The Committee on Economic Development

New York City Council Member Shaun Abreu, Chair of The Committee on State and Federal Legislation

Dear Chair Farías and Chair Abreu:

Thank you for holding an oversight meeting about New York City Heliport operations. My name is Rob Wiesenthal and I am the Founder and CEO of BLADE Air Mobility, Inc. Founded in 2014, BLADE is a technology-powered, global urban air mobility platform committed to reducing travel friction by enabling cost-effective air transportation alternatives to some of the most congested ground routes in the U.S. including right here in New York City where we are proudly headquartered. No company flies more people in and out of city centers than BLADE. We are also the largest dedicated air transporter of human transplant organs in the U.S., serving a total of 67 transplant centers and organ procurement organizations, including all major hospitals here in New York City. Nearly half of BLADE's revenues are now generated by organ transport via its MediMobility division.

The point A to point B passenger flights we arrange for our customers is precisely what subsidizes our organ donor flights – by providing more flight hours to the operators and pilots who fly our missions. This, in turn, has dramatically reduced the cost of organ transportation for all New York City area hospitals and has improved outcomes for patients by utilizing air transport rather than facing unpredictable ground traffic.

Urban air mobility is good for the post-pandemic economic recovery of the best city in the world. If New York is going to continue to maintain its status as a city attractive to some of the greatest and largest companies in the world, it will need to embrace an urban air mobility strategy — other cities, like Miami, Los Angeles, Singapore, and Paris are already leaving us behind in this area. Efficient, short-distance infra-city travel is critical for any city's competitive stature with business and travelers as well as future growth.

BLADE flies thousands of people per year between Manhattan and all area airports at the same price of an Uber Black and in less than five minutes, helping executives and employees from New York and from around the globe conduct more business more efficiently than ever before. BLADE alone employs over 200 people—taxpayers, most of whom live right here in New York City—and the broader industry employs thousands more.



There has been a tremendous amount of focus on the potential dangers of helicopter flights to people on the ground. In fact, commercial aviation is the safest form of transport, and helicopter accidents are extremely rare. Rather than relying on the accumulation of rare incidents that must be added to go back over a half-century, policymakers should focus on real world safety issues we see every day for pedestrians, bike riders, and subway riders. Those trying to make New Yorkers feel unnecessarily unsafe about air travel today are engaging in irresponsible fear-mongering.

Noise

The vast majority of noise complaints by local New Yorkers are a result of noise they hear from tourist flights the company FlyNYON which transports New York City tourists to nearby Kearney, New Jersey, for their NYC tour departure. They fly out of New Jersey to avoid New York City rules and regulations as prescribed by NYCEDC. This tour operator fly routes over city parks and around landmarks and at low altitudes without regard for our city's rules.

This is not what we do at BLADE. Helicopter services like BLADE that commute passengers efficiently from point A to point B are able to fly noise abatement routes and altitudes. By contrast, when flying a tour, the objective of the passengers is to get as close as possible to landmarks and within the cityscape, often hovering, so they can snap the ultimate Instagram photo. Our commuters just want to get to their destination safely and quickly. Flying at neighborly altitudes and routes is rarely an issue. These two types of helicopter flights are fundamentally different, and local officials must stop conflating them.

That said, BLADE recognizes that there is a noise issue and is committed to helping solve the issue. After safety, being a good neighbor is our top priority, and we embrace many strategies to reduce the impact of noise on the communities we serve. That's why we have worked with the local air traffic controllers at John F. Kennedy Airport to maximize the altitude the company's operators can fly in order to minimize the impact of noise on people on the ground. While the ultimate altitude is determined by JFK air traffic controllers to maximize safety of all depending on the landing patterns of commercial jet travel, together we have successfully raised the altitudes of the average flight from Manhattan to JFK Airport by over 30% in the past several months.

Finally, BLADE is committed to expediting the transition from conventional helicopters to quiet, electric, and emission-free Electric Vertical Aircraft. In fact, BLADE has made significant financial commitments to manufacturers, on behalf of our operators, to start deploying these aircraft starting in 2024.

Our goal is to provide safe, quiet, "green" and cost-efficient air transportation in areas with inadequate road infrastructure and significant ground congestion – until then, remain carbon neutral by funding local methane capture projects. Our strategy is to expedite the transition from conventional aircraft to quiet, zero-emission aircraft, by continuing to form alliances with leading aerospace companies.

BLADE does not purchase or operate aircraft directly. Our operator partners typically purchase or lease their fleet of aircraft to BLADE missions on a block hourly basis. We expect the market for EVA purchasing and leasing to mirror current helicopter/airplane ownership/ leasing models. There will be a gradual introduction to electric aircraft in the coming years. We anticipate a cohabitation phase with both conventional and electric aircraft to persist at least until the end of



the decade. Some heavy, long distance, or specialty (fire, EMS, police) missions may not be replaced with electric aircraft in the near future.

Until such time that BLADE services have fully transitioned to quiet and zero emission EVA, we will continue to purchase offsets to counteract the carbon emissions generated by our urban air mobility services to remain carbon neutral as a company. BLADE endeavors to fund projects and/or purchase credits generated by projects in our primary service areas. For example, through the purchase of certain credits, we have recently supported a project to capture methane gasses from one of the largest New York landfills, generating clean electrical power while reducing greenhouse gas emissions. We believe that our fliers have a greater appreciation of our carbon neutral status when our purchase of credits has a positive impact on their own communities.

In conclusion, BLADE is proud to be a New York City founded and headquartered company made up of entrepreneurial, hard-working, proud New Yorkers who want to help ensure this City remains competitive and the best city on earth.

I look forward to having an open dialogue with you and thank you in advance for your shared interest in finding solutions that keep in mind the needs of all New Yorkers. Please feel free to contact me with any questions - I can be reached via phone at 844-359-2523.

Sincerely,

Rob Wiesenthal

Robert S. Wiesenthal
Founder and CEO of BLADE Urban Air Mobility, Inc.



November 30, 2022

New York City Council
Economic Development Committee

RE: Helicopters

The Boerum Hill Association stand with our neighbors in Brooklyn Heights, DUMBO, and Cobble Hill, who want to eliminate nonessential helicopter flights in our area.

We support the legislation introduced by Council Members Brewer, Restler and Hanif.

Noise is a major issue in New York City. Many of us seek the tranquility of Brooklyn Bridge Park and Governor's Island only to experience a near constant drone of helicopter blades. We go to these magnificent parks to escape our crowded streets and honking horns only to be assaulted by whirling blades.

However, parks are not the only affected areas. Boerum Hill is subject to private helicopter flyovers daily. The noise invades our homes and makes our windows shake.

Our city should do all it can to eliminate this noise and stress. Any solution should include rules for the entire tri-State region, not just New York City.

Please consider the environment and our sanity. Stop these flights.

In community,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Howard Kolins'.

Howard Kolins
President

hkolins@aol.com

December 1, 2022

New York City Council
City Hall
New York, NY 10003



RE: Written Testimony to the Committee on Economic Development and the Committee on State and Federal Legislation

Dear Chair Farías and Chair Abreu,

Thank you for your leadership by holding a hearing on this important issue. As President of Brooklyn Botanic Garden, I have become intimately familiar with the impacts that the increase in non-essential helicopter traffic over New York City is having on our city and particularly the effect it is having on our city's vital green spaces.

Tourist helicopter flights have become a fixture in Manhattan, Brooklyn Heights, and the waterfront areas of Brooklyn, but the start of the COVID-19 pandemic expanded a new and growing market for commercial helicopter flights ferrying wealthy passengers from a heliport in Hudson River Park at W. 30th St. directly to JFK Airport and the Hamptons. The flight paths of these nonessential flights take commuter helicopters into the heart of Brooklyn, flying directly down Flatbush Avenue or east and west across the borough mostly over Eastern Parkway to and from JFK and Long Island. Flights also regularly depart from the City-owned East 34th street heliport and take passengers to JFK and the Hamptons, flying over Brooklyn in the process.

Finally, tourist helicopters fly from the City-owned Downtown Manhattan Heliport or New Jersey, and loop around New York Harbor, Governor's Island, Battery Park, the Brooklyn Bridge, Brooklyn Bridge Park, and many other uptown locations as well. The dramatic increase of helicopter flights to JFK and the Hamptons has a substantial harmful impact on the health and quality of life of the residents of Fort Greene, Williamsburg, Bushwick, Crown Heights, Prospect Heights, Brownsville, Prospect Lefferts Gardens, Flatbush, Flatlands, East New York, etc., essentially over the entire borough of Brooklyn and often parts of southern Queens.

Excessive noise pollution caused by nonessential flights is having an impact on green spaces across the City. On a busy day, scores of nonessential commuter flights fly over Prospect Park and the Brooklyn Botanic Garden at an altitude of less than 800 feet—sometimes as low as 400 feet (the height of a 40-story building). The Hamptons flights also fly directly over Brooklyn's other two major parks—Marine Park and Floyd Bennett Field—also damaging those green spaces that should provide refuge from noise and air pollution.

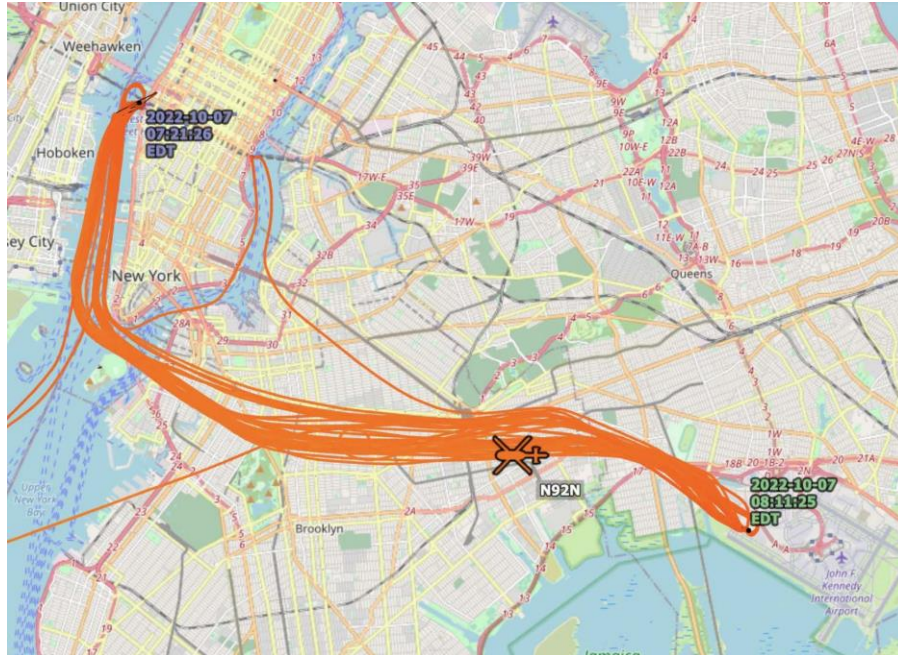
In addition to the harmful impact of noise pollution generated by motors and rotor blades, residents of Brooklyn are now subject to increased emissions from the leaded aviation fuel used by many small helicopters, as well as the toxic jet fuel used by the larger, twin-engine helicopters

such as the Sikorsky helicopters used for the longer Hamptons route. Both noise pollution and toxic emissions from aviation fuel have been shown to have harmful effects on the health and wellbeing of children and the entire community, and these flights disproportionately impact low income communities of color, as the closer they get to Jamaica Bay and JFK, the lower they fly, increasing the impact on those communities

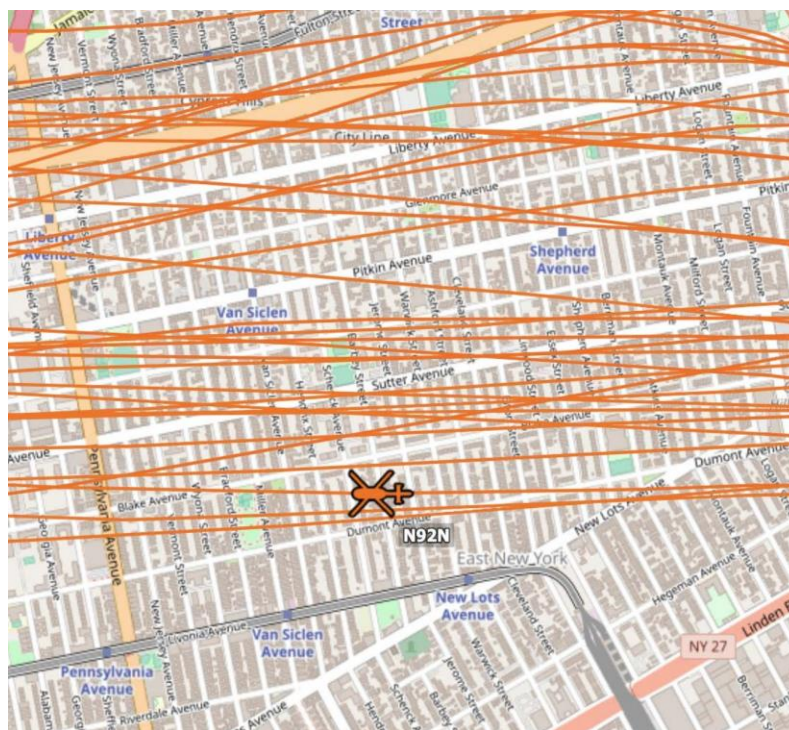
There are many ways that the City and the City Council could dramatically reduce or end all of these nonessential flights that bring almost no income to the City, at great cost to our collective physical, mental, and environmental health, and I hope the Council will consider all of those options. Thank you for your time and for the opportunity to present this information to you. I have also included a number of images which help illustrate the scope of the issue over Brooklyn. Please do not hesitate to reach out if we can be of assistance as you consider this issue.

Sincerely,

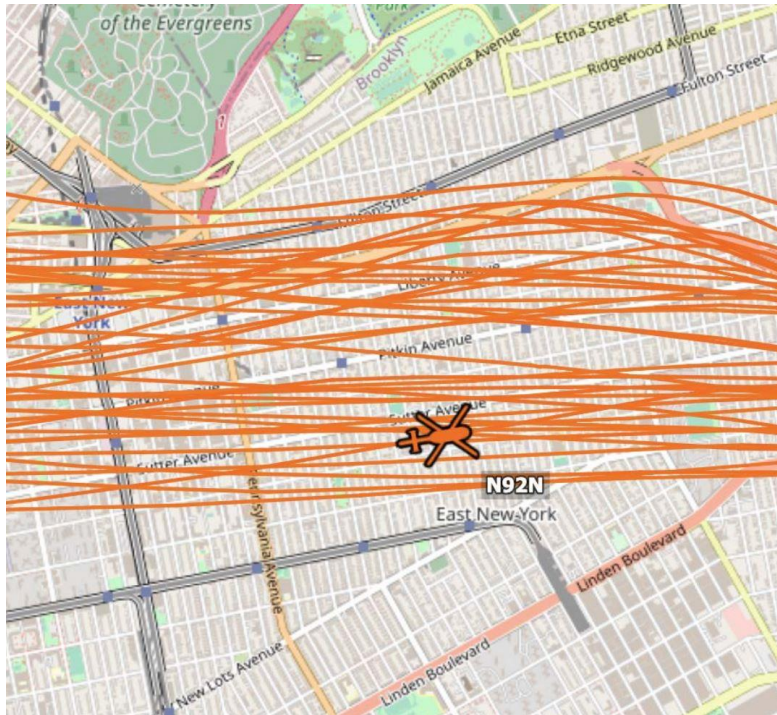
Adrian Benepe
President, Brooklyn Botanic Garden



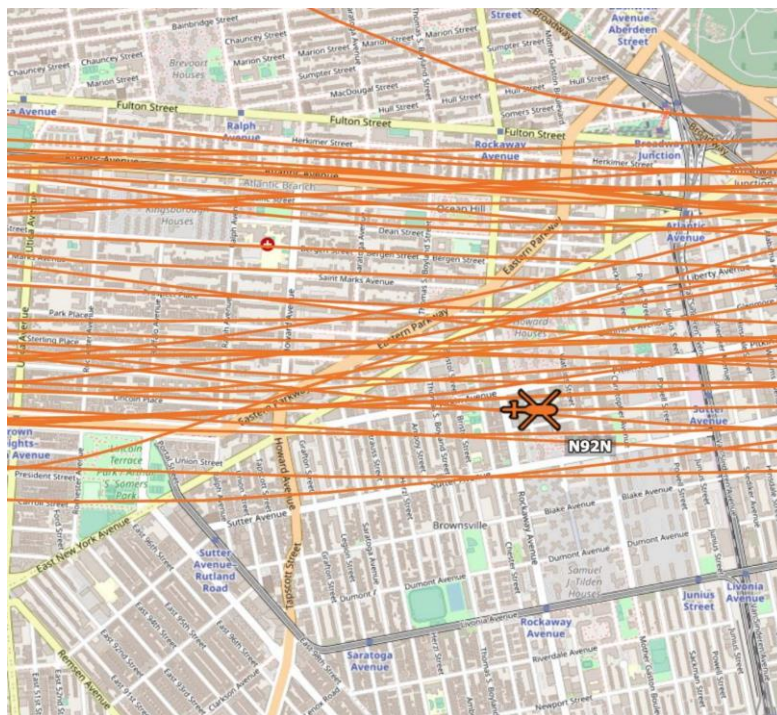
Commuter helicopter taking passengers from JFK to the West 30th Street Heliport



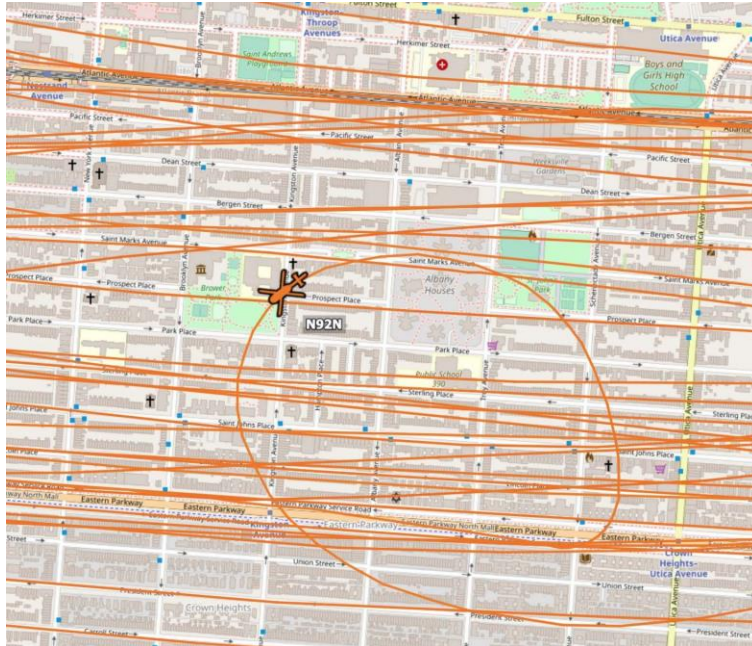
Commuter helicopter taking passengers from JFK to the West 30th Street Heliport



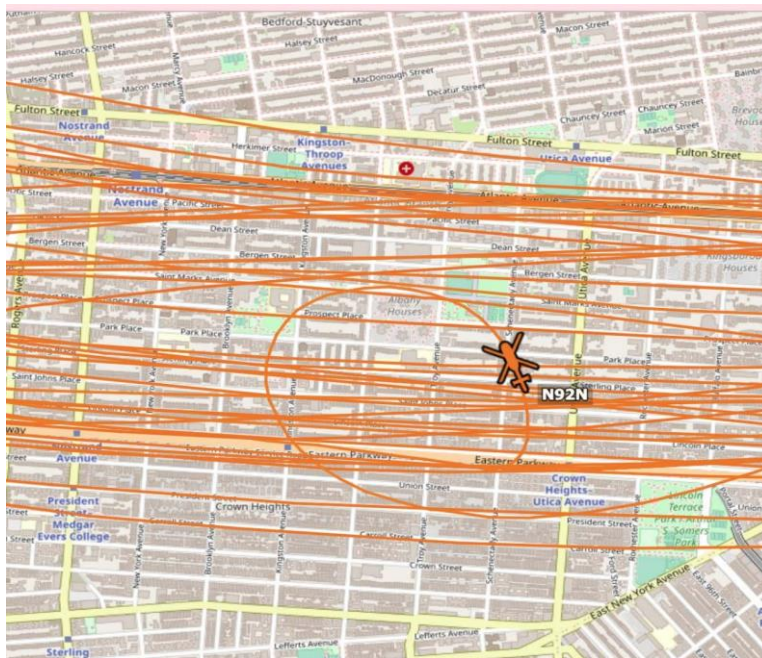
Commuter helicopter taking passengers from the West 30t Street Heliport to JFK



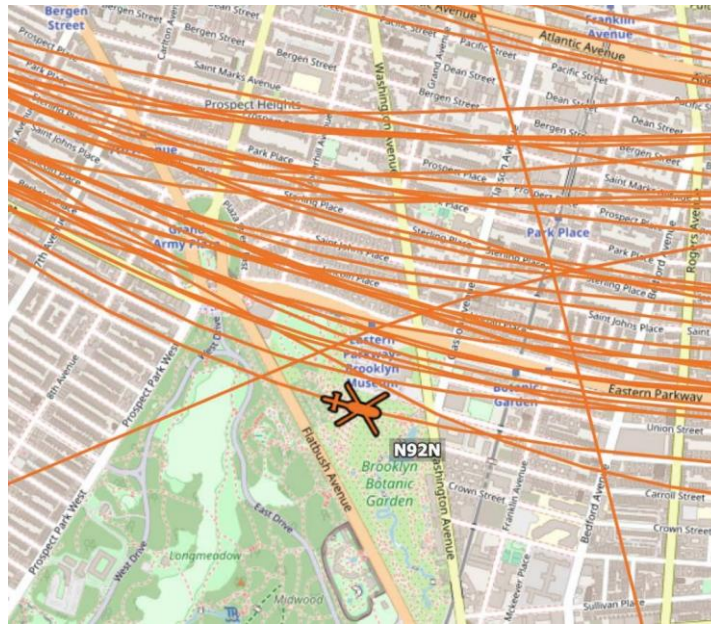
Commuter helicopter taking passengers from the West 30t Street Heliport to JFK



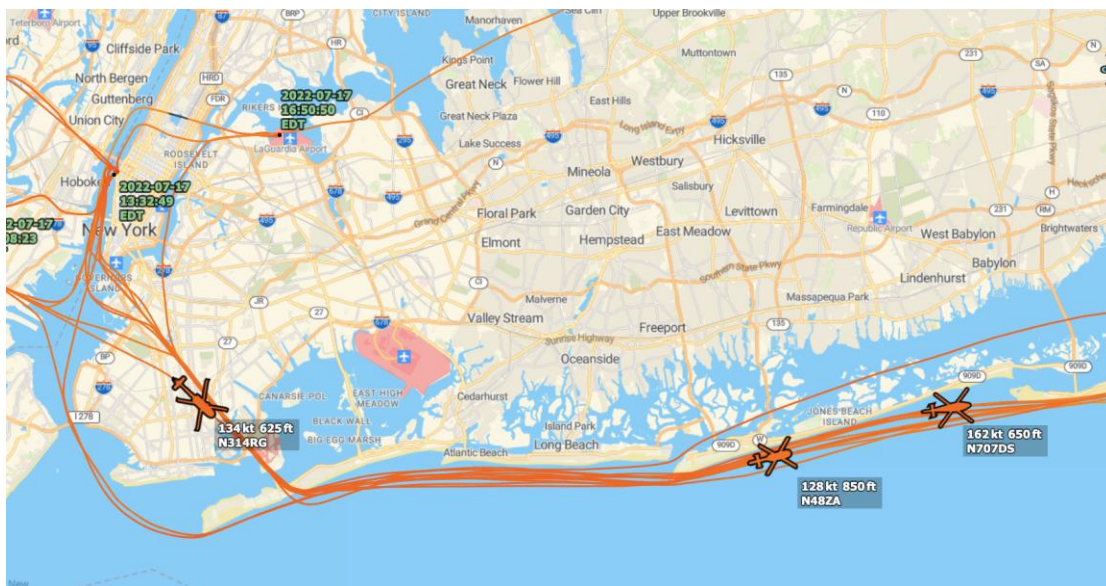
Commuter helicopter taking passengers from the West 30th Street Heliport to JFK taking a detour in Crown Heights



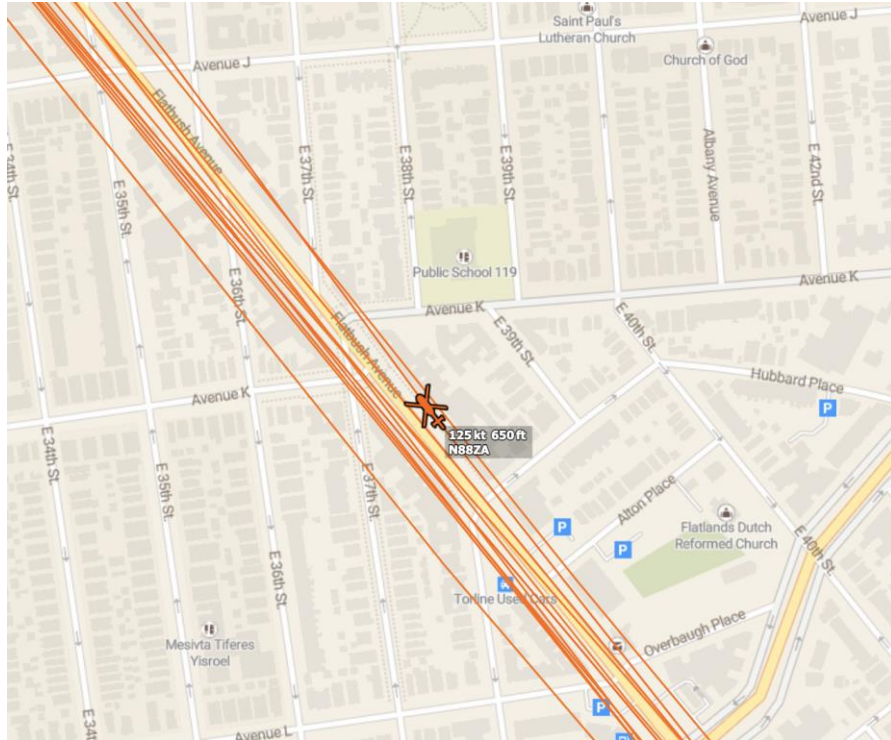
Commuter helicopter taking passengers from the West 30th Street Heliport to JFK taking a detour in Crown Heights



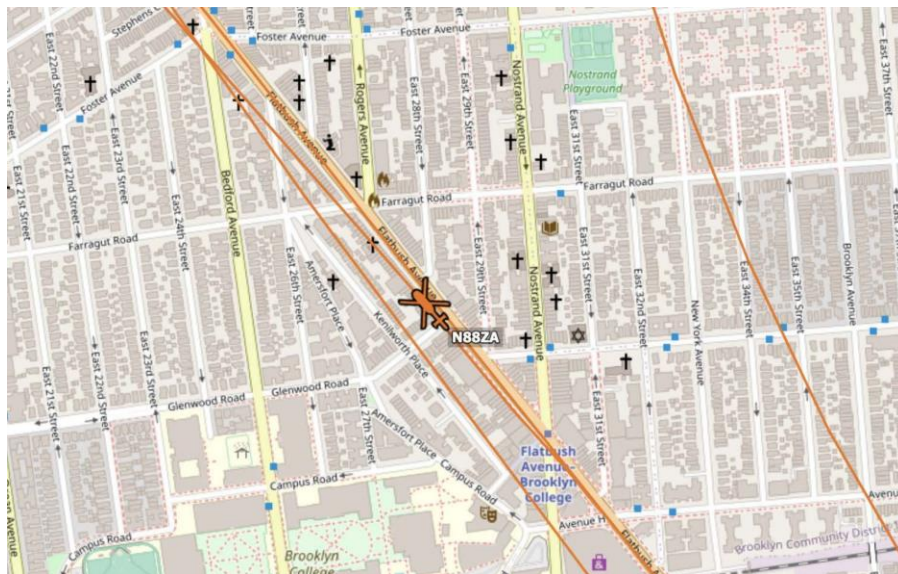
Commuter helicopter taking passengers from the West 30th Street Heliport to JFK flying over Brooklyn Botanic Garden



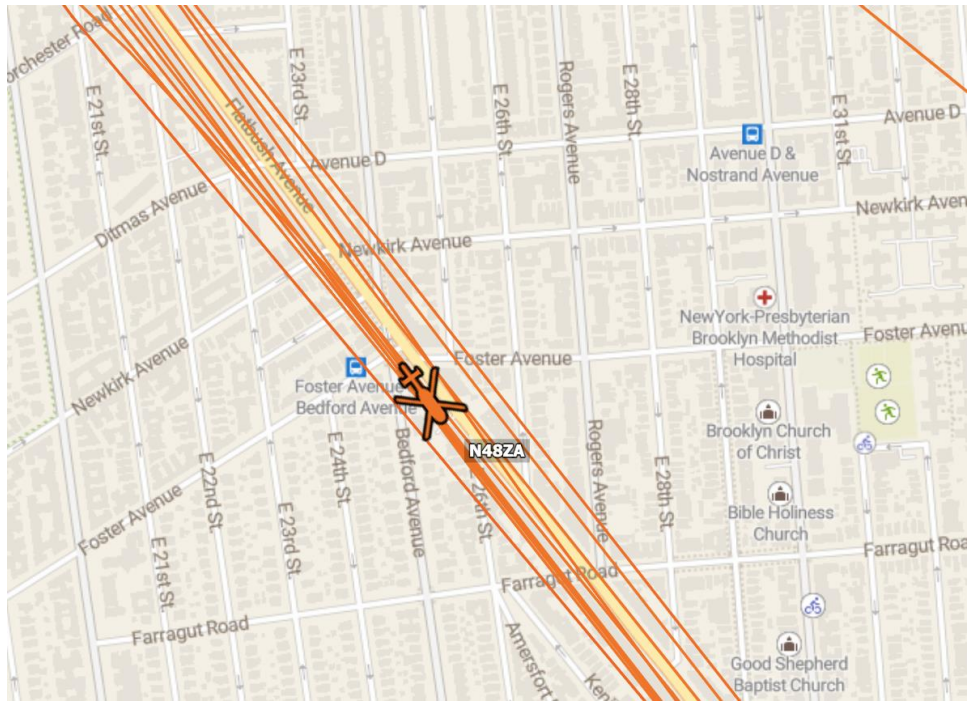
Commuter helicopters taking passengers from the West 30th Street Heliport to the Hamptons flying over Brooklyn



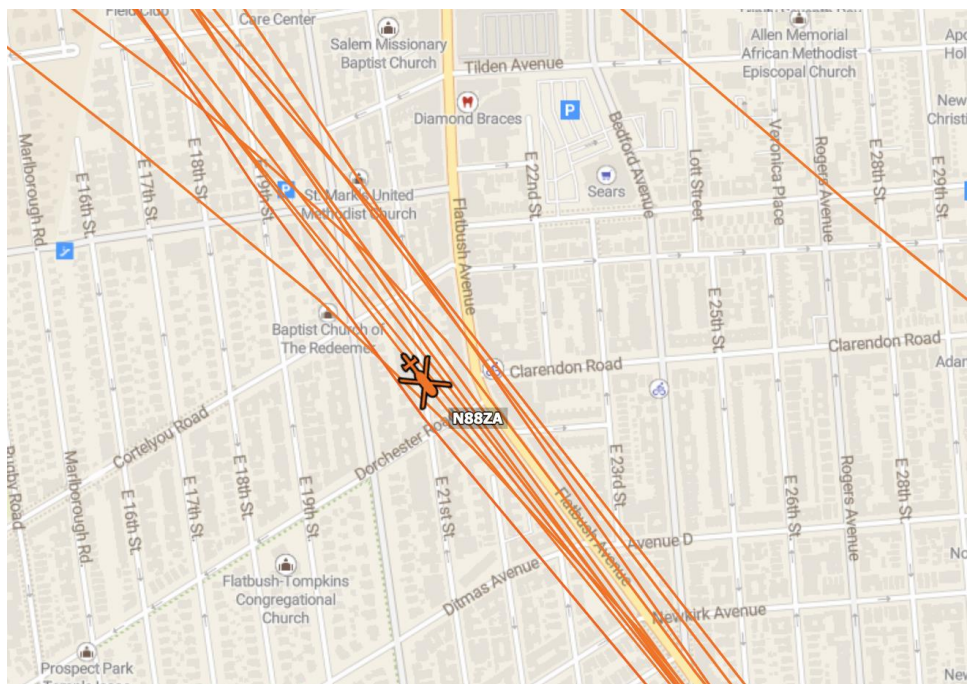
Commuter helicopter taking passengers from the Hamptons to Manhattan flying over Flatbush Ave



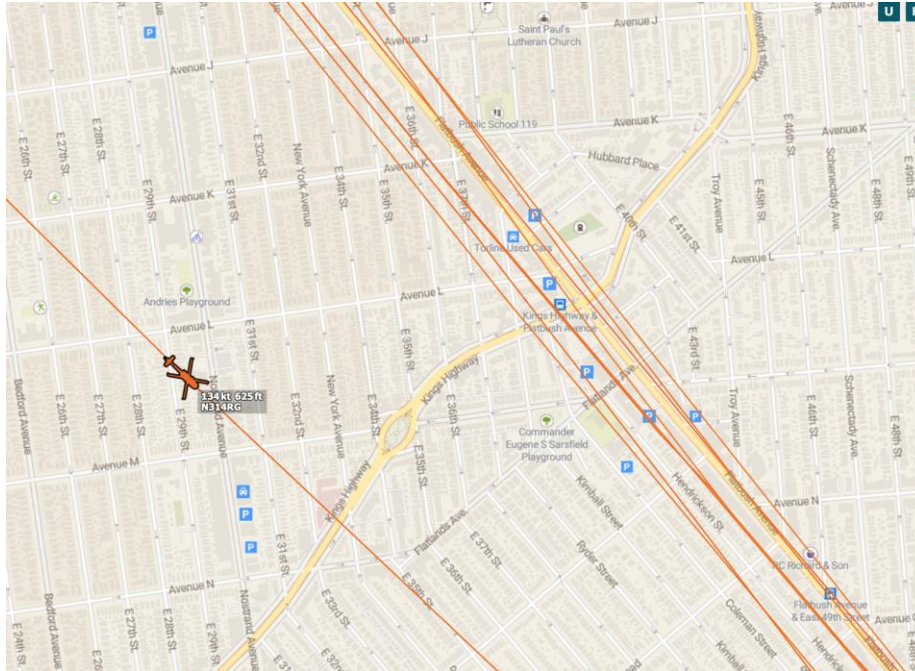
Commuter helicopter taking passengers from the Hamptons to Manhattan flying over Flatbush Ave



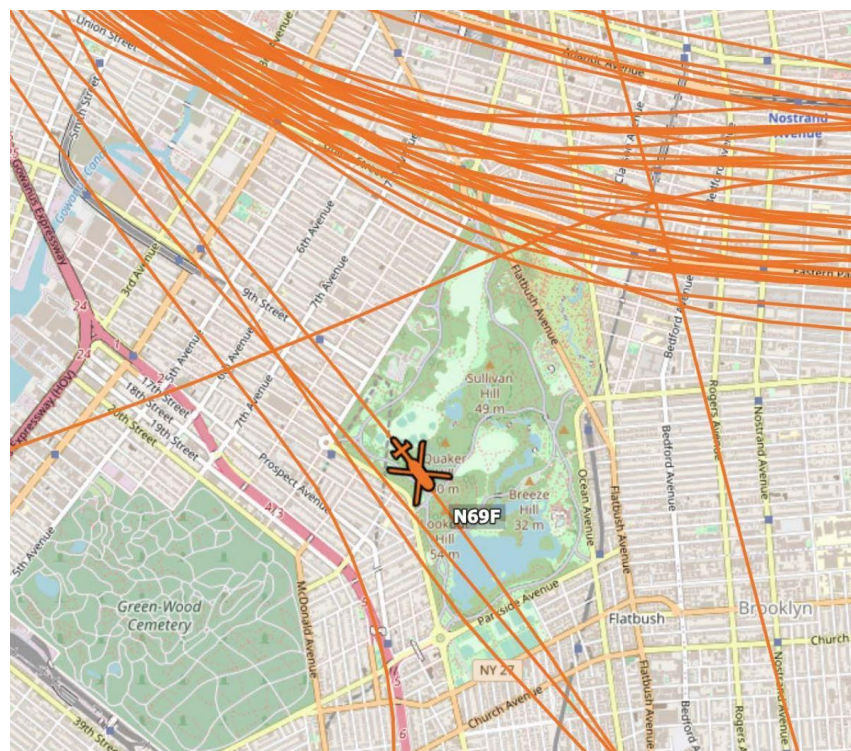
Commuter helicopters taking passengers from Manhattan to the Hamptons flying over Flatbush Ave



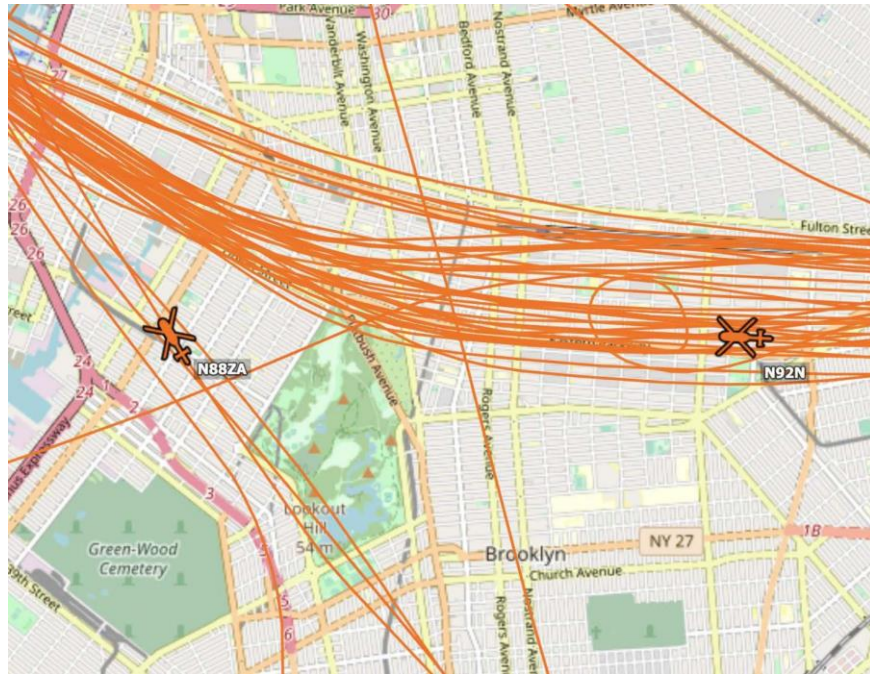
Commuter helicopter taking passengers from Manhattan to the Hamptons flying over Flatbush Ave



Commuter helicopter taking passengers from Manhattan to the Hamptons flying near Flatbush Ave



Commuter helicopter taking passengers from Manhattan to the Hamptons flying over Prospect Park



Commuter helicopters taking passenger from JFK and Long Island to Manhattan Heliports



November 28, 2022

SENT VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Committees on Economic Development and State and Federal Legislation
City Hall
New York, NY 10007
testimony@council.nyc.gov

RE: Oversight New York City Heliport Operations
November 29, 2022 10:00am

Dear Chairwoman Fariás and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for calling a meeting to discuss the oversight of New York City's helicopter operations.

On behalf of the members of the Helicopter Tourism & Jobs Council – a range of industry stakeholders -- we appreciate the opportunity to share some information with you and the members of the Economic Development Committee and the State and Federal Legislation Committee.

Air tours originating from the Downtown Manhattan Heliport, which are all flown in fully enclosed aircraft, are capped at fewer than 30,000 operations per year and serve several vital functions for the City and its economy such as:

- Providing an opportunity for approximately 140,000 people per year from all over the world to see the majesty of New York City from the most spectacular vantage point. These visitors, in turn, become ambassadors for the City when they return home.
- Generating tens of millions of dollars in economic activity and in turn millions of dollars in revenue for the City and the State, including direct payments to the NYCEDC and sales taxes.
- Employing hundreds of local residents who work for the helicopter operators and the heliports serving in various roles:
 - Marketing
 - Accounting
 - Line Men
 - Pilots
 - Mechanics
 - Fuel Delivery
 - Logistics Coordinators
 - Security

The same companies that utilize helicopters to provide air tours also provide transportation services using the same equipment to their own charter customers, and to other corporate users. Moreover, they conduct hundreds of flight operations a year for organ transplants and other sensitive cargo deliveries. The air tour business makes it economically viable to sustain the fleets of aircraft that serve these other essential functions.

It is true that noise complaints due to helicopter noise increased in 2020 during the COVID lockdowns. However, we are fully confident based on both data and anecdotal evidence the helicopter tour operators based out of New York's Downtown Manhattan Heliport were *not* responsible for this. As a reminder, the only helicopter operations that are bound to stick to specific routes and limited to fly at certain times of the day are the air tours conducting their business out of the Downtown Manhattan Heliport. These rules were based on a voluntary agreement negotiated by our organization and the New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) in 2016.

Based on reconciliations of air-traffic data with 311 calls it seems the increase in these complaints were largely driven by helicopter operators that fly tours originating out of New Jersey and are unfortunately not governed by agreements with New York City. These operators fly their operations over Manhattan and its parks with impunity. Regulating New York's helicopter industry out of existence will simply not solve this problem. On the contrary there is a strong argument to be made that it would exacerbate the problem of flights originating outside the City as the market would seek to service the excess demand from places that New York's policy makers have no jurisdiction over. Our organization strongly opposes any flight operations that unnecessarily occur over land, particularly those with open fuselages.

