

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON  
TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE, COMMITTEE ON  
PUBLIC HOUSING AND THE COMMITTEE ON  
CRIMINAL JUSTICE

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CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

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Of the

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COMMITTEE ON FINANCE JOINTLY  
WITH THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION  
AND INFRASTRUCTURE, THE COMMITTEE ON  
PUBLIC HOUSING AND THE COMMITTEE  
ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE

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May 19, 2023

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Start: 10:44 a.m.

Recess: 5:23 p.m.

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HELD AT: COUNCIL CHAMBERS - CITY HALL

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B E F O R E: Justin Brannan,  
Chairperson of Committee on  
Finance

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Selvena Brooks-Powers,  
Chairperson of Committee on  
Transportation and Infrastructure

16

17

Alexa Avilés,  
Chairperson of Committee on Public  
Housing

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19

Carlina Rivera,  
Chairperson of Committee on  
Criminal Justice

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21

22

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

23

Alexa Avilés

Diana Ayala

Charles Barron

24

Carmen N. De La Rosa

Darlene Mealy

25

Chi A. Ossè

Lincoln Restler

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COUNCIL MEMBERS: (CONTINUED)

- Rafael Salamanca, Jr.
- Pierina Ana Sanchez
- Julie Won
- Nantasha Williams
- Amanda Farías
- Althea Stevens
- Kamillah Hanks
- Gale A. Brewer

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2 TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE, COMMITTEE ON  
3 PUBLIC HOUSING AND THE COMMITTEE ON  
4 CRIMINAL JUSTICE 3

5 A P P E A R A N C E S

6 Ydanis Rodriguez  
7 Commissioner of the New York City Department of  
8 Transportation

9 Margaret Forgione  
10 First Deputy Commissioner

11 Paul Ochoa  
12 Executive Deputy Commissioner

13 Rick Rodriguez  
14 Assistant Commissioner for Intergovernmental and  
15 Community Affairs

16 Irena Nedeljkovic

17 Lisa Bova-Hiatt  
18 NYCHA Interim Chief Executive Officer

19 Eva Trimble  
20 Chief Operating Officer

21 Annika Lescott-Martinez  
22 Executive Vice President of Finance and Chief  
23 Financial Officer

24 Joy Sinderbrand  
25 Senior Vice President for Capital Programs Joy  
Sinderbrand

Jonathan Gouveia  
Executive Vice President for Real Estate

Kerri Jew  
Executive Vice President and Chief Administrative  
Officer

Keith Grossman  
SVP Operations Support Services for NYCHA

Brian Honan  
Vice President of the Office of Intergovernmental  
Relations in the New York City Housing Authority,  
NYCHA

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

Daniel Greene  
Executive Vice President of Property Management  
Operations, NYCHA

Louis Molina  
Department of Corrections Commissioner

Paul Shechtman  
Department General Counsel

Patricia Lyons  
Deputy Commissioner of Finance

Francis Torres  
Deputy Commission of the Division of Programs and  
Community Partnerships

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SERGEANT AT ARMS: Mic check, mic check.

Today's hearing on Finance, Transportation, Public  
Housing and Criminal Justice. Recorded by Walter  
Louis. Today's date is May 19, 2023, located in the  
Chambers.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Good morning and welcome to  
the Fiscal Year 2024 Executive Budget Hearing on the  
Committees on Finance, jointly with Criminal Justice,  
Transportation and Public Housing. At this time, if  
everybody can please place phones on vibrate or  
silent mode and just a reminder, please at no point  
will you be able to approach the dais. Thank you  
Chairs, we are ready to begin.

CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Thank you Sergeant  
[GAVEL]. Okay, good morning and welcome to the 9<sup>th</sup>  
day of FY24 Executive Budget Hearings. I am Council  
Member Justin Brannan and I Chair the Committee on  
Finance. Today's hearings will begin with the  
Department of Transportation and I'm pleased to be  
joined by my good friend and colleague Council Member  
Selvena Brooks-Powers, Chair of the Committee on  
Transportation.

We've also been joined today by Council Member  
Mercedes Narcisse. Welcome to the Council familiar

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1  
2 face, Commissioner Ydanis Rodriguez. It's good to  
3 see you and your team. You got some brand name  
4 people here on your panel and I appreciate that.  
5 Thank you all for joining us today to answer our  
6 questions. Just to set the table on April 26, 2023,  
7 the Administration released the Executive Financial  
8 Plan for FY23, FY27 with a proposed FY24 Budget of  
9 \$106.7 billion.

10 DOT's Proposed FY24 Budget of \$1.41 billion  
11 represents 1.3 percent of the Administrations  
12 proposed FY24 budget in the Executive Plan. This is  
13 an increase of 3.7 million or 0.3 percent from the  
14 \$1.4 billion originally allocated in the FY24  
15 Preliminary Plan. This net increase is mostly due to  
16 additional funds for the DC 37 collective bargaining  
17 agreement, a grant put up for the traffic management  
18 center and an adjustment in utility costs. My  
19 questions today will largely focus on street safety  
20 along with greening vehicle fleets, the capital plan  
21 and other topics, particularly concerned about street  
22 safety. Reckless driving is far too prevalent  
23 especially in my district where we just lost several  
24 members of our community to a speeding driver, not  
25 even two months ago. I look forward to hearing from

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1  
2 the Commissioner and the team on efforts on how we're  
3 proceeding to correct and prevent these tragedies  
4 along with the police department.

5 I now want to turn to my Co-Chair for this  
6 hearing, Council Member Brooks-Powers for her opening  
7 statement.

8 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you Chair and  
9 good morning and welcome to today's joint hearing of  
10 the City Council Committee on Finance and the  
11 Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure on the  
12 Fiscal 2024 Executive Budget. I am Selvena Brooks-  
13 Powers and I have the privilege of chairing the  
14 Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

15 Today, we will be hearing from the New York City  
16 Department of Transportation. DOT's Fiscal 2024  
17 Executive Budget totals \$1.4 billion with the  
18 Executive Capital Budget totaling \$11.3 billion for  
19 Fiscal Years 2023 to 2027. This is a decrease of  
20 \$31.8 million in the Expense Budget since adoption.  
21 Included in the budget are new needs totaling \$7.1  
22 million in Fiscal 2024 and a variety of other  
23 adjustment totaling \$24.5 million in Fiscal 2024.

24 This is largely driven by the recent DC 37  
25 collective bargaining agreement, which total over \$12

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1 million in Fiscal 2024. I am excited to see that DC  
2 37 was able to secure a fair contract and a raise  
3 that their members deserve. Today, we will talk once  
4 more about infrastructure and about how this budget  
5 supports the Departments efforts to invest in  
6 neighborhoods in every borough. Improve street  
7 safety and meet the benchmarks mandated by the New  
8 York City Streets Plan. I note as I have at nearly  
9 every hearing this year, that many neighborhoods  
10 particularly in the outer borough community and  
11 communities of color are in desperate need of new and  
12 improved infrastructure. We need a budget that  
13 supports these efforts and I question whether an  
14 executive budget that includes \$27.9 million in PEGs  
15 in Fiscal Year 2024 will have a negative impact on  
16 our shared goals for better, safer transportation  
17 citywide.  
18

19 Before we hear from the Department of  
20 Transportation, let me take a moment to recognize  
21 that we've also been joined by Council Member Ariola.  
22 I would like to also thank my Committee Staff oh and  
23 excuse me, and Council Member Ari Kagan. I would  
24 like to thank the Committee staff who have helped  
25 prepare for this hearing. Michael Sherman Senior

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1  
2 Financial Analyst, Chima Obichere Deputy Director,  
3 Sam Breitbart Committee Counsel, Mark Chen Committee  
4 Counsel, Kevin Katowski, Senior Legislative Policy  
5 Analyst, John Basile, Senior Legislative Policy  
6 Analyst, my Policy and Budget Director Jack  
7 Seigenthaler and my Chief of Staff Renee Taylor.

8 I will now ask the Committee Counsel to go over  
9 some procedural items and swear in the  
10 representatives from the Department of  
11 Transportation.

12 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Thank you Chair. My  
13 thanks to Michel Sherman, Dan Kroop, Casey Lajsky  
14 from Council Finance for preparing all of today's  
15 hearings. The whole team works really hard behind  
16 the scenes making this look effortless up here.

17 I'm now going to turn to my Committee Counsel  
18 Mike Twomey to swear in our witnesses and we can  
19 begin testimony.

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Good morning, can you raise  
21 your right hands please? Do you affirm that your  
22 testimony will be truthful to the best of your  
23 knowledge, information and belief and you will  
24 honestly and faithfully answer Council Member  
25 questions? Ydanis Rodriguez?

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YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Yes, I do.

3

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Margaret Forgione?

4

MARGARET FORGIONE: I do.

5

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Paul Ochoa?

6

PAUL OCHOA: I do.

7

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Rick Rodriguez?

8

RICK RODRIGUEZ: I do.

9

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. You may begin.

10

YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Hello to all the family

11

members of the City Council. Myself in one of your

12

yours. Just because you left the Council doesn't

13

mean that you are stopping part of this family. And

14

to my great friend Council Member Narcisse from the

15

beautiful Island Espanola that we come from, all

16

those using this building was broke from the Island.

17

Espanola that we both share Haiti and the Dominican

18

Republic. So, when I'm sitting here ready to

19

testify, is more than being able to speak on behalf

20

of Mayor Eric Adams, but it's a lot of history

21

especially at a time when we are dealing with

22

immigrants coming in. Knowing that I was that kid

23

didn't even speak the language.

24

And then the city gave me this opportunity to be

25

a teacher, Council Member and now we're here to

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1 testify on behalf of Mayor Eric Adams. It's a  
2 testimony that if we did it, all those children that  
3 is coming, the new immigrant, they will be the future  
4 elected official and the future Commissioners. And  
5 now Mayor Eric Adams and almost 6,000 men and women  
6 at DOT which I would like to ask everyone when you  
7 see anyone taking care of the pothole, reservicing  
8 the street, the signal system. Say thank you to them  
9 because they're running the largest transportation in  
10 the whole nation. So, we are here again in this  
11 conversation about this budget with the Council  
12 Administration, we'll be working together to be sure  
13 that DOT will continue having all the resources that  
14 we need.  
15

16 So, continue making our city the safest one for  
17 pedestrians and cyclists. Good morning Chair Brooks  
18 Powers, Chair Brannan, and members of the Committee  
19 on Transportation and Infrastructure and Committee on  
20 Finance. I am Ydanis Rodriguez, Commissioner of the  
21 New York City Department of Transportation. With me  
22 today are Margaret Forgione, First Deputy  
23 Commissioner, Paul Ochoa, Executive Deputy  
24 Commissioner and Rick Rodriguez, Assistant  
25 Commissioner for Intergovernmental and Community

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1  
2 Affairs. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on  
3 behalf of Mayor Eric Adams on DOT Fiscal Year 2024  
4 Executive Budget and Fiscal Year 2023-2033 Capital  
5 Plan.

6 This budget reflects Mayor Adam's commitment to  
7 protect critical programs that support working New  
8 Yorkers, while simultaneously preparing for the  
9 economic headwinds by continuing a strong track  
10 record of fiscal responsibility. We appreciate the  
11 Mayor's continued investment in DOT during the city's  
12 disciplined fiscal approach and the support that  
13 we've been getting from the City Council.

14 This budget will allow DOT to continue critical  
15 safety work, redesigning intersections to make them  
16 sacred spaces and making this city the safest city  
17 for pedestrians and cyclists in the nation. Other  
18 municipality [00:10:16] of the state and the globe  
19 they're looking at the role model that DOT New York  
20 City represents. This budget will also allow us to  
21 reimagine the use of public space, invest more in  
22 working class and middle-class communities and  
23 communities of color, make the city more accessible  
24 for all New Yorkers, including people with  
25 disabilities. There's one million New Yorkers with

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1 disability and it's a matter of time when many who  
2 are not in disability will join the family in the  
3 future maintain our infrastructure, including nearly  
4 800 bridges, and continue to operate the Staten  
5 Island Ferry.  
6

7 New York City has the largest transportation  
8 system in the whole nation, while the larger network  
9 of bike lanes, bus lanes, pedestrian plazas, Open  
10 Streets, and outdoor dining. And by the way, many of  
11 them are not included in the street master plan. All  
12 of this is possible thanks to the partnership between  
13 the Administration and the Council.

14 You can see a breakdown DOT \$1.4 billion by 2024  
15 Expense Budget in my testimony. As you can see on  
16 the screen today and you have in front of you. By  
17 2024 Expense Budget in millions is totaled to \$1.4.  
18 Again, for the purpose of time, you are seeing the  
19 screen, you have the testimony but this is the \$1.4  
20 operation that allows our agency to have all the  
21 resources that we need, so continue making our  
22 streets safer, so continue running the ferry,  
23 resurfacing our streets.

24 You can break down DOT's Proposed \$33 billion  
25 for Fiscal Year 2023-2033 Capital Plan in my

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1 testimony, which also is on the screen and you have  
2 it to. FY23-33 Capital Commitment Plan total of \$33  
3 billion for bridges, street reconstruction,  
4 resurfacing, sidewalks, traffic, ferries, vehicle  
5 facilities, and other needs.  
6

7 On Vision Zero, this Administration is committed  
8 to Vision Zero and the safety of all New Yorkers is a  
9 top priority for Mayor Adams and DOT. The Mayor has  
10 been very clear, traffic violence is another type of  
11 violence that require action to address it. This is  
12 reflected by significant investments. DOT's current  
13 Ten-Year Capital Plan FY23-33 invests approximately  
14 \$4 billion in Vision Zero, and our expense budget  
15 invests an average of about \$260 million each year in  
16 Vision Zero. Now, there's going to be a question on  
17 how do we decide? How do we invest? How much do we  
18 put on Vision Zero? This is the dollars that we  
19 invest.

20 This commitment is working. As I testified  
21 earlier this year, traffic fatalities in New York  
22 City dropped in 2022 for the first time since 2022,  
23 since 2018. New York City is defying national trends  
24 for pedestrian deaths. But as Mayor Adams has made  
25

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1 clear, the only acceptable number of traffic  
2 fatalities is zero. We are committed to doing more.

3  
4 DOT also remains focused on creating a more  
5 equitable city by action, not just word. Where the  
6 Transportation network meets the need of all New  
7 Yorkers regardless of race, ability, or economic  
8 status. DOT is prioritizing a street design  
9 investment in higher need neighborhoods based on the  
10 Priority Investment Areas laid out in the New York  
11 City Street Plan, while still being guided by data  
12 such as crash histories and slow bus speeds. I was  
13 part of a co-prime of that plan and for me as an  
14 owner to be here testifying in front of you to  
15 explain how we are applying our street master plan,  
16 while still being guided by data such as crash  
17 histories and slow bus speeds. We are also committed  
18 to robust community engagement and learning from  
19 community members, Council Members and other elected  
20 officials about conditions on the ground. I've been  
21 with most of the Council Members visiting districts  
22 from the community and I'm committed to continue  
23 walking with the Council Members. I run across the  
24 five boroughs.

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This budget reflect the value and invests \$150 million for projects, in the Bronx, which will fund major safety and streetscape projects including protected bike lanes on 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and Soundview Avenue and new neighborhood safety improvements in Bronxdate, Co-op City, Melrose and Mott Haven.

The agency continues to transform the Grand Concourse. With our partners at DDC and DEP, we will be completing the most recent phase of our Grand Concourse transformation, from East 175<sup>th</sup> to East Fordham Road. This budget will include \$32 million for the next phase of this project, below is 161<sup>st</sup> Street.

In addition, this budget funds nearly a dozen safety and quality of life capital projects citywide including nearly \$70 million to fix street flooding and raise grades in Somerville Queens. \$10 million to fix flooding and make safety improvements along Avenue J in Brooklyn. \$26 million to expand our greenway network and add safety improvements in Travis Avenue I Staten Island. And \$31 million to make important bike transit, and pedestrian safety improvements in the Inwood section of the Manhattan Waterfront Greenway, extending our protected greenway

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1 network from Harlem River Drive to Broadway and  
2 University Heights bridge.  
3

4 Enhancing safety for students is also a top  
5 priority for this Administration. DOT and DDC will  
6 begin construction this year on several contracts for  
7 school safety improvements in Brooklyn and Staten  
8 Island. Other school safety projects in the Bronx,  
9 Manhattan, and Queens are in final design and will  
10 begin construction as soon as next year.

11 Next year, we will begin design and construction  
12 for our upcoming citywide raised crosswalks design  
13 build contract. This project will build more than  
14 100 raised crosswalks at high-priority intersections  
15 across the five boroughs. Where there is raised  
16 crosswalk, drivers slow the spinning and thus save  
17 lives.

18 On the bike lanes, DOT continues to grow our  
19 1,500 miles of bike lanes citywide, the largest  
20 network in the nation. We are on track to install  
21 the record numbers of protected bike lanes in 2023 to  
22 harden more than 10 miles of existing bike lane. And  
23 on automated enforcement, this budget provides \$7  
24 million in FY24 ramping up to nearly \$10 million in  
25 FY27 and in the baseline for the operation and

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1 maintenance of 24/7 speed cameras. Speed cameras  
2 save lives. Since we launched 24-hours operation in  
3 August, DOT has experienced 31 percent reduction in  
4 violation during the new overnight and weekend hours,  
5 meaning less speeding and enhanced safety for  
6 pedestrians, cyclists and drivers.  
7

8 On Mobility and Accessibility, DOT also  
9 continues our work to make it easier and faster to  
10 travel around the city for all New Yorkers regardless  
11 of race, ability, and economic status. In 2022, DOT  
12 installed Accessible Pedestrian Signals at a record  
13 of 494 intersections citywide to help New Yorkers who  
14 are blind or low vision navigate the city. This  
15 budget also includes over \$3 billion in capital  
16 funding over the next ten years to continue  
17 pedestrian ramp installation and upgrades citywide.

18 DOT will also be doing more curb maintenance as  
19 this is something that we hear a lot about, the New  
20 Yorkers and elected officials. This budget includes  
21 \$21 million to replace approximately 150,000 feet of  
22 new curbside citywide.

23 Turning to buses, DOT has a number of important  
24 bus projects coming up this year that will speed up  
25

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buses and get New Yorkers where they need to go  
faster and safer.

This includes projects on University Avenue, Gun  
Hill Road, and Fordham Road in the Bronx, Northern  
Boulevard in Queens, Livingston Street in Brooklyn  
and 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue Manhattan and the Washington Bridge.  
Construction is scheduled to begin by the end of this  
year for our larger capital investment in both  
priority to date along Kings Highway, Flatlands  
Avenue, and Pennsylvania Avenue in Brooklyn.

I'm also happy to report that in partnership  
with MTA, we recently received broader authority from  
Albany to crack down on drivers who impede bus  
operations by double parking, blocking bus stops, or  
blocking bike lanes starting in 2024. Automated  
enforcement changes driver behavior. Only 19 percent  
of drivers who receive a bus camera violation receive  
a second one. And only eight percent have received  
three or more tickets. We are excited for this new  
authority to help buses travel faster.

Turning to public space, this Administration  
continues to reimagine the use of public space. All  
New Yorkers should have access to safe, welcoming,

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and attractive public space close to where they live  
and DOT continues our work toward this goal.

As Mayor Adams announced in his State of the  
City Address, this Administration added \$375 million  
to improve public spaces. This includes funding that  
will allow us to start design on projects to connect  
Madison Square to Herald Square between 21<sup>st</sup> and 33<sup>rd</sup>  
Street as part of the Broadway Vision plan and  
reconstruction. New funding will also support the  
largest Open Streets Program in the nation. Open  
Streets provide new public space for recreation,  
wellness, and opportunities to move outside in all  
parts of the city. Funding will allow us to make  
permanent upgrades to Open Streets in Willis Avenue  
between East 147<sup>th</sup> Street and Bergen Avenue in the  
Bronx, Minthorne Street on Staten Island, Woodside  
Avenue in Queens, and Quisqueya Plaza in Washington  
Heights. Applications are currently open for 2023  
Open Street Program. Please help us to spread the  
word to community groups in your district.

This budget also includes \$62 million in new  
capital funding to make improvements on Jamaica  
Avenue from Sutphin Boulevard to Merrick Boulevard.

Thanks to the support of Speaker Adams and the Chair,

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1 Council Member Williams, Council Member Gennaro and  
2 Brooklyn Borough President Richards, sorry and  
3 Borough President Richard in Queens, this project  
4 will revitalize this central neighborhood corridor by  
5 introducing a number of sidewalk and streetscape  
6 improvement, building off changes allowed by the new  
7 permanent busway.  
8

9 We also recently celebrated Car Free Day, an  
10 annual car-free event and our hard at work planning  
11 for this year's Summer Street. We were so happy to  
12 expand Summer Street Program last year into the  
13 underserved community of East Harlem and will have  
14 more to share soon o how this year's program will be  
15 even bigger, the largest one in the history of New  
16 York City.

17 As I testified before, DOT face staffing  
18 challenges at all agencies in the whole nation are in  
19 the - we are in line with many sectors of economic  
20 and municipal government across the country. We are  
21 aggressively working to hire and creating a pipeline  
22 for future transportation professionals. As part of  
23 the Mayor Eric Adam's push to fill vacancies, we have  
24 gone to eight hiring events and make over 100 offers  
25

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1 since February. These positions range from clerical  
2 associate and staff analysts to engineers.  
3

4 Thank you to the Speaker and the Chair and many  
5 Council Members for your help in organizing this  
6 event in your districts as well as our partnership at  
7 DC 37. In addition at DOT's Preliminary Budget, I  
8 showed an initial design of the bus shelters ad  
9 campaign about working at DOT. We are recruiting.  
10 We want New Yorkers to come and work with us. This  
11 campaign is now underway and is at 100 bus shelters  
12 across all five boroughs throughout the city, with  
13 more planning in the coming months.

14 In conclusion, I would like to thank the Council  
15 for this great opportunity to testify before you. We  
16 look forward to continue to partner with you to make  
17 this city safer, more equitable and accessible for  
18 generations to come. [SPEAKING IN SPANISH [00:24:40-  
19 00:24:56]. We would now be happy to answer any  
20 questions.

21 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Thank you Commissioner.  
22 We've also been joined by Council Members Rivera,  
23 Barron, Moya, Hudson, Restler and Farias. I want to  
24 talk about the New York City Streets Plan. Are there  
25

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1  
2 program areas that DOT is having particular trouble  
3 with meeting their target?

4 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: We are on target and I will  
5 definitely our colleagues here both Margaret and  
6 Paul, they can add about it. I can say that we are  
7 happy to be where we are. As you know, last  
8 November, I stand with the Mayor announcing that we  
9 passed everything that announced back in January  
10 2022. In 2023, we have our own goal. We're working  
11 hard to be sure that we deliver the numbers of bus  
12 lanes, bike lanes.

13 One thing that also we want to know to  
14 highlight, is as when we voted the Street Master Plan  
15 that I was a co-prime, open street was not included,  
16 open restaurant was not included. So, there is many  
17 other things that also we are doing that is adding to  
18 these things but if you want to?

19 PAUL OCHOA: No, I think that's right, our  
20 mandate has continually increased in the programs we  
21 do and we're very excited. I think as the  
22 Commissioner mentioned, we are on pace to meet that  
23 target. The thing that we would say is, as we go  
24 into the busy season of installing, we do need a lot  
25 of your support to make sure that we can implement

1  
2 these programs and make sure we have the community by  
3 end as well.

4 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: I think the one thing that  
5 and I've spoken to your team about this before  
6 Commissioner. The one that I hear from a lot of my  
7 colleagues is when DOT wants to do something, it gets  
8 done. When a member thinks something is a good idea,  
9 there's a three-year study that has to happen.

10 So, I think we're all on the same page with  
11 keeping our streets safe. But if DOT wants to put in  
12 a bike lane, that happens overnight. If I want a  
13 stop sign, I got to you know call on a favor. So, I  
14 wish there was more coordination there because I  
15 think ultimately we're all working towards the same  
16 goal but it does seem like when DOT is trying to you  
17 know meet a target, that gets done quicker than what  
18 a local member might want.

19 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: So, I want for our First  
20 Deputy Commissioner to add a little bit on where we  
21 are on target but one thing that I can tell you, all  
22 Council Members, that I have walked, I have seen  
23 that. And you know being on that side -

24 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Sure.  
25

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1  
2 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Being the guy asking for a  
3 lot of things and being told you have to wait years  
4 and years and years you know; I think that a lot to  
5 have someone on this side that also is now so  
6 committed because I lived that experience. When I  
7 spoke to the Chair about one of our constituents who  
8 say this is a stop sign and this being approved, how  
9 can we move quickly? For me, it's about when will it  
10 be done?

11 So, we are committed because Mayor Adams  
12 committed because Mayor Adams committed to build the  
13 best relationship between Administration and you the  
14 51 Council Members and that's the new, I can say  
15 decision that we have DOT. Do the best we can to  
16 build the best relationship and you will mean to  
17 deliver what is important for each Council Member.

18 MARGARET FORGIONE: Thank you Commissioner. So,  
19 I just want to highlight several areas that we have  
20 met or exceeded, the Streets Plan and also some items  
21 that actually aren't mentioned in the Streets Plan as  
22 the Commissioner discussed. So, last year, we  
23 installed transit signal priority as 750  
24 intersections to improve bus movement. We also  
25 installed 500 accessible pedestrian signals,

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1 exceeding what our plan was in that regard. We  
2 implemented bus improvements that actually helped  
3 400,000 bus riders each and every day in the five  
4 boroughs. We began to harden bike lanes last year.  
5 These are bike lanes that were previously not really  
6 protected as well as we would like with delineators.  
7 We did ten miles of those and we added more ped space  
8 than we had actually planned to do so. So, we're  
9 working hard on every front and we're exceeding in  
10 many areas as well.  
11

12 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Is there or how will the  
13 Streets Plan be effected by congestion pricing?

14 MARGARET FORGIONE: Right, the streets plan will  
15 not be effected by congestion pricing. We were going  
16 to continue to do everything that we're doing. In  
17 fact, if we can provide more alternatives to people,  
18 such as biking and safer roadways for walking, that's  
19 certainly a goal of the Streets Plan and congestion  
20 pricing.

21 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Okay, I want to talk about  
22 the speed camera enforcement. The FY24 Executive  
23 Budget includes a new need for 24/7 automated speed  
24 camera enforcement of \$7.1 million in FY24 and \$9.2  
25 million in FY25 and the outyears. Will this funding

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1  
2 be used to support DOT internal jobs and projects or  
3 would it be used for contracts with private  
4 companies?

5 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: I will pass it to Deputy  
6 Commissioner Ochoa.

7 PAUL OCHOA: Yeah, thank you for the question  
8 Chair. First of all, we're very proud of our Speed  
9 Camera program. As the Commissioner mentioned, we  
10 have seen a 30 percent decrease since it went to  
11 24/7, which means less violations with just exactly  
12 the type of program we want to run.

13 Since the program started, we've also seen a 97  
14 percent decrease in speeding, where speed cameras are  
15 located. So, this is obviously the policy that we  
16 want to achieve. Yes, you're right, the \$7.1 million  
17 is for staffing, for the ramp up of staffing that we  
18 need in order for us to operate the 24/7 violations.

19 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: And how many cameras would  
20 that funding support?

21 PAUL OCHOA: So, we have about 2,200 cameras and  
22 that staffing would be for the 2,200 cameras. So,  
23 all of them.

24 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: And what amount or what  
25 percent of cameras will now be able to operate 24/7?

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1  
2 PAUL OCHOA: All of them are operating 24/7.

3 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Okay.

4 PAUL OCHOA: And this is an invitation to you  
5 and any member of the Council. If you want to talk  
6 about our speed camera programs, it's a very robust  
7 system that we would be happy to walk you through it.

8 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: And one other thing that I'll  
9 add, Deputy Commissioner had something. One of the  
10 things that I experienced going to Albany advocating  
11 for the 24/7, even when somebody stated that they  
12 were against it, they say came now before because of  
13 the constituency that I represent, but I personally  
14 even have changed the way how I tried.

15 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Oh, yeah.

16 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Because when a driver gets  
17 the second or third ticket, most of them because the  
18 camera 24/7, people change their way how to drive.  
19 So, having the camera 24/7 is another tool that has  
20 allowed us to change the culture on how we're driving  
21 in New York City.

22 MARGARET FORGIONE: Just one more thing to add  
23 to maybe your question. From Fiscal '14 to '22, we  
24 spent about \$2 billion in capital and expense to  
25 advance Vision Zero and in that same period, our

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1 speed cameras brought in \$905 million. So, the point  
2 is that we are – the city is putting all the  
3 resources that we need to in the Vision Zero effort,  
4 regardless of any camera revenue.  
5

6 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Okay, I want to talk about  
7 hybrid vehicles. So, according to DOT, 34 percent of  
8 its fleet is hybrid or electric, 38 percent cannot be  
9 hybrid or electric at this time. Could you talk a  
10 little bit about why and if there are plans to  
11 upgrade all vehicles possible to hybrid or electric?

12 MARGARET FORGIONE: Yeah, so at our – DOT's  
13 fleet is about 60 percent what we call medium and  
14 heavy duty. These are trucks, big trucks. The  
15 technology has not advanced yet to make those  
16 electric but as they – uhm, as the technology is  
17 present, we will start to transition our fleet over  
18 into electric heavy-duty vehicles. Right now, we are  
19 purchasing many, pretty much every light duty vehicle  
20 that we possible can as an electric vehicle. So, our  
21 fleet is transitioning over and we're committed to  
22 making that happen.

23 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: And by the way, I don't know  
24 how many of you saw that we introduced last week, the  
25 first pilot project happened in the first electric

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1 pedal cargo bike that now DOT is using to go do minor  
2 repair in bike lanes, and also in Brooklyn in the  
3 Navy Yard, we are also working with a new lab that we  
4 are also testing you know the new charges. So, I can  
5 say together with DCAS, DOT is really leading when it  
6 comes to a goal that Mayor Adams has committed to  
7 turn our vehicles electric.  
8

9 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Okay, I got two more.  
10 Talk about PEGs, so the FY24 Exec included PEGs for  
11 FY24 and the outyears with a total savings of \$32.6  
12 million. One of the largest savings, \$20 million in  
13 FY24 came from savings in the traffic and streets  
14 operation program area. Where were those savings  
15 found and what impact will it be to DOT as a result  
16 of the PEG?

17 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Yeah, so one of the things  
18 that we appreciate and Mayor Eric Adams, his  
19 commitment to be fiscal responsible and we know that  
20 it's not a - it's a thing to run the City of New York  
21 and when it comes to the PEG that we have in front of  
22 us and we put that our Deputy Commissioner Ochoa, he  
23 also will explain with more details but one of the  
24 things that I can tell you, all the PEG that we were  
25 able to do it, we did it without losing a layoff and

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1 we were able to continue investing on really setting  
2 our street, running the city. You know every one  
3 during the spring, the summer, there was just so many  
4 DOT truck in our community. They are the ones who  
5 are resurfacing the street, who are paving the  
6 street, who are taking care of the sidewalk. So, the  
7 PEG, we were able to do the PEG internally without  
8 any layoff. Deputy Commissioner Ochoa can also add  
9 more details.  
10

11 PAUL OCHOA: Yeah, thank you Chair for that  
12 question. Yes, our PEG, we were very proud to have  
13 met our PEG target. It was actually \$34 million in  
14 change. It really came from three main categories as  
15 the Commissioner mentioned. You mentioned contract  
16 underspending of traffic and street operations.  
17 Those were mainly contract underspending. We are  
18 maxing out vendors that are available for us to  
19 partner with. So, to your question, no, it is not  
20 impacting our operations.

21 The other two categories where we met our PEG  
22 were one, recognizing some revenue and the open  
23 restaurants that we expect to pass very soon, so  
24 thank you for all of you who have worked on that.  
25 And then the rest were grand swaps, which means we

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1  
2 are taking in federal dollars and switching them for  
3 city tax levy.

4 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Quickly about the capital  
5 plan. The capital plan for DOT totals \$11.3 billion  
6 for FY23 to '27. It's a 4.2 percent decrease since  
7 the prelim. Will any of the projects be effected by  
8 the change since the prelim plan?

9 PAUL OCHOA: No, we rolled some dollars to make  
10 sure that they match the construction timelines,  
11 which means we're just pushing them to better align  
12 with the actual construction timelines in partnership  
13 with our colleagues at DDC.

14 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: And is there equity given  
15 consideration when spreading love for capital  
16 improvements?

17 PAUL OCHOA: Yes, that is the types of projects  
18 and I wish I could show you a map to see the types of  
19 investments we're making across the five boroughs. I  
20 don't think there's ever been such a focus at DOT to  
21 make sure that we reaching every corner of the city  
22 and making sure that we're spending dollars across  
23 all communities.

24 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Okay, Commissioner, in  
25 addition to Paul and Rick and Ryan, your team is

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33

1  
2 amazing, very responsive. I have to shout out  
3 Claudette Workman and Leeroy Branch. I speak to them  
4 more than I speak to my wife on certain weeks and  
5 Claudette knows I'm not lying and Daniel Zuckerman  
6 too has been fantastic. So, I appreciate the  
7 relationship we have and I think it certainly helps  
8 to have a former Council Member leading the DOT. So,  
9 we appreciate that you understand our frustration  
10 sometimes and we're all trying to get to the same  
11 place.

12 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Thank you Chair. It's so  
13 great to be working with you, you know former role in  
14 this Finance Committee and Chair of the  
15 Transportation Committee, I can say you know our  
16 agency has one of the best teams when it comes to  
17 leadership. I work for them. It's 5,500 men and  
18 women that they run our department. It's a great  
19 honor to come with this experience, to be what I was  
20 like you before, bringing, learning from the  
21 frustration and this Mayor is as Commissioner say  
22 equity is what defines whatever we do at DOT. From  
23 an opportunity that we want to create inside the  
24 agency to build the leadership to develop a project  
25 to hear from each 51 Council Members regarding the

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1  
2 community that you support. What are you needs? And  
3 we are here to be sure that we work with you guys.

4 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Thank you Commissioner.  
5 We've also been joined by Council Members Carr, Lee,  
6 Won, Dinowitz and Joseph and I'm now going to hand it  
7 over to Chair Brooks-Powers. Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you. First,  
9 I'd like to start with the vacancy rate. What is the  
10 current vacancy rate for DOT?

11 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Commissioner Ochoa.

12 PAUL OCHOA: Yes, we have about a 13.1 percent  
13 vacancy and I do want to highlight the work that the  
14 Administration has been doing to make sure that we  
15 fill those vacancies. As the Commissioner said, the  
16 hiring hauls have been incredibly helpful in bringing  
17 in new staff to the team and aside from the hiring  
18 calls, the Commissioner mentioned we brought in over  
19 100 people through those hiring hauls but we've also  
20 added another 200 people just in our regular  
21 staffing, so it is getting better. I'm going to give  
22 a shout out to the DC 37 contract and the possibility  
23 of the remote work pilot that has also been very  
24 helpful in recruiting folks and retaining good  
25 talent.

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CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Are there any units  
of appropriation that have higher vacancy rates than  
others?

PAUL OCHOA: Yeah, so the short answer is yes.  
We do see that our office staff has higher vacancy  
rates than our field staff typically. That's just -  
it's not a specific issue to DOT. We see that across  
the nation in government entities.

YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: I want to add, again to  
create the pipeline, are there future planners at  
DOT? Are there future engineers at DOT? So, working  
together with DC 37, working with the Chairman of  
CUNY Matos and [00:40:40] Chancellor, we are working,  
putting an understanding between DOT and CUNY so that  
we can start recruiting early since before the  
student graduating. We also in this summer going to  
be having 150 high school and college students doing  
internship. Commissioner Forgione, she can explain  
about her experience and how she had started because  
her experience is what we've been using also to  
create the pipeline.

MARGARET FORGIONE: Thank you Commissioner. So,  
as the Commissioner says, we have a very strong  
emphasis on bringing in younger people and developing

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1  
2 their careers and keeping them within DOT. I myself,  
3 a number of years ago was a summer intern and a lot  
4 of my colleagues at a senior level within the agency  
5 were also summer interns. So, we have a robust  
6 program year around. We have 75 college aids who  
7 are with us the whole year. In the summer we add 75  
8 more summer interns and then we're working closely  
9 with DYCD to get a very substantial summer youth  
10 employment program.

11 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: And if you have anyone in  
12 your district that you want to send to us, that we  
13 would be able to do a summer internship, we're ready  
14 to work with you.