It is also true that helicopters, like other vehicles such as automobiles, buses, trucks, airplanes, and ferries release emissions as a result of burning fossil fuels as a power source. Our industry is sensitive to these concerns, and our membership is leading efforts to bring new, cleaner, quieter and more affordable eVTOL technologies to market subject to regulatory approval.

In sum, helicopters and the heliports that service them in and around the greater New York City area represent a critical component of the region's transportation infrastructure well beyond the air tours themselves. We remain committed not only to continuing to be an economic engine for our city, but to evolve in a way that lessens the impacts on our communities. We are open to conversations with anyone and everyone who has recommendations on how to improve our industry without costing our city the tremendous value inherent in it.

On behalf of the Helicopter Tourism & Jobs Council, we thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

/s/ Adam M. Trenk

Adam M. Trenk
Executive Director
Helicopter Tourism & Jobs Council

Roger Manning Testimony
11-29-2022
City Council Committee on State and Federal Legislation
Oversight - New York City Heliport Operations

Governors Island in the middle of NY harbor is a unique public space that is home to a historic district and National Monument, a high school, many arts and environmental projects, and wide-open park and recreational spaces. As in numerous other areas of the city, sightseeing helicopter noise seriously impacts the island on a daily basis. Particularly due to the peacefulness of the island, the overhead traffic has been described as "soul crushing." Unessential helicopter flights should be eliminated in NYC.

Two videos:
Governors Island - 18 choppers in 15 minutes 11/12/2022
<https://youtu.be/Odw2TRi9dGc>

Choppers over Governors Island, A sampling - May 2022
<https://youtu.be/d5YjAlfK0K4>

Roger Manning
Metro Area Governors Island Coalition (M.A.G.I.C.)
<https://govislandcoalition.org>

December 1, 2022

New York City Council Member Amanda Farías, Chair of The Committee on Economic Development

New York City Council Member Shaun Abreu, Chair of The Committee on State and Federal Legislation

Dear Chair Farías and Chair Abreu,

I am writing to express Montefiore Medical Center's support for New York City heliport operations, which enable Montefiore to provide life-saving organ transplantation to our patients. I am the Associate Vice President of Transplant Services at Montefiore Health System, and I work closely with the multidisciplinary transplant teams at the Montefiore Einstein Center for Transplantation located on Montefiore's main campus in The Bronx, New York.

Simply put, state-of-the-art patient care is our mission. Montefiore's transplantation teams are committed to the care of adult and pediatric patients with conditions affecting the heart, lung, liver, kidney and pancreas. We have a highly advanced multidisciplinary center for adults and children with end-stage organ disease, and our transplant teams of experienced and skilled surgeons use the most advanced techniques for the highest possible success rates in transplantation. We perform over 300 lifesaving transplants each year utilizing organs from both living and deceased donors.

Donor organs may come from anywhere around the country, and expeditious transportation is critical for organ transplantation. For every minute a donor organ is outside of a human body, surgical success rates decrease materially. Therefore, it is critical that we have continual and immediate access to air transport to increase the number of lives we can save.

On November 1, 2022, we launched a new partnership with BLADE MediMobility group which supports our transplant teams. BLADE and other partners dramatically improve our ability to save lives of our patients by reducing organ travel times. BLADE leverages its 24/7 availability of dedicated aircraft to reduce travel times between our hospital and donor hospitals by up to three hours. The use of helicopter transport from the New York City heliports and local airports allows Montefiore to travel further and reach organs that we might not be able to without helicopter transport, and this has a direct impact on the lives of our transplant patients.

Again, Montefiore's highest priority is patient care. New York City's East Side heliport, including our partnership with BLADE and other transportation providers, is key to the important work we do at Montefiore to save lives every day for families in The Bronx and throughout New York.

Thank you for considering this letter. Please let me know if I can provide any additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Laura Butler". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Laura" and last name "Butler" clearly distinguishable.

Laura Butler
AVP, Transplant Services
Montefiore Health System
111 East 210 Street Bronx, NY 10467

-
Office (718) 920-2729
Fax (718) 798-3857
labutler@montefiore.org
<https://www.montefiore.org/transplantation>

November 28, 2022

New York City Council Member Amanda Farías,
Chair of The Committee on Economic Development
New York City Council Member Shaun Abreu,
Chair of The Committee on State and Federal Legislation

Dear Chair Farías and Chair Abreu,

Thank you for calling this meeting about oversight of New York City heliport operations. My name is Nader Moazami, and I am a member of the faculty at New York University (NYU) Grossman School of Medicine. I am also Chief of the Division of Heart & Lung Transplantation & Mechanical Circulatory Support at NYU Langone Health and our facility is located in the NYU Langone Campus at 317 East 34th Street off Second Avenue, making us only an avenue and a half (0.2 miles to be exact) from the East 34th Street Heliport.

My expertise is in treating people who have end-stage heart failure and performing related surgical procedures, including heart transplants, at the NYU Langone Transplant Institute. Our heart transplant program is one of the top ranked in the nation, and I am especially proud of our short wait times and excellent post-transplant survival rate.

Since August 2019, our partnership with BLADE MediMobility group has enabled us to accomplish hundreds of transplants successfully and rapidly via nearly 1,000 lifesaving flights provided by BLADE. BLADE dramatically improves the efficacy of our transplants by reducing organ travel times by up to 75%. Simply stated, much of the work we do at the NYU Langone Transplant Institute would not be possible without BLADE. Our proximity to each other has played a vital role in our successful partnership. Via our partnership, BLADE arranges on-demand helicopter and jet missions for our transplant teams and donor organs. Our partnership as well as the partnerships BLADE has with other hospitals in New York City has made BLADE the largest point-to-point organ transplant transport service in the United States. BLADE leverages its captive infrastructure and 24/7 availability of dedicated aircraft to reduce travel times between our hospital and common donor hospitals by up to three hours. Expedient transportation is critical for organ transplantation; for every hour an organ is outside of the human body, surgical success rates decrease materially. After retrieving an organ from the donor hospital, the hospital transport team takes a BLADE-arranged jet, followed by a helicopter to East 34th street heliport in Manhattan, nearby NYU Langone, eliminating crosstown travel.

To the extent the organ does not need to be accompanied by medical staff, BLADE will send their own staff to retrieve and deliver organs to hospitals, when appropriate. Additionally, the use of helicopter transport from local airports allows hospitals to travel further and reach organs that they might not normally be able to, which has a direct impact on the outcomes of transplant patients in New York City – offering New Yorkers more organs than they would otherwise have access to.

The West 30th Street Heliport is also a critical piece of transportation infrastructure used for the transport of human organs by BLADE's MediMobility division. The West Side heliport is the only heliport in New York City open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. This is of critical importance as it is the only heliport in our City that is open and available at any moment with the availability of dedicated aircraft to provide local hospitals, including NYU Langone, the ability to have cost-effective, rapid movement of organs and transplant teams to improve patient outcomes - in addition to other emergency services that save lives.

New York City's West Side and East Side heliports and our partnership with BLADE are key to the continuity of the work we do to save lives.

Please let me know if I can provide any additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nader Moazami", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Nader Moazami, MD
Professor of Cardiothoracic Surgery
Chief, Division of Heart & Lung Transplantation & Mechanical Circulatory Support
Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery
New York University (NYU) Langone Health



**Mount
Sinai**

*Recanati/Miller
Transplantation Institute*

Sander S. Florman, MD, FACS

Professor of Surgery

Director, Recanati/Miller Transplantation Institute

The Mount Sinai Medical Center

One Gustave L. Levy Place, Box 1104

New York, NY 10029-6574

Tel.: (212) 659-8313

Fax: (212) 348-2474

E-mail: sander.florman@mountsinai.org

Referral Line: (212) 241-8035

November 29, 2022

Amanda Farías

New York City Council Member

Chair of The Committee on Economic Development

Shaun Abreu

New York City Council Member

Chair of The Committee on State and Federal Legislation

Dear Chair Farías and Chair Abreu,

Thank you for calling this meeting about the oversight of New York City heliport operations. My name is Dr. Sander Florman, and I am a member of the faculty at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. I am also the Director of The Recanati/Miller Transplantation Institute at Mount Sinai Health System. The Mount Sinai Hospital, where transplant surgeries take place, is located at One Gustave L. Levy Place, at Fifth Avenue near 99th Street in Manhattan, making us just 4.3 miles from the East 34th Street Heliport. My expertise is in abdominal transplantation, specifically pediatric and adult liver and kidney transplantation as well as complex hepatobiliary surgery. The Recanati/Miller Transplantation Institute (RMTI) at Mount Sinai Hospital is one of the largest and most comprehensive adult and pediatric abdominal transplantation centers in the world. We are committed to outstanding patient care, research, and educational programs. Our transplant services for adults and children include kidney, liver, pancreas, and intestinal organ transplant.

Since November 2019, our partnership with BLADE MediMobility group has enabled us to accomplish hundreds of transplants rapidly using over 530 lifesaving flights provided by BLADE. Specifically, BLADE covers our liver/kidney/intestinal program as well as the heart/lung transplant program. Via our partnership, BLADE arranges on-demand helicopter and jet missions for our transplant teams and donor organs. BLADE leverages its captive infrastructure and 24/7 availability of dedicated aircraft to reduce travel times between our hospital and common donor hospitals by up to three hours. After retrieving an organ from the donor hospital, the hospital transport team takes a BLADE-arranged jet, often followed by a helicopter to East 34th street heliport in Manhattan, near Mount Sinai on the east side, eliminating crosstown travel. To the extent the organ does not need to be accompanied by medical staff, BLADE will send their own staff to retrieve and deliver organs to hospitals, when appropriate. Additionally, the use of helicopter transport from local airports allows hospitals to travel further and reach organs that they

might not normally be able to, which has a direct impact on the outcomes of transplant patients in New York City – offering New Yorkers more organs than they would otherwise have access to.

The West 30th Street Heliport which is located approximately 5 miles from The Mount Sinai Hospital, is also a critical piece of transportation infrastructure used for the transport of human organs by BLADE's MediMobility division. The West Side heliport is the only heliport in New York City open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. This is of critical importance as it is the only heliport in our City that is open and available at any moment with the availability of dedicated aircraft to provide local hospitals, including Mount Sinai, the ability to have cost-effective, rapid movement of organs and transplant teams to improve patient outcomes - in addition to other emergency services that save lives.

New York City's West Side and East Side heliports and our partnership with BLADE are key to the continuity of the work we do to save the lives of New Yorkers.

Please do not hesitate to reach out if I can provide any additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S. Florman', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Sander S. Florman, MD
Director, The Recanati Miller Transplantation Institute
Charles Miller, MD Professor of Surgery
Mount Sinai Health System

**Stop the Chop NY/NJ testimony at the New York City Council Committee on Economic Development
jointly with the Committee on State and Federal Legislation**

November 29, 2022

This contains some material that was not read at the hearing due to time constraints.

I would like to thank Committee Chairs Farias and Abreu for holding this hearing to discuss the important issue of helicopters over New York City.

My name is Andrew Rosenthal and I am the President of Stop the Chop NYNJ, a 100% volunteer run, grassroots, non-profit formed to educate New Yorkers about the negative impacts of nonessential helicopters flying over the New York Metropolitan Area. We define “nonessential” to mean tourist, commuter, and charter flights. We do not mean police, military, news, or medical flights. We were founded in 2014 and represent people from across the region including many in New Jersey. I encourage anyone who wants a deeper understanding of the issues to go to our website stopthechopnynj.org.

As you are already aware, incessant helicopter traffic over NYC has been an issue for decades. Starting with the tragedy on the Pan Am building in 1977, to the present day, helicopters have created many serious problems for the citizens of the entire New York City metropolitan area. The numerous and regular fatal crashes, and the negative impacts of noise on the quality of life, health, and cognitive abilities of all New Yorkers, especially children and environmental justice communities, are well documented.

Many New Yorkers see a helicopter and assume it is the NYPD or news. In most cases that is not true. Currently, there are approximately 70,000 nonessential helicopter flights over New York City each year. That number will continue to grow if we let it. That is approximately 200 flights per day. Imagine if your phone rang 200 times each day. That is how these flights disrupt lives.

Safety

Unlike fixed wing aircraft, Helicopters crash on a regular basis. The fatal crash three years ago on the Axa Equitable Center building at 787 Seventh Avenue was caused by a pilot lost in the fog just like the crash that killed Kobe Bryant. Imagine the loss of life if that helicopter had crashed just 4 blocks south in Times Square. [A crash of this type can and will happen again.]

After 9/11 the federal government created a no-fly-zone around Disney World to deter terrorists. Does New York City deserve any less protection?

One of the current operators at DMH just placed an order for 100 single person helicopters that they intend to rent to anyone who takes a one-hour course. What could go wrong with 100 people at a bachelor or bachelorette party flying around our skies?

Quality of Life

It is abundantly clear that New Yorkers want action to eliminate these nonessential flights.

- Over 10,000 New Yorkers have signed a petition to eliminate this activity.

- Complaints to 311 have skyrocketed over the last few years even though NYC made it harder to report and the fact that most people stop filing complaints when they realize it accomplishes little.
- Our federal representatives Maloney, Velazquez, and Nadler have introduced three separate bills to eliminate or reduce these nonessential flights.
- There are several bills that have been introduced in City Council this session and many others over the years.
- The state legislature passed a bill introduced by Brad Hoylman and Dick Gottfried last session that awaits the Governor's signature. It is aimed at curtailing some of this nonessential activity.
- The Central Park Conservancy created a webpage to support the work of our electeds and Stop the Chop.
- Several NYC community boards have passed resolutions supporting our goals.

Health and Cognitive Abilities

There have been many peer-reviewed academic studies that show that excessive noise reduces cognitive ability, especially in children. One seminal study was authored by New York's own Arlene Bronzaft. These nonessential aircraft buzz many of our schools, especially the Harbor School on Governors Island which has the misfortune to be located near the DMH. [Some of the tourist helicopters flying over New York City are still using leaded fuel that was banned for cars 25 years ago.]

Aircraft noise has also been proven to increase high blood pressure for those living near airports.

Environmental Justice

The damage caused by these unnecessary flights negatively impacts many EJ communities between Manhattan and JFK or the Hamptons, both frequent destinations. The flights that pass over these communities are required to fly at extremely low altitudes, increasing the impact of their noise, because of airplane traffic landing at JFK and LaGuardia.

Climate Change

The average tourist helicopter spews the same amount of greenhouse gasses per hour as twenty or more cars. The large commuter/charter craft emit up to 40 times the CO₂ of an automobile. New York City, as a coastal city has already seen the impacts of climate change and will see more in the future. [Why are we subsidizing our own destruction?]

FAA and role of the City Of New York

The FAA has ultimate jurisdiction over the skies of NYC, *but it does not have sole jurisdiction over City owned lands* such as the Downtown Manhattan Heliport ("DMH" or "Pier 6") or the East 34th Street Heliport. The City Council can and must act to reduce the negative impacts of nonessential helicopters.

While more action is required, leaders have taken numerous steps over the years to address the problem;

- Mayor Giuliani shut down the East 60th Street heliport in 1997 and
- the City has closed the East 34th heliport on weekends and

- In 2016 the City capped the number of tourist flights allowed from City owned heliports and banned tourist flights on Sundays.

Economic Impacts

The helicopter operators counter that they are a “business”. However, the operators do not pay the costs of the negative externalities they cause. They will not pay the tens or even hundreds of millions of dollars required when Pier 6 needs to be replaced. Why are NYC taxpayers on the hook for this future expense?

Out of 66 million tourists who visit New York City annually, less than one in a thousand takes a helicopter trip. These helicopters are not owned, operated, repaired, or stored by New York City residents. They siphon off tourist dollars that could be spent on many other attractions such as the Circle Line or any of the magnificent observation decks around the City.

Electric Helicopters or eVTOLS

The aviation industry will tell you no action is needed as they will soon have “quiet” electric helicopters (eVTOLS). Even though there have been quieter helicopters available for years called “type 3”, none of the most active companies are using them.

At present, there are zero electric craft certified to fly paying passengers in the United States. These craft are many years if not a decade from certification to fly over the most densely populated area in the country. Even if these are approved, we know that older, noisy craft will abuse our skies for decades. Many of the current helicopters flying over New York are decades old *and will be flying decades from now if we let them.*

Actions

We implore the City Council take the following steps:

- Close the two City owned heliports to nonessential flights this year. The current contracts are concession agreements that can be canceled by the city “at will” in 30 days or less. The flights will not just move to West 30th Street as it is operating at or near its capacity as set by a binding legal settlement.
- Work with the Mayor and Governor to close the West 30th Street Heliport which is currently operating in the middle of Hudson River Park just inches from the busiest bike and pedestrian path in North America and nearly adjacent to our beloved High Line.
- Work with federal legislators to reduce or eliminate nonessential flights originating from outside New York City
- Ban eVTOLS from taking off or landing anywhere in New York City until the technology is proven safe and quiet.

Closing

In closing, I again want to thank you for holding this important hearing and look forward to working with you to craft a solution. Many problems facing New York are very hard and/or expensive to solve. This problem could be solved overnight with essentially no cost to the taxpayers of NYC.

From: Stop The Chop NY NJ <info@stopthechopnynj.org>
Sent: Friday, December 2, 2022 3:12 AM
To: Testimony
Cc: Farias, Amanda; Amanda Farias
Subject: [EXTERNAL] My Written Testimony for EDC Hearing on Heliports Nov. 29, 2022

Dear Councilmembers Farias and Abreu,

Thank you for hosting and chairing the Nov. 29, 2022 NYC Council Hearing regarding the NYC heliports, NYCEDC oversight of the heliports, and the issue of helicopter traffic over NYC more broadly. I am submitting this written testimony as I was unable to attend your Hearing in person nor virtually due to a medical appointment conflict.

My NYC Background:

I am a long-time resident of NYC, having lived on the Upper Westside of Manhattan since the 1980s (as well as having resided for several years on the Upper Eastside). I attended high school and a professional ballet school at Lincoln Center, and graduated from Barnard College and Columbia Law School. I have lived in my current UWS apartment since 2000. As you can see, I have longstanding ties to NYC and especially the UWS. I am a non-practicing attorney who teaches yoga and dance, and engages in volunteer community work through my West 80s Neighborhood Association and Love Your Street Tree Day initiatives. I love NYC, yet in recent years, the non-stop helicopter traffic and resulting excessive noise pollution has begun to make NYC unlivable and unpleasant. Not only does the noise negatively impact me in my home, but the helicopters' low vibration roars along Riverside Park, in Central Park, and throughout my West 80s neighborhood has significantly reduced my quality of life and increased my stress levels.

Why I Joined the Stop the Chop NY/NJ Volunteer Board:

In the Summer of 2019, the incessant helicopter traffic spurred me, my husband and several of my neighbors to resurrect the nonprofit organization Stop the Chop NY/NJ, and join the board of directors in early 2020 just before the Covid shutdown. As an all-volunteer Board, we have been meeting with New Yorkers throughout the metro region (as well New Jerseyites) who have also had their lives made miserable due to the excessive number of nonessential (commuter/charter and sightseeing/tourist) helicopters that are basically terrorizing all those below their low-flying helicopter flight paths. I spend pretty much all of my free time working on this issue as an unpaid volunteer because the situation is so unjust, unfair, and frustrating for myself and our coalition members. The fact that I, and my fellow Board members, all tax-paying residents of NYC have to spend our free time tirelessly advocating for clean and quiet skies over NYC, for a better quality of life, and for reduced safety risks due to the polluting and selfish helicopter industry model is itself unjust, unfair and frustrating!

How the Helicopter Industry is Destroying NYC:

The helicopter industry is destroying NYC's parks, waterways, and residential neighborhoods and turning these areas into what sounds like war zones. My former pleasures of jogging in Riverside Park and Central Park (places that should be urban respites for peace, recreation and tranquility) have now become stress-inducing experiences as either sightseeing helicopters from NJ or Westchester circle and hover above for Instagram photo opportunities or large, loud commuter flights roar across the park skimming the treetops. My jogs are

usually interrupted by both categories of flights several times. These same helicopters travel up and down the Hudson River and across the many residential neighborhoods that are near these parks. I know from our tens of thousands of Stop the Chop NY/NJ members that this same problem exists in Upper Manhattan, Battery Park, South Street Seaport, Upper East Side, Midtown Manhattan, Governors Island, Brooklyn, Queens and part of Staten Island (with some areas being more impacted by the commuter helicopters and others by the sightseeing). Unfortunately for the UWS, we are tortured by both categories of nonessential helicopters.

The Problem with the 311 Helicopter Reporting System:

The NYC EDC likes to deflect any blame and point the finger to NJ-based tourist helicopters as the source of most 311 complaints. First, the current 311 helicopter reporting system is seriously flawed as the online forms are confusing, any complaints that are made rarely get resolved (as the true resolution would be no more noise polluting helicopters overhead), and people have grown weary, cynical and frustrated with the 311 system so the true helicopter problem is under-reported. Second, many people are not aware of the helicopter tail number flight tracking apps or websites (contrary to what the EDC testified at your Hearing), and do not know how to identify the helicopters that are creating the hazard or nuisance for which they would like to complain. Third, the 30,000 tourist helicopter flights operating out of the Downtown Manhattan Heliport (DMH) are often not identifiable on the helicopter tracking apps, like FlightRadar24 as their tail numbers do not appear. This must be rectified immediately as there is no reason tourist helicopters operating from a public NYC heliport should not have their tail numbers easily apparent on the tracking apps - unless of course, it is EDC's way to keep the 311 complaint numbers low regarding said DMH sightseeing helicopters! Fourth, to have the 311 complaints be investigated by the very companies that are being complained about is like having the fox watch the henhouse! No wonder there is no legitimate resolution, and why the public is rightfully skeptical of the process. EDC testified at the Hearing that they had a "third party" doing "random sampling" of the 311 complaints as well, but that third party was not identified nor did that third party testify at the Hearing. Clearly, for all these reasons, the 311 system for logging NYC helicopter complaints must be improved.

Over Water Helicopter Flights Do Not Resolve the Noise & Vibration Problems:

At the Hearing, EDC continually mentioned that their DMH sightseeing tours are only being conducted over water since the 2016 Agreement - as if that made the helicopter noise magically disappear! As a resident who lives near the Hudson River, I can testify that helicopter noise is amplified over water and that I can hear the helicopters commuting or sightseeing along the river before I even see them out my window. The beautiful Hudson River has sadly become a helicopter highway and the roar is constant especially on weekends and prime tourism seasons. We know from our members that the same is true down at Battery Park, the Seaport, Brooklyn Heights, and Governors Island, as well as near all three Manhattan-based heliports (E. 34th Street, W. 30th Street, and DMH). Over water is not a solution - it is just another part of the vast helicopter problem over NYC.

The NYCEDC is not Accounting for Negative Externalities:

The EDC admits that the revenue to NYC per heliport is only approximately 1.2 - 2 million dollars - de minimus in the scope of the entire NYC budget. And if the negative externalities created by this industry were factored in, that number would be even smaller. We must ask the following questions to determine the true value or lack thereof: what are the costs to the environment due to all these fossil-fuel guzzling helicopters, and to New Yorkers health (especially those with pre-existing conditions such as asthma)? It should be noted that most of the Blade commuter helicopter flights to the Hamptons and NYC international airports fly extremely low through environmental justice neighborhoods in Brooklyn and Queens - communities that already suffer disproportionately from diseases such as asthma and Covid. Additionally, what are the emergency services costs every time there is a helicopter crash, the lost productivity costs due to the stress-inducing conditions New Yorkers are subjected to by this excessive noise, the increased medical visits, and reduction in children's cognition for those studying at home or in schools near heliports and flight paths, to name a few. (For more information on the health and cognitive impacts of noise pollution, I refer back to Prof. Arline Bronzaft's virtual testimony at the Hearing).

Ban the Fossil-Fuel Based Nonessential Helicopters While Electric Options are Studied:

At the Hearing, EDC continually touted its hope for electric helicopters to resolve all the problems that were complained about by the Council Members. However, they admitted there are no mandates for any electric helicopters in the new RFP for DMH. Additionally, we do not know if electric helicopters will be greener (if they are being charged by fossil-fuel based power plants they are not), what their decibel levels will be both individually and flying in groups, their safety, the new infrastructure necessary to be installed at existing heliports, the costs of fully transitioning a fossil fuel based helicopter business to electric, and many more questions. So clearly, this change is not happening tomorrow and the EDC admitted it was only likely to be "phased" in at some point. The status quo is unacceptable, as the Council heard from so many New Yorkers at the Hearing. We cannot continue to allow the helicopter industry to inflict such sonic torture and environmental degradation across NYC unabated while the EDC waits for the industry to be electrified. We need a ban of the nonessential traditional helicopters now - and while the EVTOL industry is being studied and tested.

Conclusion:

I commend the City Council for holding this EDC Heliport Oversight Hearing as a great first step towards reigning in this polluting and arrogant helicopter industry, and bringing some transparency to the situation. Because the industry does not care about its harmful impacts on the community, it is imperative that our elected representatives hold the industry and the EDC accountable. There are clearly many more questions to be answered after this Hearing. I (and my fellow Stop the Chop NY/NJ Board members) support Int. 551 (currently with 23 City Council cosponsors) and we urge the City Council to hold a Hearing on that bill as well.

Thank you for your consideration of my submitted written testimony.

Best,
Melissa Elstein

Melissa Elstein
Coalition Organizer & Board Chair & Secretary
www.stopthechopnynj.org
Sign the petition: <https://www.change.org/StoptheChopNYNJ>



From: Adam Irving <adamjirving@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 1, 2022 11:13 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NYC Helipads

It is long past time that the NYC helipads be closed to all non-essential helicopters. Few things benefit a tiny majority at the expense of the majority as well as helicopters. The tourist chopper business has been a scourge for anyone unlucky enough to live or work within their noise footprint, which is quite wide. The air taxi business between NYC and The Hamptons is even worse given the popularity of the twin engine heavy helicopters for the moneyed set.

These non-essential choppers create massive amounts of noise which travels for miles. The low end bass rattles walls and windows. They cause significant air and water pollution. They are also a safety hazard for those on the ground. They cause stress reactions in humans. There really isn't much positive to say about them.

NYC has a massive tourism economy and the heli-tours are an insignificant piece of the total. No tourist is going to skip a NYC trip if these tours were banned tomorrow.

The air taxis to the Hamptons are yet another way for the extremely wealthy to save time at the expense of the majority. The twin engine choppers pollute even more and make exponentially more noise. These air taxis plague tax paying residents from NYC helipads all the way to the East End of Long Island. I know people that have moved off Long Island to be rid of the air taxi assault that grows worse every year.

The industry will falsely argue that the helicopter noise can be abated. This is not true. The noise footprints are too wide and they simply make too much noise. They also make a type of noise that has been proven scientifically to be more annoying than other noises at the same decibel level. The "over water" solution has been trumpeted for years and it's a snake oil solution. Water actually moves the chopper noise more efficiently than land. Those on Long Island can hear the choppers before they see them. It's amazing how far and wide the low end bass noise travels.

The only solution to the noise and pollution issue is to ban non-essential helicopters.

Regards -

Adam Irving

There is

- 1) **Who Am I:** Hello, my name is Adrienne Meisels (ameisels@aol.com), and I live at W.70th St, directly under the flight path of tourist helicopters that fly over Central Park. I am a dual degree, magna cum laude, graduate from the University of Pennsylvania (with a degree from the Wharton School of Business) and a graduate with honors from Fordham University School of Law, where I was an editor of Law Review. I have worked as an attorney at Shearman & Sterling and am currently the CEO & Founder of a tech startup, headquartered in NYC.
- 2) **My Experience:** My boyfriend and I live on the ninth floor of my apartment building, so the noise from the helicopters is not only quite perceptible, but quite loud, as unless it's very hot outside, we always have the window open for "fresh" (see below) air. In addition, the noise from the helicopters is non-stop during our waking (and sometimes, non-waking) day. The noise starts around 8am, including on the weekends when we may want to sleep in, and continues to around 10pm, when we are trying to relax. We have been on zoom calls where we have to turn up the volume in order to be able to hear over the helicopter noise.

I am not the only one who is bothered by this; many of my neighbors have also voiced their frustration to me over the never-ending bombardment of our mental, emotional and physical peace and health.

3) **Harms:**

- a) **Noise pollution→ Impact on mental, emotional and physical peace and health:** Per my experience above, the noise is constant and grating on our overall health, peace and well-being. It is also interfering directly, and indirectly, with *our* financial well-being.

In landlord-tenant law, there is an old legal principle of a tenant's implied covenant of quiet enjoyment, that stipulates that tenants have the right to live in their dwelling in peace and quiet, without interference. Obviously, helicopter noise is not within any landlord's control, but it IS within the control of the government, who should, therefore, enforce this very basic tenet of habitability.

- b) **Air pollution:** EVERY SINGLE helicopter flight--in BOTH directions--is resulting in the emissions of particulates that are unhealthy to those of us who are living, standing or walking below these flight paths. Here are just three of many articles and studies on the subject:
<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/article/101005-planes-pollution-deaths-science-environment> (plane emissions kill more people than car crashes)
<https://ehjournal.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12940-020-00690-y>
<https://8billiontrees.com/carbon-offsets-credits/flights-airline-travel/helicopter/>
<https://www.enn.com/articles/23533-what-about-helicopter-emissions>

- 4) **Benefit:** The benefit for the helicopter companies is obviously financial profit. The benefits for the 1-4 (?) passengers they carry are thrill-seeking, sight-seeking and the opportunity to take “shoe selfies”.





5) Massive imbalance in harm vs. benefit ratio:

- a) **Skewed in number:** For each 1-4 people in a helicopter and the few corporations that are profiting financially from these tourist excursions, the health and peace of hundreds of thousands, if not millions, is degrading and for no purpose other than their momentary pleasure and curiosity. By simple math, the societal ROI is a huge net negative.
- b) **Non-stop:** Now, multiply that imbalance for dozens and dozens of trips (again, one helicopter flight is TWO trips past my apartment) every single day; the imbalance is now egregiously so large, that I believe, it becomes very obvious that something needs to be done.

6) Question for the council: Please tell me why these shoe selfies of a few are more important than the health, peace and inherent rights of millions hour after hour, day after day, year after year?

7) Request: Please put into legislation to stop non-emergency helicopter flights over Manhattan, especially the “residential” areas of Lincoln Square/Upper West Side.

From: Alden Warner <aywarner@mac.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 26, 2022 1:40 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Banning non-essential helicopter traffic - the 11/29 hearing

Dear Members of the Council:

Although I am unable to attend the hearing on 11/29, I write to request fervently that you act to ban non-essential helicopter traffic over NYC, and specifically over Central Park. As a resident of the Upper East Side and a frequent user of Central Park, the recent surge in helicopter tourism has made daily life outright unpleasant, with the constant noise disturbing the serenity of the Park and also piercing our apartment building walls so that there is no escape from it even within our own apartment. This is the definition of noise pollution, disturbing the peace, literally, of tens of thousands of New Yorkers daily so that a handful of tourists can have their “wow” moment and take a picture or two. It’s unconscionable that a few tour operators get rich at the expense of all who use Central Park or live with blocks of it on either side.

Many thanks for your consideration and for enacting the proposed ban.

Alden Warner

Alden Y. Warner III
Park Avenue
New York, NY 10128

Helicopter Traffic Over South Brooklyn

It grates on me that I can't enjoy a relative degree of quiet in my apartment or on a walk through Prospect Park without being strafed by luxury aircraft carrying people who need to get to an airport or their weekend homes all because someone figured out how to uberize helicopters. Noise pollution is part of living in NYC. I grew up here. I'm used to it. And noise from emergency vehicles is understandable. But noise does have an effect on concentration, productivity, and stress management. etc. Tens of thousands of NYC residents should not have to suffer the side effects of unnecessary noise so that a privileged few can save time and avoid traffic. It's the equivalent of throwing trash out of your car window in someone else's neighborhood but not your own.

Alexis Arkus-Duntov

From: Andrea Truppin <tout@verizon.net>
Sent: Friday, December 2, 2022 12:33 PM
To: Testimony
Cc: Brewer, Gale
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Operation of the city's helipads

To the Committee,

I wanted to add my voice to those of the many New Yorkers whose lives are being negatively impacted by the many daily helicopter flights up and down Manhattan and across the island. The numerous helicopters that pass over Manhattan every day - including up and down the Hudson River, along Riverside Park, and tracking back and forth across Central Park are destroying the ability of New Yorkers, including me, to enjoy the tranquility that the parks are supposed to provide. The constant roar of cars and trucks and the wailing sirens of police cars and fire trucks of the city streets are a constant assault on the ears and the mind, and the parks offer the only outdoor space where one can have a little quiet, be with one's thoughts and enjoy nature.

Recently, when walking across Central Park from East 79th Street to East 86th Street, within a space of only 20 minutes, four different sightseeing helicopters tracked back and forth across the park above me. First was the roar of one helicopter, and my stress level immediately went up. My stomach clenched up and I felt tense all over my body. And I felt a surge of anger that a few people who wanted to see Manhattan from the air could destroy the quality of life for so many thousands of New Yorkers every day. As the noise dissipated as the helicopter flew off into the distance, I felt relieved and felt my stress level go back down. But my relief was short-lived, because not more than a couple of minutes later, into my ears came the approaching rumble and roar of another helicopter. Same effect, but this time my stress level was even higher, as I had gotten through the first helicopter and thought that now I was free and clear. But no. Here came another one. And then another. And then another. Instead of hearing the chirping of birds and the rush of wind through the trees and the laughter of children playing, all I could hear was the rumble, beating and roar of the helicopter. It reminded me of the famous scene in *Apocalypse Now*. When I finally exited the park, I found West 85th Street to be quieter than the park I had just walked through.

I live on the 20th floor of an apartment building between Riverside Drive and West End Avenue in the 80s. Sometimes, I am on the phone and I have to ask the person at the end of the line to hold on because a helicopter going by is making so much noise, I can't hear them what they are saying. Sometimes, the helicopters fly so close to the top of my building, I feel I could almost reach out and touch them. This is not acceptable.

It is outrageous that profit-making companies arrogate to themselves the common airspace of all New Yorkers, without a concern for how their activities are affected the people who live here. What gives them this right? Why should they be allowed to destroy the quality of life for thousands, even millions, of people, to take two or three tourists over our city to line their pockets?

In addition, commuter helicopters that take off from the downtown heliport on the Hudson River destroy the experiences of the lovely Hudson River parks that have only recently been built. Walking or cycling by the heliport is a nightmare - the noise is unbearable as is the smell of the fumes. Plus many of the commuter helicopters then fly up the Hudson, ruining Riverside Park and disturbing the peace and quiet of Upper West Siders like myself, among other people who live near the river.

Non-essential helicopters must be banned from the skies above Manhattan as well as above the East and Hudson rivers and the heliports should be shut down.

Thank you,

Andrea Truppin
West 86th Street
New York, NY 10024

From: Andreas Friedberg <akfcom@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 26, 2022 9:10 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Hearing regarding New York City's Heliport Operations

I support the elimination of non-essential helicopters from the New York metropolitan area. Non-essential (tourist, charter and commuter) helicopter flights dramatically reduce the quality of life for millions of people in the New York metropolitan area. They pollute our environment, pose significant safety risks, harm our children, and make us miserable. In my neighborhood, along the waterfront near Ave D, helicopter noise often makes you feel like you live in a war zone.

Andy Friedberg
East 9th Street
New York, NY 10009-5439

Wednesday, November 30th, 2023
Submitted about 9:10am

Ann Simkins
Glenwood Road

klvn. NY 11210

mail.com

Dear New York City Council,

I am testifying about the NYC Helicopter Traffic.

I live at 2601 Glenwood Road, a co-op in Brooklyn. We have a community garden out back where residents can sit and have some quiet time.....

Except for the never ending helicopters that fly very low, over our building. It is horrible. NYC is already a noisy place so having pockets of quiet is very important.

Money is being made off of these helicopter flights that hurt our quality of life and pollute our environment with lead.

Please make this stop.

Thank you,
Ann Simkins

We take this opportunity to again voice our complaint to the Economic Development Corporation. In our opinion clear that the EDC tilts the scales in favor of the helicopter companies and city coffers of the citizen. For years we take every opportunity to complain. To no end. Doesn't the city care about their taxpayers? We pay considerable property taxes and feel as if we live in a war zone. What about our Governor? Why don't we stop NJ from coming into our air space. Does NY get an override on their flights? People have given up on their complaints that go nowhere. Can one really call every day of the week?

In fact, we hear now there is increased "cinematography" opportunities. Ridiculous!!! They hover over buildings and fly again and again to get their shots. Why would this even be considered?

Visitors to Brooklyn Bridge Park have complained for years that the East River oasis is often drowning in the sound of spinning chopper blades. The ZIP code encompassing the park, 11201, has logged the most complaints about helicopter noise

Five years ago, New York City banned sightseeing helicopters from using its landing pads on Sundays, ostensibly giving residents one day of respite from the thumping overhead parade that had spurred thousands of complaints. To no end.

The prohibition has not turned Sundays into a day of peace. Far from it. The city is still being buzzed by helicopters more than 150 times on some Sundays — and hundreds more times on weekdays. There is absolutely no respite.

All that noise is driving Brooklyn Heights residents, to near-constant distraction.

Flights from the two heliports in Manhattan owned by the city have rebounded this year. Helicopter traffic from New Jersey is skirting the NY rules. Why can't we appeal to the FAA?

The city's Economic Development Corporation, which oversees the two heliports, one near Wall Street and the other along the East River, appears to make rules and throw up their hands or turn a blind eye to NJ

The company, also operating as FlyNYON, is known for two things: doors-off tours that let customers dangle their feet out of open helicopters to take "shoe selfies," and a 2018 crash in which five passengers drowned in the East River.

After the crash, the Federal Aviation Administration banned the type of harnesses that NYON used at the time. But they allowed doors-off tours to continue. We continue to see doors off tours in the last month November 2022

On one Sunday in late July, more than one-third of the 157 flights over a broad swath of the city were operated by NYON from its base in Kearny, N.J., an analysis of Flightradar24 data found.

In the summer we've noticed Thursday, Friday flight traffic almost every 10 minutes. In the morning commuter traffic runs beginning at 6:00 a.m. Every sunset we can set our watch for our dinner hour to be drowned by the incessant flights. And in the evenings sometimes past 10:00 p.m.

Please, please help your citizens the millions of people that have no control for the whims of the few.

-Anne Albritton

From: ANNE KADET <annekadet@icloud.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 1, 2022 8:09 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Helicopters!

Hello,

I live in Brooklyn Heights and I just want to add my input to the helicopter issue.

The fact that a few people with \$\$\$ can disturb the piece of millions of New Yorkers just so they can enjoy a fun helicopter ride or get a faster trip to the Hamptons does not seem right to me.

I hope that the city council will ban all helicopter trips around the city except for those that are essential for maintaining safety and the functioning of government.

Thank you for your consideration!

Anne Kadet
Brooklyn

New York City's Heliport Operations – Arline L. Bronzaft, Ph.D.

Arline L. Bronzaft, Ph.D, Professor Emerita, City University of New York, Board member of GrowNYC (I oversee noise activities). Researcher and writer on the adverse impacts of noise on mental and physical health. Conducted landmark research on the effects of elevated train noise on children's learning in classes adjacent to the tracks.

With respect to heliport operations, we need to direct ourselves to the impacts of helicopter noise on residents subjected to overhead helicopter noise. Back in the 1970s when the Office of Noise Abatement and Control was active in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Office produced a booklet entitled "Noise: A Health Problem" (August 1978). This booklet concluded as follows: "It is finally clear that noise is a significant hazard to public health. Truly, noise is more than just an annoyance." While there were studies then that permitted the conclusion that noise is a health hazard, there are far more studies today linking noise to hazardous health impacts (American Public Health Association, 2021). Thus, we can simply state as EPA did: "It is finally clear that noise is a significant hazard to public health." I would like to add that my research on noise impeding children's learning is cited in this booklet.

Impacts of noise on health include stress, loss of sleep, increased cardiovascular conditions, poorer learning scores. I personally conducted two studies in New York City involving aviation noise and found that residents subjected to aircraft noise experienced a diminished quality of life. Good health requires a decent quality of life. This includes being able to carry out household activities, as well as enjoying one's property, without being imposed upon by overhead aviation noise.

Despite the growing literature linking noise, including aviation noise, to adverse health effects, the policies that should be implemented to lessen the noises have not followed the research findings (Bronzaft, 2017). Unfortunately, the Federal Aviation Administration is still conducting studies that demonstrate noise is an "annoyance." Those familiar with the research on noise refer to noise as a "health hazard." Continuing to call noise an "annoyance" will slow down efforts to introduce methods to lessen the noise and there are methods that can be employed now to reduce aviation noise.

Should members of the Council wish to speak with me further on the adverse impacts of noise on health, please do contact me. Thank you for the opportunity to present this statement.

References

United States Environmental Protection Agency (1978). Noise: A Health Hazard. Washington, D.C. Office of Noise Abatement and Control.

<https://www.scirp.org/journal/PaperInformation.aspx?PaperID=76120>

<https://www.apha.org/Policies-and-Advocacy/Public-Health-Policy-Statements/Policy-Database/2022/01/07/Noise-as-a-Public-Health-Hazard>

This is a deeply frustrated resident of 12 years in northern battery park city, which has turned into a war-zone like flight path with continuous deafening helicopter traffic shaking our apartments and windows from early morning till late at night 7 days a week.