15 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Okay, thank you for  
16 that. How is the budget specifically addressing the  
17 vacancy issues and how is the budget improving the  
18 hiring process?

19 PAUL OCHOA: I can take that. So, I know our  
20 friends at OMB don't get a lot of love at these types  
21 of hearing but they have been very helpful in  
22 approving actions much faster. I think they've cut  
23 down on the times by about 50 percent, which has been  
24 very helpful to us in onboarding. I think one of the  
25 frustrations that you probably heard from agencies is

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1 just how long it takes from the time you make an  
2 offer to the time they walk in the door and that time  
3 has been cut significantly. So, it's not a budget  
4 issue per se, I think it's just the process. It's a  
5 process improvement certainly that takes OMB, City  
6 Halls push and as well as our own HR streamlining  
7 systems to make sure that we bring in folks faster.  
8

9 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Besides that, what  
10 incentives are like offered to DOT employees, so that  
11 they stay and do not go to private sector jobs or  
12 agencies at other levels of government? Because I  
13 know in past hearings, you all have talked about the  
14 competitiveness of the private sector.

15 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: One of the things that Paul  
16 is getting to is what happened at DOT, is that when  
17 someone joins the agency, it's very difficult for  
18 them to leave and I can tell you that as someone that  
19 was a teacher for 50 years, we know that retention is  
20 key. So, when I got into DOT, what I got was great  
21 men and women in leadership at DOT. That many of  
22 them, they've been working there for 20 and 30 years.  
23 So I feel that you know when someone had this  
24 opportunity to work on the bridges, not only they  
25 will be working on the Brooklyn Bridge. On the 24<sup>th</sup>

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1 we're going to be celebrating the 140 years when the  
2 Brooklyn Bridge was built. But they're going to be  
3 working, maintaining, paintings and building close to  
4 800 bridges that we have in the City of New York.  
5 When someone joined the Staten Island Ferry, it's  
6 about I think that there's always going to be you  
7 know other options that people look and like and in  
8 government people rotate. Today your Council Member,  
9 tomorrow you can be working the agency. Someone can  
10 be at DDC, DDP, come in DOT but I feel that DOT have  
11 a high level of retention.

13 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: In April, DOT stated  
14 that it participated doing a hiring fair with DCAS  
15 and DC37. How many individuals were placed in DOT  
16 roles out of this hiring fair?

17 PAUL OCHOA: Yeah, these are the 100, just on  
18 those hiring fairs, we brought in about 100 people  
19 that have already, yes, have already started at DOT.  
20 And they're across the division, so as the  
21 Commissioner mentioned, we brought in engineers that  
22 get sent to bridges. We brought in clerical  
23 associates that get sent to traffic ops, electrical  
24 engineers, city planners, it really runs the gamut of  
25 type of individuals we've been able to recruit.

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CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: That's good, I also want to get into the staffing level, so I understand that better. Is there an optimal staffing level that exists within DOT, such as, such that all jobs can be done and there's no gap in services? So, DOT has a number of mandates from Streets Plan to other laws that are in place. So, what is that sweet number in terms of the staffing that would allow in the perfect world for all of those jobs to be able to happen and there be no gap in service?

PAUL OCHOA: Yeah, we have 744 vacant positions. I would love to hire all 744 positions.

CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: But what's the need?

PAUL OCHOA: The reality is we make due with what we have at any given moment. If we have more staff, that means we can spend more OTPS which means we can do more projects that is normal. What we said at this hearing is that the PEG did not impact any of our current work given our current levels of staffing. I think we have a very strong support from City Hall to if it gets to a point where we actual fill these vacancies and we need more money to match the OTPS, we were going to have those conversations

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1  
2 and make sure we're properly funded to do all the  
3 good work that New Yorkers expect from us.

4 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: So, are you saying  
5 that the 744 is what's needed to be an optimal  
6 headcount or is there another number?

7 PAUL OCHOA: Yes, I am always going to try to  
8 fill all our vacancies. We, the current staff that  
9 we have, allows us to do the work that we're being  
10 asked to do right now. We can always do more with  
11 more.

12 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: And Chair if you don't mind,  
13 let me add to this that look, we will continue coming  
14 in front of the Council and the question is going to  
15 be, how is DOT doing this Street Master Plan? And I  
16 said before, and then the question will be have you  
17 done the bus lane? Have you done the bike lane?  
18 Those have been the two areas that we have mentioned  
19 in the Street Master Plan.

20 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Don't get too ahead,  
21 I'm going to get there.

22 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: So, I said before, when we  
23 were having those meetings right at the Council that  
24 I was part, and we were addressing you know during  
25 COVID and we put together our Street Master Plan,

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1 Open Street, Open Restaurant was no part of that.

2 That piece that I know that many of you Council

3 Members that I was in that seat before with dealing

4 with, is that when we had to work with those two

5 areas, bus lane, bike lane, have you accomplished

6 those? Many of you have challenges in your own

7 district and sometimes when we go with those plans –

8 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Commissioner, I do

9 want to spend some time on that but I just want to

10 stick on staffing for the moment. So, what would be

11 the PS cost for the staffing level for the 744?

12 PAUL OCHOA: The PS cost would be what we have

13 in the budget. We are budgeted to be fully staffed.

14 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Okay, let's get into

15 Streets Plan. It seems like that's where you want to

16 go. So, just piggybacking off of Chair Brannan's

17 questions earlier, I know you keep mentioning that

18 when Streets Plan was adopted that there was no open

19 dining. It's been some time now that you've been

20 saying that in the hearings, so I'm curious to know

21 in Fiscal 2024 in the Proposed budget, will it take

22 into account open dining? Especially given that DOT

23 has requested to oversee the Open Dining program.

24  
25

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1  
2 So, will the budget take into account the fact  
3 that you now have Open Dining. So, as you can still  
4 meet those goals of the Streets Plan because now it's  
5 there, you requested it. You've said DOT can handle  
6 it but if the Streets Plan is not you know meeting  
7 the goals, you know it shows that the agency may need  
8 more staff, may need more resources and we need to  
9 understand that better because we don't want to not  
10 meet the goals of Open Streets, because that is a  
11 priority,

12 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: So, first of all, thank you  
13 to you and the Speaker and all Council Member for  
14 being working with demonstration here at DOT and to  
15 aid the bill that now the program of Open Restaurant  
16 is under, it will be under DOT. We save 100,000 jobs  
17 because of Open Restaurant. We had 12,000 open  
18 restaurants during COVID. Chair, before COVID, 80  
19 percent of what is open restaurant, sidewalk type, in  
20 Manhattan there were millions in downtown Manhattan.  
21 For the first time we got to see family that they  
22 were able to have tables and Chairs, got to outside  
23 the Midtown Manhattan, downtown Brooklyn and Long  
24 Island City.

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1 So, definitely Open Restaurant is a big one.

2  
3 Yes, we will have the resources. When it comes to  
4 the Street Master Plan, Mayor Adams commitment to put  
5 the money where his word is, DOT have other resources  
6 that we need for us to do the job. Weather permitted  
7 because you know also, most of the work that we do is  
8 during the spring, the summer and the fall. We hope  
9 that we will have good months to do the work and we  
10 hope again as we engage in conversation with all of  
11 you 51 Council Members, that also we get your support  
12 to the bus lane, the bike lane that we need in order  
13 to accomplish our street master plan.

14 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you for that  
15 and how many like you said earlier, that you are on  
16 target for the Streets Plan in 2023 mandate. How  
17 many bus lanes are you required to build in 2023?  
18 What's the number? I only want the number; I don't  
19 need the narrative.

20 MARGARET FORGIONE: Well, over a five-year  
21 period, we're looking at 150 bus lane miles or  
22 improved bus lanes. So, it's you know it's not  
23 necessarily a consistent amount every year.

24 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: And how many bike  
25 lanes?

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1  
2 MARGARET FORGIONE: So, we're looking at doing  
3 25 to 30 protected miles of bike lane this year and  
4 about 50 miles of total bike lanes.

5 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: And when we met with the  
6 advocate TA and Family [00:51:21] and everyone, one  
7 of the things that we heard things about how  
8 important it is to also focus on the quality. Not  
9 just only the quantity but we also are focusing on  
10 both the quantity and the quality. That's why this  
11 year, for the first time with your support. We  
12 widened the bike lane in 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue and that's why  
13 last year we were able to hardening ten miles of bike  
14 lane and this lane we're going to be hardening  
15 another ten miles of bike lane that will improve the  
16 safety of cyclists in our city.

17 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: How many bus lanes  
18 have been built this year to date?

19 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: The things as I said, we want  
20 to focus like, we -

21 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: I just want the  
22 number Commissioner.

23 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: We cannot give you the number  
24 because we work around the weather and that's  
25 something that you know, it is now -

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CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: But do you know how many were built to date? You should be able to tell us how many to date have been built. I'm not saying what your projection is, as of today, how many have been built is what I'm asking?

MARGARET FORGIONE: Yeah, so let me mention that we have just entered our installation season. We can't lay down markings. We can't do much of our most of our asphalt work in the winter time, so we are actually just entering the implementation season. So, it would be better for us to be able to update you in just a little bit on all the projects that are underway.

CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Do you have monthly projections for the construction?

MARGARET FORGIONE: We more deal in seasons, so maybe we can talk about the projects that we do have planned for 2023. So, we have University Avenue in the Bronx, Gun Hill Road, Northern Boulevard Queens, Fordham Road, Livingston Street in Brooklyn, Third Avenue in Manhattan, and the Washington Bridge.

So, we have a lot of bus projects that are in various stages of discussion with the community and in implementation.

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1  
2 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: And considering that  
3 it was a pretty mild winter and there wasn't that  
4 many snow, did any construction take place in the  
5 winter this year since we had good weather?

6 MARGARET FORGIONE: Yeah, unfortunately we're  
7 not, it's not really that nimble in that our marking  
8 contractors, they can't bring their people on for  
9 like a day or two. So, we officially and the weather  
10 has to be in the 50's in order to lay markings or  
11 paint, so winter is really difficult.

12 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: And then when  
13 answering questions about the failure to meet Streets  
14 Plans target, DOT has cited there is issues with  
15 contractors who are unable to meet delivery  
16 requirements. How is DOT holding these contractors  
17 accountable and has DOT considered seeking  
18 alternative contractors?

19 MARGARET FORGIONE: So, one of the challenges  
20 that we've had is the marking contractors. There are  
21 a limited number of marking contractors because there  
22 is very expensive equipment that goes with this work.  
23 A vehicle costs many hundreds of thousands of  
24 dollars. So, we are working to see who else in the  
25 industry could possibly join this work force and if

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1  
2 there are ways to develop other vendors to bring more  
3 people in to be able to do that work. We're also  
4 increasing our in-house capability, which is always  
5 very useful to be able just to do it ourselves.

6 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: And Chairman if you don't  
7 mind, adding to that, how we are working to  
8 accomplish this goal which is very interesting. I  
9 know for you and for many of us is that Mayor Adams  
10 with Michael Gardner, the new director of the MWBE is  
11 so committed that by 2025 \$25 billion of contract  
12 must be going to women and minority. So, we are also  
13 having a lot of — last night it was 48<sup>th</sup> Street  
14 together with Michael Gardner, other Commissioners  
15 engaging in that conversation about the steps that we  
16 are taking to be sure that more women and minority  
17 are onboard. And we are also working with the  
18 traditional one who are not all women and minority,  
19 having a friendly engaging conversation to say, help  
20 us to accomplish this goal.

21 So what we will see happen in the next couple of  
22 months or year, if expansion and more option that we  
23 are building as a result of Mayor Adam committed to  
24 put \$25 billion in contract to women and minority.

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CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Did you say 25  
percent or \$25 million?

YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: \$25 billion by 2025. That's  
Mayor Adams commitment of the money and contract that  
will be going to women and minority.

CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you. In  
April, DOT said it was finalized in the contract for  
a new team to install benches and real time bus  
information at bus stops. Has that contract been  
finalized?

MARGARET FORIONE: I think you're talking about  
the real time passenger information contract, which  
will be very beneficial in that it will be looking to  
power these devices through solar, which is much more  
efficient in that we don't have to do any trenching  
and obviously it's good for a number of reasons. So,  
we are in the process of still finalizing that  
contract. That contract has not begun.

CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: DOT staff had  
informed the Council that contract is set to apply  
cameras needed to enforce protective bus lanes had  
also been delayed because of the supply chain issues.  
Have these issues been resolved and what is the  
status of the cameras?

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1  
2 MARGARET FORGIONE: Yeah, we have not, uhm, we  
3 have all of our cameras in place. And so, I'm not  
4 exactly sure what you're referring to but at this  
5 moment, all of our speed cameras or red-light  
6 cameras, they're all in place. Our vendor is not  
7 having any issues supplying that.

8 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Okay, that was the  
9 information shared on a call that you all had with us  
10 earlier this year. So, you're saying that they're  
11 all now in place?

12 MARGARET FORGIONE: We will check and make sure  
13 and follow up on the conversation from earlier.

14 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: And Commissioner, I  
15 was glad to hear you bring up the MWBE projects  
16 because that was something that's been a concern to  
17 me as I one, I've been excited to see DOT in the  
18 streets, especially in my community doing the work  
19 because the season is here, as you mentioned. But in  
20 terms of the companies that are being contracted, the  
21 workforce that we see, a lot of times they don't look  
22 diverse. And so, I'm really interested in what the  
23 diversity looks like in terms of the workforce and  
24 the contractors that you have currently put in place  
25 to do this seasonal work.

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1 Like, do you have like the numbers in terms of  
2 MBE's particularly a Black businesses and your Latino  
3 businesses and in terms of the workforce, do you have  
4 it broken down also by race?  
5

6 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Yeah, as I said before in the  
7 manual, everyone that come in with us speaking the  
8 language, I am not going to be wasting my time as a  
9 Commissioner without pushing equity in a real way,  
10 especially for women and minority.

11 So, you know as a foreman and current organizer,  
12 former teacher, Council Member, I can share with you  
13 that last year, we only had 11 percent for women and  
14 minority. Right now, I can tell you that by June 30,  
15 we will on 20 percent for contract for women and  
16 minority. We are almost doubling. What used to be  
17 like 40 or 60 million contracts that went to women  
18 and minority, now it's going beyond \$160 million and  
19 that's only the beginning. Because this mayor is  
20 committed to be progressive by action or economic  
21 justice and we are overdue when it comes to a city  
22 that we spend billions and billions of dollars and  
23 women and minority and Black and Latino, working  
24 class has never been having a chair at the table when  
25 it comes to having contracts. So, yes, we are making

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1 progress at DOT and this this administration Mayor  
2 Eric Adams is only at the beginning what New York  
3 City will see in his time as a Mayor.  
4

5 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: 11 percent and 20  
6 percent is a huge jump, which is great. So, how like  
7 what contracts has gone out that has led to that  
8 jump?

9 PAUL OCHOA: I can take it. So, a lot of our  
10 legacy contracts did not have MWBE goals, so the way  
11 that we we're reaching this doubling of numbers is by  
12 requiring every time we have to renew or issue new  
13 contracts that have to set clear goals that are both  
14 reachable from the vendor side and serve the policy  
15 that the Commissioner mentioned.

16 So, we're tagging that 30 percent MWBE goal to  
17 each one of the contracts that we are reissuing as an  
18 agency.

19 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Of the one's that  
20 you reissued, do you have a breakdown in terms of  
21 what the percentage or the Black businesses and the,  
22 as you know I want them separate though. I don't  
23 want the Black and Brown together. I want -

24 PAUL OCHOA: No, no, no, so I have, we do have  
25 them separate. As the Commissioner mentioned, year

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1 to date, we are at about \$130 million, which is year  
2 to date, it's like 18 and 19 percent but we do expect  
3 to get well beyond the 20 percent actually. So, out  
4 of the \$130 million, \$22 million has gone to Black  
5 owned businesses, \$18 million has gone to Hispanic  
6 owned businesses, \$37 has gone to women owned  
7 businesses and \$49 has gone to Asian owned  
8 businesses.  
9

10 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: And then in terms of  
11 the women, what's the breakdown with that?

12 PAUL OCHOA: The women would be White women.  
13 Otherwise it would be captured under Black or  
14 Hispanic or Asian.

15 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: And we are Chair, in this in  
16 the summer now, we're going to be holding our second  
17 day of doing business with DOT.

18 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: I would love to  
19 cohost one.

20 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: So, more than happy. So,  
21 what I did also, and that's how we've also been  
22 getting our numbers. Not only we are taking the  
23 initiative bringing women and minority, last night as  
24 I said with Michael Gardner more than 250 business  
25 owners, Latino and Black and Asian. You know, being

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1 informed about how to navigate but also, I've been  
2 meeting with those who are not MWBE and I've been  
3 asking them, help me to accomplish this goal. And I  
4 can tell you that we've been getting some good  
5 results. Carlos, who lead that unit in DOT, that is  
6 in charge, to be sure that we get our MWBE. He doing  
7 a great job and under the supervision that we have  
8 with him and announcing other, I am confident that  
9 this is only the beginning. Like, 20 percent is good  
10 but we need to go higher.

12 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: And looking at these  
13 numbers is why I always emphasize the minority side  
14 because what we do find with the women side that it's  
15 often really White women, which really contributes to  
16 the overall majority number. And so, would love to  
17 cosponsor and I'm sure my colleagues here would in  
18 their districts as well, opportunities to work with  
19 the Department of Transportation to see more of an  
20 increase because diversity and diversity Black and  
21 Hispanic firms are still the underutilized category.  
22 And we look at Black women, even lower and so, it's  
23 important like if we're really trying to make some  
24 changes, how the industry operates. We have to look  
25 at how we're contracting, so I'm really glad to hear

1  
2 that you're tacking that on but like let's look at a  
3 little bit more granular and see how do we pull up  
4 these visits as a given opportunity. Because today  
5 may be a DOT project. They get that city experience  
6 and then they go to another agency. The next thing  
7 you know they may be with SCE, MTA or whatever, so  
8 that's something that's important.

9 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: And Chair, what we are doing  
10 so that we are also working with Lisa Flores and also  
11 the Director of Contracts to be sure also that those  
12 small businesses, they know how to navigate the  
13 system too and so I feel that you know all of us  
14 being advocating for that to happen but sometimes  
15 what we have seen was also like that conversation and  
16 like, people talk about equity but is equity action  
17 or is equity word? Is the committee of WBE something  
18 that only we come and say that is important for us?  
19 Are we getting results? So, one thing that also we  
20 are doing is to be sure at DOT that the members of  
21 Committee that evaluate contracts also reflect the  
22 diversity of our city, which is something new that we  
23 are bringing to the agency.

24 So, in every single agency, the unit that I  
25 have, the direction because this is important for

1 Mayor Eric Adams that has given this. Each panel  
2 that review contracts must be diverse. So, that's  
3 helping us also getting the message but also knowing  
4 that there's an action when there's a direction given  
5 by the Mayor knows that we need to address the lack  
6 of access for women and minority to get contract.  
7 They are there. They know how to do the work. They  
8 just have not had the opportunity to be part of those  
9 contracts.  
10

11 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Okay, so there's two  
12 quick categories I want to hit, so I could be able to  
13 pass it off to my colleagues to ask questions and  
14 then I'll come back after. So, trucking enforcement  
15 and 53-foot tractor trailers. Yesterday, we received  
16 a letter detailing DOTs efforts to improve trucking  
17 enforcement and address problems related to 53-footer  
18 trucks illegally present on our streets.

19 We had asked questions about the resources  
20 devoted to trucking in DOT and specifically to the  
21 freight mobility unit. Your response said there were  
22 several vacancies in the freight mobility unit but  
23 you didn't specify how many. How many positions are  
24 you hiring for and what are these positions? And  
25 your response also said DOT has limited visibility in

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1  
2 the activities of 53-foot trucks that are illegally  
3 on our streets. How can we increase visibility and  
4 how does this budget help the DOT address this,  
5 better address this issue?

6 MARGARET FORGIONE: Okay, so maybe I'll start.  
7 We do have a hand full of vacancies in our freight  
8 mobility units.

9 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: How many exactly?

10 MARGARET FORGIONE: I'd have to get back to you.  
11 We'll see if we have the information here but it's a  
12 fairly small number. These are planner type people,  
13 people who have a background. It doesn't necessarily  
14 have to be in the trucking industry but with city  
15 planning types of work.

16 When we talk about like a lack of eyes on what's  
17 happening out there, there are a lot of activities on  
18 a lot of streets. We work closely with NYPD to  
19 highlight if there are certain areas in the city that  
20 we believe enforcement is needed, and we request that  
21 they do over dimensional truck enforcement in that  
22 way. We're also, as you probably are aware, looking  
23 at overweight trucks on the BQE and putting in place  
24 a weigh in motion program there. And if that program

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1  
2 is successful, it's definitely the type of program we  
3 would want to see expanded elsewhere in the future.

4 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you. The last  
5 category I want to touch on is parking. I want to  
6 touch briefly on the investments - sorry, allergies  
7 have been trying to take me out this year. I want to  
8 touch briefly on investments in parking citywide.  
9 How much does DOT allocate to investments in parking  
10 in its capital and expense budgets?

11 PAUL OCHOA: Just to clarify Council Member, do  
12 you mean like garage parking or like traffic  
13 operations, metering of parking?

14 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Sorry, uhm, so in  
15 terms of just the assets in the city in terms of  
16 street parking, municipal parking.

17 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Let me say a little bit on  
18 the street parking and then the Deputy on the  
19 municipal parking. One thing that I want, you know I  
20 always tell people in parking in the street is that  
21 we had to realize that New York City only had 350  
22 square miles of 8.6 million people, 50 million  
23 visitors. So, there is a SPEAKING ON SPANISH  
24 [01:08:20]- [01:08:25]. It means there's no big for  
25 so many people. I tell people you know I come from a

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1  
2 community that people believe that the street belong  
3 to those who need to park. So, we are changing the  
4 course of people. We have to share the streets. The  
5 streets are only for those who need to park. We get  
6 what people in Queens, in Brooklyn and in places that  
7 live – they have their house 15 blocks from the train  
8 station and where the car is needed. But there's  
9 other places in the city that people buy a car to use  
10 it twice a week and park in the street.

11 So, we need to be sure again that again, DOT  
12 oversee all those miles of streets, that many  
13 individuals need to park. So, we're working hard to  
14 be sure that you know people, we share the street for  
15 those who need to park but also the street also to be  
16 used for pedestrian for cyclists, for open street,  
17 for open restaurant.

18 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: And I hear you and I  
19 do think that DOT has a responsibility to also ensure  
20 that there is parking even if there are municipal  
21 lots or garages available because as we look to share  
22 the streets, we got to remember that everyone's  
23 quality of life needs to be taken into account as  
24 well. I find that when we see cars blocking bike  
25 lanes and bus lanes, you know that's really

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1 concerning. So, I think to be able to move them off  
2 the streets is to give them somewhere to go because  
3 the cars have not disappeared and we may want to wish  
4 them away but that's not the reality. And so, you  
5 talk about the quality of life and the safety for  
6 cyclists, for pedestrians and motorists and I feel  
7 that we have to include that in the conversation when  
8 we talk about DOT and its mandates because the  
9 quality of like impacts everyone at the end of the  
10 day, so we can't act like they don't exist. I will  
11 often talk about when I travel. Now, I'm looking at  
12 what the street designs are and you know where I've  
13 gone and I haven't seen any accidents, any horns  
14 blowing. There's some areas that they have municipal  
15 lots and so they may not have a lot of street parking  
16 but they have somewhere for the cars to actually go  
17 to come off the streets.

18  
19 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Chair, if you don't mind and  
20 Paul will add a little bit with that part but I got  
21 to, as I say, we need to share the street. It's the  
22 understanding that the streets are also used for  
23 people that they have to use them to park the car.  
24 And that we also, DOT running numbers of public  
25

1 parking garage, that I don't know if Paul want to - I  
2 don't know or Margaret.  
3

4 PAUL OCHOA: We do have and we're happy to break  
5 it down but our traffic operations would be in charge  
6 of parking. In Fiscal 2023, we had about \$72 million  
7 for the parking operation. Now there's a lot of  
8 overlap obviously in the question and how you framed  
9 it but I do want to emphasize what the Commissioner  
10 said and we also have competing priorities. The  
11 Council has been a leader in asking us to daylight  
12 intersections for example, and that takes away  
13 parking. So, we just have to balance the different  
14 priorities as well.

15 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: And how many parking  
16 spots are there by borough? Is there adequate supply  
17 to meet the demand in outer borough neighborhoods  
18 with limited access to public transit?

19 MARGARET FORGIONE: So, I would say that in less  
20 dense neighborhoods, obviously there is adequate  
21 parking and then in areas where there are lot of  
22 people, a lot of competition for the spaces, there's  
23 not enough but what we would like to mention is that  
24 we are - we have several initiatives that you might  
25 you know if you're not aware of, you'll find

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1 interesting. The first, well, I'm sure you're aware  
2 of our neighborhood loading zone program where we're  
3 adding hundreds of loading zones in critical  
4 locations to prevent double parking, mainly of  
5 commercial vehicles or vehicles, for-hire vehicles  
6 waiting for passengers, that kind of thing. That can  
7 really alleviate congestion and find a dedicated  
8 place for those vehicles and then at night, they  
9 generally revert to residential parking.  
10

11 So, somebody is driving away for the day to go  
12 to work, when they come back at night they can park.  
13 And the other thing is we recently launched a double-  
14 parking portal where we're looking for comments from  
15 the community on areas that are problematic, that we  
16 can delve into deeper and see what treatments we can  
17 provide there.

18 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you. I have a  
19 couple more questions but I'm going to yield to my  
20 colleagues to get through their questions.

21 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Thank you Chair. We have  
22 questions from Narcisse followed by Ariola.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Good morning. Thank  
24 you Chairs. Commissioner, thank you for coming. If  
25 there is any funding in the budget for expansion of

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1 Ferry's? So, maybe I can be hopeful to further in  
2 Southern Brooklyn?  
3

4 PAUL OCHOA: Thank you for that question Council  
5 Member. I believe the ferry's you're talking about  
6 are EDC ferry's. So, we would not have that question  
7 but I'm happy to either connect you or follow up with  
8 our EDC partners.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Because they told me  
10 that you're very much involved in it too that I have  
11 to talk to DOT.

12 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: So, we run the Staten Island  
13 Ferry and we do the ferry that goes to Hart Island,  
14 which is the largest public cemetery in the whole  
15 nation. So, those two are under our control but the  
16 other one is run by EDC but more than happy to follow  
17 up with you.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: So, why did they push  
19 me towards you? Okay, but we'll get back on that  
20 one. Racks on the Padgett Avenue, right? How did it  
21 get there? I mean if there is a request because  
22 there is so many people sending me texts to say, why  
23 are we having racks? And there's nobody biking on  
24 the Padgett Avenue. The Padgett is the most  
25 complaint that I get in my office.

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1  
2 MARGARET FORGIONE: Okay, so is that about a  
3 bike lane that is not being used? Is that what  
4 you're saying or?

5 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Yeah, the racks, not  
6 the bike-

7 MARGARET FORGIONE: Oh, city bike racks.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: You know keep in mind,  
9 I'm not against racks but I'm saying like the people  
10 in the community saying there's so many and why?  
11 Because nobody's using them and they've been standing  
12 there.

13 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: So, more than happy to follow  
14 with you Council Member but one of the things that I  
15 got to say about this Administration, we are  
16 committed to connect all community with city bike,  
17 bike share, micro-mobility. That's our goal. One of  
18 the things that I got to say born and raised in 1965,  
19 my father had a bike. As an immigrant, we've been  
20 told that bike is a symbol of poverty and now it's  
21 more upper class and middle class to get into the  
22 bike because if you ride it for a half an hour every  
23 day, you will extend six years to your life.

24 So, what we are doing to engage in the  
25 conversation and more than happy to partner with you

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1  
2 to also go to the community and talk about what is  
3 the benefit if we bike?

4 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: I love it. I love  
5 biking. I'm supporting but I'm just saying the  
6 community saying how they place in the area where  
7 they can use for other things and no one is using the  
8 racks.

9 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Yeah, more than happy to  
10 follow with you yeah.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Okay, the street  
12 coming for the turn, I'm wondering is that possible  
13 to see that we can use the same approach for the  
14 regular street for the bumps because I have so many  
15 requests for speed bumps and I'm wondering if we can  
16 use the same approach for the actual streets?

17 MARGARET FORGIONE: Right, uhm, we have looked a  
18 little bit at a device you could bring in for a  
19 street hump in that regard but we haven't found  
20 anything that we think is going to be feasible and  
21 going to be able to withstand a plow in the winter  
22 time.

23 So, at this point, we're not able to utilize the  
24 left turn treatments as speed humps but maybe we can  
25 talk with you right afterwards. You can tell us

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1 which speed hump studies in particular. You're  
2 interested in us advancing and we'll see everything  
3 that we can do.  
4

5 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: No because you have a  
6 lot of street. Like, you have I mean, in residence  
7 in East 18<sup>th</sup> Street before Foster Avenue and  
8 Glenwood, that's not my district but we have  
9 complaints. That's a City Council approach. That's  
10 been waiting for two years. I have some in my  
11 district too that have been waiting for a long time  
12 and I can go on and on. East 56<sup>th</sup>, it's 56 between L  
13 and M. There's so many, so I'm wondering, we have to  
14 use a different strategy to see how we approach it.  
15 If that's taking too long since I've been hearing a  
16 lot of vacancies and different things but the people  
17 that are dying, we're talking about safe streets, so  
18 I'm thinking about something we should be doing a  
19 little more.

20 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: More than happy to follow  
21 with you.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Okay. So, how long  
23 the project take approximately? For the record, the  
24 process.  
25

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1  
2 MARGARET FORGIONE: Well, what we need to do is  
3 examine the areas to confirm the incidence of  
4 speeding. We need to actually inspect the areas to  
5 see compatibility physically for speed humps. And  
6 then we need to do installation. And keep in mind  
7 that we pave 1,150 lane miles every year and we have  
8 to put back the existing speed humps on top of it as  
9 well as put in new ones, so those are some of the  
10 challenges but what we would also like to offer is  
11 that we have other tools in our toolbox that we could  
12 potentially utilize to calm a street down. So, maybe  
13 there's also other things we can do.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Thank you Commissioner  
15 and then to [01:18:04] because that's always on top  
16 of things for us.

17 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: And that, so that's what we  
18 hear in our hearing. I've been committed since day  
19 one to always help my Borough Commissioner and as  
20 also my Chief of Staff to be sure that beside that we  
21 come here and testify in the intergovernmental that  
22 we follow with you for any particular request that is  
23 important for you and for your constituents.

24 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Okay, we've been joined by  
25 Council Members Sanchez and Abreu. Now, we have

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1  
2 questions from Council Member Ariola followed by  
3 Rivera.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER ARIOLA: Thank you Chairs. Thank  
5 you Commissioner and your entire team for coming  
6 today. I'd like to talk about potholes. So, how  
7 much funding does the DOT allocate towards pothole  
8 repairs?

9 MARGARET FORGIONE: Okay, on every given day, we  
10 have pothole crews in every borough and over the  
11 winter when we can't pave, we convert paving crews  
12 into pothole crews and of course during the inclement  
13 weather we have more potholes. So, we feel pothole  
14 crews is needed. We also do blitzes during usually  
15 it's the April time when the potholes tend to appear  
16 in order to make sure we're addressing everything.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER ARIOLA: So, does the Department  
18 keep track of how many potholes they have filled in a  
19 years' time?

20 MARGARET FORGIONE: Absolutely.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER ARIOLA: So, how many last year  
22 and how many this year thus far?

23 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Wait, I'm going to call Irena  
24 to please sit with us, also so, one of the things  
25 that I can say, Irena oversee everything about our

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1 roadway. More than 1,200 men and women paving,  
2 resurfacing pot holes and those are again I want to  
3 talk about retention and people with great  
4 leadership. So, she is one of those, if you don't  
5 mind to answer the question.  
6

7 IRENA NEDELJKOVIC: Hello everybody.

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: I just need to swear you in  
9 first, sorry. Do you affirm that your testimony will  
10 be truthful to the best of your knowledge,  
11 information and belief and you will honestly and  
12 faithfully answer Council Member questions?

13 IRENA NEDELJKOVIC: Yes.

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you.

15 IRENA NEDELJKOVIC: So, I believe your question  
16 was on pot holes. How many have we done to date?  
17 Calendar year to date, is that your question?

18 COUNCIL MEMBER ARIOLA: Hmm, hmm.

19 IRENA NEDELJKOVIC: As of the 17<sup>th</sup>, we have  
20 completed over 90,500 pot holes throughout the city.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER ARIOLA: That's great and do you  
22 keep track of potholes where you need to repair the  
23 same pot hole more than once?

24 IRENA NEDELJKOVIC: We keep track of that in  
25 each borough and locations that are prone to pot

1  
2 holes, so generally prioritized through servicing in  
3 that Community Board.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER ARIOLA: And the complaints that  
5 I get about the pot hole fixing, it's not the amount  
6 of time that it takes for the DOT to come out or the  
7 diligence in filling those pot holes, in fact, it's  
8 quite efficient but it's the material used for the  
9 pot hole, seems to kind of granulize and it breaks up  
10 right away. So I just wondered - you know why is the  
11 material such as that being used to fill a pot hole  
12 where if there's a hard rain, you know the pot hole  
13 is there again. It seems to kind of just turn into  
14 stone.

15 IRENA NEDELJKOVIC: Well, we are always focused  
16 on improving our quality and the quality of our  
17 repairs. And for individual pot holes, I would have  
18 to look into the specific conditions because  
19 sometimes to make the area safe, we have to get there  
20 right away and we use a material known as cold patch  
21 and that is not meant to be a permanent repair.

22 We generally use the same material for pot hole  
23 repair that we use for surfacing of streets but any  
24 sort of defect that you have it's not going to hold  
25 up as well as a resurfaced street without pot holes.

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1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER ARIOLA: Okay and I just have  
3 just one more question. When you do come to  
4 resurface a street, first you do the milling and then  
5 it stays milled for a little bit of time but for the  
6 people on that block that you've milled, it seems  
7 like an eternity. So, what can I say to them when  
8 they call the office and say, "when will my street be  
9 paved?" What's the standard time from the end of  
10 milling to the time it gets paved?

11 IRENA NEDELJKOVIC: Our goal is to return to  
12 milled street within 15 days. Sometimes it can be  
13 sooner. Sometimes it's a little later and there are  
14 efficiencies built into that timeframe. First, we  
15 want to give the utility companies and even not the  
16 big companies but even somebody who is a plumber an  
17 opportunity to be able to do repairs underneath the  
18 asphalt and not have to cut out the street  
19 immediately after.

20 So, we conduct extensive coordination efforts  
21 with our sister agencies such as DEP and also utility  
22 partners throughout the five boroughs. So, that's  
23 one of the major, major considerations but another  
24 consideration is our pace of paving. It's a litter  
25 bit counterintuitive but we pave much faster than

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1 mill. So, in order for us to spend our hard-earned  
2 resurfacing dollars properly, we have to have enough  
3 milled area to then go and pave as fast as possible  
4 to cover more lane miles in any given community.  
5

6 COUNCIL MEMBER ARIOLA: Thank you. Thank you  
7 very much. Thank you Chairs.

8 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: The one thing that I want to  
9 offer to both Chairs is if you like one day, we can  
10 take you for you to see the plan under the BQE that  
11 together with the one in Queens with DOT produce 50  
12 percent of the asphalt that we use. And last year  
13 for the first time, we also started mixing plastic  
14 and how we recycle you know the material. Everything  
15 started when we bought the rock upstate New York and  
16 that's why you see those truck lights paving and  
17 marking because we use those materials. But Chair,  
18 I'm also happy again to if you want for delegation or  
19 the Council Member to take you one day so that you  
20 can see the whole process when we produce the  
21 asphalt.

22 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: We have Council Member  
23 Rivera followed by Dinowitz.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: Thank you so much for  
25 being here and for all of your hard work. I'm going

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1  
2 to ask my questions. I guess I'm going to frontend  
3 the questions if that's okay since I don't have much  
4 time.

5 So, last year, this Council passed the bill  
6 which I was honored to carry that carried a greenway  
7 master plan for New York City that you all were in  
8 support of. We understand that federal funding has  
9 been allocated toward the creation of this master  
10 plan. Can you give us an update on the how he plan  
11 is coming, what city resources are being used to  
12 support these efforts and what type of city funding  
13 is going towards those efforts. Have any capital  
14 dollars been identified for any portion of this plan?