- 1) Almost all these flights are tourists from the city heliports or from NJ based operators, and commuters from places like the Hamptons or the airports.
- 2) My children are woken up literally every day by a computer helicopter thundering past, often as early as 6:15 am.
- 3) On any nice day, it is impossible to have a family picnic or a quiet walk in Rockefeller park, or indeed any of the waterfront locations in Hudson River Park.
- 4) We have as a family simply stopped visiting Governor's island, which is like being on an airport runway. The Brooklyn waterfront is no better
- 5) It is beyond high time that the helicopter industry take ownership of privatizing their profits while socializing their losses and consequences - a deafening roar that has become the sound of NY harbor, tormenting the residents all day.
- 6) The investment in the NYC waterfront park system is going to waste, by turning them all into effective flight paths reminiscent of war zones.
- 7) We find ourselves praying for foggy dry days, when one can enjoy the park without the constant din of helicopters.

Please please stop all use of the city's heliports for all commuter and tourist traffic. This will have a dramatic improvement on quality of life, which is getting worse by the day. This will also pressure the Hudson River Park Trust to close its own heliports to these noisy polluting machines, a travesty considering their mission of promoting green serene space in Manhattan. The New Jersey based authorities are very likely to follow suite, since they suffer from the same noise over the NJ waterfront, but are rightly waiting for New York to do something first.

Do the right thing I implore you. We cannot live in peace in our own homes, as helicopter traffic just keeps increasing day after day.

ASHWIN Padmanabhan
Northern Battery Park City

Audrey Berges

S 4th Street

Brooklyn, NY 11249

audrey9.berges@gmail.com

November 30, 2022

Councilmember Amanda Farías

Chairperson, Committee on Economic Development

New York City Council

Councilmember Shaun Abreu

Chairperson, Committee on State and Federal Legislation

New York City Council

cc: City Council Speaker Adrienne Adams

Re: Pass Intro 0551 and ban nonessential helicopter flights from NYC heliports

Dear Chairperson Farías and Chairperson Abreu,

The City Council should pass Intro 0551 because of two main reasons.

The first and most important reason is the environment. Helicopters emit more than 40 times as much greenhouse gases as non-electric cars do. In a world where we urgently need to perform a transition from fossil fuels to electric transportation, there is no place for non-essential helicopter trips.

However, you might wonder if a transition from helicopters using leaded fuel to more environment-friendly helicopters could happen in the following years, in which case Intro 0551 would not be that useful. But unfortunately, as an engineer, I can tell you that neither soon nor in several decades we will manage to build such a machine. Indeed, batteries are for the moment way too heavy to be efficient in the air, and the research is far from being able to build light enough batteries. The scientific literature demonstrates it. As a result, the only solution to perform an ecological transition is to reduce the number of flights taken.

I want to remind you how urgent the need for an ecological transition is. As the *World Energy Outlook 2021* report from the IEA – International Energy Agency – explains, the world energy system is under pressure and will be even more pressured in the coming decades, as the global population is set to grow by 2 billion to 2050 and that fossil fuel reserves keep decreasing. Thus, passing Intro 0551 to ban non-essential helicopter flights is a logical and necessary step.

The second reason why the City Council needs to pass this bill is related to New Yorkers' well-being. Anyone who has ever walked in Manhattan, or even Brooklyn – where I live – can testify about the unbearable noise helicopters traffic makes. You cannot even talk on the telephone or with a friend in the street, while a helicopter is passing above your head. If you want to take a break from the city in Prospect Park, you will certainly hear some terrible noise from a helicopter passing by.

Also, it is proved that loud noises make the amygdala activate our body's fight mode, which is a stress response. Scientific research has already demonstrated that stress can heavily affect your health over a lifetime. And New Yorkers do not need even more stress in their everyday life.

As a result, if you really care about New Yorkers' well-being and their right to have an audible conversation on the phone or a break at Prospect Park, banning non-essential helicopter flights is necessary.

I sincerely hope this testimony will be heard.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Audrey Berges.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'AB' with a stylized flourish at the end.

From: Barbara Rietschel <raisedbarb@earthlink.net>
Sent: Tuesday, November 29, 2022 1:36 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Stop The Chop

I am writing to ask you to close down the heliport that is located on the west side in the 30s.

It is loud - too loud for young children
It is dangerous - right next to people walking along the river.
It covers all with diesel fumes

It is stressful to everyone living or walking near by.

It never should have been okayed for it to expand.

If you are trying to have an afternoon on a Sunday in the summer - you can't.
The number of helicopters landing is too many to count and continues into the evening.

I'm pretty sure the people who use it can find somewhere else - they all have cars picking them up.

From: Barry L. Kline <blk251@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 30, 2022 6:27 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] BAN THE NYC HELIPORTS & NYC HELICOPTER TRAFFIC!

Quality of life on the Upper West Side in Manhattan has been significantly DEGRADED for years due to the incessant and constant HELICOPTER NOISE directly above my apartment!! As a remote (home based) worker I can attest to the fact that my home office work environment has been completely DESTROYED by the ALL-DAY HELICOPTER NOISE which I am FORCED TO LISTEN TO from early in the morning to early in the evening, every day, INCLUDING WEEKENDS. While discussing business with work colleagues on audio or video calls EVERYONE can hear the OUTRAGEOUSLY LOUD HELICOPTER NOISE unless I mute my calls which is IMPOSSIBLE to do when I AM TALKING. The NOISE is SO LOUD that my colleagues have asked me if I live next to an AIRPORT!!!

For years I have been in contact with US Representatives Nadler and Maloney offices who have said THEIR HANDS ARE TIED AND THERE IS NOTHING THEY CAN DO BECAUSE THE FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION (FAA) ALLOWS THESE RIDICULOUS, ANNOYING AND DANGEROUS HELICOPTERS TO FLY OVER THE UPPER WEST SIDE!!

IF YOU HAVE ANY CONCERN FOR THE SAFETY AND QUALITY OF LIFE FOR UPPER WEST SIDE RESIDENTS SUCH AS MYSELF WILL YOU PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE INTERVENE AND BAN HELICOPTER TRAFFIC ONCE AND FOR ALL???!!!

Barry Kline
West 89th St.,
New York, NY 10024

blk251@yahoo.com

From: Barry Perlman <bbperlman1@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 1, 2022 7:51 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Helicopters

To: NYC Council

From: Barry Perlman, MD - UWS, Manhattan

Re: Helicopter noise

Increasingly the noise from helicopters over my area of Manhattan has increased to the point that now on many days it seems unceasing. It's become almost impossible to take a quiet, peaceful walk in Riverside Park due to the unremitting very LOUD noise of helicopters flying over or along the park over the river.

The NYC Council needs to take action quickly to maintain our quality of life by radically limiting these overflights.

Overall NYC is being hurt by far too many insults to our lives - crime, homelessness, cost, etc. Limiting helicopters flying over our homes seems as though it might be one of the easier ones to solve.

From: Barry Raebeck <braebeck@optonline.net>
Sent: Thursday, December 1, 2022 3:31 PM
To: Testimony
Cc: Melissa Elstein; Andrew Rosenthal
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NYC Heliports

Dear Council Members:

Thank you for your attention to the serious issue of increasing and unregulated helicopter traffic over populated areas. As I visit NYC routinely, I have been struck by the huge increase in loud noxious helicopters overhead day and night.

This is a major problem on so many levels.

First is the egregious environmental impact of carbon emissions from unnecessary luxury helicopter transport. The climate crisis is real. The helicopter companies and their clients don't give a damn.

Second is the awful noise. Helicopters are not only absurdly (dangerous-to-one's-hearing) loud, but their very sound connotes something sinister, impending tragedy and violence. The once-quiet skies of America do not need to be experienced as a war movie by those on the ground.

Third is the real and present danger of accident. Helicopters are unstable and often carelessly operated. They crash routinely.

Fourth is the inequity issue. Wealthy greedy individuals inflict pollution (air, water, noise) and psychological duress on everyone else. Who benefits? Primarily the helicopter operators.

Fifth is this is an international issue. All across the globe citizens are rallying against luxury aircraft travel. NYC should be in the forefront and cease subsidizing our own destruction.

I live in East Hampton and have been leading our regional fight against the scourge of luxury aircraft ruining our quality of life. Most of the helicopter flights that come to East Hampton Airport originate in NYC. Virtually everyone in the flight paths from there to here and back again hates helicopter traffic, no matter our economic status.

Anything that you can do to eliminate helicopter traffic is welcome. For me this is hardly a "gallant cause"--it is a no-brainer. Most people despise helicopters. Their unnecessary use should be banned.

Sincerely,

Barry Raebeck, PhD
Director, *Coalition to Transform East Hampton Airport*

Stop the Chop

We should definitely pass legislation that bans non-essential helicopter flights over NYC, the metro NYC area and NJ. They disturb the peace. The noise they create is as much a pollutant – or more – as the carbon emissions from their engines. They are particularly disturbing for me whenever I am in Central Park in the day. The park is one of the city's greatest refuge from noise – except when the helicopters hover above, then it's no refuge at all. I can't begin to count the number of times the helicopters have ruined my visit to the park. They must be banned. Their non-essential flights have no legitimate interest for being in our skies. Thank you.

barry.rehfeld@gmail.com

**TO: The New York City Council Committee on Economic Development
and Committee on State and Federal Legislation**

December 2, 2022

Dear Members of the Committee,

I live on 110th Street in Manhattan, and I need to lodge a complaint about noise and air pollution resulting from non-essential helicopters flying over our area. Helicopters are a major, 7-days-a-week, noise nuisance and source of pollution, and it is getting worse each month. It affects very negatively our environment and destroys the modest quality of life we have.

We already live with numerous sources of noise and pollution on a 7-days-a-week basis, from sirens by ambulances, fire trucks and police cars, to buses and trucks, we hear airplanes taking off from LaGuardia Airport, we hear metro north trains passing along Park Avenue... There is way too much noise, and those non-essential helicopters and small plane flights only add to it and must stop now. Please, ENOUGH!!!

So I ask that there is a complete and permanent ban on any non-essential flights, whether by helicopters or airplanes, over New York City.

Thank you.

Respectfully,

Bertrand Sciberras

I live half a block from Central Park in a small studio apartment on the first floor of a brownstone. I am fortunate to be in the back of the building, away from street noise and especially to have a large private garden, which I have brought to life and tended for 27 years. I am not rich, and although I have a good job now, I have, on occasion, been unemployed and food insecure.

Over the past 3 years, helicopter traffic has become constant. Rarely do we have more than 5-10 minutes respite from the noise. The noise is a huge stressor. It disrupts my train of thought when I'm working. During the summer, I couldn't take a work call from the garden without wearing noise cancelling head phones. And at the end of the day – especially on Fridays – I can't sit in the garden and relax because the noise is non-stop. This noise is harming my physical and mental health. I am always on edge because of it. The last time I went for a run along the Hudson River, it sounded like I was running on an airport runway. Helicopters have ruined the peace and quiet of Hudson River Park.

Very little (if any) of this noise is necessary. Tourists and impatient rich people should not have the right to inflict this kind of stress and damage to others. Even news organizations do not need to hover for hours getting B-roll footage of a concert in the park. In fact, I ask the City Council to do everything you can to prevent any non-essential (police or medical emergency) traffic on or near the city.

Thank you for your attention.

-Beth Browde

From: Jacob Blickenstaff <jacob3313@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, December 2, 2022 10:00 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Helicopter Noise

Hello,

Thank you for the opportunity to let our voices be heard regarding NYC heliports and NYC helicopter traffic during this week's New York City Council meeting.

The facts speak for themselves.

Our experience is that, living in Brklyn Heights, the traffic from helicopters overhead has increased to an alarming degree over the past two years. Nonessential helicopter flights leaving from Manhattan & circling over Brooklyn are audible (from inside our apartment, not just outdoors) every single day. There is simply no break from the noise: it is seven days a week, in the mornings and at night, on the weekend and during weekdays & weeknights, 365 days a year no matter the season—and it is especially bad in the summer, when walks to enjoy the sunset are ruined by helicopters departing and circling at a rate that rivals an airport.

Beyond the noise, the increase in pollution and the risk of accident puts the health and well-being of thousands of New Yorkers at risk—all to benefit only the few, the helicopter/heliport companies.

One helicopter emits 45 cars worth of fossil fuel pollution. Currently, 4,000 helicopters in only one month fly over the city. Pollution from the helicopters pollutes the air we breathe in the short-term and, over the long term, causes irreversible damage to the environment.

A helicopter crashed in 2018 killed 5 people. In 2019, a helicopter crashed into a tower building in the city.

It is time to put a stop to the unchecked, excessive helicopter flights overhead. New York City is a densely populated urban environment and allowing noisy, polluting, dangerous helicopters to fly unchecked over its citizens is reckless and wrong. As far as we know, no other major urban city treats its taxpayers this way. Subjecting residents to “harassment from the skies” goes against everything the city stands for and it needs to stop.

Sincerely,
The Blickenstaff Family

From: Bradley Frome <bfrome@me.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 30, 2022 11:02 AM
To: Testimony
Cc: iinfo@thebha.org
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Helicopter noice, Brooklyn Hits.

Please note that the noise from helicopters in NY Harbor to the Brooklyn Bridge is amplified and echos due to the large buildings. I've stopped sitting on the Bklyn Heights Promenade during peak hours due to constant helicopter noise. I've even heard a tourist saying to another, 'Wow, there sure are a lot of helicopters flying around here.' All you need to do is have someone from your committee come by and just walk along the waterfront and the Promenade to hear from yourselves. This noise pollution is unbearable.

I vote NO to any helicopter ports or activity along this corridor.

Bradley Frome
Pineapple St.,
Brooklyn, NY 11201-1744

From: Carol H Krinsky <chk1@nyu.edu>
Sent: Saturday, December 3, 2022 10:34 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] tourist helicopter flights

As if the city were not noisy enough, polluted enough, or sufficiently filled with things for visitors to do, we must also endure inessential tourist helicopter flights. It is hard to imagine that even business people in a hurry have to use helicopters. Please do what you can to stop them entirely or if that is impossible for some reason, please make sure that they are ever more strictly regulated for noise, pollution, safety, maintenance standards, and anything else essential. When a flight does go over land (I listened to the video of the hearing) it gets a warning the first time. Why does it not get a fine right away? Surely the pilots have heard the rules! Medevac flights are essential. Tourist flights aren't, or are flights for an executive's convenience or ego. Thank you for your attention.

Carol Krinsky

First Ave. NY NY 10010

From: Caroline Wood <carowood29@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, December 2, 2022 10:33 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NYC heliports & helicopter traffic

My name is Caroline Wood. I'm writing to try and convey the misery caused by relentless, loud, low-flying helicopter traffic that has recently plagued Chelsea, where I live.

It wasn't always like this. I've lived in the same rental apt for 30 years, since moving here after college in 1991. (I know, wow!) I love living in New York City. I can't imagine making my home anywhere else. I live with my partner of fifteen years. We both write for a living, from home. It is increasingly difficult to work because most days now we are plagued with tourist helicopter traffic overhead at low altitudes -- passing by, but also regularly making slow, loud loops over our neighborhood, presumably so tourists can snap their own photographs of the Empire State Building, Hudson Yards, and whatever else is of interest.

Often, the helicopters come in waves, three and four at a time, within a minute of each other. The noise and vibrations inside our fourth-floor apartment on West 22nd Street become distracting, highly annoying, and finally, after hours of repeat traffic on the Hudson and overhead, almost nauseous-making. The sunset hour on fair weather days, especially, sounds like warfare.

Increasingly, commuter helicopters also make the Empire State Building and Hudson Yard loops. As does the NYPD and various "news-gathering" outfits. No one, it seems, can fly in our vicinity without taking a spin around these two landmarks. The noise is awful.

My partner is a playwright. He's been produced in New York City with regularity over the years and even won awards for his plays. I mention this because his talent and industry have contributed to the economy of Broadway and off-Broadway theatre for years. It's because of writers like him that New York City is a draw for many who crave a certain kind of culture and entertainment. But it's increasingly difficult for both of us to do our work here because there's no escaping helicopter noise pollution.

Side note: if you don't live in their flight path, it's hard to imagine the racket when a helicopter slows and circles at an altitude of 1500 or 2500ft within ten blocks of you. You don't just hear it, you FEEL the chop and rattle -- it penetrates walls, even in the sturdy pre-war construction in which we live and work.

NYC is a big, crowded, noisy city. It always has been - we know this. The sirens, celebrations, the screech and clamor of road and sidewalk traffic - this is the necessary soundscape of urban life, which you accept and even take some pride in if you're going to make your home here.

But these helicopter tour and commuter companies are rapacious. They fly in defiance of NYC air-regulations and common decency. They pollute our skies and encourage their clients to dangle heavy photo equipment high above, where they become dangerous projectiles if dropped. Plus, one of them dropped into the East River a few years back.

I fear that no amount of regulation will curb them and this problem will drive writers and artists away from New York because of the disturbance they cause. My partner and I just returned from three weeks at a friend's house in north central MA. We travel for work quite a bit in normal times and we've always loved returning home. But this time, within minutes of walking through our apartment door, we were enraged and aggravated all over again as two FlyNYON helicopters circled incessantly before finally hauling off toward lower Manhattan to annoy and harass other neighborhoods.

All non-essential helicopter traffic over NYC must be banned. It's simple. NYPD and medical emergency flights, of course, have their place in the air space above NYC. But this free-for-all above a densely-populated urban center must stop. It's dangerous, it's dirty and it's already driving away a vital part of the lifeblood of this great city -- all at the expense of a handful of tourists who never touch down, walk our streets, eat in our restaurants, attend our theaters...

Life in New York is hard enough. We live here because at the end of the day, we return home to our (mostly very small) dwellings, seeking a reprieve from the assault of the subways, streets, and, let's face it, each other. We retreat to our homes - or sometimes our parks - to recharge so we can face the hustle, grit, and grind of city life.

Helicopter noise doesn't respect those walls or those tree-lined park paths. It infiltrates everywhere, and merely lifting the flying altitude or restricting the "corridors" won't fix the problem. A helicopter clattering and slowing to a slow-roll and banking at 2500 ft is still LOUD. And those sometimes lead-fortified fumes still filter down into the air we breathe. And this industry has shown that it will evade any law on the books. An enforceable ban on non-essential helicopter traffic is the only solution to this health and safety hazard.

Thank you for reading this far and doing all you can to make that happen.

Caroline Wood (and Bruce Norris)
Chelsea, NYC

Martin, William

From: Bill and Kate HW <wjhclw334@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 27, 2022 11:22 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] [SUSPECTED SPAM] Helicopter Noise

I live on West 86th St. just off Riverside Drive. I am unable to open my windows because of the helicopter traffic both on the Hudson River and overhead. I understand the police use helicopters and that is fine. Tourist and commuter helicopters however are unnecessary, a safety hazard (how many people have been killed in helicopter crashes compared with the number of horse carriage riders), an environmental disaster from both carbon emissions and noise pollution. Tourists will not stop coming to NYC because they can't take a helicopter ride. Commuter helicopters are unnecessary, City Council should consider a light rail system that connects La Guardia to the Lexington Avenue IRT and Metro North station at 125th St. and continues along 125th St. to the Broadway subway line. I recently was in Brooklyn along the East River and could not sit outside at a restaurant and carry on a conversation with my companions because of the incessant helicopter noise. The City Council should do its best to make NYC more livable for its taxpayers instead of pandering to an industry that contributes nothing to NYC residents and taxpayers who want to enjoy outdoor parks and venues without the incessant and annoying drone of unnecessary helicopters.

Sincerely yours,
Catherine Waterworth
W. 86th St.

PS - Traffic helicopters are unnecessary as well. Cameras with live feed can be monitored from the station studio and could provide valuable footage to police in many instances.

From: Cathy Haft <chaft@mindspring.com>
Sent: Friday, December 2, 2022 10:21 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Helicopters

To whom it may concern:

For years now Brooklyn Heights residents have been bombarded with helicopter noise. The copters load passengers, take off, and within five minutes land again for passengers to disembark.

This happens over & over on the weekends. The noise and the fumes are an assault on our quiet neighborhood. Tourists have any number of tall buildings from which to view the skyline rather than from a short polluting copter ride.

We pay very high taxes for the privilege of living in NYC. The choppers ruin our sense of comfort & our hearing. Please ban this senseless menace.

Cathy Haf
Willow Street
Brooklyn, NY 11201

November 30, 2022

New York City Council
Committee on Economic Development
via: <https://council.nyc.gov/testify/>

re: NYC Heliports and NYC Helicopter Traffic
Hearing held on Tuesday, November 29, 2022

Those of us who live and work in New York City are being bludgeoned with noise and pollution by tour, charter and commuter helicopters.

Their overbearing racket shatters the peace of my west side neighborhood every day. Every day. It is reported — and I experience it — that over 300 of these helicopters pass overhead each day. That is 30 an hour, one every other minute. Their noise can be heard as they slowly approach, rumble through their long slow arc as they turn across the river, and slowly depart, closely following each other in an endless noisy stream. They are profoundly disruptive.

Their noise is everywhere! Helicopters can be heard at least a mile away. Their window-rattling din pervades the entire neighborhood. They fly over our homes and our schools. Helicopters hover over Central Park. They fly along the edge of Riverside Park, and along both shores of the Hudson. The city pays for these beautiful parks, but a relaxing walk there is not possible because of the racket of the helicopters that circle and hover overhead. Trying to have a peaceful walk after a long week? It is immensely upsetting when that walk is ruined by the noise of helicopters.

Helicopter noise is not only heard, but it is felt, causing a visceral queasiness. Helicopter engines emit a low, sub-sonic frequency that is not blocked by walls, windows, or acoustic absorbers. Helicopter noise makes buildings vibrate. To withstand noise is extremely stressful. Ultimately, bearing a continuous level of such stress damages people's health.

The helicopters poison the air we breathe. New York is making an effort to be a "green" city. Helicopters sabotage this effort. Helicopters are among the worst polluters of all gasoline engines. They spew hundreds of tons of toxic exhaust and fumes into our air every day. One helicopter emits 950 pounds of CO₂ per hour, over 40x that of a passenger car. Airborne particulates emitted by piston engine helicopters inflict harm on people's respiratory and cardiovascular functions, and on children's developing brains and nervous systems.

The helicopter companies have shown themselves to be reckless about the safety of their passengers, not to mention the safety of the millions of people in our teeming city. The city has seen several horrific helicopter accidents in the past decade. Yet the tour, charter and commuter helicopters continue to fly over our parks, homes, schools and businesses.

In addition, their security screening of passengers is cursory, at best. They are not allowed to fly during United Nations week, to protect the visiting dignitaries. The security of everyone else in New York also needs to be protected.

Tour, charter and commuter helicopters are not necessary. Police and hospital helicopters are necessary. But tour, charter and commuter helicopters do not contribute to the safety, security or maintenance of the city, nor to the well-being of the people here. No amount of money from the helicopter industry can justify the harm these helicopters are inflicting on the people of New York.

We who live here, work here, and raise our families here: we are the heart of the city. We pay substantial taxes to be here. With their ceaseless, overbearing racket, these helicopters shatter the peace of our neighborhoods. With their toxic emissions, they poison the air we breathe. With their casual approach to safety and security, they are a constant danger. This is an assault, and it is not livable. It is time to stop this scourge.

Chere Campbell
New York

Thank you for allowing me to submit comments regarding non-essential helicopters.

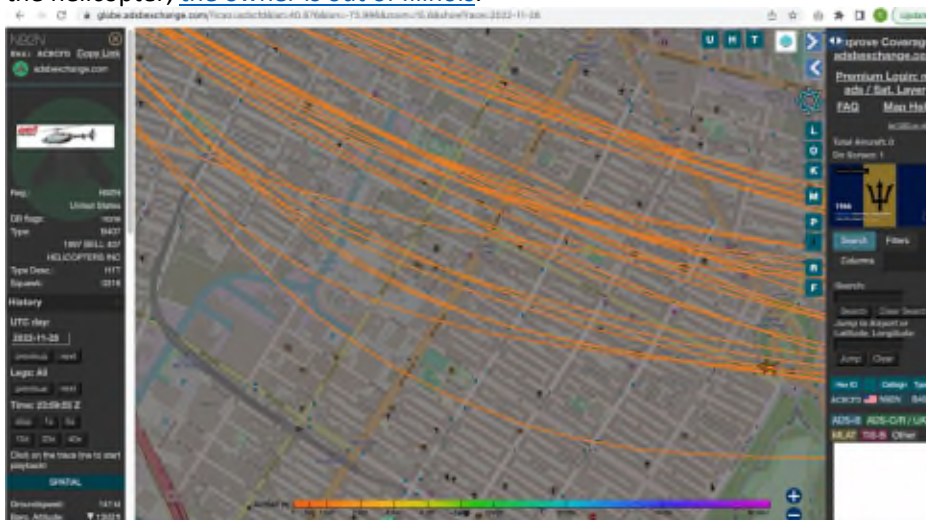
I've lived in various parts of Brooklyn for a number of years, and currently live on St Marks Place between 4th and 5th Avenues. I work from home and am a part-time online grad student.

Since I've moved here, the helicopter traffic has increased exponentially. Now every morning at 7:04 am, the first flight comes roaring over, and flights continue every 10 minutes or so. Since my partner and I both work from home and both of us are night-owls, we don't have to get up until 8am, but even though we sleep with the noise of a big box fan and I sleep with headphones, the chopping, close-flying helicopters cut through everything, making it impossible to sleep or think. They can continue as late as 11:30pm. Monday mornings, and Friday and Sunday afternoons/evenings are the worst.

I'm no stranger to noise – we live in a city – and we're basically under the plane flight path to LaGuardia. That's all fine – not too loud – and it's fun to watch the planes fly in. Before we moved in together, my partner lived on Hicks right off the BQE, and I lived on State, overlooking the BQE. Sometimes a loud truck would go by but that was like living in a library versus what we're experiencing here. The helicopters are impossible to block out. I do training calls for work and I have to stop the training sessions because the people on the line can't hear me, even though I have the windows closed and am using earphones. I've been at the community garden down the block talking to people and have had to stop talking while the helicopters zoom over every few minutes. It's so tough to think or work here. We can't even take a break from it by going to one of our wonderful parks or Governor's Island since all the tourist helicopters are buzzing our landmarks every few minutes.

I'm confused as to why the helicopters are allowed to use a path over a very residential area of Brooklyn to ferry tourists and rich people from NJ or Manhattan to the airports or to the Hamptons. We pay our taxes, but we would never have use for these helicopter services and the pilots aren't from our neighborhoods. If you track the helicopters, they leave out of NJ. I don't understand why we get the noise and pollution dumped over us. They've basically installed a very noisy highway over us with the addition of Blade. And I think it's especially insulting that our quality of life and our environment suffers so a few rich people can make it to the Hamptons or a few tourists can get to the airport. These commuter helicopters fly over water when leaving Manhattan, but then cut through Brooklyn – why?

Here's a [screen shot](#) of only one of the helicopters from Monday. Again, just one – there were more. If you look up the helicopter, [the owner is out of Illinois](#).



Please ban all non-essential helicopter use. There's no reason thousands of us should be subjected to this. It's not benefitting our communities, or even our state.

-Christina Allen

From: Cindy McLaughlin <cindy.weaver@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 27, 2022 3:17 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Eliminate non-essential helicopter traffic over NYC

Dear NYC City Council members,

Thank you for the opportunity to weigh in on this session about NYC-area heliports and helicopters.

I'm writing as a longtime resident of Brooklyn, a climate industry executive, and a very active member of my community working to reduce air and noise pollution.

In response to the climate crisis NYC has made a 2050 net-zero commitment, with an initial milestone of 40% emissions reduction by 2030. According to the [US Energy Information Administration](#) from 2018, (the most relevant available year on record until they post their 2021 numbers in December) nearly 50% of NY state's carbon emissions comes from transportation. It will be impossible for NYC to meet its emissions reduction commitment without dramatically curbing fossil fuel use in transportation, including helicopters for which emissions are exceedingly high. Helicopters also create significant air and noise pollution, degrading public respiratory, vascular, and mental health.

In some ways, NY has been bold in reducing its transportation emissions. Rail investments (East Side Access, 2nd avenue subway, IBX, Gateway) have been long-range and deliberate and will start to yield meaningful transit results upon commissioning. Bus rapid transit and bike lane access throughout the city are being expanded. Urban highways like the BQE are up for visioning, and can be dramatically shrunk or even removed in the process. These are all terrific developments, and we should double down on each of them.

However, we're moving in the wrong direction on aviation. NYS is investing in expanded airport access while helicopter tourism and transportation for the wealthy have been prioritized over the health and welfare of city residents and our planet.

The City Council now has the opportunity to make progress on greenhouse gas emissions, air quality, and noise pollution for helicopters, while earning the gratitude of its constituents. The Council should eliminate non-essential helicopter travel, reduce the space allocated to concrete heliports in favor of gardens and solar panels, and require zero-carbon fuels and quieter flights for essential helicopters. Our planet, public health, and sanity depend on it.

Thank you for your consideration,
Cindy McLaughlin
Head of Product, [CarbonBuilt](#)
Chair, Public Realm Committee, the Brooklyn Heights Association
Co-chair, Urban Land Institute's Technology and Innovation Council

NYC City Council
November 28, 2022

Re. Helicopter Flight Path over Cobble Hill, Brooklyn

Clifford John Benson
Hicks Street

Brooklyn, NY 11231

To Whom it May Concern:

Please consider altering the flight path currently being used by many non essential helicopters. Cobble Hill is a quiet, dense neighborhood, once quite quiet and now being bombarded regularly by low loud flying helicopters. From my apartment, it often feels as if they are going to fly into the building.

I can only assume there are other paths over water where they don't have to disturb people living their lives, kids sleeping, elderly resting etc etc.

Thank you for your consideration.

Warmest,
Clifford John Benson

**NYC Council, Committee on Economic Development Hearing re:
NYC heliports and Helicopter Traffic, November 29, 2022**

Written Testimony Submission

Thank you to the Committees on Economic Development and State and Federal Legislation for convening this hearing. I would also like to thank Chair Farias and Chair Abreu for the opportunity to submit my personal testimony on heliport operations in New York City.

I call on the NYC Council to ban nonessential helicopter flights from NYC heliports, due to the negative quality-of-life, safety, and climate-related impacts on New Yorkers.

I have lived on the Upper West Side of Manhattan for over 23 years. I work in the nonprofit sector helping community-based organizations support and strengthen our city. I have a deep connection to NYC, and it is my intention is to call the City home for many years to come.

In the last few years, I have observed a dramatic increase in helicopter flights over the city and my neighborhood that is degrading our quality of life. Most days, helicopters thunder over my apartment building every 5-10 minutes for 12-15 hours. The only peace my neighbors and I get is on rainy days when fewer helicopters are in the air.

When I walk my dog in the neighborhood or our beloved Central Park, helicopters are now constant and deafening, making it hard to hear friends in conversation or enjoy nature.

Helicopter noise is distractingly loud even inside my apartment with the windows closed, especially the Sikorsky commuter flights that buzz over the West 70s at all hours of the day and night, and the tourist helicopters that hover incessantly.

I am also disturbed by low-flying helicopters over the Hudson River, which cause terrible noise pollution in Riverside Park, and I hear from my apartment half a mile away.

I am one of the 30,000+ New Yorkers who submitted helicopter-related complaints to 311 and to the FAA in 2021. And 2022.

To my knowledge, no other large city in the world allows private helicopter companies unfettered access to fly over densely populated areas with no concern for the residents who live there.

I believe the current situation is overwhelmingly biased in favor of the nonessential helicopter industry, with no consideration of the impact on tax-paying New York residents who suffer from constant helicopter noise and air pollution.

In Brooklyn, commuter helicopters fly low over homes in Environmental Justice Areas rather than over water as their websites indicate. I know this because I see their flightpaths on apps like Flight Radar 24.

I am also concerned about potential terrorism and safety. According to Stop the Chop NY/NJ, since 1980, there have been at least 30 helicopter crashes in and around NYC, resulting in numerous fatalities and serious injuries, as well as property damage. In 2019, a commuter helicopter crashed into midtown's Equitable Building resulting in the death of the pilot, a rooftop fire, and a neighborhood evacuation. Also, in 2019, a Blade helicopter crashed into the Hudson River.

In 2018, five young 'shoe selfie' tourists tragically drowned when their Liberty Tour sightseeing flight crashed and sank in the East River. Even with a history of crashes, tourism, photography, commuter, and charter helicopters continue to fly dangerously low over buildings, parks, schools, waterways, and roadways seven days a week.

I commend the City Council for proposing legislation to prohibit non-essential helicopter trips from taking off from city-owned heliports, limit helicopter-related noise pollution, and calling upon the Federal Aviation Administration to ban both tourist and chartered helicopter flights over New York City airspace.

I am grateful to Council Member Brewer, Council Member Powers, and Council Member Restler for their leadership on this topic.

Thank you for your consideration of my testimony.

Colleen Farrell

Curtis Fox Helicopter Testimony

I live and work in Brooklyn, right on Grand Army Plaza in Prospect Heights. I've been working from home for the past 18 years, but now, because of helicopter traffic, I may have to either find an office outside of my home or move.

I'm an independent radio and podcast producer. I've produced podcasts for many different outlets, including WNYC, The New Yorker and The Poetry Foundation. Until fairly recently, I regularly recorded long interviews in my home office, but I can't do that anymore. Since the lockdown lifted the helicopter traffic from Manhattan to JFK and the Hamptons has increased dramatically, and seems to be increasing exponentially. Here's what it's like from my apartment. First you hear a menacing low buzz in the distance, then an increasingly piercing racket as the helicopter gets closer, then a window-pane-rattling attacking noise as it passes overhead — usually just a few hundred feet overhead. As it turns out, my apartment is right on the regular flightpath of helicopters leaving from the city-owned 34th Street heliport and now, increasingly, from the heliport on the east side. When I need to record an interview these days, I have to pay money to rent a studio. The helicopter traffic over the city is not just another urban annoyance. It is having a profound effect on my business.

I can't believe the New York City allows this to happen. I can't believe the city is favoring the interests of a few rich commuters and unscrupulous companies over the well-being of the people of New York. I can't believe that in an era of catastrophic climate change the city allows gas-guzzling helicopters free rein in its airspace. It's absurd, it's wrong, and it has to stop.

From: Daniel Kassell <dankassell@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, December 3, 2022 3:41 PM
To: Testimony
Cc: Brewer, Gale; Linda Rosenthal, NYS Assembly
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MORE HELIPADS

More Helipads and unobstructed Landing locations are needed for the future development of ultralight VLR aircraft.

Millions of electric ultralights is a trend connected to Drones.

The FAA urban air vertical aviation policy is separate from noisy helicopters, have no carbon footprint and will transform urban air mobility to include passengers.

NYCC must see the future now to solve auto congestion in every borough.

Daniel Kassell
AUTHENTIC MARKETING
212-779-INFO

From: Daniel Konecky <danielkonecky@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 30, 2022 9:21 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Banning non essential helicopter flights over my neighborhood

Hello,

I live by Brooklyn College on Bedford Avenue in South Midwood. I work from home. So does my wife. Over the last year or so the helicopters above our home have made that working more and more difficult. I can completely understand medical and police helicopters, but ... what about all these tourist and commuter rides? Why do they have to go over our neighborhood and interrupt my ability to earn a living?

I hope that as a city, we will work together to ban nonessential helicopters, or at least reroute them over the river. Thanks in advance from homeowners living in the impacted area.

Daniel Konecky
Bedford Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11210

I run in Central Park, and I can't remember the last time I was not sonically accosted by at least one helicopter during my circuit. I also recently spent part of an unusually warm fall weekend afternoon by the Hudson in Riverside Park (at about 64th St.) which would have been relaxing had it not been for an apparently endless sequence of helicopters flying by every three minutes or so, with the noise of the next one coming into range just after the prior one was abating.

These helicopters are an intrusion on people's attempts to find a little oasis of quiet in this noisy city. They should have no right to diminish our peaceful enjoyment of our collective property, just as others have no right to blast music that interferes with the peaceful enjoyment of one's own home. Our homes and our parks are our refuges, and these aural assaults need to stop.

-Daniel Simon

November 28, 2022

Testimony submitted to the Committee on Economic Development and the Committee on State and Federal Legislation

By: Daniel Watts, NYC Resident

Dear Members of the Committees on Economic Development and State and Federal Legislation,

Thank you for providing the opportunity to testify regarding New York City's Heliport operations.

I have read the Commercial Air Tour Voluntary Agreement between the National Park Service, the Federal Aviation Administration, and the commercial air tour operator(s).

The agreement recognizes the helicopter operations "impact the acoustic and visual experience for visitors" and aims to "reduce potential disturbances caused by commercial air tours" (line 118). The agreement also points to the risk of terrorist activity calling for a higher level of helicopter safety requirements (line 124).

It is the City Council's responsibility to protect New York City residents in the same way that the National Park Service is protecting its parks. The City Council should protect New Yorkers from the constant and overwhelming noise from non-essential helicopter traffic, and from the potential for a terrorist attack in the heart of our city.

I've been a resident of Brooklyn since 1971 and I have an office in downtown Manhattan. The noise from non-essential helicopter flights is unending and deafening for me and for all residents, workers, students, park-goers, and visitors to the Brooklyn waterfront, the Brooklyn Bridge, lower Manhattan, the west side of Manhattan, and the lower Bronx. ***There is no excuse for it***—the harm caused vastly outweighs the paltry fees earned by the city and the enjoyment of the few privileged tourists who take these flights.

Please take the obvious and simple step of ending the concession for tourist helicopters at the Downtown Manhattan Heliport. All the other city heliports no longer allow these flights, which constitute the vast majority of all helicopter flights in the airspace over the city. Taking this step will be a major improvement in quality of life in our great city.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel Watts

Martin, William

From: Daryl Elliott <elliott860@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 28, 2022 3:45 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Helicopters Over Manhattan

I have had the great privilege of living on 5th Ave and 68th Street on the Upper East Side of Manhattan for nearly 30 years. My apartment has been an oasis in a city that often overwhelms and I am doubly lucky to be right across the street from Central Park - a respite from the urban jungle that we live in. No longer! The sudden arrival of tourist helicopters invading the air space over Central Park, hovering at low altitudes, several at a time with a flight path from Newark to the West Side, then across Central Park right over my apartment on the East side - back and forth endlessly all day long is enough to finally make me leave the city I love. Having lived through 9/11, 2008, Hurricane Sandy, blackouts and most recently the horrible pandemic -- nothing would make me leave until the unrelenting intrusion -- a noise like no other -- in the summer from 9AM until 9PM all day long including and especially on weekends - then the helicopters!

There is NO ESCAPE from it -- nowhere to go, nowhere to hide, with all windows closed it makes no difference. No matter the taxes and the maintenance that I pay, I have no control over this overhead armageddon. I can't imagine the effect on our Central Park wildlife in addition to the human toll -- noise pollution, air pollution - it really feels like the end of the world or at least the end of the city that I know and love. Please, please, please stop the madness -- stop the helicopters that fly over our city with no regard for its residents. It's killing us.

Daryl Elliott
5th Ave
New York, NY 10065

From: David Beatty <david.beatty@me.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 1, 2022 7:12 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Helicopters

Dear NYC,

Please please please can you do something about the destruction of our city parks brought about by the constant noise helicopters cause in them

How about a forward thinking law that reduces allowable decibel levels by 5% every year, giving the industry the ability to adapt and reducing noise and stress, and massive increase in city heal care overhead, over time

Thanks

DAvid

David Beatty
david.beatty@me.com
Office +1-212-404-7343

Fax +1-866-418-0227

Almost every day of the week, including weekends, from 7 AM to the evenings, at frequent times throughout the day, our lives are interrupted and disturbed by the loud, low-flying, menacing-sounding growl of helicopters that fly near our apartment. They are disruptive to our lives. We stop what we are doing until they pass, as it is difficult to think or concentrate on anything when they fly by.

My wife is 70 and is recovering from cancer. She works from home as a CUNY professor. I am a retired professor from CUNY as well, and am 73. I never imagined, when we were finally able to afford this co-op that we have managed to make our home and sanctuary, that this kind of selfish, indifferent assault on our peace of mind and routine life would occur. I doubt these helicopters are essential to the economic well-being of New York City.

On top of the endless sirens we hear from Eastern Parkway and other nearby streets, on top of the anxiety we feel about crime on the streets and in the subway, on top of the stress due to the increase in the number of cars that continue to ignore the speed limit and traffic signals, as well as do the unregulated speeding delivery bicycles, the disturbing, loud noise of the helicopters flying past adds to our angst and dramatically reduces the quality of life in the city for us and for many of its citizens.

David Forbes
Eastern Parkway ##
Brooklyn NY 11238

The ongoing, never-ending helicopter onslaught NYC is subjugated to Every. Single. Day. is not only a disaster for the environment (via its poisonous and inefficient fuel use), but also drastically adds to the mental health burden of a public already under stress from the obvious signs of ominous, irreversible climate change and decline of American civic life right before our very eyes...and ears.

The lavishly reimagined waterfronts in Manhattan, Brooklyn, Jersey City, Hoboken and elsewhere are no longer suitable for recreating and relief from city chaos due the incessant noise and filth of both chopper tourism and elite shuttles to the Hamptons and airports.

Not even from one's own apartment can one find refuge from the thunder above.

Nor in Central Park, as Shakespeare's words struggle to rise above shattering hovering crafts.