15 My second question is - I have three. I  
16 represent an environmental justice community with  
17 over 10,000 families living in public housing next to  
18 the FDR drive, which exposes them to harmful air  
19 pollution resulting in higher rates of asthma and  
20 other negative health outcomes.

21 So, DOT has begun a study to evaluate treatment  
22 options for the FDR drive below 14<sup>th</sup> Street that will  
23 reduce carbon admissions and pollution levels in the  
24 area. This is a really big priority for my community  
25 and started when we were discussing the East Side

1 Coastal Resiliency Project. I want to thank you for  
2 undertaking this study, it's really exciting. Is  
3 there dedicated funding to complete this study in the  
4 next fiscal year? And has the Department identified  
5 any capital funding that could be used for  
6 recommended projects or in similar project to reduce  
7 pollution levels?  
8

9 And then my final question is on Open Streets  
10 and thank you for including that in your testimony.  
11 When is the Avenue B Open Street going to get some of  
12 these capital improvements, even planters or  
13 something to make it clearer to drivers to go slow  
14 and share the street? Thank you very, very much.

15 YDANIS: I'm going to get started with the  
16 greenway and then my colleagues here, they will  
17 follow but I got to say again for all of us role,  
18 looking at greenway, before we talk about greenway,  
19 we're thinking more about let's really sign the entry  
20 to a park. Now, in our time, we learned that most  
21 people who died during COVID, they didn't die just  
22 because of COVID, they died because they're dealing  
23 with asthma or a respiratory condition living in a  
24 community without having so much greenspace. So,  
25 that's why the new approach that we have right now is

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1 not only about the entry to a park, when we look to  
2 greenway. That's why now, under Mayor Eric Adams  
3 with the funding that the administration and you the  
4 Council put together. We are spending \$1 million on  
5 looking at reimagining a greenway from Van Cortlandt  
6 Park to Randall's Island, bringing justice to our  
7 most unfortunately to our community blocking  
8 community waterfronts. So, that greenway is going to  
9 be one of the biggest ones. A project that we are  
10 looking at right now, having access to cyclists to  
11 pedestrians, so the greenway plan is going to be -  
12 the greenway plan is due to 12/01/2024 and we are on  
13 track to do so but I just wanted to highlight that in  
14 particular.  
15

16 IRENA NEDELJKOVIC: Yeah, and one quick thing on  
17 Greenway, we have just this month opened up a  
18 highway, we call it a highway, our yard in Brooklyn  
19 where we have our crews coming out of to do greenway  
20 work only. And we've been able to rent some  
21 equipment to get them started before we buy the  
22 capital equipment and we've hired the staffing for  
23 that location. We can get you like a more well-  
24 rounded view on anything else related to greenway but  
25

1 we are advancing and doing the hiring and getting the  
2 vehicles.  
3

4 Right, as far as the FDR study, I do know we are  
5 doing that with some other city agency partners. I  
6 don't believe anything in terms of capital  
7 improvements associated with that, the capital money,  
8 we've gotten to that stage yet. So, we'd also want  
9 to get you a detailed update but it will be completed  
10 the winter of this year into next year. So, over the  
11 winter, we'll complete that and the study is fully  
12 funded but not any improvements that would come from  
13 the study.

14 And then for Avenue B. Avenue B for Open  
15 Street, if we need to strengthen the message out  
16 there to get that to drivers, we can make sure that  
17 we can get some planters out there this season.

18 PAUL OCHOA: And on Open Streets Council Member,  
19 you may have seen that we've just released an RFP to  
20 support our open streets citywide. It's a \$30  
21 million contract to precisely do the work that you're  
22 asking both on the staffing, on the maintenance, and  
23 on potential fixtures that we could do - non capital  
24 fixtures that we could do. We're also continuing to  
25 offer refunds for organizations who seek to do

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1 programming up to \$20,000 for them to plan their Open  
2 Streets seasons.  
3

4 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: And Chair and the Council  
5 Members, this is the moment that the window is open  
6 to get closed. It's \$30 million RFP is out; it still  
7 is open. So, those of us that are looking for the  
8 first time also, this open street will include a  
9 mandated of the 30 percent for women and minority but  
10 also we want that you help to disseminate this  
11 information.

12 So, if there's anyone in the five borough in the  
13 city that you feel that they have the capacity that  
14 they can respond to the RFP, this is the moment that  
15 we need to look and work together to disseminate this  
16 information.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Now, we have questions  
19 from Council Member Dinowitz followed by Hudson.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Good afternoon. Thank  
21 you. First, I just want to recognize that the DOT  
22 has been making excessive - it wasn't that funny.  
23 Accessibility upgrades in my district. I've seen it  
24 all around. I want to thank you. That's incredibly  
25 important our city is accessible to all and I

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1 appreciate you mentioning the Van Cortlandt Park  
2 Greenway. I would love your help in pressuring the  
3 MTA to give us access to the space we need to  
4 continue that bike path. I have a few questions.  
5 Some of them you know obviously relate to budget.  
6 I'm concerned about the turnaround time for things  
7 like speed hump requests, stop signs and things like  
8 paint. Do you have an average turnaround time for  
9 when those are requested, when those actually in the  
10 response happens that it gets on the timeline? And  
11 in line with that, I just you know I would tell you  
12 that we've had a lot of issues in my office with  
13 members of the DOT not responding to emails. We sent  
14 requests and requests about painting two parking  
15 spaces in August and the response we got was that  
16 we're making very important safety upgrades and we  
17 can't get to the paint and we don't have a timeline.

18  
19 And I know that DOT is very quick at things  
20 because when you want to do something, it takes you  
21 just a couple weeks to do whole lane reductions and  
22 bus bulbs, it doesn't take you that long when the DOT  
23 wants to do something. So, I'm interested to know  
24 what the turnaround time is when requests are made  
25 and if nine months is typical turnaround time for

1 things like paint. I'm going to ask a couple more  
2 questions and we can because Council Member Rivera  
3 was very smart in time. The speed cushions, it's on  
4 your website as a you know a feasible traffic calming  
5 measures, which are like speed humps but that don't  
6 interfere with bus routes. Every time we've - well,  
7 we were told once that you don't do those even though  
8 they're on your website. We were told from the Bronx  
9 DOT that you don't do speed cushions. Again, even  
10 though they're on your website and it's one of the  
11 tools in your toolbox, and lastly the car share. I  
12 understand you know you're trying to reduce the  
13 number of cars. How much money does the DOT get from  
14 the private companies that are now benefiting from  
15 the street space that they are now taking up from  
16 residents of New York City?

18 MARGARET FORGIONE: I'll start and then others  
19 can chime in. So, in terms of the painting two  
20 spaces that you requested. I will get them from you  
21 afterwards or Darisa Cruz, our Deputy Borough  
22 Commissioner can also get them from you and we will  
23 try to get those done as soon as possible. The  
24 challenge we have as we mentioned earlier to the  
25 Chair is that we don't have an abundance of marking

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1  
2 contractors. So, we need to mark roadways after we  
3 pave them. We are doing other projects as well, so  
4 sometimes the little thing are hard to fit in but  
5 Council Member, we will make sure we fit that in for  
6 you in the next month or two.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: I appreciate it. It's  
8 just an example. You know it was in August, it was  
9 during the summer. It wasn't during the winter  
10 months. I will get you the number but it really was  
11 about, is it typical for it to take nine months to  
12 paint things? And the same question about the speed  
13 humps, the stop signs, it's you know what's your  
14 turnaround time both for every step of the process.

15 MARGARET FORGIONE: Right, we do have a number  
16 of months for a speed hump backlog as we discussed a  
17 few moments earlier. We have a number of months to  
18 review them and then we have to schedule them to go  
19 in and that will also take a number of months. So, I  
20 won't try to say that that is a quick process. We  
21 would like to speed it up. We have a lot of  
22 competing demands though in our asphalt area.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: You don't have like a

24 -

25

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1  
2 MARGARET FORGIONE: We have one crew that does  
3 speed bump installation.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: You don't keep track  
5 of the number though. It's you know -

6 MARGARET FORGIONE: I don't that number with me  
7 but we can get that number for you.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Okay.

9 MARGARET FORGIONE: And then we are getting the  
10 answer to your car share question.

11 PAUL OCHOA: I have the car share. It's \$475  
12 per permit and that permit is for two parking spaces.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Per year?

14 PAUL OCHOA: Hmm, hmm.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: I mean if I could find  
16 two spots for \$400 somewhat dollars per year, I would  
17 be a very popular, cool guy. But I'm not and so,  
18 these are private companies that are you know paying  
19 not that much and do you get a commission from the -  
20 does the DOT get a commission? I mean-

21 MARGARET FORGIONE: Council Member, the  
22 advantage of a car share program is that we see about  
23 a seven percent reduction in car ownership and also  
24 vehicle miles traveled. So, if you don't have a car,  
25 your personal car that you're constantly looking to

1 store, you're not circulating through your  
2 neighborhood unnecessarily looking for a parking  
3 space. If you instead get rid of your car because  
4 you have one more readily available that you can rent  
5 in the neighborhood and not schlep to some other  
6 location, that's a benefit for the neighborhood and  
7 for the city at large. So, that's really the goal in  
8 the car share program.  
9

10 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Okay, I guess the last  
11 question is, has DOT gotten rid of their cars? I  
12 mean, how many cars have you reduced your fleet by?  
13 What are those numbers?

14 MARGARET FORGIONE: Right, have you been a fly  
15 on the wall for other conversations? So, we are in a  
16 conversations, so we are in a constant discussion  
17 about how we can reduce our vehicles and what we do  
18 is we put inspectors on bikes. We have a whole group  
19 of highway inspectors that actually do all their work  
20 every single day on bikes. As the Commissioner  
21 mentioned, we've introduced a cargo bike into our  
22 fleet that can carry stuff. We're trying to see the  
23 feasibility of that. So, wherever we can, yes we are  
24 trying to reduce the number of vehicles within the  
25 agency.

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1  
2 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: But I was you know going to  
3 your district Riverdale, as I know that you were very  
4 happy to see so many yellow trucks and vehicles at  
5 DOT doing all the very actually in the last couple of  
6 months, so in order for DOT also to do their work,  
7 vehicle are also necessary.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Yeah, and do you have  
9 the number of cars you've reduced your fleet by? Is  
10 there a number?

11 MARGERET FORGIONE: Over the last few years, DOT  
12 missions has increased. So, for example, we now have  
13 people doing Open Restaurants where we didn't have  
14 that years ago. We have inspectors who need to cover  
15 many locations in a day. So, it is a balancing act  
16 Council Member for completing our mission, as the  
17 Commissioner has said and reducing vehicles. So, we  
18 are looking for that everywhere we can.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Thank you for your  
20 answers. I'll follow up with those things. Thank  
21 you Chairs.

22 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Okay, we have Council  
23 Member Hudson followed by Restler.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: Thank you so much. I  
25 wanted to just revisit the bike lanes. I'm sorry, I

1 know you probably can't see me back here but I  
2 promise I'm here. I have a cushion too, a see  
3 cushion but it doesn't make a difference. I just  
4 wanted to revisit the bike lanes. I just recently  
5 had a fatality in my district. Somebody who is  
6 riding home from going grocery shopping in a bike  
7 lane and then a truck on Franklin Avenue was making a  
8 right turn without a signal and sadly killed the  
9 cyclist. And so, I want to know how many of the bike  
10 lanes, protected bike lanes in particular, your  
11 planning to install in FY24. What the budget is for  
12 that if you can share please?  
13

14 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: The deputy will include the  
15 more details about you know where we are on various  
16 things installed but one thing that I want to share  
17 with you and of course you are one of the big  
18 supporters. You know of what we're doing in terms of  
19 transportation is that in 2022, for the first time,  
20 we had 200 million bike ridership in the City of New  
21 York and now we have a daily 550,000 bike ridership  
22 in the city.

23 So, definitely before COVID but during COVID and  
24 now more than ever biking is part of moving around  
25 the city. So, we're working hard to be sure that we

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1 address you know the challenges of how to improve  
2 safety for all pedestrians but also for cyclists.  
3 So, those cyclists will also been the last couple of  
4 months have been using also electric bike, so we are  
5 also getting to a campaign together with other  
6 stakeholders on educating also how to use those  
7 electric bikes. And Deputy Commissioner will add.

9 MARGARET FORGIONE: Yeah, so Council Member one  
10 project we have planned I believe is your district is  
11 Bedford Avenue.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: Yeah, it's mostly  
13 Council Member Osse's district but I have a few  
14 blocks of that and a little bit of Council Member  
15 Restler as well.

16 MARGARET FORGIONE: Wonderful. See, we're  
17 trying to hit as many of you as we can.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: We're all supportive but  
19 my question is, what's the budget for protected bike  
20 lanes? How many miles of protected bike lanes have  
21 already been put in and then how many more do we have  
22 to go?

23 MARGARET FORGIONE: Okay.  
24  
25

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CRIMINAL JUSTICE 85

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: And how — what can I do  
3 to help expedite you know the delivery of protected  
4 bike lanes in my district and across the city?

5 MARGARET FORGIONE: Thank you for asking that  
6 question. So, citywide, we have 645 miles of  
7 protected lanes. About 225 of those are on street.  
8 This year our plan includes about 25 to 30 protected  
9 bike lanes and then a total of 50 miles of bike  
10 lanes. So, some of those miles are conventional bike  
11 lanes.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: Meaning not protected?

13 MARGARET FORGIONE: Correct.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: Okay, do you know how  
15 many of the 50?

16 MARGARET FORGIONE: Basically half and half,  
17 about 25 to 30 will be protected and the remainder  
18 will be conventional. And we very much would love  
19 your partnership as we work with communities to bring  
20 in the bike lanes. So, we really appreciate you and  
21 all of your colleagues here to help us as we advance  
22 this and we will speak to you as we're doing that of  
23 course.

24 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: And also, we are on target to  
25 harden ten miles this, as we did it last year too.

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1  
2 As you heard from the Commissioner, New York City is  
3 the one that is the city that has the largest numbers  
4 of miles when we compare to other municipalities of  
5 bike lane.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: That's great, it's  
7 something that we should be proud of but I know that  
8 we all want to do more. So, and then just how much  
9 does it cost per lane mile of protected bike lanes?

10 MARGARET FORGIONE: Uhm, we're going to have to  
11 follow-up with you on the budget information. We  
12 don't break out our budget that way.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: Okay.

14 MARGARET FORGIONE: And every protected lane is  
15 slightly different. Some might be protected with a  
16 barrier; some might just be protected with parked  
17 cars.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: Right. Okay, it would  
19 be great if you could follow up and then just for the  
20 record, can you please define how DOT classifies the  
21 protected bike lane?

22 MARGARET FORGIONE: Right, a protected bike lane  
23 is separated from traffic. Either it is off the  
24 street completely or it has a form of hard barrier

1 protection. And as I said, that might be parked  
2 cars, that might be barrier.  
3

4 COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: Thank you so much.

5 MARGARET FORGIONE: Yeah.

6 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Just piggybacking on  
7 Council Member Hudson and also your statement earlier  
8 when you said that you don't have a yearly streets  
9 plan mandate but the law actually requires 30 miles  
10 of bus lanes a year and 50 miles of protected bike  
11 lanes a year. Do you acknowledge those legal  
12 mandates?

13 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: We work towards those goals  
14 every year.

15 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Okay, because  
16 earlier you said that there wasn't an annual goal and  
17 just now what you gave is less than also what the  
18 goal is.

19 MARGARET FORGIONE: What I was trying to get at  
20 Chair is that we're also looking at it holistically  
21 over the term.

22 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: My question earlier  
23 wasn't about holistic.

24 MARGARET FORGIONE: Okay.  
25

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CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: It was about the  
year and your response to me was that you have an  
outlook for the five years but you didn't at that  
time acknowledge the annual, which my question was  
for the year.

MARGARET FORGIONE: Okay.

PAUL OCHOA: My memory as to the way that the  
law was dropped, it is in the first cycle. There  
were bench marks in the first instance for a number  
of miles to be reached and then in every subsequent  
cycle, it was across the I believe it was a four-year  
period.

CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: My understanding is  
that they're a yearly mandate.

PAUL OCHOA: We have to do the requisite number  
of miles. We don't disagree with that.

CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: So, when will DOT  
have caught up with at least the 2022 Streets Plan  
mandate?

YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: We work toward that goal.  
This is you know we feel that you know 2023 will be a  
good year. We have many projects. Some of them that  
are in front of many of you Council Members and we  
will need your support in order for us to have not

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1  
2 only the voice of the Council Member but also the  
3 voice of the community. Because we want to be  
4 accountable to our numbers but at the same time, we  
5 cannot accomplish this goal. Then we go to community  
6 and there's not support for those lanes that we need  
7 to deliver.

8 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: So, right now, do  
9 you have a plan of action to complete this in 2023,  
10 the 2022 mandate?

11 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: We do. We had a plan and we  
12 have the money that Mayor Adams has allocated to DOT  
13 for us to accomplish that goal in the street master  
14 plan.

15 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Council Member Restler  
17 followed by Carr.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Thank you very much to  
19 our distinguished co-chairs. It's always good to see  
20 you Commissioner. Well, it's mostly good to see you,  
21 unless we're talking about the BQE. But I do want to  
22 say I am – I personally feel that under your  
23 leadership, DOT has been very responsive to our  
24 office and I really appreciate it. When we bring  
25 ideas and issues to you and your staff, to Ryan to

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1  
2 Ricardo, even to Paul, and of course to Keith and to  
3 Danielle, to everyone, we get creativity in Margaret  
4 in response and I really want to thank you all for  
5 that. The work that you did on Schermerhorn, the  
6 work that you're doing on McGinnis, the work that  
7 you're doing on Livingston, it's going to save lives  
8 and we deeply appreciate it.

9 I did want to continue on the thread that Chair  
10 Brooks-Powers and Council Member Hudson and others  
11 have been calling out on the bike lanes. We were of  
12 course very concerned about the number of deaths that  
13 we've been experiencing on the road this year and you  
14 know as I have mentioned in previous hearings, really  
15 concerned about the lack of progress that we saw in  
16 the PMMR for the first four months of the year, where  
17 showing only 18 miles of bike lanes had been  
18 installed for the first four months of FY23 down 42  
19 percent. I know then you've told us you're on pace.  
20 I know today you're not going to give us any hard  
21 numbers because you're in the middle and you don't  
22 want to get a head of your press because hopefully  
23 there will some good announcements 25 days from now  
24 celebrating your amazing progress on more protective  
25 bike lanes but can I just hear on the record you're

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1 committed, that you're going to hit your goals for  
2 FY23 in terms of protective bike lanes installed?

3 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: That's the goal, we're  
4 working toward that and Mayor Adams pulled the  
5 resources that we need to accomplish those goals.  
6

7 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: The resources are there  
8 my concern Commissioner as you've heard me say many  
9 times before is that the staffing isn't there and the  
10 resources have been allocated but we can't implement  
11 the work if we don't have people and what really  
12 concerns me is we look back over even the first two  
13 months of this year. The first two months of 2023  
14 shows you hired 100 new people but 93 left. And so,  
15 what we saw inn our review of the city record,  
16 January and February, that we netted seven additional  
17 individuals and with 750 vacancies we're talking  
18 about filling one percent of the vacancies in a two-  
19 month period when supposedly this administration is  
20 on a hiring frenzy. We're just not seeing it. We're  
21 not seeing the numbers to back it up and we're  
22 certainly seeing the lack of retention is a very  
23 serious issue. So, I see Paul is shaking his head.  
24 He is coming up with the data. I'm ready to be told  
25 that there's some amazing progress that's happened

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1 since the last records that we've reviewed in the  
2 city data going back to February and I know I'm tight  
3 on time. I wanted to ask a couple very short local  
4 questions but Paul can you just update us or Deputy  
5 Commissioner, excuse me.  
6

7 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: If you don't mind before that  
8 Council Member when it came to the staffing, I got to  
9 say that I want to re-elaborate again what are the  
10 challenges that we have to get the bus lane and bike  
11 lane. Staffing is not the major issue that we deal  
12 with DOT.

13 By the way, in this last, you heard before in  
14 the last few months, we brought 75 engineers and that  
15 happened because I pushed the agency to establish  
16 partnership between DOT and the school engineer that  
17 graduated, Black engineer in the whole nation, which  
18 is City College. A partnership that we didn't have  
19 before. This year, we're going to be getting 175  
20 young person to do internship. We want to recruit  
21 them early. Our challenge is not the staff, most of  
22 the challenge is the support that we need from  
23 elected official. When we presented the plan to do  
24 bike lane and bus lane.  
25

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1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Commissioner, come to  
3 District 33 again and again and again and I am here  
4 to help. We will build every protected lane, every  
5 dedicated bus way across the City of New York. We  
6 are here for it. We love it. Paul, as a quick thing  
7 and if the Chairs will allow me I have two very, very  
8 brief local questions.

9 PAUL OCHOA: Oh, I'm sorry, yes the actually  
10 changes; you were right that we keeping up with  
11 attrition at the beginning of the year. Since the  
12 Administration together with OMB and the agencies  
13 have embarked in the spring to firing, we have not  
14 only kept up with attrition, we are on an almost one  
15 to two ratio, which means for every person we're  
16 bringing in - for every two people we're bringing in,  
17 we're only losing one. We've had since March; we've  
18 had a total of 100 and almost 50 hires and about 75  
19 separations.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Okay, well that's  
21 great, that's still about ten percent of the  
22 vacancies that we have in the - filling ten percent  
23 of the vacancies in the agency, so we got a ways to  
24 go but it's progress to hear it and I'm happy on that  
25 front that there's at least some modest forward

1 momentum. Briefly, I'm very concerned about equal  
2 tolling in congestion pricing. Does DOT support  
3 equal tolling at all crossways to ensure that folks  
4 coming through the Brooklyn Battery Tunnel are paying  
5 the same amount as any folks might be coming over any  
6 of the East River bridges? We'd love a quick yes or  
7 no on that one and yes being the answer we're looking  
8 for.

10 MARGARET FORGIONE: Right we're working with the  
11 MTA on the whole system and how the whole tolling  
12 system will work to not create some unforeseen  
13 impacts of congestion pricing.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: We appreciate it. This  
15 is critically important. I will be laser focused on  
16 this. We cannot have folks looking to come over the  
17 Brooklyn Bridge because the tunnel is more expensive  
18 or vice versa, whatever it may be. It should be  
19 equal tolling, that's critically important and BQE,  
20 summer sorry? Well, I got all the bridges. I got  
21 the Brooklyn Bridge, the Manhattan Bridge, the  
22 Williamsburg Bridge, the Kosciuszko Bridge, the  
23 Pulaski Bridge, the Green Point Avenue Bridge, we're  
24 a district of bridges. We just need to make sure  
25 there's equal tolling.

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1  
2 So, on BQE summer repairs, it sounds like you  
3 all are now moving forward on these summer repairs.  
4 Do we have a timeline for when that work is going to  
5 begin? And we are going to continue to be multiple  
6 weekend closures of the BQE this summer. There's  
7 going to be extensive nighttime work. We've gotten  
8 very little information from DOT on this. So, any  
9 information you can confirm right now would be  
10 appreciated and thank you to the Co-Chairs for the  
11 latitude.

12 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Oh, really quickly  
13 as you're answering that question, I know you said  
14 that 2023 is going to be a good year, so I'm also  
15 curious as to what changes have happened like in  
16 terms of like resources that make you feel that  
17 you'll be able to accomplish these goals as well?

18 MARGARET FORGIONE: Okay, so in terms of the  
19 work on the BQE, I don't have all those dates for  
20 you. I will get back to you in the next few days.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: But there will be two  
22 weekend closures this summer?

23 MARGARET FORGIONE: There will be some closures  
24 this summer, yes.

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COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: And we do not have a  
start date on when this work is going to begin?

MARGARET FORGIONE: We don't have it as of right  
now but I will let you know when we will have it.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Overnight work is going  
to be incredibly disruptive to my community and  
nobody knows what's coming, so we're - it was  
supposed to happen two months ago, and we still don't  
know when it's starting.

MARGARET FORGIONE: Okay.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: So, we're frustrated.

MARGARET FORGIONE: And we will make sure people  
do have a lot of notice and we will do notice within  
your community and look for your help in that as  
well. Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: All joy until we talk  
about the BQE.

CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: We have Council Member  
Carr followed by Farias.

COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: Thank you Chairs.  
Commissioner, always good to see you. I want to  
thank the men and women of the agency for all the  
work they do maintaining our roads. In particular,  
our Staten Island Borough Commissioner and her team

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1  
2 with whom we have a very constructive and productive  
3 relationship.

4 I want to focus a little bit on the Staten  
5 Island Ferry. I think the events of December with  
6 the Sandy Ground are still very fresh in our minds  
7 and you know some of the concerns about how that was  
8 handled seemed to be related to training. Maybe a  
9 lack of training, a lack of frequency of training.  
10 And so, I was wondering if you could just shed some  
11 light on what is the current training schedule for  
12 folks who are working with various part of crews, in  
13 particular the engineers and what was it prior to the  
14 events that took place on Sandy Ground? Has there  
15 been a change or an adjustment from your perspective?

16 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Margaret Forgione who  
17 oversees operation of agency, especially working  
18 together with John on the Staten Island Ferry.

19 MARGARET FORGIONE: Yeah, so prior to putting  
20 any of the boats into service, the full ferry staff  
21 was completely trained. We actually did more  
22 trainings than we needed to in terms of coast guarded  
23 mandated trainings.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: And what is the Coast  
25 Guard Mandate if you could just say?

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1  
2 MARGARET FORGIONE: I don't, I don't have,  
3 there's a whole booklet basically of all the  
4 different types of trainings that we do perform and I  
5 don't have that available but we can follow up with  
6 you. So, everybody was trained and in terms of the  
7 investigation, that is still ongoing, so we don't  
8 have any details to talk about at that point.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: So, what is the fire  
10 prevention protocols and trainings that are given?  
11 Can you give us some details about what the crews are  
12 told to do?

13 MARGARET FORGIONE: Okay there are a number, as  
14 I said, a number of trainings that we do provide to  
15 our crew. They are extremely detailed. We can  
16 follow up with you and give you more information on  
17 all of those trainings. I don't have that here.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: Sure, I mean I know we  
19 talked a little bit about it when we did our visit a  
20 couple months ago now. But I think it's good to kind  
21 of see what's been going on since that time and what  
22 maybe the lessons learned may have been. I would  
23 love to kind of hear more about that even as the  
24 investigation is still technically ongoing.

25 MARGARET FORGIONE: Okay.

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1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: Because best practices  
3 could certainly be updated based on our experience  
4 and I'll just pivot a little bit to lane surface -

5 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: And if you don't mind, I will  
6 be -

7 COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: If I could just get the  
8 question in and then you could by all means  
9 Commissioner. So, I believe at the Prelim Budget, we  
10 were expecting 1150 lane miles to be resurfaced based  
11 on that. Is that still the case in the Executive?

12 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Before getting to the  
13 question, I want to also take a bat at the first  
14 question of the ferry to say thank you to the men and  
15 women that run the ferry, especially on their bike,  
16 the five-borough bike tour. That particular evening  
17 they moved 26,000 cyclists that day and they run the  
18 largest ferry that moves the larger numbers of people  
19 in the whole nation. So, they're doing a great job  
20 and we appreciate what they do.

21 MARGARET FORGIONE: I'd just like to say we are  
22 on target this fiscal year to make our lane mile  
23 target. We usually go a little bit over and we do  
24 have all the funding in place for next year as well.

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1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: Okay, so I'll just say  
3 just before I turn it back to the Chairs, I really  
4 think we need to do 1,200 to 1,300 lane miles, 210  
5 lane miles on Staten Island. You know we were making  
6 great progress in the last Administration. It got  
7 arrested because of COVID and we weren't able to do  
8 the full resurfacing amount at that time, so this is  
9 a good opportunity for us now to make up what we  
10 didn't do. I think we did less than 1,000 in FY21  
11 and it was kind of static at that level. I think  
12 this Administrations record is pretty good on  
13 resurfacing but it could be sterling and I think  
14 that's what we should strive for. And as far as the  
15 crews Commissioner, I wholeheartedly agree these  
16 folks were heroic and really just professionals in  
17 the way they handled the evacuation and I think the  
18 best thing that we could do to say thank you is for  
19 them to finally have a contract and I hope that OLR  
20 and in consultation with DOTs coming to a conclusion  
21 on that soon.

22 So, if you know if that's going to be the case,  
23 I'd love to hear now and then I'm happy to pass it  
24 back to the Chairs.

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1  
2 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Again, the conversation  
3 continue between unions and City Hall to the  
4 contract. As a teacher that work for years without  
5 contract, when I used to be the classroom, I  
6 understand how important it is for everyone to have a  
7 good contract, so we hope that the conversation that  
8 is happening between the unions and here at City Hall  
9 will end in a good way for everyone.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: Thank you. Thank you  
11 Chairs.

12 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: And I have Council Member  
13 Farias followed by Sanchez.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: Thank you Chairs. Hi  
15 Commissioner and team DOT. I'm going to get straight  
16 to some Open Street questions if I can. Open Streets  
17 have proven to be a popular and joyful experience and  
18 use of our public spaces that increases the  
19 neighborhoods access to public space and boost nearby  
20 businesses sales by 19 percent of prepandemic levels  
21 that we've seen. However, open streets typically  
22 rely heavily on volunteer assistance due to lack of  
23 funding.

24 The recent plan to invest an additional \$30  
25 million in support for Open Streets partners is a

1 great start and appropriately focused on the equity  
2 priority areas. But this still leaves some open  
3 streets without assistance. How much funding do you  
4 folks think would be necessary to give every open  
5 street sufficient management assistance?  
6

7 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: The good thing is again, we  
8 learned during the time of COVID Open Street and what  
9 used to be a block that we put some barricade during  
10 COVID, turned to be an Open Street in 2022. We have  
11 Open Street with partnership on non-for-profit and  
12 also business improvement district and in those cases  
13 that Open Street didn't have the resources, and still  
14 today, there's a \$20,000 available for each open  
15 street, so that that funding will allow a group of  
16 citizens who want to open street to have some limit  
17 resources.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: So Commissioner, does  
19 that funding, do you think \$20K is enough for like a  
20 manager or for stipends or like how have seen it be  
21 utilized and do we think \$20K is enough to have a  
22 program be run?

23 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: No, we want by the way, last  
24 year we did almost 200 open street and I'm working  
25 with my team to be sure that we overpass even by one.

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1  
2 But every year we have to continue to see a growing  
3 open street, because the open street also became a  
4 pipeline from where we also are using [01:57:51] in  
5 turning into permanent plaza. So, this is very  
6 important for Mayor Adams, as the main goal is to  
7 reimagine the use of public space. So, most of the  
8 open street, they have a non-for-profit or they have  
9 a business improvement district that have their  
10 resources.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: So, you're saying with  
12 the nonprofit or the BID, they get the additional  
13 \$20K and I know Paul, you're like trying to get in  
14 there. You have something to say?

15 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: No, again, we like the model  
16 where in most open street there's a non-for-profit.  
17 They have not only connected; they have the resources  
18 to run the open street.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: Sure.

20 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: When there's a particular  
21 one, especially the underserved community, that they  
22 say open street, that they don't have the resources.  
23 So, we're working to – we work and we are committed  
24 not only to put \$20,000 but to identify partners that  
25

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1 can come on board and be supportive from their  
2 management and the programming of the open street.  
3

4 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: Got it.

5 PAUL OCHOA: No, that's exactly right. The  
6 Commissioner said it exactly and I think we're very  
7 excited about this new contract. To provide that  
8 support, we acknowledge that \$20,000 is not enough to  
9 run an entire program and pay staff. The \$20,000  
10 reimbursement that we offer is more of a stop gap  
11 measure, especially for those low-capacity  
12 organizations. We just want to you know do something  
13 for a couple of weekends and we're very flexible in  
14 what we are allowed to reimburse. It could be food,  
15 it could be programming, it could be essentially  
16 anything.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: Okay, makes sense and  
18 Chairs, I just have one open street question. Open  
19 Streets for schools, also known as School Streets, is  
20 a program that temporarily restricts vehicular  
21 traffic around schools during drop off and pick up  
22 times. School Streets encourage active  
23 transportation, foster a sense of community and  
24 reduce greenhouse gas emissions. They also help to  
25 supplement the limited gymnasium spacing with schools

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1 and limited access to parks and open spaces in the  
2 larger community, like 34<sup>th</sup> Avenue. That shows how  
3 beneficial the space can be for young people to  
4 socialize. With the estimated cost to implement five  
5 school streets, what is the estimated cost, pardon  
6 me, to implement five school streets in every Council  
7 District?  
8

9 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: We don't have the number.  
10 Each of them can be different but again and I said  
11 before Council Member at previous hearings, we'd love  
12 to have you as a partner advocating for not only open  
13 street but also to promote a city that is more pro  
14 pedestrian and cyclists. So, we are more than happy  
15 again to continue working with you because again, for  
16 Mayor Adams knows it's not only about crossing a  
17 block. It's not only to close the front of the  
18 school. It's also about giving life to that area.  
19 It's about being sure that the spaces used not only  
20 for a teacher as myself, to go and take this in front  
21 of the school but just to use the resources outside  
22 the school, so that the teacher and the student, they  
23 learn together.  
24  
25

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1  
2 So, we don't have the exact number but each of  
3 them come with different cost but more than happy to  
4 share more details with you.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: Yeah, that would be  
6 great.

7 PAUL OCHOA: Yeah and Council Member, at this  
8 point, I don't think it's the resources, it's more of  
9 a buying issue to make sure that you have a  
10 community, a school community engaged enough to  
11 actually take advantage of the program and manage it  
12 and that's the type of partnership that we're more  
13 than happy and willing to do.

14 COUNCL MEMBER FARIAS: Sure, have we seen, do we  
15 need a more active like school-based with principals  
16 or an active PTA or an active like nonprofit  
17 afterschool program? Like, what have we seen work so  
18 far? What's the goal in terms of partnership?

19 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Yeah, I think it's everything  
20 that you have mentioned and the different Mayor has  
21 said like you know, when I used to be a Council  
22 Member first time, I used to represent the area from  
23 Margaret Hill to 159 and there was a great part of  
24 community legal. So, they were using most of the  
25 permits focused on health. They were connecting the

1 students to that. On 57 between Amsterdam and  
2  
3 Broadway, the community is school of health. So, I  
4 feel that as Deputy Commissioner said, we, DOT is  
5 open for business for partners that want to come and  
6 be working with us, with the school. So, we want to  
7 see as many blocks to be school near to a school. We  
8 want to see more teachers taking the students outside  
9 and learn outside.

10 So, we are here to say, come on and we are more  
11 than happy to work with you to close any block near a  
12 school because we want, especially a working-class  
13 community to use the resources that we have outside  
14 the classroom too.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: And is there any goal or  
16 any reason why the schools that participate cannot  
17 get the \$20,000 grant?

18 PAUL OCHOA: We can, we can look into that.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: Okay, thank you. Thank  
20 you so much Commissioner, Deputy Commissioners, team  
21 DOT and Chairs.

22 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Now, we have questions  
23 from Council Member Sanchez followed by Joseph.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Thank you Chair and  
25 good morning. Good afternoon Commissioner and team,

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1 really good to see you. I first just wanted to start  
2 by thanking the DOT team, I have several dozen  
3 concerns open with the intergov team and the borough  
4 team and they've just been extremely responsive,  
5 which is really important because in my community I  
6 feel like we're starting from the deficit of you know  
7 folks feeling like they have attention to our  
8 streets, to our lights to our pot holes, to all of  
9 the things, so I just want to thank you for  
10 responsiveness. So, my question today or mostly  
11 comments, so you're warned, are about bus lanes. So,  
12 the BX12, the Fordham Road busway. The BX12 is the  
13 busiest bus root in the Bronx and the second in all  
14 of the City of New York.

15  
16 The BX12 bus route received select bus service  
17 designation as you know, I'm preaching to the choir  
18 in 2008 and service and street design changes  
19 resulted in good improvement at that time. But in  
20 recent years, we have seen the 12 bus speeds just  
21 grind to basically a halt. You can almost walk or  
22 speedwalk faster down Fordham Road during peak hours  
23 than you can in a car, in a bus, anything like that  
24 with the speeds crawling to four to eight miles per  
25 hour.

1  
2       So, this is frustrating. This is really not  
3 acceptable especially because we know that bus  
4 riders, I mean, my constituents right, bus riders are  
5 more likely to be low-income people of color and  
6 especially along that route. My district is 98.5  
7 percent people of color and we are extremely low  
8 income. So, all of that to say that I want to  
9 express my strong support for decisive action on the  
10 Fordham Road bus way. We need interventions. We  
11 need to do better and you know, I of course represent  
12 only part of the busway but what I you know will ask  
13 of DOT today is you know, there are like I said in  
14 2008, there were interventions that made a  
15 difference. I need to be able to answer to my  
16 constituents you know how those things work.