Imagine the waste of money on Little Island, Pier 57, Brooklyn Bridge Park and Governors Island now that these incredibly reimagined waterfronts are rendered useless for contemplation, reflection, reading or simply enjoying the majesty of the skyline and waterways given the unceasing aerial assault.

I, for one, no longer even want to sit on top of Pier 57 and enjoy the magnificent panorama...it's just too disturbing.

What Lady Liberty and the masses of tourists below think of the endless audio/visual barrage around her crown is unclear. Why the National Park Service thinks this is an acceptable situation begs an answer. Island-goers are more likely to think WWII training was taking place than that they were visiting the hallowed isle and its landmark.

And the take-off route from the downtown Manhattan heliport makes a visit to Governors Island – a miracle in itself – completely untenable.

Why the ephemeral, Apocalypse Now pleasure of a vanishingly small percentage of the 63 million annual visitors to NYC is allowed to continue is simply confounding.

This is undoubtedly an essential industry – keeping medical, police and government operators flying – but certainly doesn't provide anywhere near enough employment to justify the outsize, overwhelmingly negative impact the helicopter-based tourist industry and their lobbyists have.

And local government is almost powerless to do anything about it.

The idea that anyone can operate these kinds of businesses with impunity in the face of near-universal opposition makes one question the power of the State itself...which, in this case, is about correct, as it's the FAA who will ultimately determine our health and sanity.

A city without recreation or places to recover from the torments of the city is not a place worth living in.

Is it really true that Disneyworld is a no-fly zone and NYC is not?

Scandalous.

-David Koch

From: david@dpolakoff.com
Sent: Monday, November 28, 2022 6:05 PM
To: Testimony
Cc: Menin, Julie
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Heliports / NYC Helicopter Traffic

Dear New York City Council Committee on Economic Development and Committee on State and Federal Legislation:

Regarding your consideration of New York City's Heliport Operations, we all have a rare and unique opportunity to improve the quality of life and health for residents and visitors of New York and New Jersey, as well as the area wildlife.

Eliminating unnecessary helicopter traffic benefits the many and disadvantages the few. At the very least we should eliminate tourist helicopter rides which will eliminate air and noise pollution, as well as risks of accidents in our sky, land, and water.

I am a sailboat charter captain and sailing instructor on the Hudson River and Upper New York harbor. The noise from tourist helicopters, not to mention the commuter helicopters, is a constant nuisance, annoyance, and disturbance. We literally have to stop talking when the helicopters are within our vicinity; the charter guests can't hear each other and my students can't hear me (and that's dangerous).

As far as the economics of the tourist helicopter businesses, I am confident they can convert to commuting enterprises. But speaking of which, it would be ideal if the commuter helicopter traffic could be limited. Especially during Friday afternoon and evening and Sunday afternoon and evening, when all of the helicopter commuters go/come from the airports and beaches, the noise levels and pollution creation is unbearable.

It is hard enough living in New York City with excessive noise and pollution, but we have a window to, at least in part, ameliorate the unfortunate aspects of New York City and Gold Coast New Jersey living.

I appreciate your consideration of my perspective and experience.

- David Polakoff
New York, New York
City Council District #5

November 30, 2022

Re: Heliport/NYC Helicopter Traffic

To the Committee on Economic Development (Jointly with the Committee on State and Federal Legislation),

As a resident of South Midwood in Brooklyn, NY I am writing to complain about the frivolous helicopter flights that pollute our air and damage our quality of life on a daily basis.

Please help put a stop to unnecessary helicopter flights over ours and other neighborhoods that are affected not only by the fuel that is used for the flights - also the noise pollution that harms all of the residents, schools, and animals. As someone that works from home, each and every time a helicopter flies in our area I have to stop my work and wait for the helicopter to pass.

Thank you for your serious consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Deborah Latz

Delia Kulukundis

Thomson Avenue,
Long Island City, NY 11101
dkulukundis@gmail.com

November 30, 2022

Councilmember Amanda Farías

Chairperson, Committee on Economic Development
New York City Council

Councilmember Shaun Abreu

Chairperson, Committee on State and Federal Legislation
New York City Council

cc: City Council Speaker Adrienne Adams

Re: Pass Intro 0551 to ban nonessential helicopter flights from NYC heliports

Dear Chairperson Farías and Chairperson Abreu,

I am writing to strongly urge you to pass Intro 0551-2022, banning nonessential helicopter flights from City-owned heliports. Passing Intro 0551 is an important first step toward eliminating nonessential helicopter flights from New York City's skies. Tourist joyrides and air-taxi flights only serve the very wealthy few, yet they cause noise and air pollution that impact millions of people. We could ban these flights immediately, and that would improve quality of life for City residents today.

We cannot rely on the Economic Development Corporation to sufficiently regulate nonessential helicopter traffic from the City's heliports. Yesterday's Oversight Hearing on NYC heliport operations illustrated the failure of the EDC to regulate anything other than the tourist flights that originate at the Downtown Heliport, and even its modest regulation of tourist helicopter traffic has been insufficient. Restricting tourist flights to over-water routes does not reduce the burden of noise pollution caused by helicopters over our city of islands. The EDC claims that it will incentivize the use of greener or quieter helicopters, but these won't be in use for years, since they have not yet been approved by the Federal Aviation Administration. We need a full ban on nonessential helicopters from city heliports. New York has the power to close its heliports to nonessential flights, and there is precedent for such action - the City closed the East 60th St Heliport in 1997.

Helicopter traffic is bad for our health, and bad for the climate. Helicopters are gas-guzzling machines that use leaded fuel - and we know how that pollutes the air, water, and land, and eventually our own bodies, causing cognitive impairment and long-term health consequences. There is no substitute for leaded aviation fuel - the only solution is to reduce the number of flights taken. New York City could be a leader in cutting back on the climate pollution caused by private aviation - starting with the most unnecessary, most inequitable form of transportation - private helicopters.

Eliminating private helicopter flights from the City's heliports would improve transportation in the city. Taxis and ride-share cars clog the nearby exits of the FDR Drive and constantly idle next to the two heliports on the East River, spewing air pollution while waiting for their wealthy passengers. All three of the Manhattan heliports sit next to heavily-used bike and pedestrian corridors, and as a runner, I have to cover my nose and mouth to avoid breathing the fumes from the fuel and the engine exhaust from idling helicopters at these sites. Eliminating unnecessary helicopter flights would bring cleaner air to the people who use these greenways, as well as the passengers of the NYC Ferry.

Councilmember Restler's Intro 0551 is refreshingly simple, and it would immediately cut pollution and environmental harm. It's rare that we can so quickly limit a source of pollution like this, and we should seize the opportunity. The Oversight hearing illustrated how New Yorkers across the city are desperate for relief from the noise of helicopters above. I urge you to hold a hearing specifically on Intro 0551, and then pass it without delay.

Thank you for your consideration, and for the leadership that you have shown on this issue to date.

Sincerely,
Delia Kulukundis

This is not rocket science.

The noise disruptions caused by tourist and commuter helicopter flights over Brooklyn's residential neighborhoods diminish quality of life. Their exhaust poisons the air. Increased traffic multiplies the chance of an accident or mechanical failure, threatening those in the air and on the ground.

And to what purpose, all this damage? To convenience those with the money to commute or tour at the expense of those who live below. To save the wealthy minutes of precious time.

This is not rocket science. But a ban on non essential helicopter flights over New York City would be true **public** service.

Diane Reinhardt

To the Esteemed Members of the New York City Council,

I strongly urge you to consider banning all non-essential helicopter traffic over Manhattan, henceforth. These flights are so frequent that there are often several helicopters over the city at once, all breaking the legal noise barrier, and impinging on daily life on the ground. Indeed, to live in the Upper West Side – near Central Park – is to be driven to distraction by constant helicopter traffic: essentially jack-hammers in the sky.

I urge you to put the sanity and well-being of *millions* of locals above the fleeting desires of a handful of tourists, and those few who can afford to hop up the Hudson to their houses in the Hamptons. This is a noise pollution issue, a quality of life issue, a mental health issue, as well as an equity issue. (Not to mention a climate justice issue.)

Even as I type this letter, I have trouble concentrating because of constant chop above my apartment.

I thank the activists who have been tirelessly pushing this important issue.

And I thank the Council for hopefully finally putting an end to the constant cacophony in our skies.

New York City deserves better.



DOMINIC PETTMAN | THE NEW SCHOOL

pettmand@newschool.edu

From: dlyon797@aol.com
Sent: Monday, November 28, 2022 9:55 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Helicopter noise

Dear Honorable New York City Council Members:

I am a frequent visitor to Brooklyn Bridge Park, a park that was opened within the past twelve years. Millions of dollars were spent in designing and constructing this park for the purpose of providing a place of relaxation and recreation for people from all over Brooklyn, as well as for tourists, and people from other areas of NYC.

The purpose of a park is to provide a place where people can get away from the noise, traffic, and commotion of the city. A peaceful green space helps people to be less stressed. However, with the loud, incessant noise of helicopters flying over the park or along the East River, it is hard to gain the relaxation the park was designed for. Noise pollution is a serious problem in the city, and we need to reduce it.

I urge you to ban tourist helicopters from flying over or near parks that were designed as places of peace, relaxation, and recreation. Otherwise, parks are not fulfilling the purpose they were constructed for.

Sincerely,

Dorothy Lyon
Remsen St.,
Brooklyn, NY 11201

TO: Council Member Amanda Farias, Chair of the Committee on Economic Development

FROM: Edward Knoesel

RE: Helicopter Traffic and Noise

DATE: November 28, 2022

CC: Council Member Shahana Hanif, 39th District

I am a resident of Park Slope and am constantly disturbed by low flying helicopters traversing under the aircraft approach path to LaGuardia Airport in Park Slope, Brooklyn. A great majority of these helicopters travelling in roughly east to west/ west to east directions are for passenger shuttles between local airports and helipads in Manhattan. I support a total ban of these helicopter flights and hope that the City Council will take appropriate measures to make a ban a reality. The noise levels from these helicopter flights is unacceptable and the safety threat alone is enough to ban the flights. Thank you.

From: EILEEN GARREN <eileengarren@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 1, 2022 10:14 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony re NYC heliport hearing 11/29/22

Dear NYC City Council Members,

I urge you to do everything in your power to ban all nonessential helicopter flights over NYC. I walk in Central Park nearly every day and can attest to near constant helicopter noise over the park. Often, multiple helicopters hover, zigzag and/or circle over the park. Of course, this noise interferes with the peace of thousands who seek to enjoy respite here. The park was founded as a refuge from the noise of the city. An entire community (Seneca Village) was displaced to build the park. These helicopters disrespect their sacrifice and all who visit the park today. It is shameful that the wellbeing of the thousands who endeavor to enjoy Central Park (and all NYC parks) is sacrificed for a handful of sitedeers and commuters.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my testimony.

Sincerely,
Eileen Garren (Upper East Side Resident)

NYC Council Hearing regarding NYC Heliport and Helicopter Traffic

Tuesday, November 29, 2022, 10:00am

Testimony of Manhattan resident Elizabeth Chow

Dear Councilmembers:

Thank you for holding today's hearing on this important topic and for allowing me to give my testimony.

Since the end of pandemic lockdown I have become increasingly aware of the huge volume of non-essential helicopter traffic in NYC's skies and, consequently, of the many dangers this non-essential helicopter traffic creates in the skies above and around NYC. These dangers, which are entirely avoidable, include:

- Air pollution from these gas guzzling vehicles
- Noise pollution all day every day from low-flying helicopters buzzing around overhead, going to and from tourist sites in Manhattan (and hanging out for long periods of time over certain key attractions like Central Park), going to and from NYC area airports, and going to and from the Hamptons and other wealthy enclaves
- Potential for crashes by these notoriously unsafe vehicles as they fly over city streets full of pedestrians, over buildings full of workers, and over schools full of children

The increasing prevalence of non-essential helicopters has degraded the quality of life for all New Yorkers. Why? So that a few wealthy tourists can have an exciting overhead experience of NYC and so that a few extremely wealthy residents of NYC and its environs can get to the airport faster than the rest of us or get to their mansions in the Hamptons by flying over the heads of their fellow New Yorkers who have to suffer the noise and air pollution and hazardous conditions they create.

It would seem that the skies of NYC have been taken over by the wealthy and the helicopter operators who serve them, and that my quality of life and that of all my fellow New Yorkers is at the mercy of

these selfish, shameless people who have enough money to throw around that they don't have to consider the health and well-being of those enduring the effects of their reckless behavior.

This is clearly a situation that requires local government intervention to curb the excesses of these wealthy abusers and the helicopter operators who facilitate and profit from their selfish behavior. They should all be ashamed of themselves. Please act now to ban all non-essential helicopter traffic in and around the skies of NYC.

I am sick of tourist helicopters strafing my neighborhood. I live on the Lower East Side, at Grand Street and Lewis Street, 2 blocks from the FDR and the East River. I work at home. We already hear traffic on the Williamsburg Bridge and the FDR.

The noise already raises blood pressure and lowers the quality of life. Why are tourist helicopters allowed to take off from NJ and incessantly fly near my house? Why does the desire of tour operators to make money by disrupting our peace and wasting fossil fuel have more rights than our neighborhoods?

Now that construction has taken over the East River Park, my former refuge, I bike or walk downtown from my home to get some fresh air. But that area is taken over by a heliport, and helicopter noise.

A congested city is no place for helicopters. There are so many other ways to travel, and many better ways to get to know New York.

If tourists really want to see NYC, they should walk around in the city, not make New Yorkers miserable. I would like to know what you are doing to stop helicopters from flying over my building and nearby parks.

-Ellen Gruber Garvey

City Council should immediately hear and pass Intro 551 of Lincoln Restler in order to cut down on nonessential helicopter flights in New York City.

The drawbacks of these flights, including mass-annoyance of New Yorkers, as well as excessive fuel consumption far in excess of any value delivered, clearly vastly outweigh the benefits (e.g. convenience or enjoyment of a couple spendy tourists or rich commuters).

This is a no brainer, and the refusal of leadership to move this bill forward quicker is puzzling.

-Eric Eisenberg

Dear Esteemed Council Members,

As a mom with three kids living in a studio apartment, I would take my kids every weekend to Central Park and bring them deep into the Ramble, where the leaves can be so dense you can't even see the buildings. Designed as a peaceful respite and place for mental relaxation, the Ramble has always been our place to recharge and restore. But no more, because, although Central Park has spent millions recently renovating this part of the park, the constant stream of helicopters above makes it feel like you are under assault. Especially at sunset, conversations are paused as numerous helicopters hover overhead. Last Sunday night, I counted four over Central Park at sunset. And I fear that the park can no longer serve its purpose as a place to decompress.

Please ban non-essential helicopters in Manhattan. They are a nuisance to all residents and are only increasing in numbers, not decreasing. We are all just trying our best to live in this wonderful, dense city. The added stress of helicopter noise is a real threat to all of us, whether we are aware of it or not. Please act so that our city and parks can at least have one less source of noise and stress.

Grateful for your attention to this.

Erica DePiero

From: Eva Lowe <evalowe@mac.com>
Sent: Friday, December 2, 2022 12:26 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Helicopters

Thank you for considering the effect of helicopters on the lives of millions of residents in New York.

A comment I hear from neighbors and co-workers frequently now is; “I feel like we’re living in a war zone!”

The flights have increased and with it, the pollution and noise.

In the park, in my apartment, at work, eating at an outdoor restaurant, biking near the waterfront,...

There is no activity that is not negatively affected by the noise, vibrations and pollution from these hovering, non-essential helicopters.

The noise is so loud that I have to pause conversations with clients at work to wait for the helicopter to pass.

At home, my new windows vibrate so badly I am afraid they will break.

What gives the few, the right to inflict so much pollution and noise on millions of tax-paying citizens?

Eva Lowe
Manhattan

Members of the Committee -

I urge you to consider banning nonessential helicopter traffic from NYC including its waterways. I love NYC and have lived here many years. But in recent years, our parks, streets and homes have started sounding like a war zone. We regularly hear, feel and count a helicopter a minute flying overhead. It's nonstop and disruptive. There are efforts underway for eVTOL helicopters, but until we have a quiet solution that doesn't vibrate our homes, wake us from sleep and make our parks unenjoyable, we should not let noisy, polluted vehicles take joy rides over our city just so tourists can get a nice view. Please, restore peace to our city.

-Eve Goldman

From: Fern Wishman <fernwishman@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 1, 2022 9:47 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Helicopter Noise

Hello,

I live on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, a block from the Hudson River. I'm 80 years old and have a small terrace where I plant flowers every spring. It used to be a wonderful way to enjoy the outdoors on beautiful days.

Unfortunately, the noise from the tourist helicopters has ruined it for me. They fly North and South above the river as frequently as 5 minutes apart. I can no longer sit on my terrace because of the constant noise.

I've registered many complaints with 311 to no avail.

I just listened to the hearings and was shocked to hear that there were no reported complaints of noise, particularly during spring and summer.

I was informed that the FAA had jurisdiction over NYC airspace and emailed them.

There is virtually no way I can see the number of the helicopters since they are too high and I have eighty year old eyes.

We've lived here for 26 years and it's never been this bad.

My husband and I have considered moving but it would be difficult now. I'm sad about not being able to enjoy my small but precious garden in the sky.

Sincerely,
Fern Wishman
fernwishman@gmail.com

From: Helen Engelhardt <helenhart@optonline.net>
Sent: Thursday, December 1, 2022 9:20 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Stop the chop!

Too many non essential helicopters fly over my south Midwood neighborhood increasing noise and lead pollution.

Helen Engelhardt

From: hirusianajones@gmail.com on behalf of Hirumi Nanayakkara <hirumi.n@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, December 2, 2022 5:29 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Helicopter Written Testimony

To Whom it May Concern,

I live in Jersey City and these tourism helicopters are terrorizing our community. They've picked up a lot of popularity in the past few years at the expense of our sanity. For my community, that means 100-150 helicopters a day during peak times, that fly directly over at homes--frequently at around 100 feet.

The FAA has been unresponsive. To give you a sense as to how loud they are -- the decibel levels are louder than a jackhammer next door (we've measured). They fly so low that it rattles our entire home, and wakes my child from naps. It's truly a nightmare.

You have a unique opportunity to dramatically reduce nonessential helicopters. Please use this opportunity to regulate nonessential helicopter traffic in the greater NYC area. We are indebted to you!!

Best,
Hirumi Nanayakkara

From: jack frost <johnno139@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 1, 2022 3:05 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] See my concerns about helicopters below

[Local News](#)

Chopper noise pollution in NYC: Calls for end of non-essential helicopter flights

MANHATTAN — The buzzing has been described as constant.

“I wake up to ‘Apocalypse Now’ every morning. That is the soundtrack of my bedroom,” Manhattan resident Andrew Rosenthal said.

For years, lawmakers have tried to stop non-essential helicopter flights in and around New York City. They are popular with tourists and people looking for a quick commute.

Citing air and noise pollution and safety concerns, a coalition of New York and New Jersey lawmakers once again called for the end of tourist and commuter flights.

New York Congressman Jerry Nadler is one of the sponsors of federal legislation prohibiting these flights over New York City. It was introduced in 2019 and again last March.

“The swarm of non-essential helicopters that fill New York’s airspace, doesn’t just produce noxious noise and environmental pollution, they put New Yorkers’ lives in danger,” Nadler said. In addition to legislation, the local, state and federal lawmakers have also called on the U.S. Department of Transportation, FAA and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to act.

There have been a series of deadly helicopter accidents in New York City, including a [chopper crashing into a Midtown building](#) in June 2019 and an open-door tourist [flight hitting the East River](#) in March 2018.

In 2016, the city brokered a deal to greatly reduce helicopter traffic, but choppers coming from New Jersey also fly over city skies.

According to lawmakers, noise complaints shot up by 130% between October 2019 and October 2020.

State Senator Brad Hoylman also announced he's introducing legislation in Albany to address the helicopters. "It's going to stop the city from contracting with tourist chopper companies at any of their helipads," he said.

.

In October 2019, Mayor Bill de Blasio said on WNYC radio that, "There should be no non-essential flight over Manhattan."

Stop the Chop Testimony

To the City Council,

Hello. My name is James A. Sampson, and I live at the corner of Clinton and Pacific Streets in the Cobble Hill neighborhood of Brooklyn. My house is several blocks from the water and Brooklyn Bridge Park.

My first question to every member of the City Council is would you want helicopters buzzing above your head for up to 16 hours a day?

I have heard these nuisances as early as 7 or 8 a.m. and as late as 10 or 11 p.m. Why should any neighborhood be plagued by this kind of unnecessary noise for up to sixteen hours a day?

And what are they? Are they the police? Brownstone Brooklyn is hardly a high-crime area needing constant surveillance. Are they joy rides for tourists? If so, why are they buzzing over residential neighborhoods morning, noon, and night? What in residential neighborhoods can be of interest to tourists from the air?

Brooklyn Bridge Park is a beautiful resource, but it is next to impossible to truly enjoy with helicopters buzzing over it CONSTANTLY. I was once attempting to enjoy a picnic there when I counted up to TEN of these completely unnecessary plagues in the air at once. TEN. It is virtually impossible to take a peaceful stroll there because these loud sources of noise pollution buzz overhead quite frequently; I doubt five minutes go by without one's disturbing the quiet.

Does it serve the police to buzz our neighborhoods nonstop? How much of the taxpayers' money is wasted on this activity?

If these are thoughtless tourists, there is no reason for them to joyride over residential neighborhoods. Can they not be restricted to flying over Liberty and Governors Islands where there are no permanent residents? Better yet, can this plague be stopped altogether?

Are they pretentious businessmen who think they need a helicopter to get anywhere in New York when this city has myriad other modes of transportation? That, too, can be restricted or eliminated completely.

New York has so much necessary noise (e.g., fire trucks, ambulances, police cars, garbage trucks). NO ONE should have to suffer more unnecessary noise, and that is all this is. Completely unnecessary noise for the convenience or fun of a very, very small few.

I thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

James A. Sampson

From: james harrington <jehbklyn1@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 29, 2022 7:25 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Helicopter Hell

Let's cut to the chase: prior to Mayor Bloomberg(a licensed helicopter operator)the LMH was rarely used except for visits by people like the President or the Pope, the B'klyn coastline was a bucolic destination for world weary NYer's; alas Once Bloomberg opened the floodgates to helicopter flights over the East River chaos & insanity has reigned for the last twenty years destroying NYer's peace of mind and civil liberties, from Manhattan to Montauk helicopter flights destroy people's mental health on a daily basis. The question is are you finally prepared to represent NYer's right to a peaceful lifestyle or are you beholden to the special interests that helicopters represent.

Jim
Brooklyn

Sent from my iPhone

Jasmine Melzer

*Prospect Park West
Brooklyn NY 11215*

November 28, 2022

Dear Councilmember:

I live in Community Board 6 and for about 5 years now have been bothered by the increased number of helicopter flights right over my neighborhood and in particular my backyard. Not only are these flights noisy, they also constitute a danger to the neighborhood in the event that there is an accident (and these have happened a number of times in NYC. I wrote to the FAA several years ago to ask if flight paths had changed but never received a response. So I was very pleased to see that Stop the Chop has taken up this cause, and hope that you will (a) ban tourist flights and (b) redirect the flight paths of flights bringing weekenders back from the Hamptons, like fly back over the ocean. In particular on Sunday afternoons and evenings I can't even sit in the backyard and enjoy some peace and quiet. I believe I am entitled to peaceful enjoyment of my own property, particularly since we pay property taxes.

Sincerely,

Jasmine Melzer

Prospect Park West, Brooklyn, NY 11215

From: browwwwwwwwww <brownstones11@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 30, 2022 9:45 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Non-essential (tourist, charter and commuter) helicopter flights dramatically reduce the quality of life for millions of people in the New York metropolitan area. They pollute our environment, pose significant safety risks, harm our children...

Non-essential (tourist, charter and commuter) helicopter flights dramatically reduce the quality of life for millions of people in the New York metropolitan area. They pollute our environment, pose significant safety risks, harm our children, and make us miserable.

tx

jeff wilson

December 1, 2022

New York City Council
Economic Development Committee
Attention: Committee Chair and Members

Thank you for reading my testimony regarding the oversight of City heliports, the subject of the Committee's November 29, 2022 meeting.

I am greatly disturbed by the loud noise and vibrations from low-flying tourist helicopters over my home on the Upper West Side, spoiling outings in Central Park, walks along the Hudson and open spaces that are no longer peaceful.

Certainly flights by law enforcement and emergency services, news helicopters and flights deemed essential would continue.

Nonessential helicopter flights dramatically reduce the quality of life for millions of residents and visitors to the New York metropolitan area. They pollute our environment with 40 times more emissions than a car and use many gallons of fossil fuel. They emit high decibel noise pollution which has negative health impacts, and pose safety risks by flying low over our densely populated city.

Sincerely,

Jill Loomis
W 86th Street
New York, NY 10024

Dear Committee Members,

My deepest concern is the immediate closure of the Hudson River Park Trust VIP Heliport at W.30th St which can no longer exist in a healthier, safer, fairer New York.

Any helicopter use should be out of the question during the trainwreck of our climate crisis. The petty pleasure of helicopter tourism and the toxic privilege of private helicopter use are cynical entitlements hardly essential for Economic Development.

The Hudson River Park Trust claims Environmental Stewardship while it profits from its elite VIP Heliport in our park at W.30th St.

For 24 years, New Yorkers have been asking the Trust to close that chain link gas chamber spewing air and noise pollution up and down the Hudson. The Trust refuses.

Except in 2007, when New Yorkers won the comprehensive NY Supreme Court Settlement Index.No.:116581/07 against the Hudson River Park Trust mandating the VIP Heliport's closure by 2014. As a result of that citizens' action, HRPT ended tourist flights out W.30th.

But, HRPT stonewalled the Settlement's mandated 2014 complete closure of the VIP Heliport, and then Assembly Member Richard Gottfried nullified that mandate in 2013 with an eleventh hour amendment.

The Trust's other so-called mandate is "The Premise of Self-finance", a fine sounding contrivance setting up our park as private capital's development corridor unanswerable to the health concerns of city tax payers and park users.

The Trust profits from the corrupt sale of toxic privilege to Wealth at the expense of the health and safety of Park Users, Park employees and volunteers, heliport workers, and the entire metropolitan area that is crop dusted by lethal helicopter exhaust.

The Trust opens every Board meeting by announcing that it "does not entertain questions or comments from the Public" -about its VIP heliport or any other public concern.

I organized the single public discussion with HRPT about their heliport at a CB4 meeting in June, 2021.

One conversation allowed in 24 years.

The New York City Council does have contact with HRPT's Board members and should demand that the Trust honor the 2007 NY Supreme Court Settlement by publicly announcing the immediate closure of the W.30th St elite heliport.

The Trust's CEO Noreen Doyle claims that the appointed Trust has no jurisdiction to close their own franchise.

This is disingenuous considering that the successful 2007 Settlement brought directly against the Trust at least made them end tourist flights.

For decades the Trust has hidden behind an argument re-stated recently in a muddled press release from the HRPT's PR firm, Risa Heller Communications:

"The current Hudson River Park Act allows a heliport in the park because the historic position of the state and city has been that it is needed. While legislative, community, and land use discussions around the long-term future of the heliport take place [for 24 years], the Trust continues to work with the operator to ensure operations are managed safely,"

The Trust does not and cannot possibly manage the safety of this very dangerous franchise! While the Trust accepts profits, nothing can safeguard citizens from:

- incessant air and noise pollution
- constant toxins poisoning Park users on the most heavily used bike and pedestrian path in the United States only a few feet from departing, landing, idling, and re-fueling helicopters.
- an 8,000 Gallon Jetfuel Tank on the tarmac approx. 60 feet from the most recent 2019 helicopter crash at this Heliport. Leaking jetfuel washes off the tarmac into the Hudson.
- an open terrorist target accessible by Car, Boat, Motorcycle, Pedestrians, Bicyclists, and helicopter customers.
- no TSA or any other Security officials at an easy terrorist target without Passenger security screening.
- up to 20 large SUVs illegally idle for hours in the parking lot awaiting passengers and making dangerous turns off the Westside highway across pedestrian and bike lanes.

The reasons for closure are so many and so clear, that only Wealth's influence can explain the Trust's irresponsible evasion of its essential mandate, Environmental Stewardship. Only its donor class uses helicopters to commute to private estates away from public parks.

Backed by deep venture capital (including Barry Diller's), Blade helicopter lobbies the Trust with promises of electric helicopters which will still ferry its customers to private fossil fueled jets. That fleet of electric helicopters will be manufactured in fossil fueled plants using global wage slaves. The REEs necessary for their batteries requires intensely toxic mining using child labor.

5.5 million daily NYC subway riders do not use helicopters. Public transportation is available for reformed helicopter users.

Thank you for your immediate action.

All the Best,
Jim boyd
Chelsea, NYC

Dear Committee Members,

The Hudson River Park Trust VIP Heliport at W.30th St can no longer exist in a healthier, safer, fairer New York and should be closed immediately. For 24 years, New Yorkers have asked for its closure. The Trust refuses.

ANY helicopter use should be out of the question during the trainwreck of our climate crisis.

The petty pleasure of helicopter tourism and the toxic privilege of private helicopter use are cynical entitlements hardly essential for Economic Development.

The Hudson River Park Trust claims Environmental Stewardship while it profits from the corrupt sale of toxic privilege to Wealth at its elite Heliport in our park, a virtual chain link gas chamber spewing deadly air and noise pollution.

In 2007, New Yorkers won a comprehensive NY Supreme Court Settlement against the Trust mandating the Heliport's complete closure by 2014. As a result of that citizens' action, The Trust ended tourist flights out of W.30th.

But, the Trust stonewalled the Settlement's mandated 2014 complete closure of its Heliport, and then Assembly Member Richard Gottfried canceled that closure in 2013 with an eleventh hour amendment.

The Trust's other so-called mandate is "The Premise of Self-finance", a fine sounding contrivance setting up our park as private capital's development corridor unanswerable to the health concerns of city tax payers and park users.

Although The Trust "does not entertain questions or comments from the Public" , I organized the single public discussion in 24 years with the Trust about their heliport at a CB4 meeting in June, 2021.

18 months later, the Public and Press still cannot contact the Trust directly.

The New York City Council does have contact with Trust Board members and should demand that they honor the 2007 Settlement by publicly announcing the immediate closure of the W.30th St heliport.

The Trust claims it has no jurisdiction to close their own franchise.

This is disingenuous considering that the successful Settlement, brought directly against the Trust, forced them to, at least, end tourist flights.

For decades the Trust has hidden behind an argument re-stated recently in a muddled press release from their PR firm, Risa Heller Communications:

"The current Hudson River Park Act allows a heliport in the park because the historic position of the state and city has been that it is needed. While legislative, community, and land use discussions around the long-term future of the heliport take place [for 24 years], the Trust continues to work with the operator to ensure operations are managed safely,"

The Trust does not and cannot possibly ensure the safety of this very dangerous franchise!

While the Trust profits from Wealth's flights, nothing can safeguard citizens from their incessant air and noise pollution, or from crashes like 2019's at

- an open terrorist target with no TSA screening.
- with an 8,000 Gallon Jetfuel Tank on the tarmac leaking runoff into the Hudson.
- up to 20 chauffeured SUVs illegally idling for hours in the parking lot

The reasons for closure are so many and so clear, that only Wealth's influence can explain the Trust's irresponsible evasion of its essential promise: Environmental Stewardship.

Only its donor class uses helicopters to commute to private estates far away from public parks.

5 million daily NYC subway riders do not use helicopters. No one needs private aviation.

Thank you for your immediate action.

All the Best,
Jim boyd
Chelsea, NYC

From: Joseph Bach <josephrbach@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 1, 2022 7:40 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NYC Heliports & Helicopter Traffic

Where I live, in Hell's Kitchen, is tormented by non-stop helicopter flights all day long every day. The noise and air pollution are detrimental to our health. Anytime I try to relax in one of our great parks, it's hard to because of the omnipresence of helicopters. I go to Central or Hudson River Park specifically to get away from the noise of the city, but incredibly, helicopters are hovering or flying by all day long every day. It's insane that this is allowed to exist. The quality of life for people who live here should be the first priority in policy setting.

Joe Bach

email: josephrbach@gmail.com

From: Joe Doyle <joe.doyle54@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 29, 2022 7:37 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Please close NYC's heliports -- their noise pollution is unbearable

Sir/Madam:

I understand there is a City Council hearing today regarding heliports. Every time I walk by the Hudson River/30th Street heliport, I'm horrified how loud and intrusive the tourist helicopters are. Thanks to the Hudson River Park, we've got access again to the Hudson River shoreline. But those obnoxious heliports force passers-by to jam their fingers into their ears trying to block out the deafening roar of helicopters. It's not good for New York City. Tourists will love New York any way they travel around it. But tourist helicopters have an unfair advantage. Tour guides are paid a bounty by the tourist helicopter companies to drop off tourists for a half hour ride. The tour guide gets half an hour of relaxation time, in addition to his/her bounty. The helicopter company gets a big payday. Those who suffer are all the New Yorkers within earshot, and all who have to breathe in exhaust fumes from the helicopters.

Please do all in your power to shut down these heavily polluting heliports.

Thank you,

Joe Doyle

West 22nd St. , NY, NY 10011

- Environmental disaster wastes more than 50K gallons of fuel each month.
- Noise pollution adding to a sense of military occupation, like a war zone
- Psychological well-being/mental health impacted by environmental stress

-John Lussier

Dear National Park Service (NPS) and Federal Aviation Authority (FAA),

As a NYC lower Manhattan area resident, I thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed “Commercial Air Tour Voluntary Agreement for Statue of Liberty National Monument and Governors Island National Monument.”

Unfortunately, I find the proposal to be extremely inadequate and strongly urge the FAA and NPS to revise the plan.

Industry Bias

I believe the current proposal is overwhelmingly biased in favor of the nonessential helicopter tourism industry, with no consideration to the industry’s impact on New York residents who already suffer from constant helicopter noise and air pollution, has no detail on terrorism or safety risk mitigation, and basically maintains or even worsens the unacceptable status quo.

Noise and Air Pollution Impact on NY & NJ Residents

In terms of noise and air pollution, the proposal does nothing to solve the problem. In Section 4.0 of the proposal, the agreement provides “All commercial air tours shall maintain a 1,000 ft. lateral setback from Liberty Island (high water mark), Ellis Island (high water mark), and the Governors Island National Monument boundary...” In addition, the non-essential tourism helicopters are required to fly at a minimum of 500 ft. except when taking off and landing. Yet nowhere in the proposal does it detail or explain how the 1,000 ft buffer and 500 ft. flight elevation minimum prevents the ongoing desecration of our most important National Monument by the 7 day a week noise, nor does it address the issue of excessive air and noise pollution to land-bound tourists or, importantly, residents who work or live in lower Manhattan, western Brooklyn, and Jersey City. In fact, by creating the 1,000 foot setback, this plan will actually increase the noise from these unnecessary joyriding helicopter tours for the Battery Park, South Street Seaport, Brooklyn Heights, Red Hook, and Jersey City communities by bringing them closer to non-NPS controlled land! This is especially problematic given that this plan allows the helicopters to fly at just “500 feet above ground level”, and sound is amplified over water such as the NY Harbor and bounces off the buildings in the area.

Negative Impact on Parks

Additionally of concern is the negative impact on waterfront parks, and the area of Governor’s Island over which these low-flying helicopters are already and will be flying. Many of these communities in both states are Environmental Justice communities who already bear a disproportionate share of polluting industries.

Terrorism Risks

Furthermore, as indicated in Section 3.1 of the proposal, “The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Department of the Interior (DOI) have identified Statue of Liberty National Monument as being at increased risk for terrorist activity, and therefore the park unit is subject to much higher safety and security standards consistent with DOI and DHS critical infrastructure policies.” Again, nowhere in the proposal is there any mention of a solution to these risks! In 2003 Walt Disney World and Disneyland were protected by a 3 mile no-fly zones. The Statue of Liberty, a symbol of our nation, deserves no less.

Lack of Transparency

Another real concern is the fact that this Agreement was created as a result of “[d]iscussions between tour operators and NPS staff” (See the Statue of Liberty National Monument and Governors Island National Monument Air Tour Voluntary Agreement: Frequently Asked Questions Document.) Thus, the industry had a seat at the table in drafting this Agreement but the local communities that will suffer the consequences of increased noise pollution and reduced air quality did not. The lack of transparency as to which tour companies helped create this Agreement, and from which heliports they operate, is troublesome.

More, Not Fewer, Helicopters

Additionally, this Agreement appears to be increasing the number of sightseeing helicopter companies as the “FAA and NPS intend to enter into the Agreement with [two current operators] as well as two new operators” and “other part 135 operators will also be considered”! Instead, I urge the NPS/FAA to substantially reduce the number of helicopter flights and companies touring the New York Harbor, if not a total ban of them. Other Air Tour Management Plans throughout the country have included caps on the number of sightseeing flights, and yet this New York Harbor plan contains none at all. Will 1,000 helicopters circling the Harbor each day not impact the visitor experience the NPS is charged with protecting? The National Parks Air Tour Management Act of 2000 requires that this Agreement meet the following objectives:

“The objective of any air tour management plan shall be to develop acceptable and effective measures to mitigate or prevent the significant adverse impacts, if any, of commercial air tour operations upon the natural and cultural resources, visitor experiences, and tribal lands.”

I believe this proposed Agreement unequivocally fails this mandate.

Negative Impact on Environment

Finally, this Agreement makes no mention of the climate impact of these fossil-

fuel based nonessential joyriding flights. Helicopters use large amounts of jet fuel; to allow them to be used simply for tourist photo ops as we face a global climate emergency goes against everything the federal and local governments are urging us to do to reduce our climate impact.

Conclusion

New York electeds, in seeking to ban or curtail these type of nonessential helicopter flights (and others), due to ever increasing public complaints and numerous recent fatal helicopter crashes, have introduced legislation at all levels of government: Congressional bills H.R. 1643 and H.R. 7769; the New York State “Stop the Chop” bill currently awaiting the Governor’s signature; and at least four separate bills currently pending in the New York City Council.

See <https://stopthechopnynj.org/legislation/>

The reality is that the only solution to the above problems is elimination of such nonessential helicopter flights. Fortunately, tourists who seek to view Governors Island, the Statue of Liberty and/or Ellis Island have options by using the existing ferry systems and boat-based tour operators. I strongly urge the FAA and NPS to make the bold but proper step to revise this plan and ban these non-essential sightseeing helicopters in the New York metro area, as no other fair solution is feasible.

Sincerely,

John Ost

Pearl St. Apt. ### New York, N. Y. 10038

Thank you.

Summary Testimony

- 1, My letter to FAA, Parks.
2. Congressional letter to FAA, never responded to.
3. Noise issue for residents.

Dear National Park Service (NPS) and Federal Aviation Authority (FAA),

As a NYC lower Manhattan area resident, I thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed "Commercial Air Tour Voluntary Agreement for Statue of Liberty National Monument and Governors Island National Monument." Unfortunately, I find the proposal to be extremely inadequate and strongly urge the FAA and NPS to revise the plan.

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I believe the current proposal is overwhelmingly biased in favor of the nonessential helicopter tourism industry, with no consideration to the industry's impact on New York residents who already suffer from constant helicopter noise and air pollution, has no detail on terrorism or safety risk mitigation, and basically maintains or even worsens the unacceptable status quo.

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In terms of noise and air pollution, the proposal does nothing to solve the problem. In Section 4.0 of the proposal, the agreement provides "All commercial air tours shall maintain a 1,000 ft. lateral setback from Liberty Island (high water mark), Ellis Island (high water mark), and the Governors Island National Monument boundary..." In addition, the non-essential tourism helicopters are required to fly at a minimum of 500 ft. except when taking off and landing. Yet nowhere in the proposal does it detail or explain how the 1,000 ft buffer and 500 ft. flight elevation minimum prevents the ongoing desecration of our most important National Monument by the 7 day a week noise, nor does it address the issue of excessive air and noise pollution to land-bound tourists or, importantly, residents who work or live in lower Manhattan, western Brooklyn, and Jersey City. In fact, by creating the 1,000 foot setback, this plan will actually increase the noise from these unnecessary joyriding helicopter tours for the Battery Park, South Street Seaport, Brooklyn Heights, Red Hook, and Jersey City communities by bringing them closer to non-NPS controlled land! This is especially problematic given that this plan allows the helicopters to fly at just "500 feet above ground level", and sound is amplified over water such as the NY Harbor and bounces off the buildings in the area.

Negative Impact on Parks

Additionally of concern is the negative impact on waterfront parks, and the area of Governor's Island over which these low-flying helicopters are already and will be flying. Many of these communities in both states are Environmental Justice communities who already bear a disproportionate share of polluting industries.

Terrorism Risks

Furthermore, as indicated in Section 3.1 of the proposal, "The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Department of the Interior (DOI) have identified Statue of Liberty National Monument as being at increased risk for terrorist activity, and therefore the park unit is subject to much higher safety and security standards consistent with DOI and DHS critical infrastructure policies." Again, nowhere in the proposal is there any mention of a solution to these risks! In 2003 Walt Disney World and Disneyland were protected by a 3 mile no-fly zones. The Statue of Liberty, a symbol of our nation, deserves no less.

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4

Additionally, this Agreement appears to be increasing the number of sightseeing helicopter companies as the “FAA and NPS intend to enter into the Agreement with [two current operators] as well as two new operators” and “other part 135 operators will also be considered”¹. Instead, I urge the NPS/FAA to substantially reduce the number of helicopter flights and companies touring the New York Harbor, if not a total ban of them. Other Air Tour Management Plans throughout the country have included caps on the number of sightseeing flights, and yet this New York Harbor plan contains none at all. Will 1,000 helicopters circling the Harbor each day not impact the visitor experience the NPS is charged with protecting? The National Parks Air Tour Management Act of 2000 requires that this Agreement meet the following objectives:

I believe this proposed Agreement unequivocally fails this mandate.