17       So the red paint transit signal prioritization,  
18 camera enforcement at the intersections, the able  
19 cameras which is something Commissioner that when we  
20 walked through a couple of months ago, was going to  
21 be a new intervention. I just need to have more  
22 information about how the contribution to the  
23 improved speeds that these interventions had, so that  
24 I can have a more robust conversation in my community  
25 about the chosen intervention right. There are three

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1 proposals, some of them are quite controversial with  
2 some of the stakeholders in our area but the bottom  
3 line is, we've got to do something. And so, my ask  
4 is just a respectful request for data regarding the  
5 impact of these individual interventions. And  
6 second, you know for more engagement with the  
7 Community Advisory Board to include my community  
8 board which is 7 on my side and other stakeholders.  
9 Thank you.  
10

11 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Yeah, there's no doubt  
12 Council Member that our buses is many used by working  
13 class and middle-class New Yorkers. And I've said  
14 before, our buses is like the type of train that we  
15 have in our street. So, that's the resources we have  
16 to move more people to work, to go to a doctor  
17 appointment, to go to school. So we are committed to  
18 look at and that's you know where we need support.

19 Like next week, we will have the Community  
20 Advisory Board and we will lay out next step design  
21 and we will follow with you and Council Member Farias  
22 other elected official because we also appreciate and  
23 value the community engagement, especially working  
24 together with the local elected officials.  
25

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1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you  
3 Commissioners. I look forward to that information  
4 and meeting next week but just again reiterating I'm  
5 here for the busway. I'm here for you know better  
6 service for the riders because that's who I represent  
7 and want to make sure that we're partnering well.  
8 Thank you.

9 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: We've also been joined by  
11 Council Member Stevens, Powers, and now we have  
12 questions from Joseph and Barron.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER JOSEPH: Wonderful, good  
14 afternoon Commissioner. How are you?

15 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Good, how are you doing?

16 COUNCIL MEMBER JOSEPH: I'm great. I have a few  
17 questions plaza's. Summer is coming, I know DOT has  
18 some new projects to beautify the plaza's including  
19 Chairs, tables, umbrella's but there's always an  
20 equity issue. I don't see them equitably looking  
21 beautiful in certain areas. I can name two Newkirk  
22 Plaza and Parkside Plaza. Is there a timeline as to  
23 what's going to happen to them and how are they are  
24 going to look? Because I walk around my district  
25 often and some plazas look amazing and these two are

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1 run down and no one wants to own responsibility for  
2 them. So, my question is, the timeline on Newkirk  
3 Plaza and Parkside Plaza?  
4

5 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: So, under my time as a  
6 Commissioner, we will not have a different tier of  
7 Plazas in New York City. Okay, I say under our time  
8 and we're working to be sure that every single  
9 community gets the same investments. Understanding  
10 that there's some challenges. Let's say the time at  
11 Square Plaza, they have more institution that at time  
12 square plaza they are able to raise the old funding,  
13 the money. We also know that we also have to work  
14 with those communities that we don't have the same  
15 resources to bring the investment here.

16 So, that's in general. You know how we are  
17 addressing that piece related on how we're looking at  
18 underserved community, but let me call our -

19 COUNCIL MEMBER JOSEPH: I'm looking at equity,  
20 access.

21 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Yeah, that's what I said.  
22 Citywide, that's our commitment but let's come and  
23 bring our Deputy Commissioner, Borough Commissioner.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER JOSEPH: Hopefully she's bringing  
25 some good news. I'm here.

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1

2

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: I need to swear you in.

3

UNIDENTIFIED: Hello.

4

5

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Do you affirm that your  
testimony will be truthful to the best of your

6

knowledge, information and belief and you will

7

honestly and faithfully answer Council Member

8

questions?

9

UNIDENTIFIED: Yes.

10

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you.

11

12

UNIDENTIFIED: So, we're actually working as you  
stated. Newkirk has been an eyesore for some time

13

because unfortunately we were going back and forth

14

with ownership. We're still dealing with that.

15

However, we are actually in discussion with DSNY.

16

We're going to tag team together and go out and clean

17

up Parkside and Kirk. Just to beautify it for now

18

until we can figure everything out.

19

COUNCIL MEMBER JOSEPH: Yeah, the last time the

20

Commissioner was here, I did bring that up. We're

21

like the worst parents. MTA didn't want to own it.

22

The city doesn't want to own it, so it's been in

23

limbo but meanwhile it's dilapidated and when we walk

24

around other parts of the district, that's not what

25

we're seeing. I represent that district.

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1  
2 Another thing we talked about equity across the  
3 board when it comes to city bikes. Great, we love it  
4 but if I own a bike, we don't have enough bike racks  
5 in our district for me to park my bike but yet we  
6 talk about equity across the board when we talk about  
7 city bikes. So, I'd like for someone to address that  
8 for me.

9 MARGARET FORGIONE: We would love to give you  
10 bike racks wherever you would like them, so if we can  
11 get those locations from you, we will get them on the  
12 street very quickly.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER JOSEPH: Thank you Chairs. Can I  
14 ask two more questions? Also, speedbumps, I just  
15 want to revisit that. I've had speedbumps in my  
16 district ten years and I did an interview about that  
17 and I called you guys out for ten years. Lefferts  
18 Avenue ten years and that's a busy street, busy  
19 intersection. Not only that and also Coney Island  
20 and Katan Avenue. So, many deaths happen on that  
21 corner. We were supposed to have a feasible study.  
22 That hasn't happened yet. We did a whole to do press  
23 conference at that corner with the commissioner, with  
24 the mayor, with the commissioner of police and  
25 nothing has happened yet. So, I would love some

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1  
2 timelines if you want to do it offline. Email me, I  
3 would love to see what this conversation is because I  
4 don't want to lose any more of my neighbors anymore  
5 or my constituents on the corridor.

6 MARGARET FORGIONE: Council Member, can we talk  
7 about this offline?

8 COUNCIL MEMBER JOSEPH: Absolutely.

9 MARGARET FORGIONE: I will talk to you later  
10 today and we can talk about it.

11 PAUL OCHOA: Council Member if we may and we  
12 hear you all loud and clear. I think we'll put  
13 together a plan to clear the backlog on speed bumps  
14 and we'll still fund it and we'll find the resources  
15 to make sure that you're all and your communities are  
16 heard.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER JOSEPH: And Bedford Avenue also  
18 connects into my district as well and I've been  
19 getting a ton of emails about bike lanes in Bedford  
20 Avenue, so I would love to also address that. Thank  
21 you Chairs and thank you Commissioner.

22 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: We have Council Member  
23 Barron followed by Won.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you.  
25 Commissioner, as you know we met regarding the bike

1 lanes on Workman Avenue. Now, all of us in our  
2 district, many of us were for them but not there.  
3 That is not a feasible for it. We spoke to you and  
4 your team and it seems like regardless of what we  
5 said, the general language was like, we hear you and  
6 I know because they got ears but we're moving forward  
7 anyway. It appeared to be that. So, we're not  
8 against bike lanes at all but in that particular  
9 area, we need to come back to the drawing board and  
10 see if there's some other places it could happen  
11 because we would lose 200 parking spaces because they  
12 parking at a 90-degree angle and when they go to  
13 parallel parking, they lose about 200. And while we  
14 want to get to more uses of bike for the environment,  
15 bottom line, a lot of people are still using cars and  
16 parking. It's a big issue in our district in  
17 particular because we have a lot of new development  
18 coming in. And with new development, we've been  
19 trying to get the developers to do the parking  
20 underground and not have to do too much surface  
21 parking but underground or on the roof.

22  
23 So, that's one thing I would like for you to  
24 address. We would like that not to happen. The  
25

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1  
2 Community Board's against it, I am. The assembly  
3 person and everybody saying another spot.

4       The second thing is that the bike lanes on New  
5 Lots Avenue, that's a very narrow two-way street and  
6 I think they say it's not like secured bike lanes by  
7 themselves, it's shared bike lanes and when you see  
8 two buses pass each other on New Lots Avenue, you  
9 don't have to have two buses. You're going to have  
10 two cars. Nothing else is getting, that is an  
11 accident waiting to happen, so we're just hoping that  
12 something can be done about that and I want to thank  
13 Chair Powers for coming to our neighborhood and  
14 looking at the situation we have on Pennsylvania and  
15 Lyndon, that big intersection there. We had the same  
16 as Council Member Hudson. We had a death by cyclist  
17 there. I don't know whether we need to put some  
18 human beings there, traffic agents there, so we can  
19 figure this thing out because they could have easily  
20 stopped the truck or the bike from going forward but  
21 not having that figured out yet and still looking at  
22 it and studying it, we can lose lives.

23       On a good point, we are really resurfacing the  
24 neighborhood. I see a lot of it happening you know  
25 in a good way. All throughout our neighborhood,

1  
2 there's a lot of good resurfacing happen. I believe  
3 in giving credit where credit is due and I believe in  
4 beating you up when that's needed as well.

5 But on that, big credit. Now, I'm not sure  
6 about I guess you can answer this, I'm not sure about  
7 what this is. I know there's resurfacing and there's  
8 dealing; Commissioner, I'm not telling your staff who  
9 to respond but I think this might be her area. Is  
10 there a thing called like retrenchment or something  
11 about the streets? What is it?

12 IRENA NEDELJKOVIC: Trench restoration.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Trench restoration,  
14 that's what I was looking for. You know a lot of our  
15 streets you know when they were opened up, they used  
16 to pour a whole lot of stuff in there and then cover  
17 it up and have some layers and this is why we're  
18 getting pot holes and so, resurfacing on a street  
19 that needs what'd you say, trench restoration,  
20 resurfacing on a street that needs trench restoration  
21 is a problem. And that's why my colleague, if you  
22 resurface that street in another month, week or two,  
23 you're going to have that hole again and it might  
24 even turn into a pot hole because the trench  
25 restoration needs to happen which is more expensive,

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1 more timely and I understand all of that but the  
2 quality of the street is important because in the  
3 long run, you're going to spend more money  
4 resurfacing you know a place that needs to be a  
5 trench restoration.  
6

7 PAUL OCHOA: I can take it Council Member.  
8 Thank you so much for that question. In your  
9 district in particular, we're doing a lot of that.  
10 We typically do not repave streets that require  
11 either full street reconstruction or trench  
12 restoration, which is what we're doing in your  
13 district, then you're absolutely right. The reason  
14 why we don't do that is because resurfacing would  
15 just not last.

16 So, with the underlying conditions in the street  
17 that determine the type of fix that we do but we are  
18 doing a lot of that in your district.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: I appreciate hearing  
20 that because I walk through the community and I see a  
21 lot of good work that you're doing but you know when  
22 I'm looking at it I don't know whether that's  
23 resurfacing or trench restoration. But I could tell  
24 it's something greater than resurfacing because  
25 they've been there for a while. So, you know when

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1  
2 they're there for a while, you know they're not just  
3 resurfacing. So, that's good but Commissioner about  
4 the Workman bike lanes.

5 RICK RODRIGUEZ: Good afternoon and pleasure to  
6 finally meet you. I worked really closely with my  
7 wife when she was the Chair, so a pleasure.

8 You know you've heard us say a couple of times  
9 today how we have streets plan benchmarks. While  
10 that is true, that's not the main reason why I'm  
11 going to come to you today and say that we need to  
12 address the corridor and cosign. It's a Vision Zero  
13 corridor where there have been since 2015, 519  
14 injuries and 4 fatalities, 2 of which were children  
15 in 2020. It's justified on just the safety and when  
16 we did a traffic analysis on that corridor, what we  
17 found is two main things. One, there's a lot of  
18 schools on that corridor as you know and then  
19 secondly, the intersections have hard sight lines to  
20 see around that corner. So, you know something that  
21 we've worked with the Chair on in the past is working  
22 on daylighting. That's essentially the strategy that  
23 we're going to be taking here. The reason why that  
24 number is so large is because we're taking those last  
25 spots on the intersection so that the you know, the

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1  
2 older adults, children, their parents can actually  
3 see around those corners. That's actually because  
4 it's a big stretch.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: No, we're all concerned  
6 about that but we don't necessarily believe bike  
7 lanes is the answer to that. You know there are some  
8 other measures we'd like to sit down and see  
9 alternatives to or having satisfying all. The  
10 parking is satisfied and safety is number one.  
11 That's number one, so, we're with you on that. I'm  
12 not so sure that park lane, bike lanes get us what  
13 you're trying to get.

14 RICK RODRIGUEZ: The other thing I would add  
15 with bike lanes.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: One second. I agree  
17 with you on the safety part because that's number one  
18 but I think there may be some measures that we can  
19 take and we should come back to the drawing board and  
20 see what else can be done other than putting 200  
21 residents out of parking.

22 RICK RODRIGUEZ: Yeah, and I know it's a careful  
23 balance that we're all trying to strike and you've  
24 been a terrific partner on. Just as you've said,  
25 you've been in support for bike lanes.

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COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Oh absolutely.

RICK RODRIGUEZ: We recognize the importance.

The other thing that I just want to put out for everybody is you know bike lanes have multiple benefits. Of course they're named after you know bicycles that use them but also what they do is they shorten the crossing distance. So, not only is it for bicyclists but also pedestrians that cross the street. They have a safer distance to cross and knock on effective, having narrower thorough fares on the quarter, cars are then forced to slow their speeds down, which is the number one determinate for killed or seriously injured incidents.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: No, I understand but sometimes it might be more speed bumps. It might be different other traffic technology that could occur and human beings, you know traffic safety agents. It's a lot of other ways you can do it other than displacing 200 parking spaces. So, I hope we can reach that because you're right if we can find some kind of happy medium where both are satisfied and the priority being safety. That's number one, so I hope we can come back to the table and talk about it some more.

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1  
2 RICK RODRIGUEZ: Happy to continue the  
3 conversation but again, you know this project is  
4 super important to get installed as soon as possible  
5 as everybody was talking.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: But it's also super  
7 important for us to get something installed that has  
8 a balance to it.

9 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Council Member Won  
10 followed by Ossè.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER WON: Thank you so much Chair  
12 Brannan and Selvena Brooks-Powers. Good morning  
13 Commissioner, it's so good to see you. I want to  
14 thank you again for the traffic light for Dulma(SP?),  
15 the seven-year-old who passed. Obviously, it doesn't  
16 bring her back to life but I know that the entire  
17 community as well as the family is so incredibly  
18 grateful, so thank you for giving them that closure.

19 My questions today, the first one is, as you  
20 know my district is very hyper focused as well as the  
21 rest of Queens on the Queens Borough Bridge. The  
22 commitment for capital has been allocated by both  
23 sides. From the Borough President, the former  
24 Council Members and it was announced that it will  
25 open in 2022. Now it is 2023 and last hearing, you

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1  
2 said that it may be 2024. Can you give us an updated  
3 timeline for the Queens Borough Bridge opening for  
4 the south outer roadway for pedestrians?

5 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: First of all Council Member,  
6 thank you for also bringing us to be part of the  
7 family. The unfortunate loss and as a father was  
8 planning a very committed young lady or child, you  
9 know that was taking his father and teaching his  
10 father when he was walking through his community.  
11 Not two by only from one small business owner but for  
12 a different, so that in her view was about let's  
13 support all local business owners. So, I know how  
14 important it was you know that a family for you, it  
15 is for you and I appreciate also the leadership that  
16 you play, how you help us to come and connect it with  
17 your family.

18 So, Mayor Adams also, we're the one who gave the  
19 direction instruction to say, let's address the need,  
20 the ask that they're making and we know how important  
21 it was to improve safety for those who walk in that  
22 intersection but also how important it was for his  
23 father for a family.

24 MARGARET FORGIONE: So, Council Member in terms  
25 of the schedule for the south outer roadway, as you

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1 know we are in the middle of our upper deck  
2 replacement work. That work will continue through  
3 all of 2023. We've experienced issues with that  
4 contract. One of the main issues is that we've had  
5 supply chain issues with some of the materials. For  
6 example, one important component to have the paint be  
7 able to be made is very difficult to procure right  
8 now in a worldwide way. So, that project  
9 unfortunately got delayed. And so, now we're looking  
10 at mid-2024 but frankly we're still working out the  
11 supply chain issues and closing out that contract.  
12 And we want this project to happen as much as you do.  
13 We're watching this every single day to see if  
14 there's anything we can do to expedite the work.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER WON: I still don't understand  
17 why you can't close the South Outer roadway while the  
18 construction is happening and when are you going to  
19 start the construction for the South Outer Roadway  
20 then for the pedestrian path that also has had  
21 capital allocations? Because the construction was at  
22 least supposed to start this year for the South Outer  
23 Roadway.

24 MARGARET FORGIONE: Right, the construction  
25 itself is not so lengthy. We can do it toward the

1  
2 end of this work and that work will not delay the  
3 opening of the path. The reason why we're not in the  
4 position just to open the South Outer Roadway and  
5 continue the work on the upper deck is that the  
6 ramifications for traffic would be immense. And we  
7 can all say that maybe we can live with that but we  
8 would see extensive, extensive lengths of gridlocked  
9 streets. We'd have pedestrians crossing through cars  
10 that are stopped on crosswalks. We'd have gridlock  
11 conditions, so we're not comfortable doing that.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER WON: Right now, the amount of  
13 crashes that are happening on the north outer roadway  
14 because it's so incredibly congested with the  
15 increase of pedestrians as well as increase of  
16 cyclists, is going to risk lives. So, I hope you  
17 acknowledge that and I hope you'll make the final  
18 announcement because the community deserves an  
19 update, both on the Manhattan side and on the Queens  
20 side that you now have a delayed update again. So, I  
21 expect you as DOT to make that announcement and  
22 Chairs, would it be okay if I asked another question?  
23 Thank you.

24 Commissioner Ydanis, it's actually about your  
25 bill when you were a Council Member that you passed

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1 historically. The streets plan includes legal  
2 requirements each year for infrastructure upgrades  
3 per City Council legislation that you passed. What  
4 is the amount required for DOT to complete all street  
5 plan benchmarks for the 2023 deadline? What  
6 challenges contribute to the delay and implementation  
7 of the Streets Plan and how many bus and bike lane  
8 miles a pedestrian square footage does DOT expect to  
9 complete by the end of 2023?  
10

11 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: [INAUDIBLE 02:25:25]

12 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Turn your mic on.