Finally, this Agreement makes no mention of the climate impact of these fossil-fuel based nonessential joyriding flights. Helicopters use large amounts of jet fuel; to allow them to be used simply for tourist photo ops as we face a global climate emergency goes against everything the federal and local governments are urging us to do to reduce our climate impact.

New York electeds, in seeking to ban or curtail these type of nonessential helicopter flights (and others), due to ever increasing public complaints and numerous recent fatal helicopter crashes, have introduced legislation at all levels of government: Congressional bills H.R. 1643 and H.R. 7769; the New York State “Stop the Chop” bill currently awaiting the Governor’s signature; and at least four separate bills currently pending in the New York City Council. See <https://stopthechopnynj.org/legislation/>

Sincerely,
John Ost

Thank you.

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 21, 2019

The Honorable Daniel K. Elwell
Acting Administrator
Federal Aviation Administration
800 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20591

Dear Acting Administrator Elwell,

We write to you with renewed concerns about non-essential helicopter flights over New York City's densely populated neighborhoods in light of the June 10, 2019 crash. As you know, earlier this month, an Agusta A109E helicopter owned by American Continental Properties LLC crashed on the roof of the AXA Equitable Building, killing the pilot and igniting a dangerous fire that caused a full building evacuation. Since 1982, we've had at least 30 helicopter crashes in New York City, with at least 25 fatalities, according to National Transportation Safety Board records. We believe it is time to end non-essential helicopter flights over our city and for the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to immediately issue Temporary Flight Restrictions (TFRs) instituting these safety restrictions.

According to published reports, the helicopter pilot involved in the June 10 crash was not certified to fly in bad weather.¹ Although the weather was stormy, and visibility was poor, the pilot was still permitted to take off from the 34th Street heliport. The pilot then proceeded into restricted air space near Trump Tower where he crashed on the roof of the AXA Equitable building, that led to his death and caused a fire. Although the helicopter flight ended tragically for the pilot, it could have been far worse had the plane crashed onto the busy Midtown street below or into a building.

As you know, New York City has one of the highest rates of helicopter use in the world.² Furthermore, New York City is one of the most densely populated cities in the United States, exponentially increasing the potential dangers of a helicopter accident in our city. The number of helicopter flights over New York City creates intolerable risks to the community and negative impacts on the quality of life of all its residents. There is no justification for allowing tourists to joy-ride through our skies, endangering people below and adding to the heavy burden of noise pollution residents already endure. Commuter helicopter flights impose risks to the community that far outweigh any benefits to the very small number of people who use them.

In recent years, there have been multiple helicopter accidents in our city, many of them fatal. Some of the best known include:

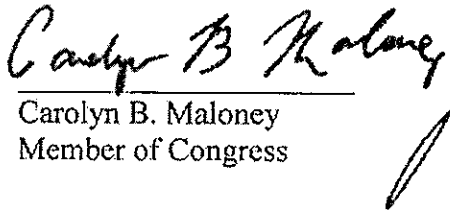
¹ Collman, A. (2019, June 11). FAA officials say the helicopter pilot who died after crashing on top of a New York City skyscraper should not have been flying. Retrieved from <https://www.businessinsider.com/helicopter-pilot-timothy-mccormack-shouldnt-have-been-flying-faa-2019-6>

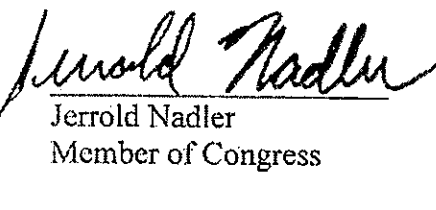
² Federal Aviation Administration. (2004). Report to Congress: Nonmilitary Helicopter Urban Noise Study (pp. 2-2, Rep.). Federal Aviation Administration. doi:https://www.faa.gov/regulations_policies/policy_guidance/envir_policy/media/04Nov-30-RTC.pdf

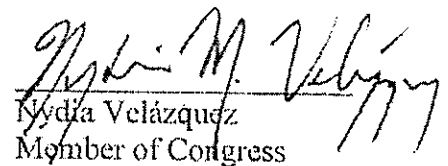
- October 4, 2011: A helicopter crashed in the East River, killing a woman
- August 8, 2009: A Liberty Helicopter flight crashed into a small plane over the Hudson River, killing 9 people
- July 7, 2007: A Liberty Helicopter unexpectedly dropped 500 feet into the Hudson River
- June 17, 2005: A corporate helicopter crashed into the East River
- June 14, 2005: A tourist flight plunged into the East River shortly after takeoff, resulting in one serious injury
- April 15, 1997: A corporate helicopter crashed into the East River, killing a Colgate-Palmolive executive and injuring a second passenger and the pilot

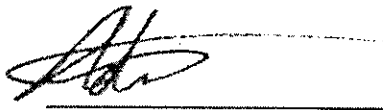
After the fatal crash on top of the Pan Am Building in 1977 that killed five people, the FAA took the wise precaution of banning helipads in New York City. But, unfortunately, with all of these recent incidents, the FAA has failed to sufficiently act. We are asking you to look at the history of fatal crashes and near escapes and to take immediate action to ban all non-essential helicopter flights and immediately institute TFRs on helicopter flights over New York City. It is within the FAA's authority to issue this TFR, and we urge the FAA to act without delay.

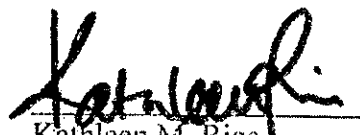
Very truly yours,

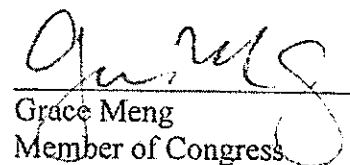

Carolyn B. Maloney
Member of Congress



Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress

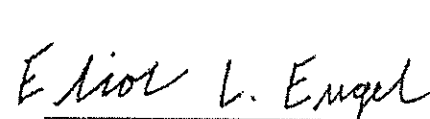

Nydia Velázquez
Member of Congress

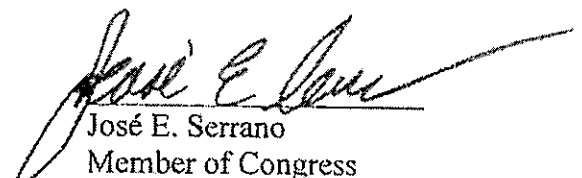

Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress


Kathleen M. Rice
Member of Congress


Grace Meng
Member of Congress


Thomas R. Suozzi
Member of Congress


Eliot L. Engel
Member of Congress


José E. Serrano
Member of Congress

cc:

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor of New York State
The Honorable Phil Murphy, Governor of New Jersey
The Honorable Bill de Blasio, Mayor of the City of New York

Even New Yorkers deserve quiet in their lives

By Justin Zorn and Leigh Marz
New York Daily News

•
Sep 26, 2022 at 5:00 am

Everybody knows New York is noisy.

Screeching subways, roaring garbage trucks, revving packs of dirt bikes, chopping helicopters, loud parties, barking dogs, jackhammers, police sirens and warnings to “stand clear of the closing doors” are baked into the identity of the city. At a time of so many glaring challenges — from the rising cost of living to extreme weather — it’s hard to regard excessive decibel levels as a top-tier concern. A recent Atlantic article, “Why Rich People Love Quiet,” suggested that efforts to control noise can often reflect the preferences of the privileged and powerful.

Still, there’s good reason why noise is a top complaint of New Yorkers — across neighborhoods and income levels. Nine out of 10 adults in the city are exposed to noise levels in excess of what the EPA considers to be harmful. Industrial noise can disproportionately impact communities of color. And there’s evidence that the city is actually louder than it’s ever been.

While there are few reliable measurements of the loudness of urban environments over time, emergency sirens are a good indicator (since they have to be loud enough to break through the surrounding sounds). The environmental researcher R. Murray Schafer found that a fire engine siren in 1912 got up to 96 decibels from a distance of 11 feet; by 1974, they hit 114 decibels from the same distance. The journalist Bianca Bosker found in 2019 that modern fire engine sirens are even louder — 123 decibels at 10 feet. While this might not sound like a huge increase, decibels are on a logarithmic scale, meaning that each 10 decibel increase registers as roughly twice as loud to the ear. Today’s sirens — at 123 decibels — are nearly six times louder than the 96 decibel sirens of a century ago.

This doesn’t just amount to lots of distraction; it amounts to a serious public health problem. More than 150 years ago, the pioneering British nurse Florence Nightingale described how noise activates what’s today known as the body’s “fight or flight” response, inhibiting good health and healing. “Unnecessary noise,” she said, “is the most cruel absence of care which can be inflicted either on sick or well.” A wide range of peer-reviewed research studies over recent decades has backed her up, demonstrating that noise can contribute substantially to risks including heart disease, stroke and depression.

The problem isn't just loudness. It's also the frequency of interruptions.

In the 1970s, the New York-based environmental psychologist Arline Bronzaft found that reading exam scores of Manhattan middle school students whose classrooms faced high-decibel elevated subway tracks lagged up to a full year behind those of pupils in quieter rooms on the other side of the school. Part of the problem was the stress caused by the volume, which rivaled heavy metal concerts. But the issue was also that the intermittent screeching broke students' concentration, undermining their ability to follow lessons or maintain a coherent progression of thought.

In the age of the attention economy and constant connectivity, New Yorkers face a barrage of unwanted interruption that compounds the ordinary urban soundscape. The average individual in the U.S. consumes more than five times more information on a given day than she did a generation ago. In a place like New York — where a disproportionate number of people work high pressure jobs — the demands are greater than elsewhere.

So, what can we do about it?

In 2007, New York City finally overhauled its noise ordinance code after more than 30 years to address issues from barking dogs to construction equipment. Yet there's still often too little enforcement of these provisions. Working harder to apply noise fines for after-hours construction or for illegal honking, for example, are simple first steps. And the city should consider noise regulations for maximum volume indoors for restaurants (where noise can reach levels that risk hearing damage). Thankfully, there are other new efforts in works to regulate helicopter noise and enforce new rules against intentionally noisy sports car mufflers.

Government can also work to proactively defend places like schools, hospitals and clinics — where quiet matters most—with tools like acoustic curtains and noise-reducing window inserts. And the city can continue to preserve parks and invest in building new public spaces, large and small, as sanctuaries.

Reducing noise isn't just a task for government. Employers, for example, can reduce the noise of modern city life by managing the volume in open-plan offices and creating quiet spaces for restful breaks as well as deep focused work.

In a recent interview, the legendary quiet campaigner Arline Bronzaft described how each one of us has a role to play in bringing more quiet. "One word could really cut back on noise intrusion," she said. "*Respect.*"

Zorn has served as a policy adviser and a meditation teacher in the U.S. House of Representatives. Marz is a collaboration consultant and leadership coach. They are co-authors of "Golden: The Power of Silence in a World of Noise."

From: Jonathan Goldman <jonathanegoldman@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 1, 2022 7:58 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Helicopter tourism

Please ban helicopter tourism from NYC. It is driving my family and me nuts.

Terrible for the environment.

Jonathan Goldman

*Jonathan Goldman, pronouns he/him/his: Jonathanegoldman.com
Archival Project: [New York 1920s: 100 Years Ago Today \(When We Became Modern\)](#)
Band: [Spanglish](#) President: [James Joyce Society](#)*

I live and work in territory historically populated by the Lenape people.

I am writing to add my voice to protests over helicopter tourist flights. I have lived on the Lower East Side almost 60 years and have suffered the impact of the increasing assault of noise and air pollution. These tourist flights are bad for New York residents, and, ironically, bad for tourism.

I recently had visitors from France staying with me. They reveled in New York's many famous sights, and enjoyed taking the ferry to the Statue of Liberty and to Ellis Island. They were surprised to see helicopters flying over the harbor and destroying the serenity of the boat trip. These frequent flights privilege those who pay for helicopter rides at the expense both of residents and of tourists like my visitors who actually want to see, explore, and learn about these places close up, but instead must face abusive noise and air pollution.

We already bear the burden of excessive noise. It's common for commercial agents to think that because there is already noise, it's ok for them to add to it. No, they are not responsible for noisy motorcycles and trains crossing bridges. But the effects of noise are cumulative and damaging.

The climate impact of these fossil-fuel based nonessential joyriding flights is also cumulative. Helicopters use large amounts of jet fuel; to allow them to be used simply for tourist photo ops as we face a global climate emergency goes against everything the federal and local governments are urging us to do to reduce our climate impact.

I urge you do everything you can to restrict nonessential helicopter flights.

-Joyce Ravitz

From: Judy Mann <judy.mann@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 29, 2022 9:10 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Hearing on NYC heliports and helicopter traffic

Thank you for conducting this hearing - I regret I cannot testify in person. I am writing on behalf of myself.

For the past 6 years I have been a tour guide on Governors Island. Over that time, the loud presence of helicopters over the harbor, flying low over the Island, and hovering over the island has intensified significantly from an ongoing nuisance to a constant presence. The noise can range from a steady roar that ruins the peace and quiet of this beautiful place, to a cacophony making tours almost impossible, ruining concerts and poetry readings and other programs.

Unnecessary, luxury helicopters are supported at NYC heliports and their unregulated flights give benefit to a tiny few to the extreme detriment of tens of thousands of New Yorkers. It can be a nightmare.

I urge you to eliminate all unnecessary flights from the NYC heliports - and to the extent possible by law, reduce the number of helicopters buzzing the harbor.

Thank you,

Judy Mann
Brooklyn, NY 11217

Thank you for your work.

I believe there are far too many unnecessary helicopter flights from the EDC-controlled helipads, and that they present a real interference with the quality of life in New York City. The air quality issues are a big concern. Further, the City's concession agreements through EDC are insufficient, both in the number and conditions of the flights and in the amount of money charged and the use of those moneys.

- Make the helicopters stay not just over water but on the far side of the Hudson River and eliminate tour flights up the East River?
- Could the City work harder to persuade the FAA to limit tourist helicopter flights over New York City that originate in New Jersey?
- Increase the benefit to the City by charging much more for the privilege of using the EDC heliports and specifically paying those moneys into public transit
- Eliminate traffic helicopters – why can we not get variances for drone camera coverage instead? Or suggest that traffic helicopter companies lease space on advertising billboards instead
- Cap private flight numbers overall
- Limit flights on Saturdays
- Reduce hours of tour flights to 10AM-2PM so as not to disturb folks in the early morning and the afternoons

I appreciate anything you can do to reduce helicopter traffic.

Thank you

-Julia Robbins

From: juliannehirsh <jajbhirsh1@optonline.net>
Sent: Tuesday, November 29, 2022 3:05 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] helicopter pollution

To Whom it May Concern :

We live in Flatbush near Brooklyn College. We are plagued by the noise of helicopters overhead. Our houses vibrate. If we're standing outside we can't hear the person standing next to us. In the summer we often hear many flying east on Thursday or Friday. Flying west Sunday or Monday. The Monday evening at the end of Memorial Day weekend we counted at least 20 helicopters. This must stop!

This is all about money and convenience. People are making money from these frivolous flights that pollute our air and damage our quality of life. Therefore, the pro commuter/tourist flight folk are motivated by money. People going to the Hamptons for the weekend don't want to be sitting in traffic. The 1% affecting the rest of us.

Unnecessary commercial helicopter flights create noise pollution and have been identified by the EPA as the leading cause of lead pollution in the US today. The negative CO2 output (a critical contributor to global warming) of helicopters far outweigh that of gas powered automobiles for the same distance.

We need to stop this now, for our own well being and for that of the good old planet earth.

Julianne and Jules Hirsh
East 24th Street
Brooklyn NY 11210

From: Julie Kratochvil <jkratochvi@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 1, 2022 11:54 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] EDC hearing on Helicopter port/ noise pollution

Dear Council,

Thank you for hearing the concerns of the NYC citizens that are impacted by the noise pollution of air traffic, specifically helicopters, over NYC.

My husband and I live in Battery Park City along the Hudson river. We are very grateful to have a beautiful and, sometimes, serene place to reside. We all know that city living brings unique opportunities and unique challenges. Noise pollution is one challenge that city living brings....cars, horns, sirens, air traffic, etc. The expectation with being a city dweller is that there will be noise to deal with. However, there is a difference of noise expectation between normal daily city life activity and superfluous and unnecessary activity. I believe that the invasiveness of helicopter noise falls into the latter category. Helicopter travel and helicopter tourist excursions benefit a unique few, yet detrimentally impact thousands of NYC citizens through noise pollution and air pollution. The cost-benefit ratio seems disproportionately against those living in NYC.

Now I am not naive to imagine that the sway of dollars does not sometimes mute the voice and desires of citizens when government decisions are made. However, I do implore the council to consciously take into account the quality of life impact on the hundreds of thousands of NYC citizens that live along the Hudson River, near Central Park, the East River, in Queens and Brooklyn over the Hampton Flight path, and Staten Island. Are our needs less important than the financially well healed individuals that can afford and will make use of helicopter transportation and sightseeing? Please, make your decisions based on the belief that we, the people, are the most important consideration.

Thank you for your time,
Julie Kratochvil
Rector place

From: Karen Nielsen <karennie@mac.com>
Sent: Monday, November 28, 2022 3:48 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Heliports / NYC Helicopter Traffic Testimony

Below is my testimony to support a STOP to all the unnecessary helicopter traffic in the NYC area:

The elimination of non-essential helicopters from the New York metropolitan area is vital to our communities. Non-essential (tourist, charter and commuter) helicopter flights dramatically reduce the quality of life for millions of people in the New York metropolitan area. They pollute our environment with both noise and air pollution, they pose significant safety risks both in potential for crash and terrorism, they frighten and harm our children, they frighten and harm our wildlife and destroy the sanctuary our parks are meant to be. It is no longer possible to take a quiet walk along the Hudson or East River, or enjoy the calm of Central Park without being consistently startled and disrupted by the loud droning of helicopters above. They also disrupt the peace in our apartments as they pass by, nonstop. The for-profit companies who run these helicopters do so to line their own pockets, at the expense of, and detriment to, the health and well being of those living in the neighborhoods or trying to enjoy the parks, under which they fly. Please stop the non-essential helicopters in the NYC metropolitan area. Bring back quiet and beauty to our skies! Thank you.

Karen Nielsen
Riverside Drive
New York, NY 10024

From: Katie Miller <kathy9891@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 27, 2022 7:50 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony re Heliports at City Council Hearing This Tue. 11/29

Hello,

My name is Katherine Miller and I live on W 74 St on the Upper West Side. The number of helicopters constantly swarming above my building is not simply overwhelming, it is disturbing. Every 5-10 minutes there is a gang of 5-6 tourist helicopters from NJ (namely FlyNYON) that circle above my building and Central Park for at least 10 minutes at below 1,000 ft height. Sometimes they hover for 10-15 minutes. Sometimes at -40 to -74 kts. The noise is deafening, it's like being bombed from above. And this happens every single day. During the week and on weekends, including Sundays. God forbid it's a sunny weekend, there is no option to sleep in, the helicopters start attacking UWS as early as 6-7am and continue flying until 10pm and later at night. Any expansion to NYC heliports is simply reckless, in fact they all must be shut down as soon as possible. There is absolutely no benefit to tax paying New Yorkers from these heliports. For instance, W 30 St heliport that is located in a public park funded by taxpayers is being used by abusive Blade and there are other helicopter companies that run illegal tours out of that heliport. Neither the FAA nor NYCEDC take any action against those companies that do literally whatever they want and fly however low and dangerously over residential areas and Central Park.

On top of the pest of tourist helicopters, the commuter helicopters use Upper West Side as their route to Long Island at any time of day or night. Those fly even lower at 400-500ft. People have constant headaches and mental health issues due to the helicopter noise. My family has been suffering for over a year now, all of us have sleeping disorders, PTSD, constant anxiety and other mental health issues. The air is unbreathable. Besides, helicopters still use hazardous leaded fuel, because FAA and USDOT refuse to regulate small aviation.

Along the Hudson river, the helicopters fly at 200-300 ft very close to Riverside Dr, when the regulations allow only in the middle of the river and only above 1,500 ft. The noise from those low flying helicopters can be heard in Brooklyn. People on the Upper West Side literally can't enjoy their apartments, let alone outdoor space or parks. The problem is that no one follows those regulations and on the other hand, no one holds those perpetrators accountable.

The amount of 311 complaints that I left is uncountable. I've sent letters to the Mayor, Governor, FAA, and many other public officials. Nobody responded. Nobody is willing to take any action. The government completely gave up on its citizens and taxpayers.

FlyNYON helicopters constantly take unnecessary risks for tips from tourists. A few times in the past I saw objects falling from flying helicopters. Not to mention the crash that killed 5 people. We're lucky in that case the pilot decided to crash that helicopter in the river, otherwise the number of victims would have been much higher. Every single day not only my privacy is invaded by those helicopters taking pictures of my dwelling and my family, but we're also constantly in physical danger, because it's only the matter of time until FlyNYON will start throwing stuff on purpose or simply crash one of those very old and poorly maintained helicopters in a

residential building like mine.

All these issues on top of the constant noise, adverse mental health impact and inability to escape from this constant nuisance. The government has failed New Yorkers in ignoring this important issue, the inability of public officials has led me to believe that maybe New York City is not a place for me and my family. It is just not worth risking our lives every single day all the while paying a premium in taxes. Somebody needs to take decisive action to ban non-essential helicopters today, we can't wait any longer. People have already gotten hurt and more will be hurt the longer NYC government and FAA wait to take action.

Katherine Miller

November 26, 2022

Dear NY City Council Members,

I have been running in Central Park for 30 years. However, in the last couple of years the low flying helicopter traffic has increased so much that I no longer can have a peaceful, healthy exercise experience in the park. I tried expensive noise-cancelling earbuds but they aren't able to fully mask the annoying chop-chop-chop of the helicopters. And unfortunately, I have had to retreat to treadmills in my gym since fighting helicopter noise severely impacts the meditative aspects of running.

When I realized that the majority of this traffic is a handful of tourists who are allowed to fly over the park I am ASTOUNDED that the City of NY allows this precious resource to be impacted so severely by a few non-residents who pay no taxes and engage in a practice that contributes almost nothing to the economic health of the city.

I first came to NYC in 1989 when the Central Park Conservancy was just beginning to rescue a bereft park that was covered with graffiti and dusty barren lawns. Millions of dollars later we now have a jewel of a park that is the envy of cities worldwide.

WHY IS THE CITY ALLOWING HELICOPTERS USED BY A FEW TO DISTURB THE HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF NEW YORKERS WHO RELY ON CENTRAL PARK FOR A LITTLE RESPITE FROM THE HURLY-BURLY OF THE CITY?

Please restrict helicopter traffic in NYC to police, military and medical usage!

Ms. Kathryn Birstein
West 57th Street, ###
New York, NY 10019

kathryn@birstein.com

Written testimony to the Committee on Economic Development re: Non-essential helicopters

December 1, 2022

To Whom this May Concern:

I am writing to submit my testimony on the use of non-essential helicopters.

I am a twenty-year resident of Prospect Heights, Brooklyn where my husband and I both work.

We are constantly enveloped in the rumbling of overhead helicopter noise.

In our home and in the community, it's no longer possible to have a conversation uninterrupted by helicopters.

The green spaces that once attracted us to the neighborhood are no longer resources for calm respite, besieged as they are now continually by the rumble and roar of these planes.

Our stress levels have increased dramatically in parallel with the rising, ongoing volume of noisy non-essential helicopter traffic. Our ability to sleep, rest, work, think and simply enjoy ourselves is affected.

Life in New York City is and has always been hard. And yet, for all its indignities, we stay for the diversity and vitality.

But living under the constant, roaring hum of helicopters for the gain of a few companies whose business model is designed for the uber-wealthy? We didn't sign up for that and neither should you. I urge you to protect your constituents right to peace and tranquility.

Please reject the money, lobbying efforts, and promises offered by these companies in favor of a better, more livable city for the rest of us.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Glass
Plaza Street East
Brooklyn, NY 11238

My name is Ken Coughlin and I am speaking on behalf of Manhattan Community Board 7.

Community Board 7 encompasses the Upper West Side of Manhattan from 59th Street to 110th Street. Over the past several years, our district has experienced a surge in tourist and commuter helicopter flights traveling up and down the Hudson River and across the district to and from points east. In City fiscal year 2022, helicopter noise was the top complaint to the 311 system in our community district, accounting for 10,347 complaints filed.

In January 2020, Manhattan Community Board 7 voted unanimously to support our elected officials' efforts to reduce helicopter traffic in the city, including federal legislation that would prohibit all nonessential helicopter flights – meaning tourist and commuter flights -- within New York City airspace. One year later, by unanimous vote, we called on the City to end its promotion of tourist and other nonessential helicopter flights on the website of NYC & Company, the taxpayer-supported official destination marketing organization for the five boroughs. (This promotion of helicopter flights subsequently ended.)

Manhattan Community Board 7 urges City agencies to end the excessive and harmful noise pollution, terrorism risks, and climate and environmental impacts of nonessential helicopter flights by completely eliminating them over New York City's skies. Although we haven't yet taken a position on specific Council legislation, we support closing New York City heliports to nonessential flights.

Dear Members of the NYC Council Committee on Economic Development,

I am submitting this testimony regarding New York City's heliport operations to urge the Council to abolish the use of public New York City heliports for non-essential helicopter flights.

I live in Carroll Gardens, where my neighbors and I now experience upwards of 30 low-flying helicopter flights directly overhead nearly every single day. The flights operate from around 7am to 11pm on most days. They are deafeningly loud; walkers on the street in the area are forced to stop talking to one another while a helicopter passes overhead. The noise can be heard throughout any building in the area, on any floor, even if all windows are closed. I am routinely awakened by these flights, and my apartment building, which is well-constructed and well-maintained, often vibrates when these flights pass overhead.

After some investigatory work using publicly-available flight-tracking information I determined that nearly all of these flights over my home (over 95%) are non-essential commuter flights ferrying people to/from the three publicly-owned heliports in Manhattan: at Pier 6 in the Financial District, at E 34th St, and at W 30th St. Most flights are going towards or coming from JFK or the Hamptons.

The problem is not only confined to Carroll Gardens and surrounding areas; some of New York's finest parks, including Central Park, Brooklyn Bridge Park, Governor's Island, Liberty Island, etc. are constantly besieged by the din of tourist and commuter helicopters.

I understand that while the W 30th St heliport is jointly operated by the city and the State of New York, the two heliports on the east side of Manhattan are entirely under the city's jurisdiction. I find it unconscionable that the city permits the use of its heliports for unnecessary tourism and commuter flights. Not only is the nuisance extreme, but it is dangerous to have low-flying aircraft traveling regularly over densely-populated areas of Brooklyn, Manhattan, and Queens. A helicopter crashed into the East River in 2018, and another in Manhattan in 2019 – what if such a crash were to occur in Brooklyn on the way to JFK? Dozens would be injured or killed. Not to mention the severe property damage, legal cost, etc. such a crash would cause.

I will note as well that as the climate crisis accelerates, unnecessary helicopter flights, which produce 3 to 5 times more emissions than a diesel car, are clearly incompatible with emissions-reductions goals we must achieve to combat global warming. New York City is already spending millions on climate resiliency; why does it turn around and tolerate the very behaviors requiring such expenditures in the first place?

Finally, I would like to inform the Council that over the past 8 months I have submitted more than 150 complaints via the city's 311 system to the EDC regarding helicopter noise. Exactly none of them have been looked into or processed in any way; despite an SLA of 10 days, every one remains "In Progress."

The city may not be able to regulate its airspace, but it can absolutely regulate who may use its heliports. I urge the Council to consider the serious environmental, health, safety, and quality of life impacts of permitting commuter and tourism flights from public heliports. These helicopters are endangering New Yorkers, harming our environment, and ruining quality of life, for very little benefit except to the very wealthy who can afford such flights. Please help all the residents of New York City who are suffering every day from the deleterious impacts by banning non-essential helicopter flights from our heliports.

Thank you,
Kenneth Lay
Brooklyn, NY

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

For profit helicopter companies treat our skies and neighborhoods as their private domain without regard to the millions of people who are affected on a daily basis by the incessant noise, air pollution, potential safety posed by non-essential and commuter helicopter traffic over NY and NJ Hudson river communities. Helicopter traffic reduces real estate values, puts people at risk of life and property loss, and negatively impacts outdoor businesses, festivals and other public events. Nonessential helicopters pollute the environment in many ways—noise, air, just to name the obvious.

Disney World has a “no fly zone” over its property protecting thousands of animals surely the politicians in NY and NJ, local, state and federal level can resolve this issue in favor of the residents and citizens of the affected communities by banning nonessential helicopter traffic from the New York City area. This is a “quality of life” matter and we citizens should be able to enjoy the quiet enjoyment of our homes and public spaces.

Very truly yours,
Kim Bressant Kibwe
Resident, Jersey City, NJ

To whom it may concern,

I'm writing to express support for all measures to end all non-essential helicopter traffic over NYC, including legislation (Int 0551-2022) introduced by CM Lincoln Restler. I live underneath a helicopter route often taken for passenger helicopters and it is a massive, literal headache. The city needs to prioritize people living and working here. Noise pollution is a nuisance and a quality of life concern, but it is also a [public health hazard](#).

Kira McDonald

December 2, 2022

Dear Councilmembers Farias and Abreu:

Thank you for chairing the Nov 29, 2022 Council hearing on NYC Heliports Operations.

I am a board member of the all-volunteer Stop The Chop NY/NJ. I joined the board a year ago, due to the constant onslaught of non-essential helicopters that are plaguing our Brooklyn communities. I live in Carroll Gardens, Brooklyn, where we are bombarded by Blade commuter helicopters flying between Manhattan heliports to JFK and the Hamptons all day long. The first flight roars over at 7AM, and they continue as often as every 5 minutes until 11PM. Many in multiples. They fly at dangerously low altitudes, generating ear-splitting noise, skimming the rooftops of this residential neighborhood, shaking schools, parks on an **11 mile path across the entire borough of Brooklyn**. From Cobble Hill to East New York, it looks and sounds like Blade commuter flights are about to crash into our homes. Brooklyn sounds like a war zone.

The all-land routes Blade flights take over Brooklyn are "suggested" by the FAA based on 40 year old maps. By no means are they mandated. In fact, the FAA does not distinguish essential vs nonessential helicopter operations so commuter helicopters are free to fly at whatever altitude they want, wherever they choose. And, they do, because it's faster. [Blade's "where we fly" map](#) on their site is a joke.

Reporting these low-flying, loud helicopters is cumbersome. It requires the public to determine where the helicopters originated from, know the tail number, the color. Should they be reported to the NYCEDC or FAA (note: the FAA only accepts one complaint per person of a similar nature, a member of the public has one chance). As NYCEDC Andrew Kimball vaguely explained, complaints filed with NYC311 are investigated by a "third party" which does a random sampling of 75 complaints, and using an "automated dependency surveillance broadcast system" which are cross referenced for compliance. NYCEDC is paying a "third party" to investigate the very companies the operators that are being complained about? That sounds like a clear conflict of interest and compounds public skepticism of the NYC311 process.

It's no surprise there have been over 25k complaints November 21, 2021 – November 22, 2021.

- 25,244 Total Helicopter complaints
- 25,092 received no resolution or response from NYCEDC/NYC311, dating back to November 2021.
- 24,952 are labeled with "Other" descriptor

Please view a download of the 12-month NYC Open Data complaint log, formatted into a Google doc, which can be filtered by borough, zip, NYCEDC resolution (99% have no resolution). https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1riHVNwJCAZNYe3DXkzSpaGkBS88E8w7F/edit?usp=s_haring&oid=112829130893521251840&rtpof=true&sd=true

Liabilities to NYC include, in no particular order because they are all so egregious:

- Health: studies have proven that excessive aviation noise impairs children's cognitive function. Some helicopters still burn leaded fuel, banned by the EPA decades ago because of its known detrimental impacts on children. NYC has some of the highest levels of pediatric asthma in the US. Exposure to repeated, excessive noise is proven to be detrimental to adult cardiovascular health and cognition.
- Environmental Justice: The commuter helicopter routes in Brooklyn and Queens disproportionately impact Environmental Justice, low-income communities already shouldering decades of environmental burden.
- Public safety: there's no one in charge of rogue helicopters in our airspace. It's heavily congested and unregulated, even after 9/11 and several tragic accidents. Who will be liable when there's a tragic accident? Even Disney World has a Restricted Fly Zone. NYC's population is 150% larger than the average daily visitors to DW. Are we relying on the FAA or business development interests of NYCEDC?
- Environmental: The average tourist helicopter spews the same amount of greenhouse gasses per hour as twenty or more cars. The large commuter/charter craft emit up to 40 times the CO2 of an automobile. New York City, as a coastal city has already seen the impacts of climate change and will see more in the future. Why is the city subsidizing our own destruction?

Looking towards the future of eclectic helicopters, as the industry stumbles over itself to protect the financial interests of General Aviation and shareholder value, it's important to note that there are zero electric crafts certified to fly paying passengers in the United States. They are decades away to be certified to fly over the most densely populated area of the United States. If the industry was so resolute on adopting, quieter, greener helicopters they would have adopted "Stage 3" helicopters. They've been available for years. But they didn't. Many of the helicopters operating to/from NYC heliports are already decades old, including massive Sikorsky helicopters built for off-shore oil rig transport in the 1980-1990's, which shuttle passengers to the Hamptons.

And will electrics be safe for the public below? And as published in Bloomberg July 29, 2022, "Air Taxis Keep Crashing, Bursting Into Flames in Testing Phase" <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-07-29/evtols-keep-crashing-and-bursting-into-flames-during-testing-phase> They use a lithium batteries, just like e-bikes, which have caused over 200 fires and 40 fatalities in NYC this year. If there is no intervention by NYC, we will be stuck with the same loud, fossil-fuel guzzling, combustible helicopters roaring above us, all day long.

Conclusion:

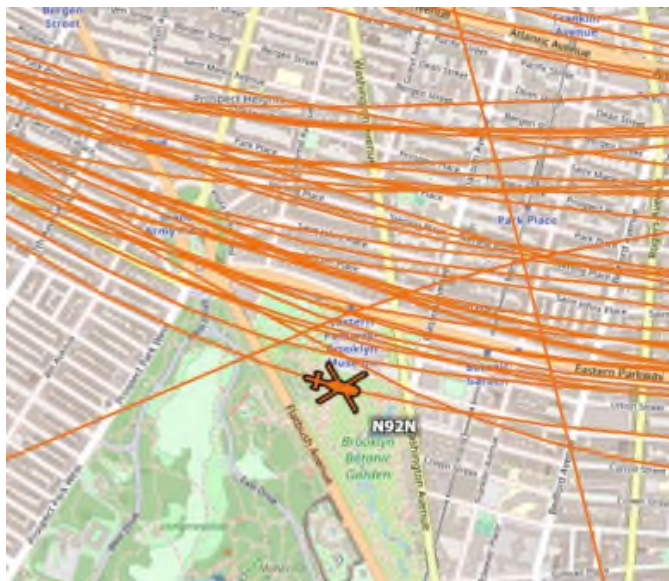
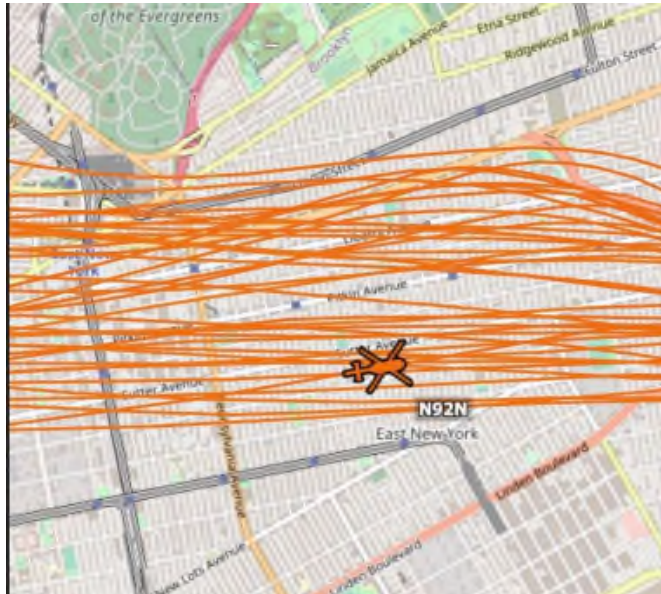
I commend the City Council for holding this EDC Heliport Oversight Hearing as a great first step towards reigning in this polluting and arrogant helicopter industry, and bringing some transparency to the situation. Because the industry does not care about its harmful impacts on the community, it is imperative that our elected representatives hold the industry and the EDC

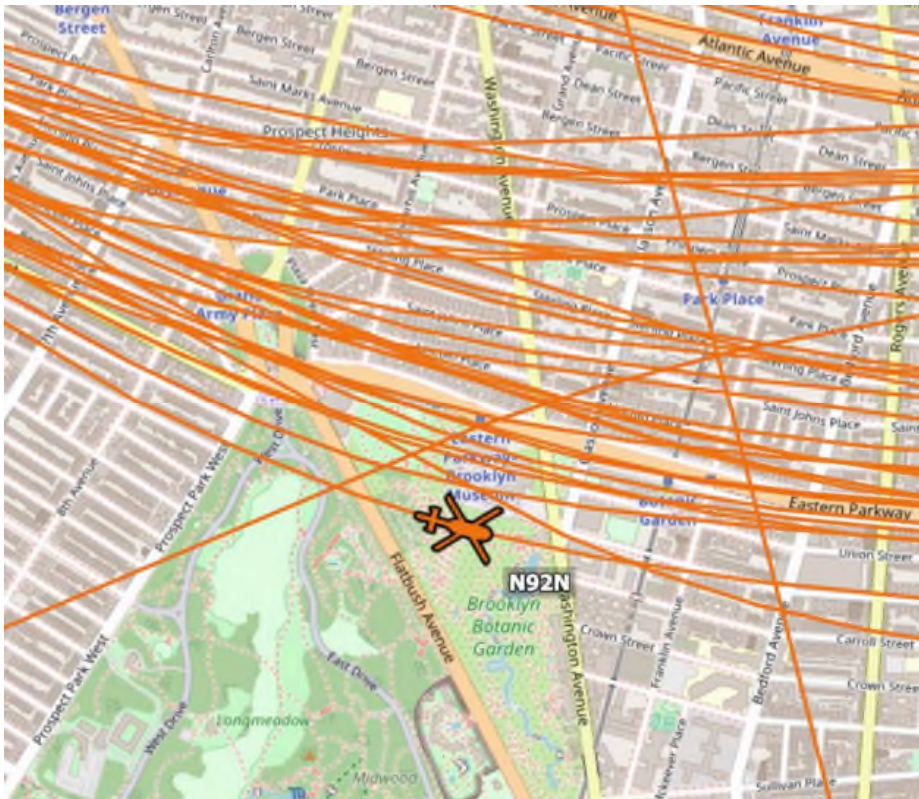
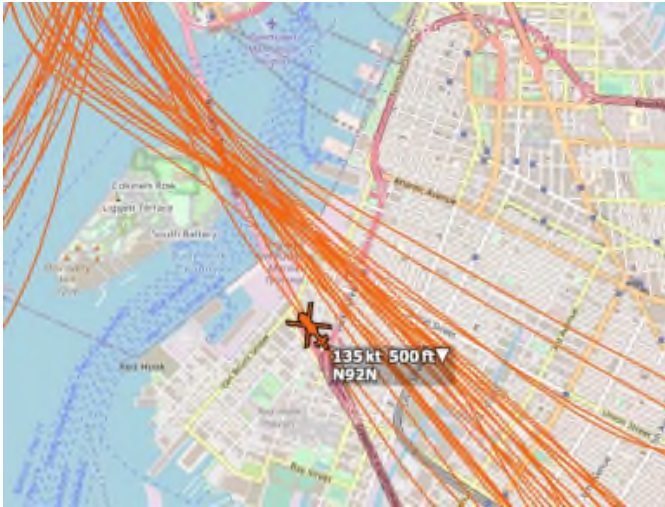
accountable. There are clearly many more questions to be answered after this Hearing. I (and my fellow Stop the Chop NY/NJ Board members) support Int. 551 (currently with 23 City Council cosponsors) and we urge the City Council to hold a Hearing on that bill as well.

Thank you for this opportunity to be heard, and for your consideration of written testimony.

Best,

Lara O'Brien





Letter sent to the FAA about the proliferation of tourist and commuter helicopter traffic over the City

To FAA Safety,

There has been an unusually high volume of helicopter traffic over Manhattan since the summer of 2020. Radar App's (eg Flightradar24) identify them as sightseeing helicopters, mostly originating from heliports in New Jersey (N207MH, N217MH, N726H, N7159MH; see attached flight paths, flight records).

Helicopters departing from heliports in NYC are strictly regulated. They are only to fly over water; not over congested areas, unless unavoidable.

Apparently, these regulations do not apply (or are not enforced) to helicopters from New Jersey. Every day, for the three years, there are dozens of helicopter crossings over the City, mostly over East and West 86-87 Str. Many of them make several loops, crisscrossing, hovering over highly congested areas for several minutes. They operate from the morning until late night, even when visibility is limited. I have attached a few screenshots of flight paths and flight records.

They don't follow FAA rules. They fly low, way lower than the required 1,000 feet above the highest structures on the ground. There are several high rises over 1,000 feet in the city.

In response to thousands of complaints by residents, NYS may introduce legislation to ban nonessential helicopter traffic over the City.

Unfortunately, even if passed, it will take several more months for the law to be implemented.

I understand that the FAA does not regulate helicopter traffic. But I hope that given the ongoing safety violations, the FAA will investigate and issue warnings to the operators of sightseeing helicopters.

lap2@columbia.edu

Helicopter noise Upper West Side

I moved to an apartment on 94th St near Riverside Drive about a year and a half ago, from Chelsea. I'm astounded at the level of helicopter noise overhead from helicopters over the Hudson—it feels like **living in a war zone**. I work at home as a writer and it's a constant distraction and source of tension—there is barely a moment of quiet, and the noise is LOUD, unpleasant, and intrusive. I'm amazed that the city permits this many helicopters and at this decibel level, which goes on all day and into the night (even on Thanksgiving!).

The number of helicopters allowed needs to be drastically cut back, and certainly no new traffic or licenses should be permitted.

Thank you,

Laura Kipnis

From: Laura Piraino <laurapiraino@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, November 28, 2022 9:00 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Hearing regarding New York City's Heliport Operations

Dear The New York City Council Committee on Economic Development and Committee on State and Federal Legislation,

Thank you for holding a hearing on New York City's Heliport Operations on Tuesday, November 29th at 10am.

I live on West 80th Street. I will be working at Mount Sinai on the Upper East Side during the hearing, so unable to join you on Tuesday. I am frequently in Central Park, Riverside Park, and all neighborhoods in Manhattan really, for socializing, the Arts, restaurants and shopping. I am strongly opposed to non essential, non emergency/press helicopter traffic.

If you live and work here as I do, you are very familiar with the negative impacts of helicopter traffic. Most of us have no backyard or outdoor space, so the parks that are publicly accessible are one of our only options to connect with nature, destress, socialize and exercise without charge. They are an escape from the sirens and honking on the main commercial corridors. The impact of excessive noise pollution on our physical and mental health is well documented and can not be understated- and when impacting a public space, disproportionately impacts those under-represented communities and families without another option. To inconvenience millions of people in their outdoor "home" for a handful of wealthy tourists trying to get an expensive Instagram sneaker picture over Central Park (or my building) favors the rich but does not benefit the local population or economy.

The wildlife and the 210 bird species that are found in Central Park also must absorb this negative unnecessary impact. According to the Audubon Society, NYC is an extremely important migratory path on the East Coast and we also have significant birding areas in all parks in Manhattan. The City's own plans to restore biodiversity of our green space, water and air space run counter to policies that allow unnecessary air traffic. City Council has to make decisions on how to implement our 80x50 sustainability carbon reduction plan as well, yet have failed to hold this carbon intensive luxury leisure industry accountable. Yet you require other businesses here in Manhattan to reduce emissions, and should do so with helicopters by limiting non-emergency ones. Ironically the helicopter port is also adjacent to the west side protected bike path along the Hudson River Park - a horrible nuisance along a truly safe and inspiring corridor that has introduced cycling to urbanites who otherwise don't ride outside of parks, particularly older women, children and their parents. The noise and wind produced from the helicopters coming in and out can be strongly felt on a bicycle, especially by a child.

During this past summer, there was a helicopter noise incident while attending a classical concert in Central Park, no one could hear the music. Many left early. This is not how we can support the Arts in Manhattan. I ran into someone on the way out who was handing out leaflets for an organization called Stop the Chop. They asked if I had an interest in volunteering, there was another upcoming concert in the bandshell, could I chat with folks prior to the music starting. I was thrilled that there might be something we could actually do to address this issue. In just one evening, I spoke with at least 50 New Yorkers, all of

whom had an almost identical reaction: they hated the helicopter noise, and did not understand why this would be permitted here in Manhattan since there was no benefit.

We are dependent on tourism here in Manhattan, much more so than any other borough. Why give the millions of visitors an unpleasant experience on the ground, one that may cause them not to return? They have tv and movie memories that usually inspire them to visit. Imagine watching your favorite movie/tv set in Manhattan- perhaps it is Harry Met Sally, Mrs. Maisel, Manhattan, Maid in Manhattan,- just pick one- and just before the main character leans over to reveal their deepest feelings of love, or meaningful self reflection- a helicopter overhead hovers just above them, hovering for minutes, and more minutes, and the moment has past, the words left unsaid. The movie would get a bad review. So should unnecessary non-emergency helicopters.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,

Laura Piraino

From: Lynn Caporale <caporale@usa.net>
Sent: Saturday, December 3, 2022 9:30 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Helicopters

I submitted this to the National Parks comments:

December 03, 2022 07:28 AM Mountain Time

Park: Statue Of Liberty National Monument
Project: Air Tour Voluntary Agreement for National Parks of New York Harbor
Document: Draft Voluntary Agreement and FAQs: National Parks of New York Harbor

Name: Lynn Caporale
Address: Sherman Square
City: New York
State: NY
Postal Code: 10023
Email
Address: caporale@usa.net
Organization:

Each single helicopter, in which a few tourists get a joy ride, disrupts the lives of, literally, thousands of people on the ground, every single time.

There are so many things to see, participate in, and enjoy in New York. If a tourist wants a view, we have viewing areas in high buildings. If a tourist wants a thrill, they can ride the Cyclone or Wonder Wheel.

Comments: There is no redeeming social value for the helicopters, and so much negative effect. Yes, a few people make a financial profit, but come on, can't they figure out a less intrusive way to make money in and around NYC? Lots of other people do.

Comment ID: 2280452-124250/1749

From: Mark Crawford <mcrow85249@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, November 28, 2022 8:45 PM
To: Testimony
Cc: District33
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Hearing regarding New York City's Heliport Operations

Dear Honorable New York City Council Members:

As a Brooklyn resident, I thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed “Commercial Air Tour Voluntary Agreement for Statue of Liberty National Monument and Governors Island National Monument.” Unfortunately, I find the proposal to be extremely inadequate and strongly urge the New York City Council to vote against it and revise the plan.

Industry Bias

I believe the current proposal is overwhelmingly biased in favor of the nonessential helicopter tourism industry, with no consideration to the industry’s impact on tax-paying New York and New Jersey residents who already suffer from constant helicopter noise and air pollution, has no detail on terrorism or safety risk mitigation, and basically maintains or even worsens the unacceptable status quo.

Noise and Air Pollution Impact on NYC & Brooklyn

In terms of noise and air pollution, the proposal does nothing to solve the problem. In Section 4.0 of the proposal, the agreement provides “All commercial air tours shall maintain a 1,000 ft. lateral setback from Liberty Island (high water mark), Ellis Island (high water mark), and the Governors Island National Monument boundary...” In addition, the non-essential tourism helicopters are required to fly at a minimum of 500 ft. except when taking off and landing. Yet nowhere in the proposal does it detail or explain how the 1,000 ft buffer and 500 ft. flight elevation minimum prevents the ongoing desecration of our most important National Monument by the 7 day a week noise, nor does it address the issue of excessive air and noise pollution to land-bound tourists or, importantly, residents who work or live in lower Manhattan, western Brooklyn, and Jersey City. In fact, by creating the 1,000 foot setback, this plan will actually increase the noise from these unnecessary joyriding helicopter tours for the Battery Park, South Street Seaport, Brooklyn Heights, Red Hook, and Jersey City communities by bringing them closer to non-NPS controlled land! This is especially problematic given that this plan allows the helicopters to fly at just “500 feet above ground level”, and sound is amplified over water such as the NY Harbor.

Negative Impact on Parks

Additionally of concern is the negative impact on New Jersey’s Liberty State Park, the downtown Manhattan and Brooklyn waterfront parks, and the area of Governors Island over which these low-flying helicopters are already and will be flying. Many of these communities in both states are Environmental Justice communities who already bear a disproportionate share of polluting industries.

Terrorism Risks

Furthermore, as indicated in Section 3.1 of the proposal, “The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the

Department of the Interior (DOI) have identified Statue of Liberty National Monument as being at increased risk for terrorist activity, and therefore the park unit is subject to much higher safety and security standards consistent with DOI and DHS critical infrastructure policies.” Again, nowhere in the proposal is there any mention of a solution to these risks! In 2003 Walt Disney World and Disneyland were protected by a 3 mile no-fly zones. The Statue of Liberty, a symbol of our nation, deserves no less.

Lack of Transparency

Another real concern is the fact that this Agreement was created as a result of “[d]iscussions between tour operators and NPS staff” (See the Statue of Liberty National Monument and Governors Island National Monument Air Tour Voluntary Agreement: Frequently Asked Questions Document.) Thus, the industry had a seat at the table in drafting this Agreement but the local communities that will suffer the consequences of increased noise pollution and reduced air quality did not. The lack of transparency as to which tour companies helped create this Agreement, and from which heliports they operate, is troublesome.

More, Not Fewer, Helicopters

Additionally, this Agreement appears to be increasing the number of sightseeing helicopter companies as the “FAA and NPS intend to enter into the Agreement with [two current operators] as well as two new operators” and “other part 135 operators will also be considered”! Instead, I urge the NPS/FAA to substantially reduce the number of helicopter flights and companies touring the New York Harbor, if not a total ban of them. Other Air Tour Management Plans throughout the country have included caps on the number of sightseeing flights, and yet this New York Harbor plan contains none at all. Will 1,000 helicopters circling the Harbor each day not impact the visitor experience the NPS is charged with protecting? The National Parks Air Tour Management Act of 2000 requires that this Agreement meet the following objectives:

“The objective of any air tour management plan shall be to develop acceptable and effective measures to mitigate or prevent the significant adverse impacts, if any, of commercial air tour operations upon the natural and cultural resources, visitor experiences, and tribal lands.”

I believe this proposed Agreement unequivocally fails this mandate.

Negative Impact on Environment

Finally, this Agreement makes no mention of the climate impact of these fossil-fuel based nonessential joyriding flights. Helicopters use large amounts of jet fuel; to allow them to be used simply for tourist photo ops as we face a global climate emergency goes against everything the federal and local governments are urging us to do to reduce our climate impact.

Conclusion

New York electeds, in seeking to ban or curtail these type of nonessential helicopter flights (and others), due to ever increasing public complaints and numerous recent fatal helicopter crashes, have introduced legislation at all levels of government: Congressional bills H.R. 1643 and H.R. 7769; the New York State “Stop the Chop” bill currently awaiting the Governor’s signature; and at least four separate bills currently pending in the New York City Council.

See <https://stopthechopnyny.org/legislation/>

The reality is that the only solution to the above problems is elimination of such nonessential helicopter flights. Fortunately, tourists who seek to view Governors Island, the Statue of Liberty and/or Ellis Island have options by using the existing ferry systems and boat-based tour operators. I strongly urge the FAA and NPS to make the bold but proper step to revise this plan and ban these non-essential sightseeing helicopters in the New York metro area, as no other fair solution is feasible.

Sincerely,
Mark Crawford
Remsen Street
Brooklyn, NY 11201

Testimony of Mark Bierman, Brooklyn, New York
New York City Council Joint Hearing: Committee on Economic Development and Committee
on State and Federal Legislation: NYC Heliports and Helicopter Operations
November 29, 2022- 10:00 A.M.

A Sikorsky S-92A helicopter, the same helicopter made for the military known as the Blackhawk, as modified for civilian use for 19 passengers, thunders a few hundred feet directly over my apartment. I can feel my heart start to race, my blood pressure rise, my anxiety level soar. The walls of my apartment literally shake and vibrate from the explosive earsplitting sound of the twin CT7-8A 2520 hp engines and beating 56 foot blades. According to FAA noise studies, these helicopter sounds can exceed 100 decibels at that altitude, where hearing damage can occur over 80 decibels.

In the past year, helicopters flying at extremely low altitudes ferrying passengers to and from the Hamptons, or JFK or just to see Brooklyn from the air have proliferated, crisscrossing my residential neighborhood sometimes as often as once every five minutes. They begin as early as 5:00 a.m. and sometimes go until after midnight. It is unbearable; it is hellish, it is unsustainable. It is making residential neighborhoods throughout New York City in these flight-paths unlivable. It is impacting the lives and health and well being of hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers. It is subjecting infants and children to the perpetual deafening sounds of these helicopters. It is subjecting New Yorkers to the high levels of toxic jet fuel exhaust they emissions. It makes it impossible to enjoy one's home and family time, to work at home, to study at home, to put children to sleep. A walk in the park is becoming like a walk along an airport landing strip or a military base. Our homes have become prisons of inescapable constant extreme explosions of deafening noise; noise levels that have been shown to contribute to or exacerbate illness.

I have lived in New York my entire life-more than six decades- but have never experienced anything like this Helicopter cacophony until this past year since Blade and other irresponsible operators adopted the Uber model for helicopter rides and HeliNY and other such tour operators greatly expanded tourist helicopter runs to every few minutes. These helicopters are, to say the least, nonessential to the lives of city residents, benefitting only a small number of wealthy passengers and out-of town tourists. They have no place blasting day in and day out over the heads of New Yorkers.

Irresponsible and arrogant owners and boards of these helicopter companies have refused reasonable requests that they fly over the water, not residential neighborhoods. This so that they can boast about how fast they can get a passenger to JFK or the Hamptons, just to fatten their profits even though it is only a five minute difference to avoid neighborhood overflights. Although electric powered helicopters that generate only 45 decibels of noise and do not contribute to significantly climate change are now available, these operators continue to chose to fly deafening polluting Sikorskys, Bell 407s and other high powered exhaust emitting helicopters over our homes, streets, schools and parks at low altitudes.

These operators and their boards have shown that they care nothing for New York or its residents. Some operators or their board members apparently believe that their well placed political connections afford them unbridled license to destroy our neighborhoods. That these operators are allowed to use publically owned facilities to make New York sound like a war zone, is a travesty. It must stop and stop now. The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey that operates JFK must also be stopped from granting them landing rights.

This is an extremely serious public health issue. Any politician that does not get on board to put an immediate end to the abusive and dangerous use of public facilities by these private operators is a part of the problem and has no place in government. If those politicians don't act now, they will have the swelling ranks of outraged and desperate voters to contend with. We simply can no longer live with this scourge on our city.

New York City, 11.28.2022

To the New York City Council,

Helicopters in operation produce a high noise level, pollute air, land and water with their toxic fuel and pose the constant danger of an accident with many casualties, especially in dense populated areas.

Just for transporting people, except for emergency purposes, the relative small helicopter has a negative benefit to cost ratio.

Where a choice of dependable transportation is available there should be no option for the few tourists stressing the larger population with unnecessary helicopter flights.

Here in New York City many supposedly recreational public parks are along the water where all the heliports are located.

On Chelsea Pier many times I can see five helicopters at once in the air, coming and going. The noise interrupts any conversation and the smell of fuel lingers in the air. There is no escape.

Near the Empire State Building, where I live, pre COVID, on days with a clear sky, sightseeing flights for tourists were equally going on all day long.

It's like all your neighbors are using gas powered leaf blowers on a daily basis.

I believe those choppers are so past century that they belong in a museum.

Many cities did get that.

Thank you,

Martin Schaub

29 November 2022

Subject: Stop the Chop!

Council Members,

I write to you as a resident of Manhattan's upper west side for over 40 years.

The constant helicopter noise overhead has affected our quality of life - to the point that one cannot take a peaceful walk in Central Park.

There are no benefits to New Yorkers here, and we are counting on you to protect our rights by prohibiting this from continuing.

Regards,
Mary Evancho

Nutrition education in early years of schools correlated with health promotion and disease prevention. Evidence suggests students who learned about nutrition in their early years of schooling exhibited positive behavior, and experienced good long-term health. Unfortunately not all schools across NYC incorporate nutrition education, which confines students' ability to receive the optimal learning knowledge and experience to make more informed decisions of carrying a healthier lifestyle. Research shows that raising students' awareness promotes improved health, and increase motivation to engage in hands-on activities. Needless to say that solely incorporating nutrition education is insufficient without ensuring the delivery of material. Data shows that low-income, underserved communities with lesser educational attainment are prone to increased detrimental health due to the disproportionate accessibility of resources. Schools must ensure that the educational tools and materials are appropriate, reliable, and taught by external, certified dietician specialists.

Bill Int 081-2022 will request the DOE to submit a yearly report outlining their material, staff members, and courses. In that way, we can review those reports and identify which schools are failing to comply or lacking the resources to meet the requirements of this bill. From there, we will cohesively determine the underlying causes of their inability to integrate nutrition education and provide the necessary support, whether it is additional funding, resources or guidance. Advocating for bill Int 081-2022 will enhance students' awareness, promote positive behavior, and ensure accessibility to reduced or free meals; the goal is to decrease the likelihood of students experiencing detrimental health with the appropriate support in their early years of schooling, including low-income, underserved communities.

-Maryem Zaki

11/27/2022

My name is Melodie Bryant. Thank you to the Committee for taking my testimony today.

Helicopters over Chelsea, our parks, our adjacent islands, our botanical gardens, and our waterfront, have made both rivers and their adjoining parks unlivable. Knowing I'm speaking to the Committee for Economic Development is not encouraging, as I fear the very people I'm addressing have already prioritized money over people. And I have to wonder whether it's a coincidence that we can no longer report helicopters over us as noise complaints via 311, where our numbers were becoming overwhelming, but are forced to complain once again to the foxes guarding the henhouse. The fact is, the burden of keeping these heliports should come from industry, not us. They are the reason for this hearing even being needed. The public has already spoken and spoken loudly.

The industry knows full well what it's doing. These heliports stink up our greenways and promenades; the wind carries the smell of benzene up and down the waterfront. But the final self-own is the signs warning the public there may be high winds from helicopters being hosted. These business know they are causing danger and choose to foist the responsibility for safety onto the public so they can continue to run their business. What are they going to do about the pollution? Try to sell us gasmasks?

Supposedly these heliports are used for wealthy commuters. But we all know they are not limited to that. Whether coming from Manhattan, NJ, CT, Westchester or Rhode Island, this is a rogue industry which purports to serve commuters, but also ferries Instagram so-called “photographers,” at dangerous altitudes over our heads. It’s no surprise that while I’ve testified at many hearings on helicopters, I’ve yet to hear any voice in favor of these heliports that did not come from industry.

If I’m not mistaken, these heliports are on public land. Instead of these, we could have hockey rinks, roller rinks, more parkland for people and dogs, gardens, restaurants, event spaces, and other more creative, quieter and safer uses.

Please shut these heliports down in Manhattan. Give us back our waterfronts and our parklands as refuge from daily commerce. Let us once again have places to walk, think, dream and have a conversation in peace.

Thank you

Melodie Bryant
savvyflix@gmail.com
Chelsea 10011

November 23, 2022

I am writing to request that non-essential helicopter flights be banned from flying over the city.

Here, on the upper west side of Manhattan, the chop of helicopters can be heard incessantly, well into the late hours of the evening, only to start again before daylight. The tourism helicopters tend to not respect the current minimum altitude regulations and they run the same route time and time again, adding a highway in the air over our neighborhood that thunders with a reverberating grumble all day long.

Clearly some city noise and the sounds of emergency response vehicles are to be expected when you live in a city like ours, but the constant drone of the helicopters is just way beyond anything else.

Thank you,

Michael J McCready

From: michael krass <teenadak@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, December 2, 2022 9:37 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] helicopters

hello

in reviewing tuesdays recorded testimony at your hearing, i protest that it is untrue that tour helicopters fly only over water. their route regularly and continuously flies directly over the governors island park, disturbing the potential peace and wildlife of that sanctuary.

equally 'only over water' means that the tour helicopters, both from the nyc downtown heliport and from new jersey sites, skim within feet of the former piers of brooklyn bridge park, which obviously are IN THE WATER, upending the peace and wildlife sanctuaries which were so carefully and expensively established there for all city residents.

and so the pride in this testimony is unfounded, the need for the economic benefits of excessively noisy helicopters is unproven, the numbers on noise pollution in the parks and for the increasing residences built along the waterfront unaddressed.

please please GET RID OF TOUR HELICOPTERS until silent machines can be proven to fly undisturbed to the residents of the city of new york.

thank you
michael krass

NYC Helicopter Traffic 11/29/2022

I have lived at 235 Union Street, Brooklyn, NY, for 32 + years. I own a brownstone and occupy a portion of the building while also renting two apartments to families at affordable rents. Over the last several years I, my tenants, and neighbors have been regularly subjugated to sinister, loud, and intrusive noise coming from overhead helicopter traffic. I'm not referring to the occasional traffic copter or very infrequent police aircraft, but to the low-flying commuter helicopter traffic proceeding back and forth to JFK. The frequency of these flights varies but has grown steadily and is most intense on weekend rush hours. The noise pollution is so intense at times that I no longer use my outdoor space. Several times I've called 311. Each time my complaint was recorded, and I was given a service request number and informed that the Economic Development Corp would respond within ten days. I never did get a response.

I have visited the Blade company's web site which shows the map of their route to JFK proceeding over the water, down the upper bay, through the Verrazzano Narrows and on to the lower bay before turning east to JFK. This map is a LIE. These helicopters are taking a direct route over thousands of residences at low altitudes, and they are disturbing all the inhabitants below.

Who controls this activity? I've been led to believe that airspace is in the purview of the Federal government, but the city has control over potential landing sites. The City Council needs to shut down all landing sites for commuter service unless all the traffic using these heliports is strictly and honestly restricted to over-the-water travel.

Michael S. Popper

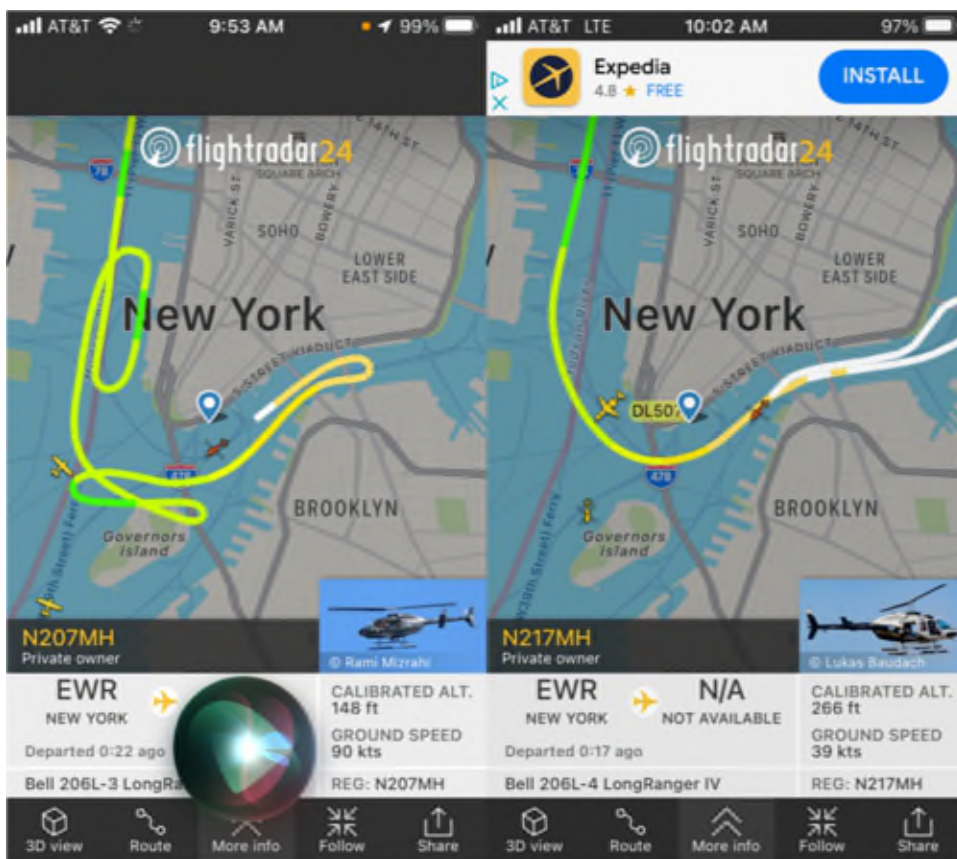
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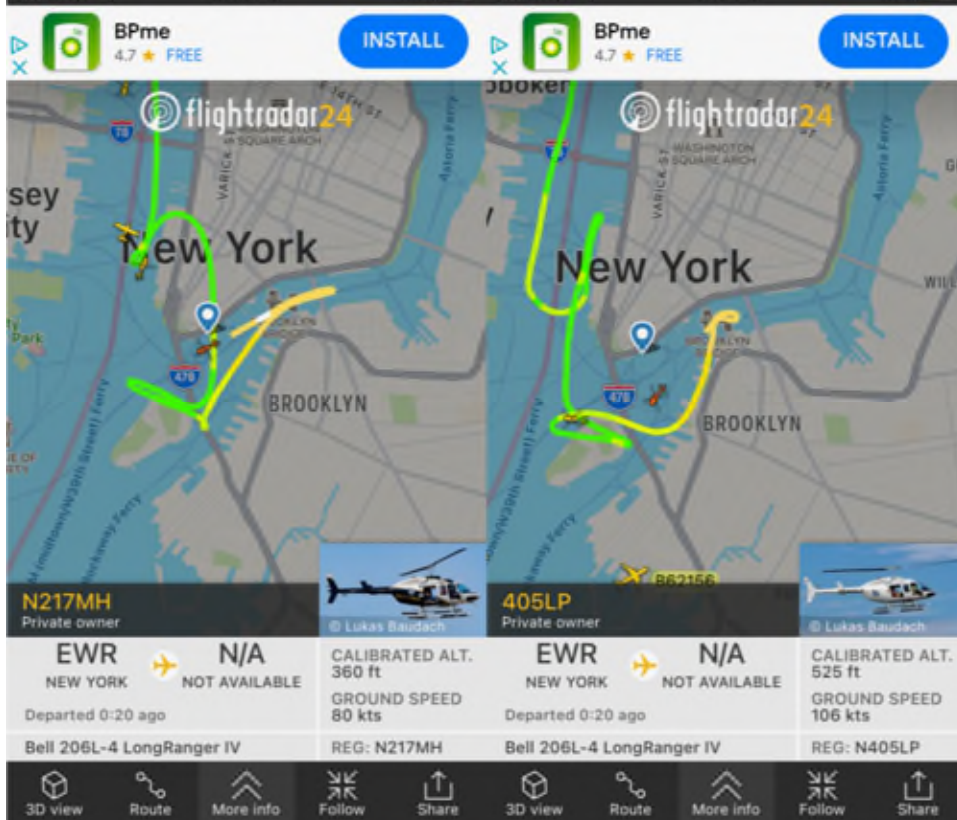
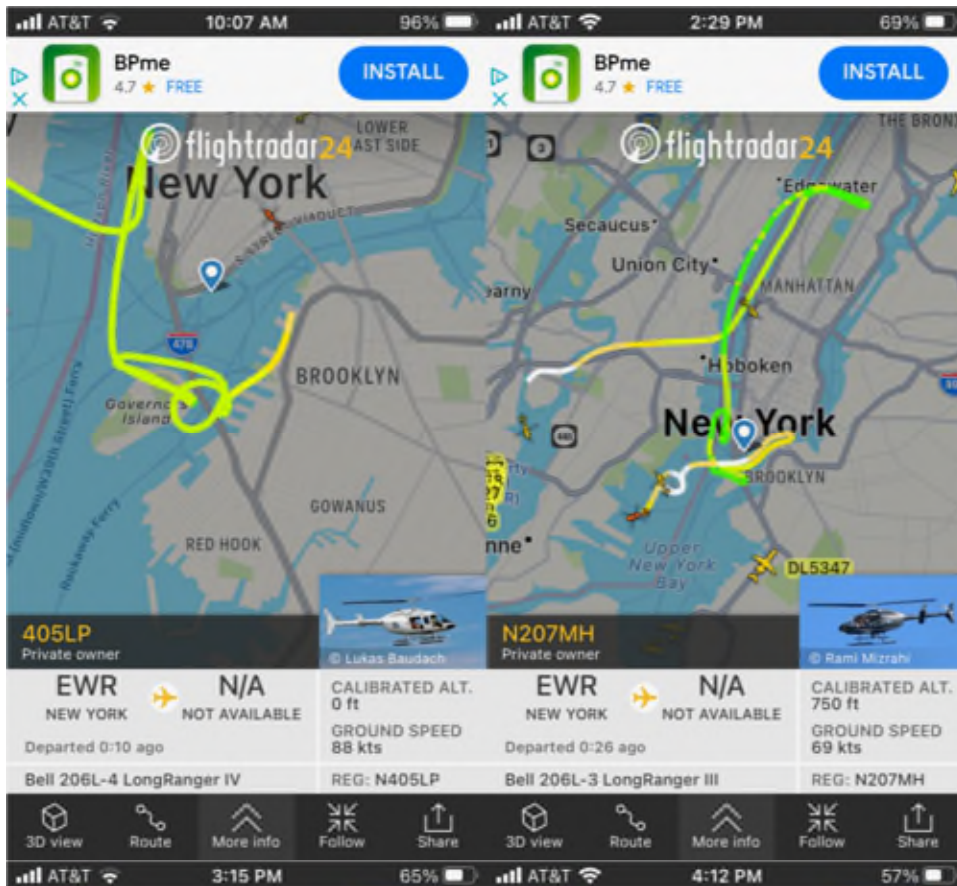
Testimony Statement regarding helicopter noise along Brooklyn waterfront.

As a Brooklyn heights resident for over 20 years, I have greatly appreciated the calm and tranquility that the neighborhood once offered.

Over the past few years that tranquility has been shattered by the continuous drone of sightseeing helicopters. No longer is the neighborhood quiet or Brooklyn Bridge park a refuge due to high volume of sightseeing helicopters passing multiple times along the Brooklyn waterfront. No longer can we open windows in our apartment on a nice day because of the noise reverberating from the surrounding buildings from the helicopters. It's been an assault on the neighborhood.

The helicopters according to the App Flightradar, more often originate from NJ airports not the NYC helipads. They pass along the Brooklyn waterfront repeatedly in one trip. Below are screen shots of the route they most often take. These screen shots are from one Sunday in October.





These routes show the repeated passes the helicopters make along the Brooklyn Bridge park, Dumbo and Brooklyn Heights. On clear days it's every 15 to 20 minutes that the helicopters pass along the waterfront, from 9am-until after dark which could be 9pm in the summer.

It's an assault of noise and air pollution on the local resident's quality of life.

Please, please get legislation passed to stop or limit these tours.

Thank you.

With much respect,

Michele Marozik

.

From: Mick Hilgers <mickhilgers@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, December 2, 2022 11:42 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Helicopter Traffic Over New York City, NJ, and Waterways

Dear New York City Council,

I'm writing to make the deadline to express concern about the relentless, loud, low-flying helicopter traffic that has become an extremely frequent (sometimes it feels nearly constant) disturbance to New York City, where I spend a great deal of time, and Hoboken, where I live.

It has not always been like this. The tourist helicopter traffic overhead at low altitudes makes a tremendous amount of aggravating noise -- passing by, but also regularly making slow, loud loops, often over Chelsea, where my partner's apartment is located, and where I often record audio and video material -- presumably so tourists can take photographs of the Empire State Building, Hudson Yards, and other landmarks. The "golden hour" near sunset can be so fraught with helicopter noise it brings to mind the Huey scenes in *Apocalypse Now* (minus the napalm. So far.).

Non-essential helicopter traffic over NYC should be strictly limited, if not altogether banned. Real world, actual, enforced limits -- not just reprimands and fines, and constant, constant loopholes. This should not be difficult or complicated. NYPD and medical emergency flights, of course, have their needed place in the air space above New York City. But the current free-for-all is dangerous, it's dirty, and it's already driving away a vital part of the lifeblood of this great city (or driving us nuts) -- all for the benefit of a handful of tourists who buzz overhead, not even experiencing NYC at street level...

Life in and around New York is hard enough. And this tourist helicopter industry has shown that it will evade any law on the books by any means at its disposal. An enforceable ban on non-essential helicopter traffic is the only solution to this health and safety hazard.

Thank you for reading this far and doing all you can to make that happen.

Mick Hilgers
14th Street,
Hoboken, NJ. 07030

--
Mick Hilgers he/him
mickhilgers@gmail.com

[Website](#)

From: Nancy Idaka Sheran <nancysheran@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, December 3, 2022 9:27 AM
To: Testimony
Cc: Nancy Idaka Sheran
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Helipads - put limits on air traffic

I live in Midtown Manhattan and am concerned about the safety of helicopters (and proposed electric tourist drone/planes) flights over Manhattan and the rivers that surround it. I also have privacy concerns.

We have congestion on the ground. Let's avoid congestion in the air, and think through what airborne vehicles we want in the air, how to keep everyone safe, and how to maintain quality of life for people who live in NYC.

Tourist helicopter flights are non-essential and should be strictly limited or prohibited. Any air traffic operating over Manhattan and NYC airspace faces increased risk to operate safely with the proliferation of supertalls and other tall buildings in Manhattan, along the rivers, and now also in other boroughs. Do we have to wait for accidents to happen? Is it worth the risk? We need to limit air traffic over Manhattan and NYC for quality of life and safety reasons. It shouldn't be a free for all!

And with the new cameras that can photograph areas miles away, I have privacy concerns for people who live in NYC.

Please limit air traffic over Manhattan and NYC.

Nancy Sheran
E 36th St.
New York, NY 10016

From: nmusinsky@gmail.com
Sent: Saturday, November 26, 2022 9:05 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony for the hearing regarding NYC heliport operations

To the Councilmembers,

I live on the Upper West Side (W. 87th Street). For the past few years we have been plagued by a great deal of tourist helicopter traffic because we are under the flight path of tourist helicopters from New Jersey, on their way to and from a circuit over Central Park. As a daily walker in the Park I cannot count the times that the peace of the park has been shattered by hovering helicopters, presumably to give their well-heeled riders extra time to aim their phone cameras at the greenery. The noise is jarring and upsetting, to the human and animal population below. It is truly an obscenity that a handful of rich tourists can destroy the well-being of tens of thousands of residents on the ground. Rain and wind become a blessing because one knows that the helicopters won't be out. This is a problem, as I have personally witnessed, not only in our neighborhood, but in the harbor area and around Governor's Island – whose lovely vistas and freedom from traffic have been ruined by the constant overflights of tourist copters, and along the Hudson River.

Besides these immediate quality of life issues, helicopters pose a huge safety risk– what if one crashed on a building or crowded street? – as well as a deplorable contribution to global warming. Helicopters are a blessing for emergency rescues – let's keep them for that. There is absolutely no justification for the use of helicopters for tourism or for travel for wealthy elites over a city of several million people.

Please oppose the construction of heliports in NYC, and please support the closing of each and every heliport whose purpose is for recreational or commuter use.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Nina Musinsky
W. 87th St.
New York, NY 10024

From: Norrice Raymaker <norrice.raymaker@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 1, 2022 11:05 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL]

Dear NY EDC Council Members,

I am writing to ask you to close the NYC heliports. Please know that elected officials and residents in Hudson County, NJ support this regulation.

Nonessential helicopters negatively impact our quality of life. We are subjected to tourist, commuter and charter helicopter traffic flying over or to New York City, JFK, Newark, LaGuardia and Long Island. We cannot enjoy our parks. Our homes vibrate and the noise, which can be heard inside or outside our homes, is very disturbing. The helicopters fly over our schools and places of worship interrupting learning and services.

The traffic also impacts our enjoyment of New York City. Recently, while at Lincoln Center, I saw and heard helicopters hovering over Central Park. New York City is a world class city, but unlike Paris and London which have banned helicopter traffic, helicopter corporations here continue to degrade our beautiful New York City, the New York Harbor, Ellis and Governors Islands, Liberty State Park, the Statue of Liberty, the Brooklyn and Washington Bridges and other sacred metropolitan landmarks.

It is ironic that we have banned plastic bags in New Jersey but our hands are seemingly tied when it comes to banning nonessential helicopters. We have legislation in committee at the state level that has not made it to the floor. We have been advised that Federal legislation will solve the helicopter problem but that too has not advanced.

You have a unique opportunity to dramatically reduce nonessential helicopters. Please use this opportunity to regulate nonessential helicopter traffic in the greater NYC area. We are indebted to you.

Sincerely,

Norrice Raymaker
Palisade Ave,
Jersey City, NJ 07306

norrice.raymaker@gmail.com

From: Paul Adams <paul.adams@stonybrook.edu>
Sent: Thursday, December 1, 2022 8:47 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Helicopter Hell on North Fork of Long Island

Helicopters commuting from nYC to East Hampton make summers miserable in Riverhead!

--

-

Paul

From: Peter Reed <psreednyc@icloud.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 26, 2022 11:15 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Nov 29 Hearing regarding Heliports

Dear NYC Council:

Although I am not able to attend the NYC Council's Committee hearing on November 29 regarding heliport operations, I write in support of eliminating non-essential helicopter traffic over the city. I reside near Central Park, and in recent years, the daily noise pollution from helicopters has affected our quality of life. The disturbing noise is noticeable inside the apartment as well as outdoors. There is no escape. The noise has negatively impacted the experience of being in Central Park – one of the greatest American designed landscapes intended as a refuge from the pressures of urban life. Please take the bold move of eliminating non-essential helicopter traffic. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Reed

Park Ave
New York, NY 10128

psreednyc@mac.com

From: Phil Cohen <philiphcohen@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, December 2, 2022 3:48 PM
To: Testimony; Farias, Amanda; Nieves, Rebecca
Subject: [EXTERNAL] T-2022-2403, Bill 551 -- Committees on Economic Development & State and Federal Legislation

Dear Councilmembers-

My name is Phil Cohen. I am a Council Member in the City of Hoboken, New Jersey. I have served on Council Member Gale Brewer's Helicopter Task Force when Council Member Brewer served as Manhattan Borough President.

I write to encourage the New York City Council to do all they can to eliminate non-essential helicopters that regularly use New York City heliports. I watched the testimony that occurred on November 29th. As Council Member Gale Brewer noted, in response to testimony from a representative of the NYEDC, when asked whether he had communicated with New Jersey officials about these issues and testified to the effect that after speaking with New Jersey officials he heard that he heard "no complaints" from New Jersey residents based on his outreach to New Jersey representatives. I want to assure the members of the Committee that, as Council Member Brewer noted, this testimony does not jibe with the numbers of regular complaints that New Jersey residents regularly lodge with their representatives. In fact, many complaints are regularly submitted by New Jersey residents.

Below is an excerpt of a complaint from a Hoboken resident that I received **today**, through Governor Phil Murphy's office. This Hoboken resident's complaint, who lives in midtown Hoboken, is typical of the types of complaints I have received with regular frequency direct from Hoboken residents or indirectly from complaints forwarded to me by the City of Hoboken's Office of Constituent Affairs.

The following is an excerpt of the representative complaint I received today through Governor Murphy's Office:

"I realize there's always been heavy helicopter traffic over the Hudson river proper, but this is new.

About 3 months ago, helicopter traffic started coming directly over Hoboken, west to east and back again, at low altitudes (under 1000 feet, sometimes significantly). It was so sudden and noticeable, we thought it was just rerouting because the UN was in session that week. This was 6-10 flights an hour at times, directly over central Hoboken (and therefore Jersey City/Union City further west, too).

However, it continued after the General Assembly ended. I'm not sure if they are commuters or tourists, but this route and its noise is definitely a new thing. I've lived here 15 years. This shakes windows and wakes up babies. (emphasis added)"

By making New York City heliports less inviting to non-essential helicopters by banning non-essential helicopters from the New York City operated heliports, the New York City Council's enacting "511" will effectively reduce the numbers of helicopters flying over New York City residents and New Jersey residents. Many of these non-essential helicopters fly over the Hudson River over New Jersey and our communities *en route* to the New York City heliports -- this is particularly so with respect to the 30th Street heliport -- as New York City is the desired destination for many daily non-essential New Jersey-based helicopter flights.

On behalf of my constituents in Hoboken, New Jersey, I remain ready, willing and able to work with and support your important efforts to address these critical, regional, quality of life issues that daily affect the densely populated communities of New Yorkers and New Jerseyans.

Thank you for your leadership on these important quality of life issues.

Respectfully submitted-

Phil Cohen
Hoboken City Council Member, 5th Ward
Hoboken, New Jersey

From: Rick Elkins <rick.elkins@icloud.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 30, 2022 9:54 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Terrible noise from helicopters

This is to testify to the impact of helicopter noise on our family.

We live in Brooklyn Heights, and the helicopter noise here is very stressful for us. That noise interferes with our work during the day, makes our meals stressful, and makes it difficult to enjoy the simple pleasure of such things as watching a movie, as the noise from helicopters frequently drowns out the dialogue. Conversations becomes difficult. We can't even enjoy relaxing in the waterfront Brooklyn Bridge Park, as the noise there is stressful.

The noise from each passing helicopter lasts for a surprisingly long time, compounded by the fact that they often move slowly to allow passengers to see the views. And they often sit with their noisy engines running at the Helipad by the South Street Seaport for extended periods of time.

All this is damaging our quality of life.
And our neighbors agree that this is a big problem for them, too.

We feel that tourist helicopters and helicopter taxis to airports, etc. should be banned, as they benefit so few at the expense of so many.

And the sheer numbers of helicopters in this crowded sky makes a tragic accident seem inevitable.

Obviously official helicopters such as those of the NYPD need to be allowed.
But we hope action will be taken to ban non-essential helicopters.

Thank you.

Rick Elkins and family
Hicks Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201

West 83rd St.,
New York, NY 10024
December 1, 2022

New York City Council
Committee on Economic Development

To whom it may concern:

My husband and I have lived on the Upper West Side since 2013. We choose to live here to take advantage of the natural beauty and serenity of Central Park and Riverside Park. We spend time in the parks at least daily, so we are directly affected by quality of life issues in our neighborhood.

That quality has been seriously degraded in the past 2-3 years by the increased bombardment of helicopters flying through (bad enough) and hovering over (intolerable) Manhattan. The noisy assault begins as early as 7:30AM and often persists until well after sunset. Often there are multiple helicopters hanging over us in the park, disturbing hundreds of thousands of city residents for the idle amusement of a few inconsiderate sightseers and the enrichment of unscrupulous tour operators.

These non-essential flights are most disturbing during pleasant weather when we try to let fresh air into our homes. But the flights are omnipresent even on gray, rainy and foggy days when the flights travel closer to the ground, causing even more noise and air pollution.

I applaud the work of the City Council and local federal officials to ban non-essential helicopter traffic over the city limits, and I urge you to pursue all avenues to remove this pestilent and dangerous hazard from our skies.

Thank you,
Rick Titone
ricktitone1@gmail.com

Rosemarie Santiesteban
West 111th Street
New York, NY 10025
romanhattan@hotmail.com

To Whom it May Concern,

Helicopters greatly decrease our quality of life in NY and NJ. Their noise is a disturbance to people and their emissions are warming the planet.

I volunteer at Riverside Park and the helicopters going up and down the Hudson disrupts the peacefulness of the park, the wildlife and anyone trying to enjoy one of the few spaces in Manhattan to enjoy nature.

I am very fortunate to have a roof deck on our building which has been a wonderful safe escape during covid, but to have helicopters flying by every 5-10 minutes gives us no peace to relax, read or converse with our neighbors.

Also the helicopters are non stop. They start early in the morning, go through the day and are as late as 11pm at night.

New Yorkers should not be inconvenienced by joy rides disturbing the environment and adding carbon to the ecosystem.

Even on Wednesday Nov 30th on Ask the Mayor with Governor Murphy a caller called to complain of the lower flight paths and how his windows are rattling. It is truly frightening to have to be woken up by them hovering our neighborhood on the Upper West Side.

Please do not allow this to continue and stop the helicopter traffic except for emergency needs.

Thank you so much.

Ro SantiEsteban

From: Robert Hullot-Kentor <rhullotkentor@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 1, 2022 9:31 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] The Problem of NYC Helicopter Traffic. Testimony.

I would like to include my voice among the thousands and thousands, and certainly millions of New York City residents--if they had the moment to express themselves on the matter--who have been distressed for many years and decades now by the ongoing helicopter traffic over the city.

What I can briefly contribute to this conversation is especially ONE OBSERVATION.

The great cities of Europe, think especially of Paris, never would allow air traffic and certainly not helicopters to fly over the metropolis. And why is that? Because Paris, like Madrid and many other European cities would never risk damage to what is recognized as precious human achievements. Do they need to be names? These are the achievements first of all of human life in its most profound agglomeration. These are the achievements of great museums, concert halls, temples, churches, sacred buildings of many kinds, governmental buildings of irreplaceable dignity and achievement.

And here in New York City we treat those very same things as a tourist ride?

We endanger all of this to the hazards of helicopter traffic?

Because what is anything worth compared to the tourist industry?

One of the most interesting aspects, sociologically, about the United States and relevant to the issue of the helicopter free for all over the city--and no less to the appalling loss of life of pedestrians in our streets--is that WHAT IS MOVING ALWAYS TAKES PRECEDENCE OVER WHAT IS NOT MOVING. The helicopters, by this principle, take precedence over all that is underneath them. This deserves some thinking about. It is a violent principle.

The Constitution of the United States, like the constitutions of democratic nations world wide, holds as a principle the value of **tranquility**. New York City residents suffer from many certainly even innumerable things, but almost to a person, we suffer the deprivation of that tranquility that is a human right according to the most precious statement of the values of this nation. And a major and easily avoidable source of this damage to tranquility is the tourist traffic the crowds the airspace above our heads.

I urge the exclusion of helicopter traffic from the airspace over this city, and I do so in the strongest possible terms. Ending the helicopter traffic in this city would be a wonderful accomplishment for ourselves and for the natural environment no less.

Sincerely,
Dr. Robert Hullot-Kentor

From: Rod Paine <roddypaine@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, December 2, 2022 10:42 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NYCC EconDev Hearing Testimony
Attachments: NYCC EconDev Hearing Testimony.pdf

Dear New York City Council Members,

I regret I was not able to attend Tuesday's hearing, but wanted to briefly share my experience on the topic of nonessential helicopters over New York City.

I live on West 87th Street in Manhattan and, as I imagine you know, all of the commuter heli- copters cross Central Park at the Reservoir. The Blade company and others use large and extremely loud Sikorsky aircraft and the noise is deafening. To compound matters, most of them cheat and fly below 1,000 feet, making it all the more intolerable.

Their flights start before 7:00 AM some days and I've seen them cross late into the evening. For a handful of well-heeled travelers, tens of thousands of us below have to suffer their egre- gious noise. Not very egalitarian for New York, is it?

And even this sonic assault pales in comparison with FlyNYON's constant tourist traffic. Their 40-year-old Bell helicopters are loud and slow, and they circle once on the East Side and then again right over our street. From Kearny, NJ, FlyNYON sends three to four choppers per hour on the nicer days.

They used to continue over Roosevelt Island and turn in at 34th Street to buzz the Empire State Building, but that suddenly stopped last summer and in April, 2021, respectively. Did some- one of influence get to them? Either way, they end up over Governor's Island, DUMBO and the waterfront parks, presenting a terrible nuisance to all seeking a break from the City's din.

I'm not an emissions or climate expert but I can only image the pollution these things create over our skies. The Bell Ranger burns about 26 gallons of fuel per hour and the Sikorsky S76, a staggering 105 gallons per hour. This is an immense waste of resources and huge generator of air pollution from companies not even based in New York.

Please see the attached documents to get an idea of how frequently the tourist flights pass overhead. I also have some video and other supporting information if you're interested.

I know the NJ-based tourist outfits like FlyNYON are out of the City's reach, but stopping the loud commuter flights would be a step in the right direction This also might embolden our rep- resentatives in Washington to address the problem at the Federal level.

I much appreciate your taking the time to read this, and I appreciate anything you can do.

Very truly yours,

Rod Paine
West 87th Street
New York City

New York City Council
250 Broadway
New York, NY 10007

F. Rodney Paine
West 87th Street
New York, NY 10024

2 December 2022

Dear New York City Council Members,

I regret I was not able to attend Tuesday's hearing, but wanted to briefly share my experience on the topic of nonessential helicopters over New York City.

I live on West 87th Street in Manhattan and, as I imagine you know, all of the commuter helicopters cross Central Park at the Reservoir. The Blade company and others use large and extremely loud Sikorsky aircraft and the noise is deafening. To compound matters, most of them cheat and fly below 1,000 feet, making it all the more intolerable.

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I much appreciate your taking the time to read this, and I appreciate anything you can do.

Very truly yours,

Rod Paine

Recent Helicopter Flights over Upper West Side

Saturday May 1 (59)			
	4:03 R44 *	10:31 N217MH	4:19 N838BP *
9:24 N206MH	4:29 N7159H	10:33 N206MH	4:28 N207MH
9:25 N217MH	4:32 N206MH	10:36 N7159H	4:33 N7159H
9:27 N726H	4:37 N726H	10:38 N207MH	4:39 N206MH
	4:39 R44 *		4:40 N217MH
10:13 N838BP *	4:44 N217MH	11:33 N206MH	
10:14 N206MH		11:34 N7159H	5:01 N929WA
10:20 N207MH	5:41 N206MH	11:35 N217MH	5:15 N99DQ *
10:21 N7159H	5:42 N726H	11:40 N50178	5:30 N207MH
10:25 N726H	5:43 N7159H	11:45 N207MH	5:33 N838BP *
	5:45 N207MH		5:36 N206MH
11:17 N217MH		12:14 N838BP *	5:40 N7159H
11:18 N206MH	6:24 N7159H	12:31 N206MH	5:49 N48ZA
11:34 N207MH	6:33 R44 *	12:36 N7159H	
11:38 N726H	6:37 N726H	12:40 N207MH	6:00 N88ZA *
	6:40 N206MH	12:43 N217MH	6:17 N408GG *
12:15 N217MH	6:44 N207MH	12:48 N7667S	6:27 N207MH
12:30 N726H	6:45 N217MH		6:29 N206MH
12:34 N7159H	6:53 N929WA*	1:28 N206MH	6:33 N217MH
12:36 N206MH	6:54 N980TT*	1:33 N217MH	6:35 N7159H
		1:36 N7159H	6:55 N355AG
1:19 N207MH	7:33 N207MH	1:38 N207MH	6:56 N838BP *
1:34 N175RV	7:36 N7159H	1:52 N838BP *	
1:35 N7159H	7:36 N217MH		7:39 N7159H
1:38 N726H	7:37 N88ZA *	2:02 N355AG	7:42 N207MH
1:39 N206MH	7:38 N206MH	2:14 N155RR *	7:43 N217MH
1:40 N217MH	7:57 N7667S	2:36 N206MH	7:43 N206MH
		2:37 N7159H	
2:29 N207MH	8:57 N217MH	2:38 N207MH	8:47 N207MH
2:35 N726H	9:29 N7159H	2:40 N355AG	8:49 N88ZA *
2:37 N217MH	10:44 N206MH	2:41 N217MH	
	10:46 N7159H		10:06 N207MH
3:08 N838BP *		3:30 N7159H	10:07 N206MH
3:28 N206MH	Sunday May 2 (63)	3:33 N207MH	
3:29 N726H	9:24 N217MH	3:46 N206MH	
3:30 N207MH	9:25 N206MH	3:50 N217MH	
3:31 N217MH	9:29 N7159H	3:58 N155RR	
4:02 N7667S *			

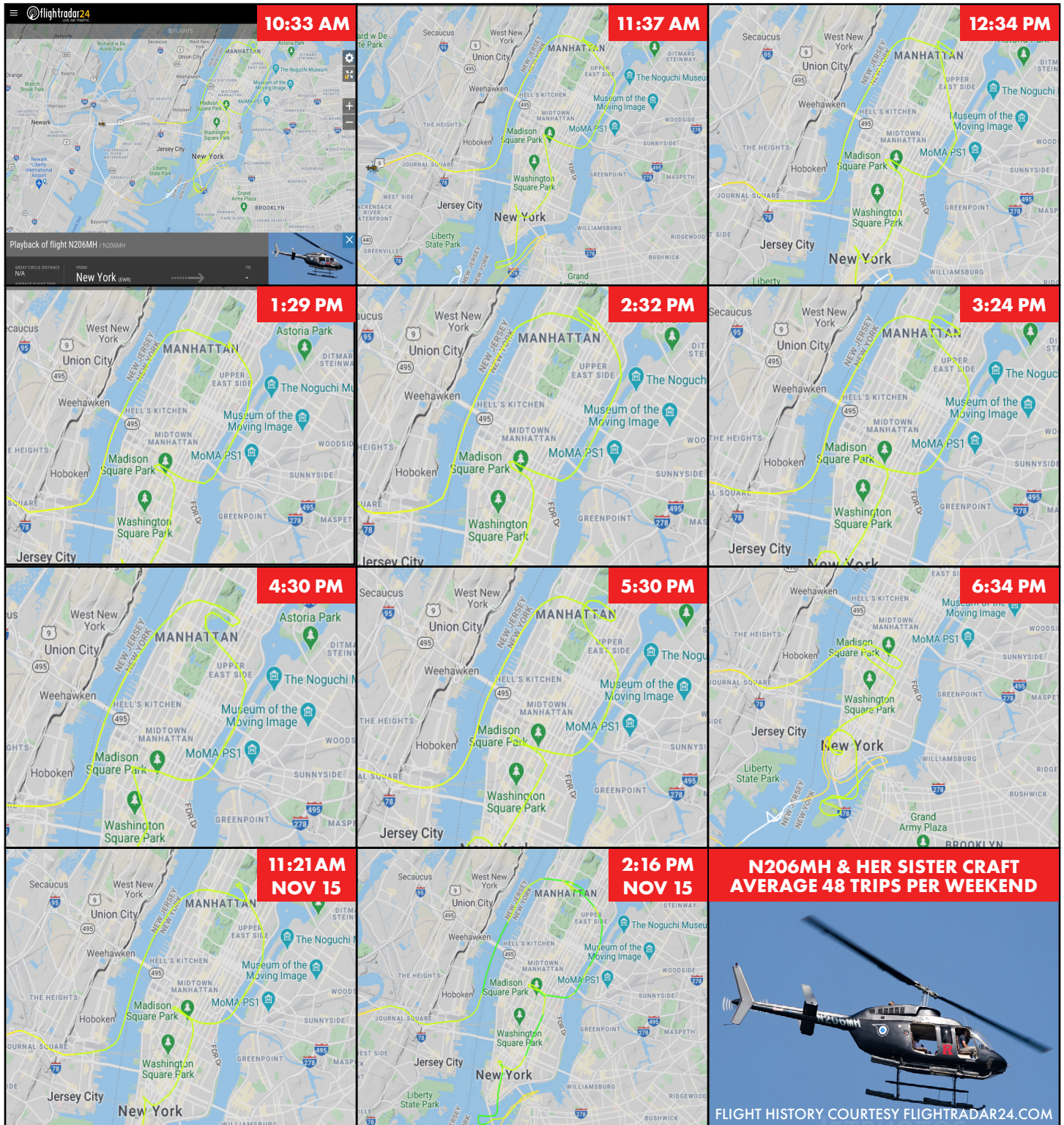
* straight-thru flight; all FlyNYON choppers circled at Fifth Ave and CPW



THE SAME CHOPPERS ARE FOREVER CIRCLING OVER CENTRAL PARK.

AND THEY'RE ALL FROM FLY NYON OUT OF KEARNY NJ


A DAY IN THE LIFE OF FLY NYON'S N206MH FROM 14-15 NOVEMBER 2020. NOTE THE CIRCLING OVER CENTRAL PARK AND JOURNEY DOWNTOWN. THEY FLY IN PACKS OF UP TO FIVE COPTERS PER HOUR.



N7159H
Private owner





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EWR  **N/A**
NEW YORK
EDT (UTC -04:00)
ACTUAL 1:28 PM ESTIMATED

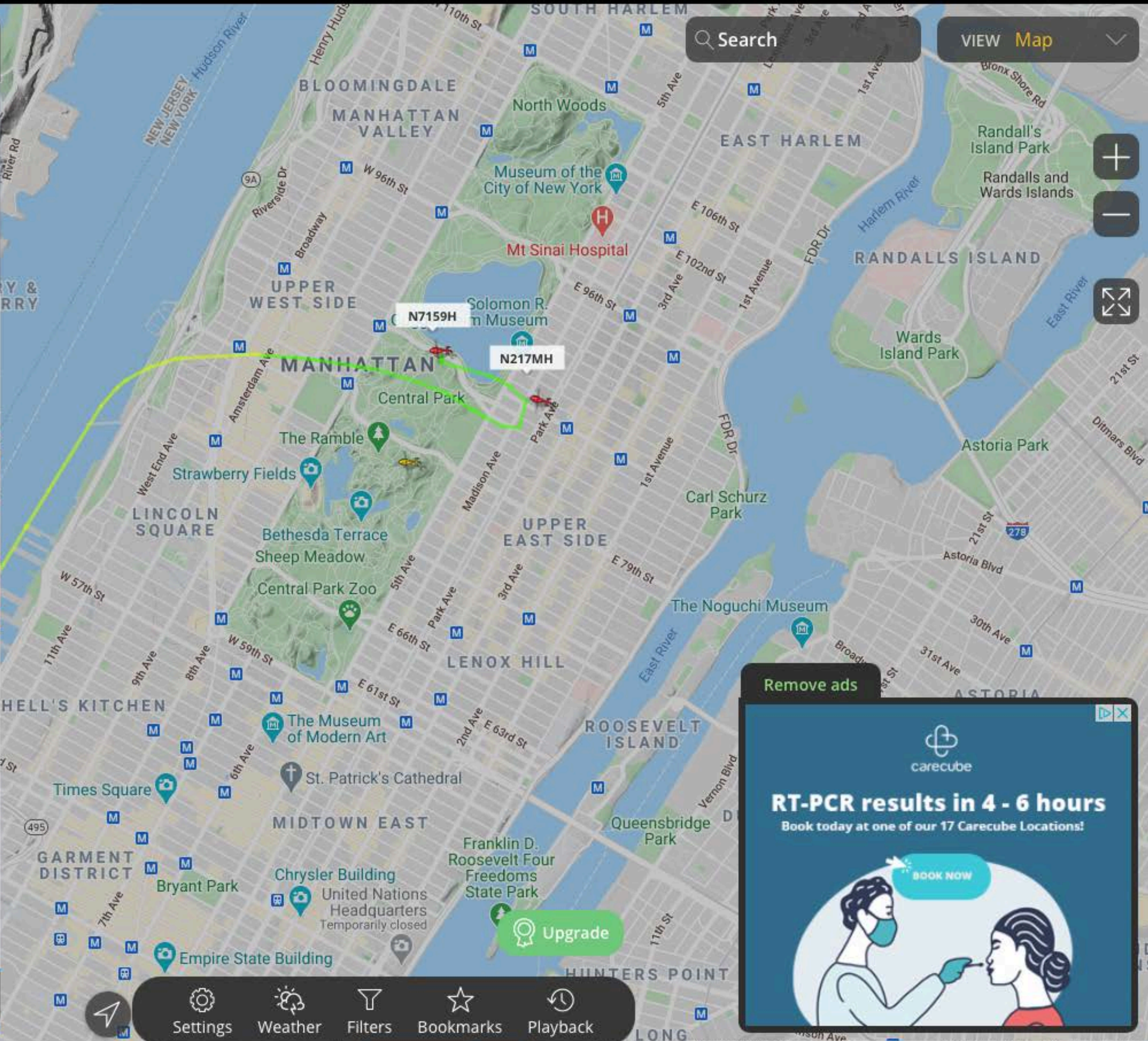


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 AIRCRAFT TYPE (B06)
Bell 206L-3 LongRanger III

REGISTRATION N7159H	COUNTRY OF REG. 
SERIAL NUMBER (MSN) 	AGE 



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N206MH

Private owner



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EWR

NEW YORK

EDT (UTC -04:00)




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ACTUAL


2:20 PM


ESTIMATED


AIRCRAFT TYPE (B06)
Bell 206L-3


REGISTRATION
N206MH


COUNTRY OF REG.



SERIAL NUMBER (MSN)



AGE



Recent N206MH flights

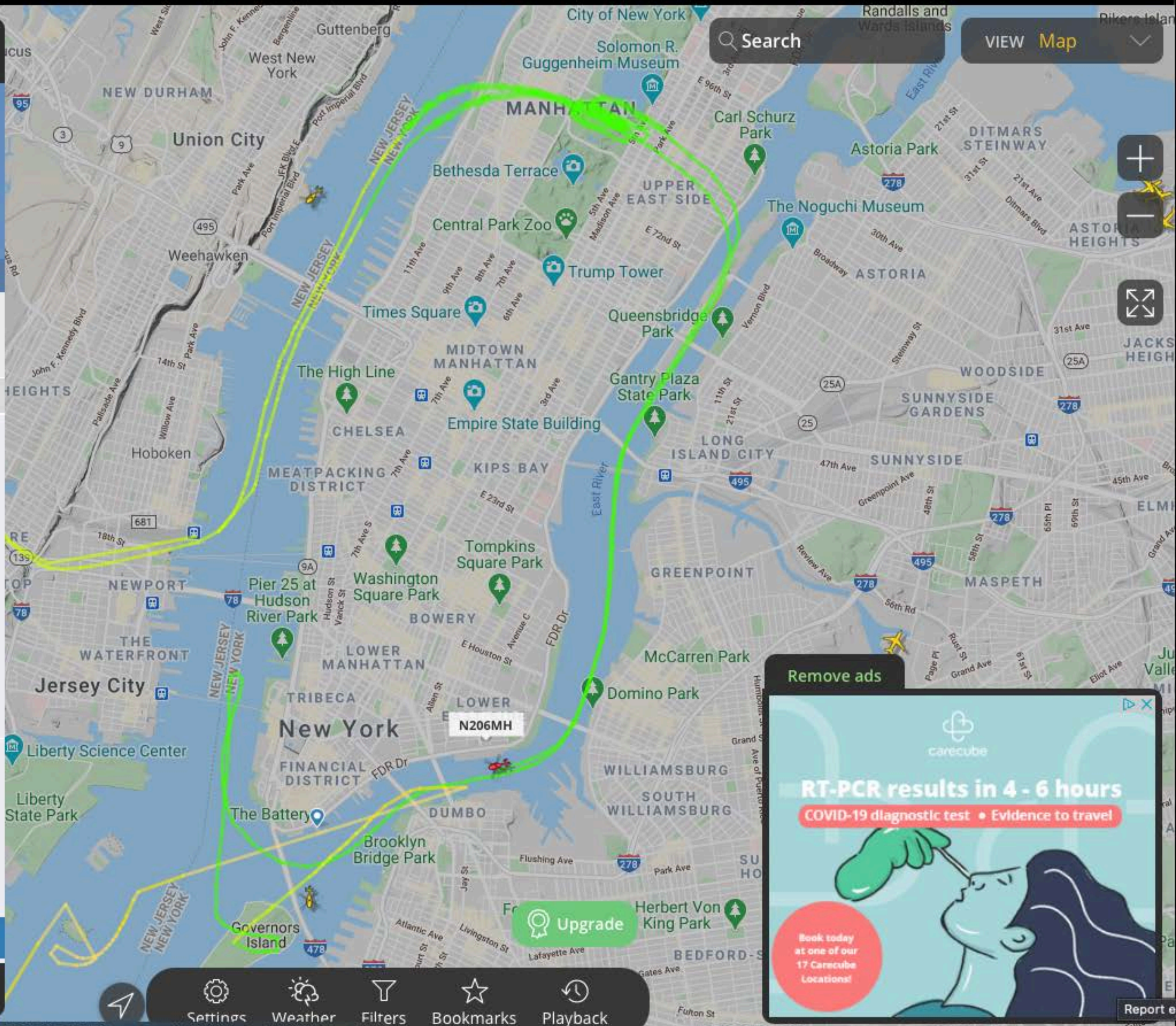
3D view

Route

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The map displays the flight path of aircraft N206MH in bright green. The path starts in the Hudson River area, moves north through Union City and Weehawken, then enters Manhattan. It follows a loop through the Upper East Side, passing landmarks like the Guggenheim Museum and Central Park Zoo, then through Midtown Manhattan, passing Times Square and the Empire State Building. The path continues south through Lower Manhattan, passing the Financial District and the Battery, before heading south into Brooklyn and then back towards the Hudson River. The map includes various city labels, street names, and landmarks.

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1 km

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N726H

Private owner



Aircraft photo not available
If you have a photo and want it to appear on Flightradar24, upload it to jetphotos.com

JRB

NEW YORK

EDT (UTC -04:00)

N/A

ACTUAL

5:37 PM

ESTIMATED



Aircraft Detection Lighting

ADLS for wind farms, communications towers, power lines and installations.


 DeText Inc

Open



AIRCRAFT TYPE (B06)
Bell 206L-3 LongRanger III

REGISTRATION
N726H

COUNTRY OF REG.


SERIAL NUMBER (MSN)

AGE

 3D view

 Route

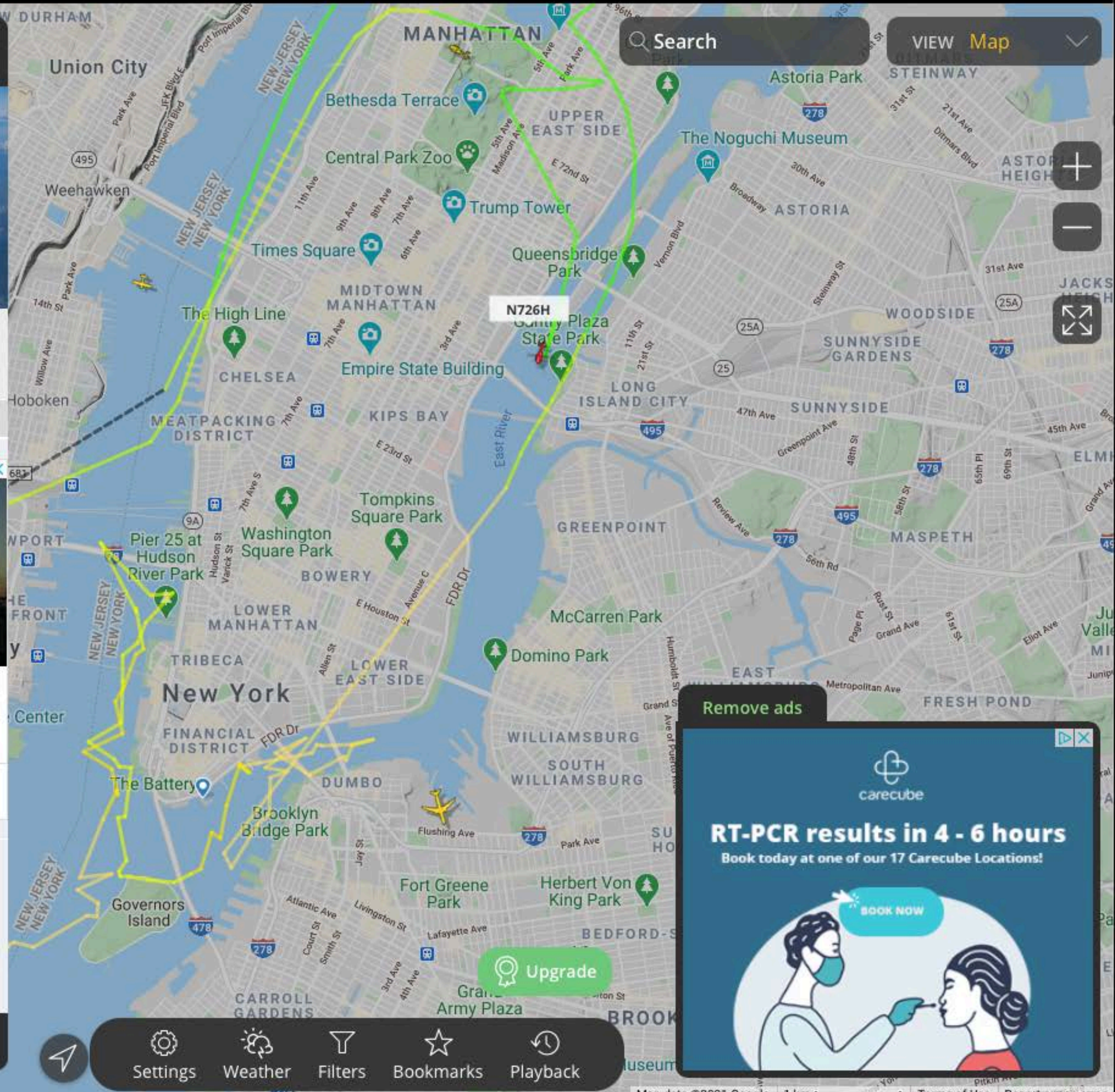
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Private owner



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N/A

ACTUAL

5:37 PM

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Aircraft Detection Lighting


ADLS for wind farms, communications towers, power lines and installations.

 DeTect Inc

Open

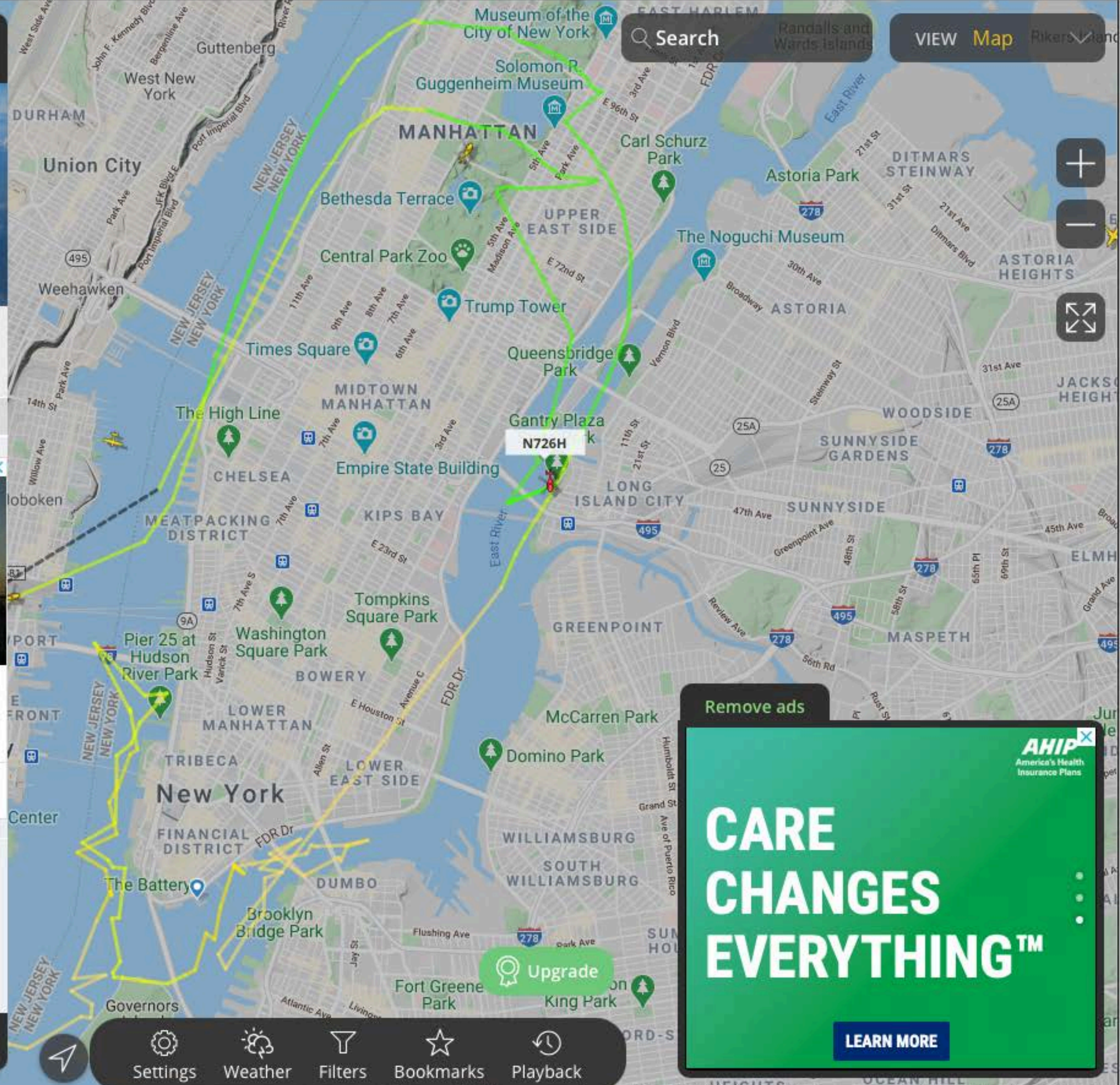
 AIRCRAFT TYPE (B06)
Bell 206L-3 LongRanger III

REGISTRATION
N726H

COUNTRY OF REG.


SERIAL NUMBER (MSN)

AGE



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10:17 AM


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THE OCEANS SUPERIOR OMEGA

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AIRCRAFT TYPE (B06)

Bell 206L-3 LongRanger III


REGISTRATION

N7159H


COUNTRY OF REG.




SERIAL NUMBER (MSN)





AGE





Recent N7159H flights







CALIBRATED ALTITUDE

500 ft

VERTICAL SPEED




GPS ALTITUDE





TRACK

157°



Speed & altitude graph





GROUND SPEED

49 kts

TRUE AIRSPEED


N/A

INDICATED AIRSPEED


N/A

MACH


N/A




3D view




Route



Follow



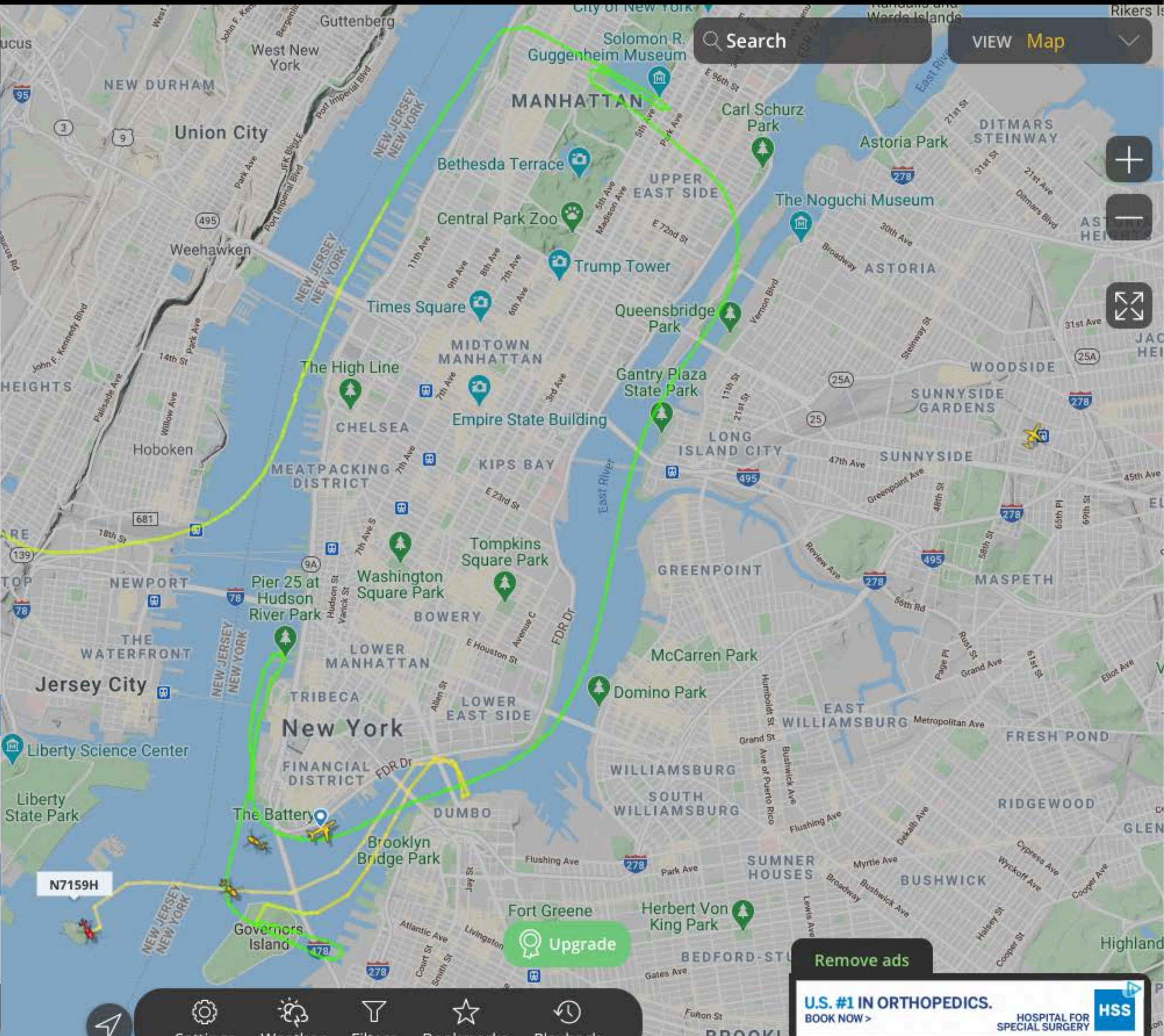
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Bell 206L-3


REGISTRATION
N206MH


COUNTRY OF REG.



SERIAL NUMBER (MSN)


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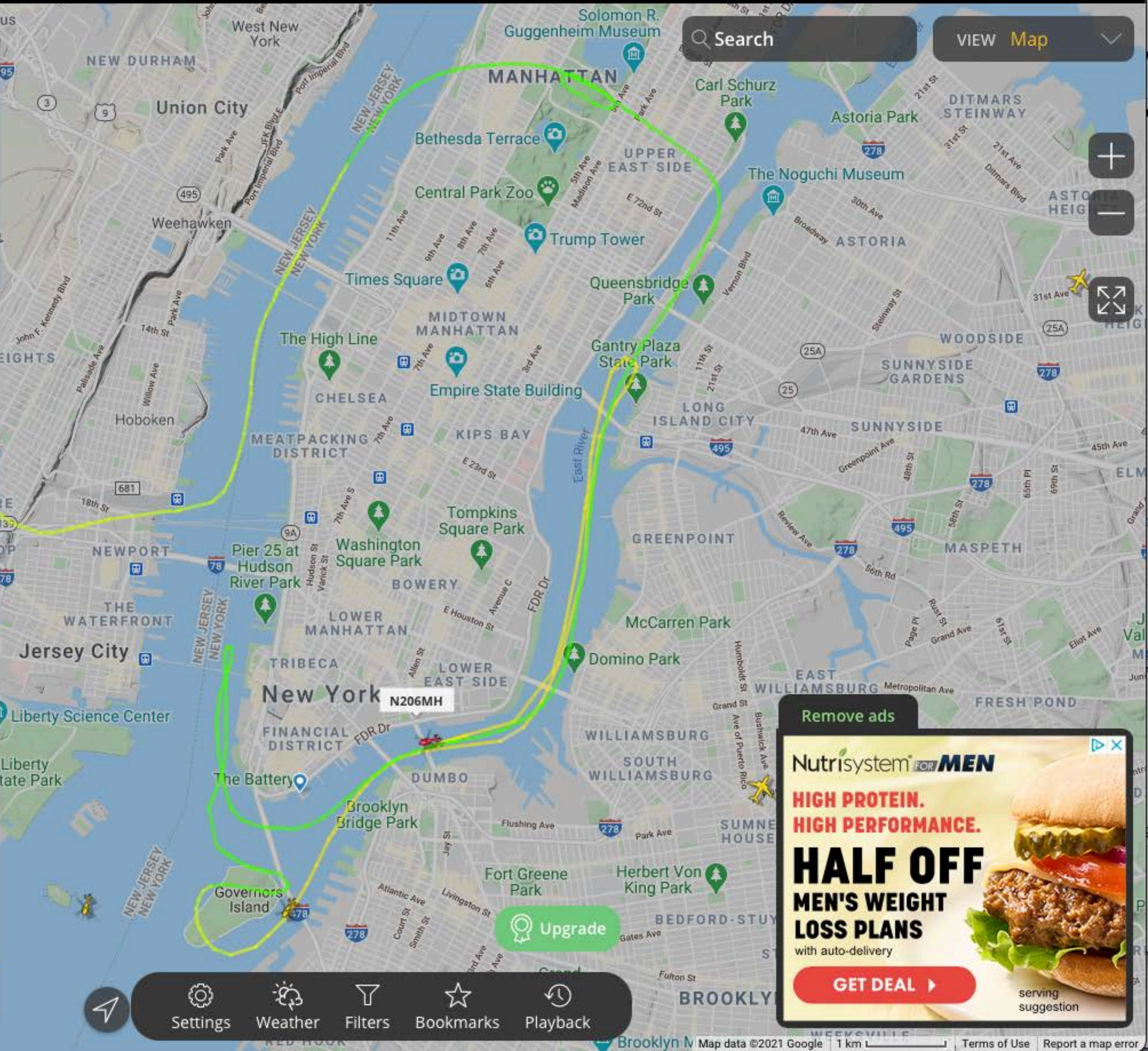
3D view

Route

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The map displays the flight path of aircraft N206MH, a Bell 206L-3 helicopter, over New York City. The path is highlighted in green and yellow, starting from the Jersey City area, crossing the Hudson River, and looping through Manhattan and Brooklyn. Key landmarks and neighborhoods labeled include Union City, Weehawken, Hoboken, Jersey City, The Battery, Financial District, Lower Manhattan, Tribeca, Chelsea, Midtown Manhattan, Upper East Side, East Side, Greenpoint, Williamsburg, South Williamsburg, Bedford-Stuyvesant, and Brooklyn. The map also shows major highways like I-95, I-278, and I-495, as well as parks like Central Park, Times Square, and the High Line. A search bar and map controls are visible in the top right corner.

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EWR



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NEW YORK


EDT (UTC -04:00)

ACTUAL

12:28 PM

ESTIMATED

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AIRCRAFT TYPE (B06)
Bell 206L-4 LongRanger


REGISTRATION
N217MH


COUNTRY OF REG.



SERIAL NUMBER (MSN)



AGE



 Recent N217MH flights




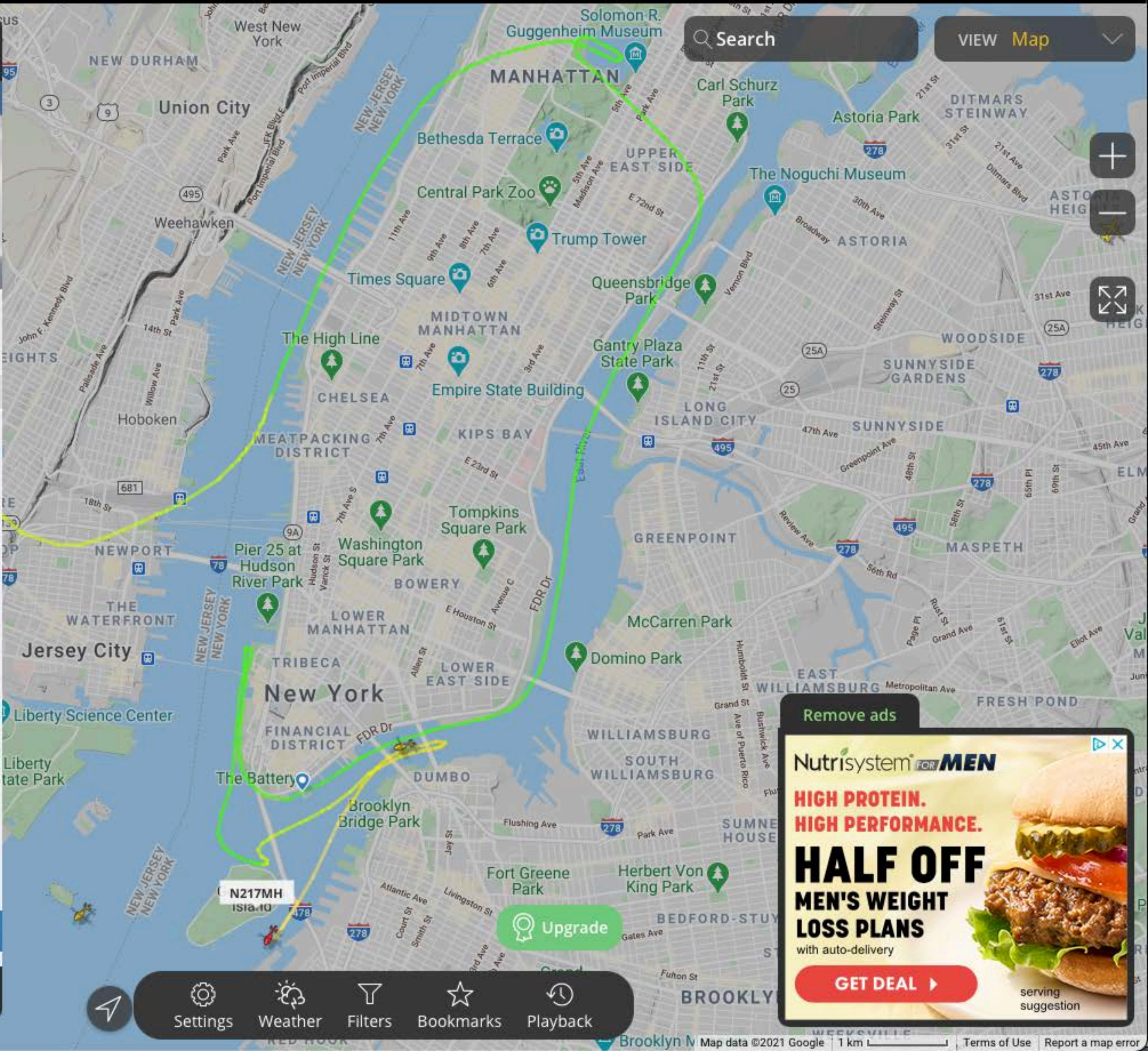
 3D view

 Route

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NEW YORK

EDT (UTC -04:00)

ACTUAL

12:26 PM

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AIRCRAFT TYPE (B06)

Bell 206L-3 LongRanger III

REGISTRATION

N7159H

COUNTRY OF REG.



SERIAL NUMBER (MSN)



AGE



Recent N7159H flights



3D view



Route



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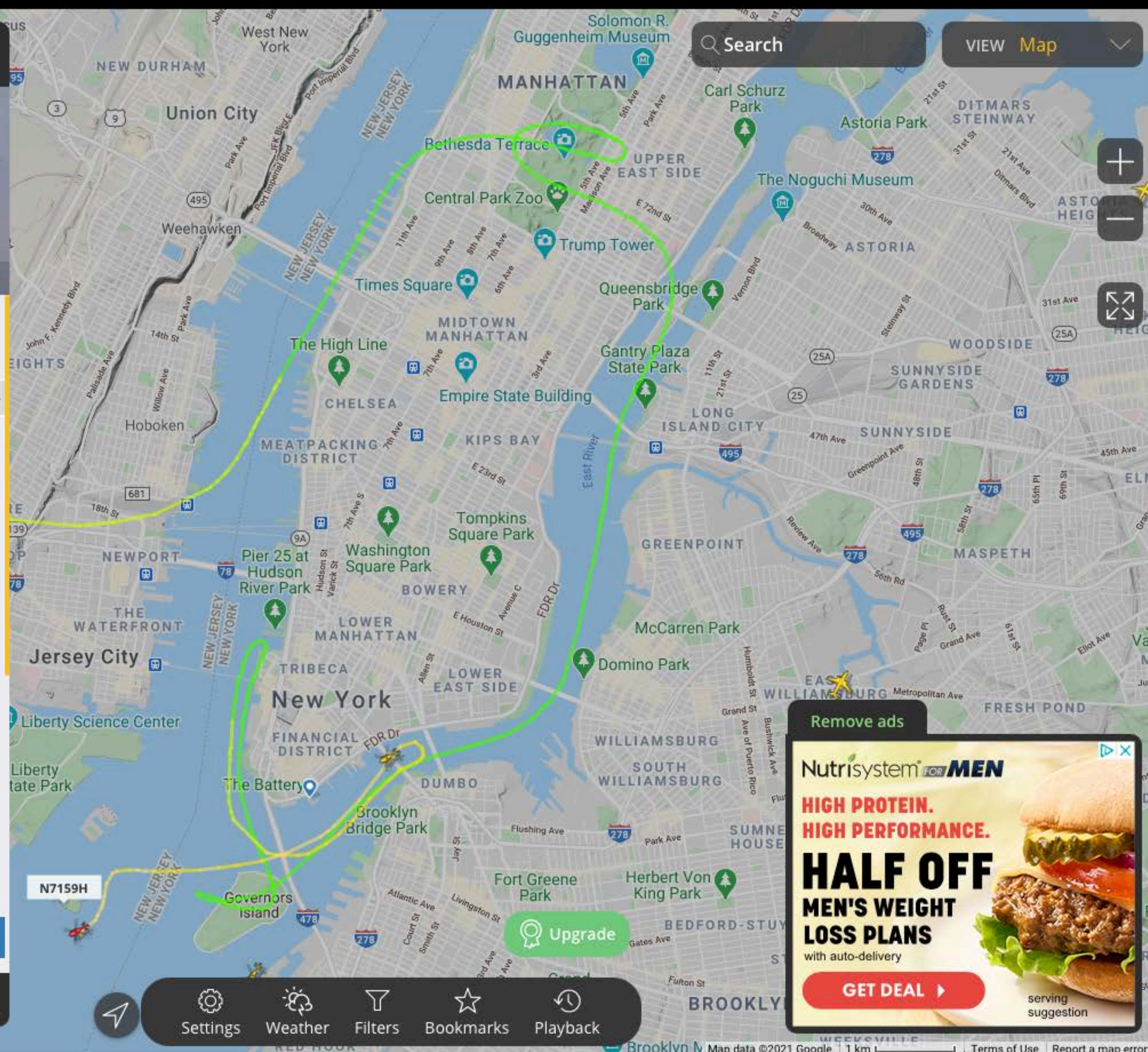
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N206MH

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EWR

NEW YORK

EDT (UTC -04:00)




N/A

ACTUAL

12:23 PM

ESTIMATED




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Enjoy
Deluxe accommodation,
dinner & drinks


RIGGS


BOOK NOW





AIRCRAFT TYPE (B06)
Bell 206L-3


REGISTRATION
N206MH


COUNTRY OF REG.



SERIAL NUMBER (MSN)



AGE



Recent N206MH flights





3D view

Route

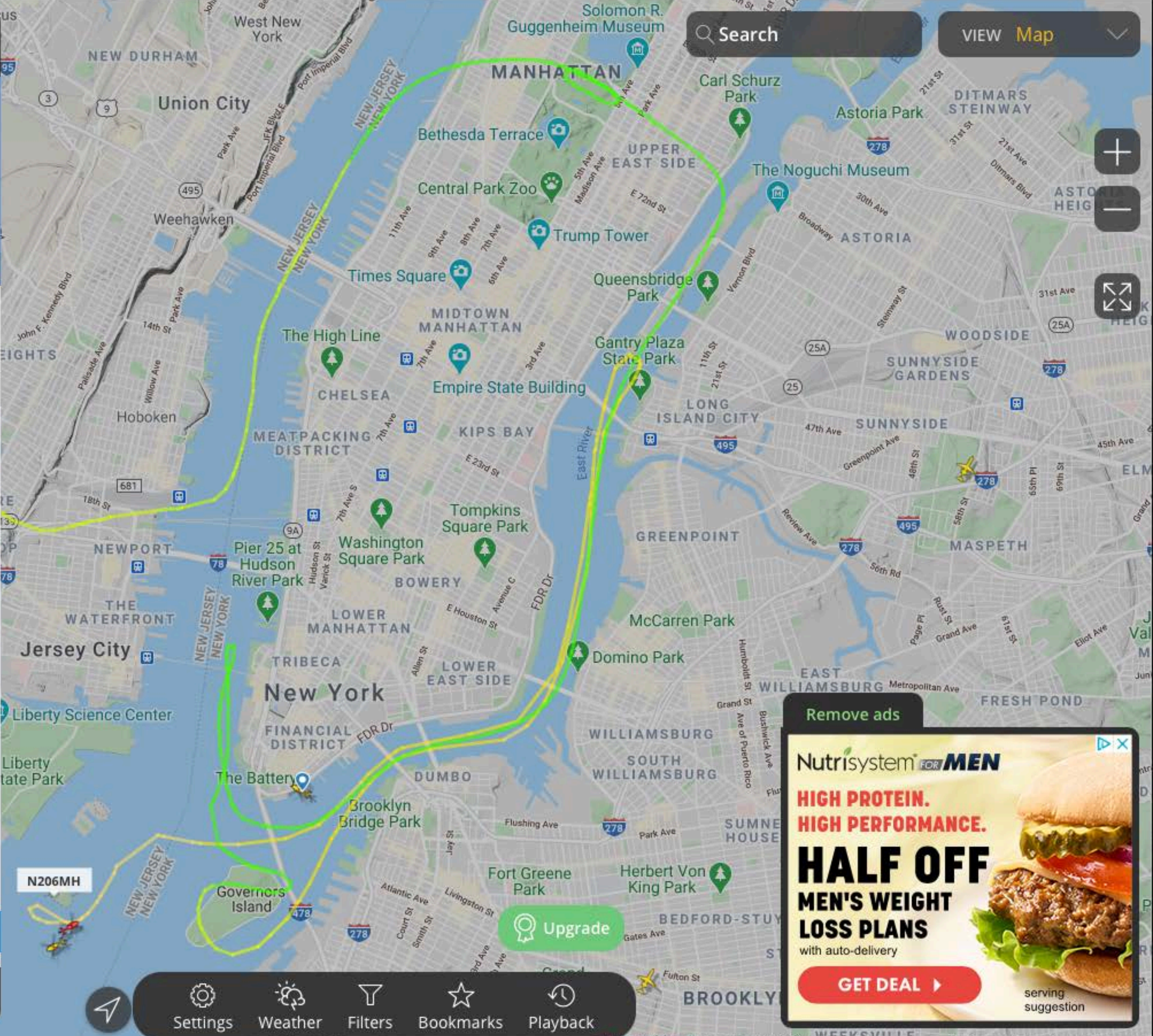
Follow


Share

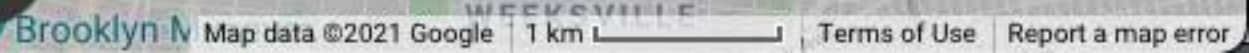
More


Search


VIEW Map











Settings


Weather

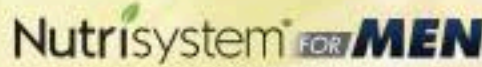
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serving suggestion

Roger Manning of [Metro Area Governors Island Coalition \(M.A.G.I.C.\)](#) Testimony - UPDATED
11-29-2022
City Council Committee on State and Federal Legislation
Oversight - New York City Heliport Operations

Governors Island in the middle of NY harbor is a unique public space that is home to a historic district and National Monument, a high school, many arts and environmental projects, and wide-open park and recreational spaces. As in numerous other areas of the city, sightseeing helicopter noise seriously impacts the island on a daily basis. Particularly due to the peacefulness of the island, the overhead traffic has been described as "soul crushing."

Nearly ALL the helicopters affecting Governors Island ARE sightseeing helicopters. The bulk of the loudest flights come from Manhattan. And of course many tours come from NJ.

Routing over water doesn't help at the East River and Buttermilk channel which are narrow.

It should be noted that most users of Governors Island are not aware of 311 reporting for helicopters.

Limiting to daytime hours over Governors Island doesn't work as that is when Governors Island is most active. And the tour flights do not end at 7pm. And Sundays are inundated!

Council member Brewer is correct. The ONLY answer is eliminating unessential helicopter flights in NYC via Congressperson Nadler's bill.

A NYC Audubon person is doing a study regarding helicopters' affect on birds

Two videos:
Governors Island - 18 choppers in 15 minutes 11/12/2022
<https://youtu.be/Odw2TRi9dGc>

Choppers over Governors Island, A sampling - May 2022
<https://youtu.be/d5YjAlfK0K4>

Roger Manning
Metro Area Governors Island Coalition (M.A.G.I.C.)
<https://govislandcoalition.org>

From: royd, Silver <roydsilver@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 1, 2022 3:00 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Helicoptors Noise

Regarding your hearings on Helicopter prevalence over the city

Please realize that the Helicopters are an often unbearably loud disturbance but they interfere with digital TV signals and force people into very expensive cable TV contracts for TV coverage that increase it's fees way above inflation each year. It affects those of us living on a fixed income. Reducing or eliminating helicopter flights over NYC more affordable for the masses.

Sincerely,

Roy Silver

Please Stop The Endless Noise

Helicopter traffic over the Hudson is excessive, loud, harmful to the environment, offensive and disruptive to people trying to enjoy the riverside, and dangerous. I live in Hoboken, a densely populated city with limited areas to enjoy nature—just like NYC. I do not have a car or a vacation home, so my options for outdoor recreation are limited. However, the riverside, with its benches, trees, walkways and views, is a haven for everyone. But the endless roar of helicopters, so unnecessary, is severely detrimental to our enjoyment, and offensive. Why should we have to listen to that all day?

—Sally Cummings
Hoboken, NJ
November 29, 2022

Written Testimony by Dr. Samantha Cocco-Klein to the
Oversight Hearing on Heliport Operations
November 29, 2022

I would like to express my deep frustration over the continuous helicopter flights over South Brooklyn and the Brooklyn waterfront. The helicopters produce a loud and stressful sound, which at 78 to 87 decibels is well in excess of the 55 decibels considered safe by the World Health Organization (WHO). The noise makes outdoor conversations impossible and turns our riverside parks into the auditory equivalent of a war zone.

The helicopter flights are a classic concentrated benefit, allowing a handful of companies to profit, while regular New Yorkers pay the costs in “stress related illnesses, high blood pressure, speech interference, hearing loss, sleep disruption, and lost productivity” (US EPA, Clean Air Act Title IV). These costs significantly outweigh any economic benefit to the city from the commercial helicopter flights. And there are myriad ways for tourists to view the city, from above and below, which do not put public health at risk.

Additionally, the helicopter flights are incompatible with New York City’s goals to reduce carbon emissions and foster environmental justice. Helicopters are the largest source of lead air emissions in the U.S., needlessly contributing to air pollution in the city. And the helicopters’ carbon footprint far exceed that of cars, trains and other modes of transport, producing an estimated 90 kg of CO₂ per passenger per hour.

Finally, the helicopters are a stressful reminder of the city’s inequities. In our new gilded age, the ultra-wealthy are using helicopters to avoid traffic and inadequate public transportation, leaving noise and pollution in their wake.

Enough is enough. It is time to ban non-essential helicopter flights in New York City.

From: Samia <samia_patel@msn.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 30, 2022 8:56 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Helicopter Noise

Hello - I've lived in Manhattan (UWS) for over 25 years. I've never had a problem with the noise and bustle of the city, but the helicopter noise these days is horrible and intolerable. It's to the point that I can never leave my window open in a nice day. I actually prefer cloudy days now because at least I know they will be quiet. Please do something about this. It's just making the city a much less attractive place to live.

Sent from my iPhone

November 29, 2022

To the City Council:

I walk through Brooklyn Bridge Park several times a week at various times of day. No matter what time I am there, I hear a cacophony of rotator noise bouncing off the buildings in Brooklyn as helicopters fly down and around the East River. It's a plague! A miniscule number of people are enjoying seeing the city from above or avoiding traffic and inflicting unacceptable levels of noise (and fossil fuel) pollution on the rest of us. It must be stopped. Please regulate this!

Thank you!

Best,
Sarah Burnes

Dean Street
Brooklyn, NY 11217

From: Scott Munson <scottmunsonmusic@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 28, 2022 4:41 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] I oppose NON-essential helicopter traffic - Astoria - thank you.

Hello,

Thank you council for this opportunity.

Here is my testimony:

My wife and I bought our house in 1998 on a quiet street in Astoria.

It's always been quiet here until the mandate of the North shore route.

Since then loud low flying helicopters and seaplanes plague us.

I use the app from airnoise.io to track them. They are MOSTLY non-essential flights and almost NEVER "fly neighborly"

They typically fly 1000-1500 feet in altitude and right over our house, often shaking the walls.

There is virtually no oversight on flight patterns. They could easily stay over the river longer but choose to take a short cut over our residential area of Astoria (over Mount Sinai Hospital).

PLEASE HELP US!!

Thank you,

Regards,

Scott Munson.

--

[ScottMunsonMusic.com](https://scottmunsonmusic.com)

To whom it may concern:

Tourism and non-essential helicopters that originate in New Jersey continue to fly over Manhattan; and tourism helicopters fly out of the Downtown Heliport in Manhattan. We want all of this helicopter activity to stop. I also urge the closure of the one heliport located in a park. Parks and helicopters are not meant for co-location. This heliport focuses on transportation for customers going to airports and out of town. I have been at events near the heliport and the noise is deafening and the health concerns from fuel burning all over the city as helicopters fly above continuously.

I live on the Upper West Side and see/hear helicopters when I visit Central Park, which is OFTEN. I report it to 311, but have had no response. Please take action to stop thing unnecessary intrusion and accompanying environmental degradation, especially from a heliport inside the city!

-Sonya Duffy

NYC council members,

Thank you for accepting and reading my testimony regarding non-essential flights in our city's airspace. I am a new resident of the Upper West Side. I moved to this neighborhood two years ago because of its reputation for peace and quiet. This decades old reputation is quickly being eroded by the sightseeing flights overhead which originate from private, for-profit companies based in New Jersey (namely FlyNYON operating out of Kearny, NJ).

I urge City Council to hold NYC EDC responsible for working with the FAA and New Jersey officials, to put an absolute end to the out-of-state sightseeing operations which are allowed to operate from New Jersey, cross state lines, and fly directly over our communities. With over 50% of 311 Helicopter complaints relating to out-of-state helicopters, it is an overwhelmingly large piece of this problem and must be kept top of mind as we work to find solutions.

FEDERAL COOPERATION AND ACTION IS NECESSARY

EDC frequently referenced their guardrails for sightseeing flights (such as: no flights on Sundays; cannot fly over land; etc) however these only apply to flights that originate from NYC heliports. Flights originating from New Jersey effectively skirt these guidelines completely. Tours from New Jersey fly over land and our homes. They fly on Sundays. They even operated on Thanksgiving Day and multiple religious holidays. The FAA simply MUST be involved to create blanket federal law that protect us from flights originating from ALL other States, and as your constituent I urge the council to facilitate this.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE NEIGHBORHOODS

Something that wasn't touched on in the hearing is the disproportionate impact of the non-essential helicopter flights on our economically disadvantaged communities. It is not a coincidence that the majority of these flight paths are directly over New York's Environmental Justice neighborhoods. People who live in these communities are already fighting for equity in every other area of their lives. Being assaulted by helicopter noise and air pollution above their homes adds yet another obstacle to battle against. Which, in my opinion, is systemically racist.

NEW YORKERS NEED SAFE HAVENS

New Yorker's homes should be sanctuaries, as the nature of living in a busy city requires one to have a quiet place to retreat to. These helicopters overhead compromise the sanctuary and comfort of the home space. I purposefully sought out an apartment on a high-level floor in order to avoid street and sidewalk noise in my home—but now there is also traffic to be avoided in the sky.

There is no shortage of knowledge suggesting that city-dwellers need safe, quiet spaces. Frederick Law Olmsted designed Central Park in 1857 to be a safe haven in the center of the busy city. He intended for the park's beauty to "soothe the city's inhabitants and allow them to enjoy a natural setting." The non-essential helicopters over our city's parks is a gross injustice to all New Yorkers, and an insult to the very concept on which Central Park was created. When the peace of our homes *and* outdoor public spaces are shattered, it truly feels like there is no

escape from the constant noise. *Something* must be sacred and off-limits of capitalistic pursuits. Couldn't that be our skies?

Conclusively, I urge the council to act to combat the outsized impact from the out-of-state sightseeing operations on our city's residents, and to cooperate with the FAA to properly regulate New York City's airspace.

Sincerely,
Sophia Del Plato

Stephanie Heintzeler
Warren Street,
Brooklyn, NY 11201

11/29/2022

stephanieheintzeler@gmail.com

Regarding: Helicopter noise over Cobble Hill, Brooklyn

Dear City Council,

I have been living in Cobble Hill for 9 years and am very concerned about the increasing noise we have in our neighborhood. In addition to the number of loud trucks and sirens that are passing down Court Street there are more helicopters day and night that fly over the area.

Not only does it interrupt my sleep but it does often concern me when I hear several helicopters. I stop whatever I am doing and check the news to see if I missed anything important. This is not how I'd like to spend my days.

I understand that some helicopters are necessary, however I would ask you to look into non-essential helicopters that pollute our environment and wellbeing.

Thank you!

Kind regards,
Stephanie Heintzeler

I live on the Upper West Side of Manhattan. As I write out this testimony urging the city council to use its power to restrict the number of non-essential helicopters in NYC airspace and adjacent waterways, I am unnerved by the exceptional noise coming from no fewer than 3 helicopters overhead right now.

The noise from these tourist-filled helicopters is constant and unrelenting. NYC is not an ancient volcano. It is not the Grand Canyon or the Na Pali coast in Hawaii. It is our home. It is criminal these polluting machines are allowed to fly low over our homes where we eat, sleep, work and care for our families and neighbors.

And for what?

For a bit of tax revenue or so some stranger from Wisconsin can post a picture to their Instagram account. Give me a break.

I'm not sure how much longer I can tolerate the noise and disruption. I'm not alone. I would say I can go to Central Park for the peace, quiet and serenity Olmsted and Vaux envisioned when they designed the park but there is no relief there either. The constant thumping of helicopter noise is ever-present over the Reservoir, Sheep's Meadow, and The Ramble where weary city-dwellers go to bird watch and escape the chaos of the city's busy streets.

New York City needs durable residents who dig a fence post here and make this city their permanent home. If we prioritize the silly desires of tourists from the endless, soulless suburbs of the USA over the tax-paying residents of New York City, you might as well call it Disney World and charge admission.

I'll be living somewhere else.

Thank You,

Stephen Cooke
Manhattan

From: Steve@TRPNA <steve@trpna.org>
Sent: Sunday, November 27, 2022 11:19 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] The New York City Council Committee on Economic Development and Committee on State and Federal Legislation will hold a Hearing regarding New York City's Heliport Operations

Good morning. My name is Steve Anderson, and I am a 40-year resident of the Upper West Side and serve as president of the Theodore Roosevelt Park Neighborhood Association, and the Upper West Side Coalition of Block Association and Community Groups.

Let me be brief and clear:

The level of helicopter activity is an aerial assault on our community, unacceptable harassment, and must be curtailed — and this is a situation that demands comprehensive attention by the New York City Council in coordination with the state and federal agencies responsible.

Stop this aerial bombardment now! Leave the skies for those responders aiding people in distress, seeking to increase security, or providing news reporting about events occurring within our city.

We did not sign up for this, this is incessant harassment, as if we have been taken hostage on a never ending no doors chopper nightmare.

CLOSE THE DOORS NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL,
and end this bad trip!

Thank you.

Steve Anderson, President
TRPNA, Theodore Roosevelt Park Neighborhood Association of W81St &
Upper West Side Coalition of Block Associations & Community Groups
Steve@TRPNA.org



From: Steven Fox <mo.sfox@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 28, 2022 6:28 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] The New York City Council Committee on Economic Development and Committee on State and Federal Legislation

To the New York City Council:

Now is the time to finally take substantive action on the 'plague of helicopters ruining New York' (NYTimes) for tax-paying residents of New York City.

The constant drone of noise (not to mention the horrible effects on clean air) caused by tourist and taxi helicopters is making New Yorkers miserable and ruining the quality of life here. Moreover, this tiny industry serves almost entirely non-resident (non tax paying) tourists, or the less than 1% of New Yorkers who want to get to the airport of the Hamptons a little quicker.

Tax paying residents are leaving New York City and property values are going down because this has gotten out of hand. It makes no sense for the City to protect this tiny industry serving so few New Yorkers and ruining the quality of life for those of us on the ground who have to listen to this constant drone all day.

With a new administration, perhaps the City will finally act on behalf of New York residents on this issue. Shut down the City Heliports to non-essential helicopters.

Sincerely,

Steven Fox

From: Susan Gibson <sgibson@joanrivers.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 30, 2022 10:18 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Helicopter Noise

Attention City Council Members:

I am writing to voice my concern about the daily barrage of non-essential (tourist, charter, and commuter) helicopter flights over the West Side and in Central Park. My daily walks in Central Park for exercise, birdwatching and to clear my mind from everyday issues is dramatically impacted by loud, hovering helicopters overhead. These tourist choppers don't just fly over the park, they circle and hover over the ball fields, the Pool and the most magical place: the Loch. I've counted 4 hovering helicopters at the same time over the North Meadow! This constant noise dramatically reduces the quality of life in Manhattan and hurts the Central Park experience significantly. I love NYC, but the one reason that would persuade me to leave is the noise level – not the least being these non-essential choppers.

Please consider any way to curtail or eliminate these tourist rides that benefit a few and leave the residents bombarded with noise.

Thank you for your consideration.

Susan Gibson – Upper Westsider

Susan Gibson
EVP Marketing
Joan Rivers Worldwide
West 99th Street,
New York, NY 10025

Maintaining and further encouraging tourist and commuter helicopter flights from heliports on NYC-owned property are contrary to required climate crisis mitigation and the NYC Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) mission and goals:

- Helicopters are one of the most wasteful polluting forms of transportation, dumping 950 lbs. of carbon dioxide per hour into the atmosphere -- this when New York City is attempting to reach zero carbon emissions within our lifetimes and the whole world is struggling to either reduce emissions or cope with present devastating consequences.
- The NYCEDC section in the NYC Mayor's Management Report (September 2022) states that it plays a key role in city economics, centered on equity and resiliency; bringing emerging industries to the city, programs and projects that reflect its commitment to equitable economic growth and sustainable neighborhoods; encouraging offshore wind development, sustainable and innovative projects; investing in and providing resources for companies in areas like life sciences, digital technology; green energy, and advanced manufacturing. An aging, fuel-wasteful, polluting tourist industry doesn't fit that model.
- The current RFP, if an operator is selected and an agreement consummated, would allow another five years, possibly extended to 10 years, of 29,561 tourist helicopter flights per year from the Downtown Manhattan Heliport (DMH). At average about 20 minutes for each flight, that spews an additional 4,680 tons of carbon dioxide into the earth's atmosphere to entertain tourists with picture-snapping opportunities. Concurrently, the city is legislating draconian energy-saving measures on large new and old buildings and defending the tolling of vehicles entering Manhattan below 60th St ("congestion pricing") to reduce traffic and consequent carbon emissions. And that's not to mention NY State's ambitious climate-saving programs and investments.

The nonessential waste of resources by sightseeing helicopter flights -- for the benefit of small numbers of people and employing relatively few workers -- harms millions of New York residents, workers and students with noise and pollution.

To the New York City Council.

Attached please find a very important document file from the www.faa.gov website. All helicopters are not built the same and not all have all the necessary safety equipment as requested for years by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB).

Upon reviewing the document, please take note that the Sikorsky S-76 is NOT equipped with a crash resistant fuel tank. This model helicopter flies directly over areas of NYC including Central Park at a rather low altitude. This means that should a helicopter that is NOT equipped with a CRFS crash even at a very low altitude, it could become a fireball. How can aircraft that is used to transport staff to oil rigs be used to transport a few privileged people over a city that is populated with over 8 million people? Again, review the attached information. Think of the noise, air pollution and safety hazards that are linked to these helicopters.

Be the change.

Make a difference.

Take the Lead.

Regards,

Teresa McCaskie
Long Island NY 11952

Please view the link below

https://www.faa.gov/sites/faa.gov/files/aircraft/air_cert/design_approvals/rotorcraft/rot_C_RFS_Compliant_List.pdf

11/29/22

Dear Committee:

The City Council MUST act to stop dangerous and polluting choppers over NYC.

City parks are being ruined. Residents are exposed to frightening noise pollution, all while the climate crisis is worsened and ignored.

And, sooner not later, there will be a crash in which the pilot won't manage to crash land onto a building top without killing scores below.

Stop the madness!

Tom Ogden
Park Avenue
New York, NY 10128

Hello New York City Council,

I am writing today to implore you to regulate the heliports and ban non-essential aircraft over NYC. You have the power to only allow ESSENTIAL helicopters over homes in NYC.

I live in Astoria (Councilmember Caban's district) and it is under a highway of air craft. I have evidence from the *Port Authority* that states I live under the route. This route is used by the rich to fly to the Hamptons. They are charter / commuter flights by companies like *Blade*. Astoria has to endure the noise and air pollution. This is not only an environmental issue but a quality of life issue. These flights are not bringing organs for transplants. They are selfish people that want to party in the Hamptons.

How many fly over my home? I shot a video of 3 helicopters in less than 90 seconds. Imagine living under that much traffic.

New York City has all of these green initiatives:

- 1000 miles of bike lanes
- Encourage hybrid cars
- Improved public transportation
- Idling laws
- Aggressive recycling

Yet, you allow dirty helicopters to fly constantly over communities with homes, schools and parks. That is the height of hypocrisy.

If you continue to allow these helicopters, you MUST remove your green policies from your websites because you don't want a greener NYC.

It will be simpler to ban them.

Thank you,

Tom Camastra

From: Tracy K Flynn <tracyflynn@nyu.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, November 30, 2022 9:29 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: EDC Heliport Hearing Updates! Due Friday - Your Written Statement; Watch Hearing; News Reports on Hearing

I am writing to urge you to do something about helicopter noise on the Upper East Side.

The noise pollution for a few affects thousands of New Yorkers and it isn't fair. Electric/noiseless helicopters are on the horizon so let's legislate that non-commercial helicopters are prohibited until they do something about the noise.

Furthermore, I believe it is a safety issue as some terrorists/bad actors could do serious damage from a helicopter.

Thanks for considering.
Tracy Kennedy Flynn

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Stop the Chop NY/NJ <info@stopthechopnynj.org>
Date: Wed, Nov 30, 2022 at 8:42 PM
Subject: EDC Heliport Hearing Updates! Due Friday - Your Written Statement; Watch Hearing; News Reports on Hearing
To: Tracy <tracyflynn@nyu.edu>

[View this email in your browser](#)



Dear Stop the Chop NY/NJ friends and supporters,

Dear New York City Council:

As a NYC/NJ metropolitan area resident, I thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed “Commercial Air Tour Voluntary Agreement for Statue of Liberty National Monument and Governors Island National Monument.” Unfortunately, I find the proposal to be extremely inadequate and strongly urge the FAA and NPS to revise the plan.

Industry Bias

I believe the current proposal is overwhelmingly biased in favor of the nonessential helicopter tourism industry, with no consideration to the industry’s impact on tax-paying New York and New Jersey residents who already suffer from constant helicopter noise and air pollution, has no detail on terrorism or safety risk mitigation, and basically maintains or even worsens the unacceptable status quo.

Noise and Air Pollution Impact on NY & NJ Residents

In terms of noise and air pollution, the proposal does nothing to solve the problem. In Section 4.0 of the proposal, the agreement provides “All commercial air tours shall maintain a 1,000 ft. lateral setback from Liberty Island (high water mark), Ellis Island (high water mark), and the Governors Island National Monument boundary...” In addition, the non-essential tourism helicopters are required to fly at a minimum of 500 ft. except when taking off and landing. Yet nowhere in the proposal does it detail or explain how the 1,000 ft buffer and 500 ft. flight elevation minimum prevents the ongoing

desecration of our most important National Monument by the 7 day a week noise, nor does it address the issue of excessive air and noise pollution to land-bound tourists or, importantly, residents who work or live in lower Manhattan, western Brooklyn, and Jersey City. In fact, by creating the 1,000 foot setback, this plan will actually increase the noise from these unnecessary joyriding helicopter tours for the Battery Park, South Street Seaport, Brooklyn Heights, Red Hook, and Jersey City communities by bringing them closer to non-NPS controlled land! This is especially problematic given that this plan allows the helicopters to fly at just “500 feet above ground level”, and sound is amplified over water such as the NY Harbor.

Negative Impact on Parks

Additionally of concern is the negative impact on New Jersey’s Liberty State Park, the downtown Manhattan and Brooklyn waterfront parks, and the area of Governors Island over which these low-flying helicopters are already and will be flying. Many of these communities in both states are Environmental Justice communities who already bear a disproportionate share of polluting industries.

Terrorism Risks

Furthermore, as indicated in Section 3.1 of the proposal, “The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Department of the Interior (DOI) have identified Statue of Liberty National Monument as being at increased risk for terrorist activity, and therefore the park unit is subject to much higher safety and security standards consistent with DOI and DHS critical infrastructure policies.” Again, nowhere in the proposal is there any mention of a solution to these risks! In 2003 Walt Disney World and Disneyland were protected by a 3 mile no-fly zones. The Statue of Liberty, a symbol of our nation, deserves no less.

Lack of Transparency

Another real concern is the fact that this Agreement was created as a result of “[d]iscussions between tour operators and NPS staff” (See the Statue of Liberty National Monument and Governors Island National Monument Air Tour Voluntary Agreement: Frequently Asked Questions Document.) Thus, the industry had a seat at the table in drafting this Agreement but the local communities that will suffer the consequences of increased noise pollution and reduced air quality did not. The lack of transparency as to which tour companies helped create this Agreement, and from which heliports they operate, is troublesome.

More, Not Fewer, Helicopters

Additionally, this Agreement appears to be increasing the number of sightseeing helicopter companies as the “FAA and NPS intend to enter into the Agreement with [two current operators] as well as two new operators” and “other part 135 operators will also be considered”! Instead, I urge the NPS/FAA to substantially reduce the number of helicopter flights and companies touring the New York Harbor, if not a total ban of them. Other Air Tour Management Plans throughout the country have included caps on the number of sightseeing flights, and yet this New York Harbor plan contains none at all. Will 1,000 helicopters circling the Harbor each day not impact the visitor experience the NPS is charged with protecting? The National Parks Air Tour Management Act of 2000 requires that this Agreement meet the following objectives:

“The objective of any air tour management plan shall be to develop acceptable and effective measures to mitigate or prevent the significant adverse impacts, if any, of commercial air tour operations upon the natural and cultural resources, visitor experiences, and tribal lands.”

I believe this proposed Agreement unequivocally fails this mandate.

Negative Impact on Environment

Finally, this Agreement makes no mention of the climate impact of these fossil-fuel based nonessential joyriding flights. Helicopters use large amounts of jet fuel; to allow them to be used simply for tourist photo ops as we face a global climate emergency goes against everything the federal and local governments are urging us to do to reduce our climate impact.

Conclusion

New York elected officials, in seeking to ban or curtail these type of nonessential helicopter flights (and others), due to ever increasing public complaints and numerous recent fatal helicopter crashes, have introduced legislation at all levels of government: Congressional bills H.R. 1643 and H.R. 7769; the New York State “Stop the Chop” bill currently awaiting the Governor’s signature; and at least four separate bills currently pending in the New York City Council.

See <https://stopthechopnyny.org/legislation/>

The reality is that the only solution to the above problems is elimination of such nonessential helicopter flights. Fortunately, tourists who seek to view Governors Island, the Statue of Liberty and/or Ellis Island have options by using the existing ferry systems and boat-based tour operators. I strongly urge the FAA and NPS to make the bold but proper step to revise this plan and ban these non-essential sightseeing helicopters in the New York metro area, as no other fair solution is feasible.

In Addition

I suggest the formation of a Citizens’ Assembly in New York City so that other forms of communication can be listened to. A bird insisted that the plan be

revised. Consider the past, present, and future.

Sincerely,

Verne Zimmer

My name is Veronica Cooper. I live at 130 Pacific St, Brooklyn, NY 11201
Frequently the helicopters are so low some of my dishes in the cabinet rattle as they pass by. I can feel it in my chest. The noise is exacerbating my anxiety and causing me undue stress, contributing to high cortisol levels. It is constant.

Veronica

cooper.veronica@gmail.com

From: Virginia Levie <virginia.levie@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 30, 2022 4:32 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Eliminate frivolous helicopter flights from NYC heliports

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen
of the New York City Council Committee
on Economic Development and
Committee on State and Federal Legislation:

I am writing to **STRONGLY** urge you to eliminate frivolous and damaging commuter and tourist helicopter flights in New York City.

As a resident of South Midwood in Brooklyn, our home is apparently in the direct path of commuters and vacationers. Flights intensify over the weekends, starting on Thursday, becoming almost unbearable on Friday afternoon and Saturday morning, and revving up again on Sunday through Monday or Tuesday. I have counted over 15 flights in a half hour on a long summer weekend.

These helicopters of convenience fly so low that conversation is impossible when they are overhead. Even indoors, windows can rattle and chairs shake. If I am teaching on Zoom, I am forced to pause. If my husband is interviewing a source, that work must also pause. My heart goes out to the teachers at our nearby elementary who must deal with these interruptions frequently.

Neighborhood discussion boards are full of similar complaints:

"We have a community garden out back and spend a lot of time out there during the spring and summer and fall. The commercial helicopters fly over our building and yard all afternoon and evening long. Obviously we are on their route. The past few years have been out of control. They fly so low and are so loud."

"In my opinion, helicopter noise does indeed change the character of this neighborhood."

Even more important than our individual difficulty are the larger societal ones:

- Luxury helicopter flights intensify noise pollution for ALL New Yorkers. **Noise pollution is linked to stress related illnesses, high blood pressure**, speech interference, hearing loss, sleep disruption, and lost productivity, problems already too prevalent in our neighborhoods.
- **helicopter CO2 emissions are dramatically greater** than gas powered auto for the same distance, and
- **helicopters are now the leading source of LEAD pollution** in the US (according to the EPA).

Eliminating commuter and tourist helicopter flights from NYC heliports is one of the single most effective acts you can take to improve and protect the health and quality of life of our wonderful city.

Sincerely,

Virginia Levie
E 23 Street
Brooklyn NY 11210

From: rebuild_totem.0o@icloud.com
Sent: Thursday, December 1, 2022 3:40 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: City Council Hearing of November 29 on the subject of helicopter noise, testimony

The following is my testimony on the subject of helicopter noise:

Listen. Hear that sound?

thwop thwop thwop thwop thwop thwop thrwop thwop thwop thwop thwop thwop thrwop THWOP

It's the sound of shameless defiance of the will of the people of New York. It's long been clear that something needs to be done about the helicopter issue. So, what's the game plan?

- 1. Limit flights to "only" ten hours a day, six days a week. Huh? You're kidding, right?***
- 2. It's all Jersey's fault. How lame is that?***
- 3. Switch to electric helicopters...someday. Get real!***

We can do a lot better.

JA
Long Island City, New York
December 1, 2022

...ban nonessential helicopters from the NY metro airspace? There are many reasons: *environmental* (they use excessive fossil fuel for small number of passengers); *safety* (high risks of crashes & already over 30 serious or deadly crashes in our densely populated area); *security* (risk of terrorist hijacking); *noise* (excessive noise pollution creates bodily & emotional harm, and reduces cognitive abilities); *economic* (reduces property values under flight paths, externalizes environmental pollution costs to society, medical visits due to crashes, noise exposure cost taxpayers, emergency services costs of crashes, lost worker productivity time due to noise & crashes...

appraise9mai@aol.com

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 11-29

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: John O'Sy

Address: Pearl St

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: CHARLES KOMANOFF

Address: DUANE ST 10013

I represent: SELF

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☒ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Graham Van Korf

Address: _____

I represent: Brooklyn Borough President

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 11-29-22

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: MARY R SHANE

Address: 204 ST NY. NY

I represent: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: ANDREW KENN

Address: NEW YORK CITY

I represent: Economic Development

Address: CORP

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: MIKELE ADGATE

Address: NYC

I represent: Economic Development

Address: CORP

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 11/29/22

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kenneth Lay

Address: 1st Pl Brooklyn NY 11231

I represent: Myself

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: NOV 29, 2022

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Daniel Watts

Address: Pierrepont Place, BRKLYN, NY 11201

I represent: private citizen

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 11/29/22

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: JAMES BOYD

Address: _____

I represent: _____

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 11/29/22

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Michael Popper

Address: Union Street Brooklyn NY

I represent: myself

Address: Union Street

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Katia Veraza

Address: 1225 ~~Albany~~ First St, Alexandria, VA.

I represent: Helicopter Association International.

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 11/29/22

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Andrew Rosenthal

Address: Riverside Drive, New York, NY

I represent: Stop the Chop NY NJ

Address: _____