13 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: During this conversation, you  
14 get to see and this is only like part of the reality.  
15 Part of the challenge of the Street Master Plan is  
16 about bus lane and bike lane. And we're working  
17 toward the goal. Mayor Eric Adams has put the  
18 resources that we need. It's not lack of resources.  
19 It's also about one, the weather and second, it's  
20 about the staff. We've been doing good. You know as  
21 you heard in the last few months, we offer a job to  
22 75 new engineers that we didn't have in 2022. So, we  
23 are bringing new engineers to the planners for on the  
24 Street Master Plan but I just ask the support of each  
25 51 Council Members for us to go after all those bus

1 lanes and bike lanes that we have to deliver. We are  
2 committed to doing a great thing led by Eric Bitten  
3 who oversee everything on planning, so we are on  
4 target. That's you know from my end, what I can  
5 share with you is about Mayor has given direction.  
6 He put in the resources. We are on target and  
7 hopefully again, we will continue having the support  
8 that we need from all the elected officials for us to  
9 do the bike lane and the bus lane. I said before,  
10 there were other things that was not included when  
11 the bill that I was a co-prime was passed.

12  
13 Open Street was not part of that. Open  
14 Restaurant was not part of that. So, Open Restaurant  
15 was not part of Open Street and by hardening. So, I  
16 feel that with the partnership with the  
17 Administration and you as a Council, as a body, we've  
18 been able to work towards these targets and we work  
19 24/7 to be sure that 2023 will be a good year for us  
20 to accomplish what the City Council mandate DOT to  
21 deliver on the Street Master Plan.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER WON: Is there going to be a  
23 public tracker for the Street Plan implementation?  
24 Like a dashboard the way that the Parks Department  
25 has a tracker?

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1  
2 MARGARET FORGIONE: Yeah, we have most of the  
3 components if not all of the components in the  
4 Mayor's Management Report.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER WON: And that's going to be  
6 publicly tracked?

7 MARGARET FORGIONE: It's published twice a year.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER WON: Okay, thank you so much.

9 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Okay, last questions from  
10 Council Member Ossè.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER OSSÈ: Thank you Chairs and good  
12 afternoon Commissioner and Paul, how are you? A  
13 couple specific District questions. There has been a  
14 lot of requests for a crosswalk on Marcy and Clifton  
15 between Herbert Von King Park and Clifton Street. A  
16 lot of children cross there. We haven't seen much  
17 success in getting a crosswalk there, would love that  
18 to be on your radar and something that we can  
19 complete hopefully by the end of this year.

20 YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: I'm happy to look at that  
21 particular location. As I said before that we funded  
22 the Administration located to DOT and working with  
23 DDC. We are ready to work on the designing and get  
24 100 raised crosswalk in our city in 2023. But I

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1  
2 don't know at that particular location if we have to  
3 get back or if it's included too.

4 MARGARET FORGIONE: Right, I suspect what you're  
5 interested in is a stop sign for that location.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER OSSÈ: A stop sign?

7 MARGARET FORGIONE: Rather than the marked  
8 crosswalk. I mean, we put in a crosswalk wherever we  
9 stop traffic, so what I'm wondering is that maybe  
10 that location in one direction we're not stopping  
11 traffic. Is that the case?

12 COUNCIL MEMBER OSSÈ: The case is that yeah,  
13 we're not stopping traffic. People are speeding  
14 through.

15 MARGARET FORGIONE: Okay, we will have a study  
16 done right away if it's not already in process.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER OSSÈ: Terrific. In addition to  
18 that, I know Council Member Barron asked about trench  
19 repair. There was a study done by DOT I believe in  
20 2019 on the trench between Tompkins and Hancock,  
21 between Tompkins and Marcy and would really  
22 appreciate an update on that in terms of one that's  
23 going to happen. A lot of the residents have been  
24 asking about that. If you have an answer now, that  
25

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would be great but also if you need to get back to  
me, that's okay too.

PAUL OCHOA: Yeah Council Member, thank you for  
that question. I do have that. It's about a \$25  
million project. It's in final design and we expect  
the contract to register in Spring of 2024 and  
usually construction for these types of projects take  
about a year.

COUNCIL MEMBER OSSÈ: Spring of 2024 is when?

PAUL OCHOA: Registration, yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER OSSÈ: Okay, spring of 2024.

Thank you. I submitted a lot of requests for bike  
racks in the district last spring and I would love a  
specific answer on or timeline on when they would be  
installed in the district and specifically to be more  
specific, there is one location on 84 Sterling Place  
and would love an update on when that bike rack would  
be installed.

MARGARET FORGIONE: Okay, we'll get that one in  
ASAP. We'll follow up with you.

COUNCIL MEMBER OSSÈ: Terrific, also as you  
probably know Commissioner, I've been a big advocate  
for the protected bike lane on Bedford Avenue. I  
really appreciate some of the communication that

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1  
2 you've had between myself and you know our district  
3 on that case. The last question that I have is we've  
4 you know been working on a bill and discussing with  
5 Keith Bray of DOT about the feasibility of senior  
6 residential parking within our district. Have you  
7 heard anything about that or do you have any insight  
8 on the feasibility of what that could possibly look  
9 like?

10 MARGARET FORGIONE: Right, so Keith has  
11 mentioned the discussions with you and we're sort of  
12 turning those ideas over within our staff. We don't  
13 have anything concrete to get back to you on but  
14 obviously protecting seniors and doing everything we  
15 can to support seniors is very important to us.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER OSSÈ: Do you know when I would  
17 get a response about that?

18 MARGARET FORGIONE: Let me circle back with the  
19 team and then we'll get back to you.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER OSSÈ: And thank you Chairs.

21 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Council Member Powers for  
22 final questions.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: Thank you. I'll make it  
24 quick because I know we got a long day ahead. Nice  
25 to see everyone. Commissioner, nice to see you. I

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1 want to thank you and Commissioner Pincar for coming  
2 out to the district recently and looking at many of  
3 the improvements that we're working on together.  
4 Just one very quick question. Commissioner Pincar  
5 answers all my other questions very swiftly, so I  
6 only have one and it's congestion pricing is, it  
7 looks like it's coming and for those who represent  
8 the areas that are on the border, which includes  
9 myself, a lot of concern from the neighbors about  
10 what is going to happen in those sort of areas right,  
11 adjacent to where the zone is. I know there's a lot  
12 of discussion debate about how much there might be a  
13 parking rise situation but it does seem like there's  
14 going to be somewhat of a messy situation if you're  
15 on 61<sup>st</sup>, 62<sup>nd</sup>, 63<sup>rd</sup>, 64<sup>th</sup> street. So, what plans does  
16 DOT have to help address that and the ideas or any  
17 measure that you might take ahead of that to offset  
18 any negative impacts?

19  
20 MARGARET FORGIONE: Okay, so we, this is very  
21 much on our radar. We are embarking on a very in-  
22 depth study of all of the communities that could  
23 potentially be impacted by congestion pricing with  
24 the scenario that you outlined and I think other  
25 communities also have concerns, whether it's even

1 further afield. Will people come into the  
2 neighborhood park? Get on the subway? Get on metro  
3 north or what have you and come into Manhattan. So,  
4 we will be doing a study, which will collect before  
5 information you know now before congestion pricing is  
6 implemented and then be watching it very carefully  
7 afterward to make sure that we can talk about  
8 mitigating any negative effects that do arise.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: When do you believe  
11 you're going to have that report?

12 MARGARET FORGIONE: Well, obviously it's like a  
13 before and after thing. So, we're going to be  
14 collecting data over the next year before congestion  
15 pricing begins and then once it begins we're going to  
16 be watching very closely.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: And what happens if it's  
18 a disaster and if we're not prepared then for that  
19 situation. We'll be studying it. We won't get  
20 authority if we need something like residential  
21 parking permits in the state. They could be out of  
22 session by then. We would perhaps need to take  
23 pretty swift actions and it sounds like we're not  
24 taking any action now to potentially offset that

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1  
2 we're doing a study before and after to see how it  
3 goes.

4 MARGARET FORGIONE: Right, so we plan to work  
5 closely with you and the communities and also with  
6 the MTA once and if we actually do see negative  
7 effects to put options on the table.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: And that's after?

9 MARGARET FORGIONE: Correct.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER POWERS: I want to be on the  
11 record saying I think that's not the right approach.  
12 I think that taking no measures ahead to prepare for  
13 the potential mess and chaos that could be caused  
14 there would be a mistake and not to have. So, I'll  
15 reach out and maybe we can set up a meeting to talk  
16 about it with the colleagues who also represent those  
17 areas but I do think we should be thinking ahead and  
18 not waiting until the plan is in effect to you know  
19 potentially mitigate against those. Thanks.

20 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you. I just  
21 had a few more questions for you guys in terms of  
22 accessibility. For the accessible pedestrian  
23 signals, can you provide an update on the amount of  
24 APS devices that DOT has installed so far on Fiscal  
25 2023 and how it is compared to Fiscal Year 2022? And

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1  
2 what is the budget for the installation and  
3 maintenance of APS devices?

4 MARGARET FORGIONE: Last fiscal year we  
5 installed almost 500 APS's. That was above the  
6 mandated amount that we needed that we plan to do.  
7 In all, we have 1,532 intersections that do have APS  
8 in it. And going forward, we do plan for about 500  
9 per year. And so far, we're doing very well. We are  
10 on target for performing at that level.

11 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: The 500 is fiscal  
12 year 2023 or 2022?

13 MARGARET FORGIONE: Let's see, so sorry, we're  
14 looking at calendar years, yup and so for Calendar  
15 Year 2023, we will be doing 500. Last year, we did  
16 about 500 and then it varies a little bit in calendar  
17 year 2024, we go up to 700. And then it rises a  
18 little each year and we have funding for that. We  
19 have \$537 million in city funds in the ten-year  
20 capital plan.

21 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: In terms of the  
22 transit signal priorities for Fiscal 2024 Executive  
23 Budget includes \$351,000 for transit signal  
24 priorities. What is the average cost of TSP at each  
25

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1 intersection and what is the average cost to install  
2 TSP along an entire bus route?  
3

4 MARGARET FORGIONE: Okay, I don't think we have  
5 the numbers per intersection with us but we can  
6 follow-up and get that to you.

7 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you. And then  
8 my final, final question is I want to understand how  
9 DOT would resolve accident prone intersections that  
10 are deemed difficult to add calming measures such as  
11 Hook Creek Boulevard, North Conduit. Today, there  
12 was actually an accident in my district on Hook Creek  
13 Boulevard where a pedestrian was walking out of the -  
14 and this was based on my briefing from NYPD. A  
15 pedestrian was walking outside of the walkway and a  
16 truck struck the pedestrian. But in terms of those  
17 type of roadways, what - like how can DOT resolve  
18 that? And it's similar also in the North Conduit  
19 where there's like a break in the road, so like if a  
20 truck hits that break, all of the houses on block,  
21 their foundation shakes. So, their infrastructure is  
22 weakened as a result, so I would like to know how DOT  
23 is able to resolve these type of locations.  
24  
25

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1  
2 MARGARET FORGIONE: Right, stepping back to your  
3 previous question, we do have the number for transit  
4 signal priority is \$6,500 per intersection.

5 Okay, and then in terms of evaluating  
6 intersections and figuring out what to do with them,  
7 we do have you know a very data driven approach to  
8 all of our work. So, we do look at corridors that  
9 are high crash or high injury and often times even if  
10 something has happened at one location on the  
11 corridor, it could happen at any other intersection  
12 on that type of corridor, around that corridor. So,  
13 what we seek to do is really address entire areas  
14 through calming. In the case like what you just  
15 mentioned, a truck making a turn, if there are a  
16 location like that with a lot of crashes of turning  
17 vehicles, maybe it's something we want to ban that  
18 turn. Maybe we want to make all those vehicles go  
19 straight and take a number of right turns or turn at  
20 a different intersection. Maybe we need to have  
21 leading pedestrian intervals that will get  
22 pedestrians to be able to cross well out into the  
23 intersection, if not the entire way so that they're  
24 completely separated from turning the vehicles.

25

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1  
2 So, there are number of different approaches  
3 that we take for these corridors but we're happy to  
4 look at that one as well.

5 CHAIRPERSON BROOKS-POWERS: I would love DOT to  
6 come out and look at them with me, so I can show you  
7 because the ones that I'm talking about right now are  
8 not necessarily about turns. It's like, again as  
9 I've said before, like a road is going to do what  
10 it's designed to do. So, there's some infrastructure  
11 investments and love that they could definitely  
12 benefit from. Thank you. Thank you Chair.

13 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Commissioner and your  
14 team, thank you so much. We look forward to working  
15 with you to hammer out this budget. Thank you.  
16 Okay, we'll take a brief pause and we're going to  
17 hear from NYCHA.

18 BREAK [02:40:01- [02:49:05]

19 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: [GAVEL] Okay, good  
20 afternoon, we're ready to begin the second Executive  
21 Budget hearing of the day. We focus on the New York  
22 City Housing Authority and I'm pleased to be joined  
23 by my colleague and neighbor Council Member Alexa  
24 Avilés, Chair of the Committee on Public Housing.  
25 That's all you need right now.

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I want to welcome Interim CEO Lisa Bova-Hiatt and your team. Thank you all for joining us today to answer our questions. I just want to set the table on April 26, 2023, the Administration released the Executive Financial Plan for FY23 to FY27 with a proposed FY24 budget of \$106.7 billion while NYCHA's budget is not part of the city's budget, the city does provide supplemental funding to the authority. NYCHA's proposed supplement in the FY24 Executive Plan is \$225.8 million, which is an increase of \$2.9 million from the \$222.9 million originally allocated in the FY24 Preliminary Plan.

This net increase is mostly due to additional funds for the DC 37 collective bargaining agreement, just partially offset by a \$7.9 million PEG. My questions today will largely focus on the Vacant Unit Readiness Program. The New York State Emergency Rental Assistance Program ERAP, the RAD PACT conversions and some other topics.

In a housing crisis, our public housing stock is really the biggest asset we have in keeping New Yorkers off the street and now more than ever it's important that we stand up for NYCHA and its tenants. I look forward to hearing from the CEO and her team

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1 on me and my colleagues questions. I'm now going to  
2 turn it to my Co-Chair for this hearing Council  
3 Member Avilés for her opening statement.  
4

5 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: Thank you Chair Brannan.  
6 MY name is Alexa Avilés and I am the Chair of the  
7 Committee on Public Housing and I'm pleased to  
8 welcome the NYCHA Interim Chief Executive Officer,  
9 Lisa Bova-Hiatt and her team to this important  
10 hearing on Fiscal 2024 Executive Budget.

11 Our discussion in the Preliminary Budget hearing  
12 highlighted the ongoing financial and operational  
13 challenges facing NYCHA. We heard that the  
14 authorities residents had accrued about half a  
15 billion dollars in rental arrears, posing a serious  
16 threat to NYCHA's basic ability that keep the lights  
17 on. And critically comply with the mandate for  
18 repairs under the federal monitors agreement.

19 After intense advocacy by residents, the  
20 authority and others asking the state to step up in  
21 its investment to NYCHA, facing this half a billion-  
22 dollar gap in arrears, the state did provide  
23 approximately \$163 million in anticipated ERAP  
24 funding along with \$135 million in new capital  
25 funding. I applaud everyone involved in seriously

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1 advocating for our public housing residents.

2  
3 Although these measures do not meet the total need,  
4 it is nevertheless a positive step forward.

5 Today, I hope to learn much more about the  
6 updated financial picture for NYCHA and what is being  
7 done to address its outstanding challenges. NYCHA  
8 budgets, as the Chair mentioned are on a calendar  
9 year separate from the city budgets running July to  
10 June. NYCHA's total budgeted expenditures for 2023  
11 are \$4.4 billion. However, revenues total \$4.38  
12 billion, which means NYCHA anticipates a deficit of  
13 around \$35 million at year end. Even after a plan,  
14 \$65 million dollars in withdrawal from reserves.

15 NYCHA may only have a month or less of reserves  
16 remaining. If we should experience a government  
17 shutdown, we will without question be in a heightened  
18 crisis. The question of the Vacant Unit Readiness  
19 Program will lose large today. This is a core  
20 program funded with \$226 million in city funds set  
21 aside for NYCHA in 2023.

22 This program which is meant to rehab available  
23 NYCHA units to make them ready for new tenants has  
24 been dogged by slow performance and underspending.  
25 The response of the Administration has been to cut

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1 funding from the program from \$31 million in the  
2 November plan, then another \$36 million in the  
3 expense for capital swap in the executive plan. The  
4 Council has called in its Preliminary Budget response  
5 for the November PEG of \$31 million to be restored,  
6 so that the vacant units could see expedited repairs.  
7 However the Administration has continued to call back  
8 this funding.  
9

10 Among the 6,583 vacant units still on the rent  
11 rolls, the average time for completion is 371 days or  
12 over a year. In light of the influx is asylum  
13 seekers on top of the city's preexisting housing  
14 crisis. We simply cannot allow to let affordable  
15 housing units at NYCHA or anywhere in our city lay  
16 vacant.

17 I hope to hear much more about the plans to  
18 improve performance in this area. The Council still  
19 maintains that funding should be restored to the  
20 Vacant Unit Readiness program and it never should  
21 have been subjected to cuts in the first place. The  
22 Executive Budget also included a need in DoITTs  
23 budget for the Big Apple Connect. Over \$23 million  
24 is added across the plan bringing the total to \$93.3  
25 million. This is a major new initiative from the

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1 Administration replacing the prior administrations  
2 internet master plan and I want to make sure that Big  
3 Apple Connect is a good value inclusive of residents  
4 voices and truly serving them.  
5

6 NYCHA has a critical role ahead. Beit  
7 maintaining compliance with the federal monitor,  
8 pushing for new info construction, bolstering vacant  
9 unit readiness program or improving resident  
10 engagement and many other urgent issues. Certainly  
11 the pact and preservation trust models add to the  
12 complexity. I'm concerned that the city's executive  
13 plan does not set up NYCHA for success and we will  
14 continue to push for additional city resources for  
15 public housing.

16 As we indicated in the preliminary budget  
17 response, the Council is here to support ambitious  
18 affordable housing initiatives that will set New York  
19 City on a path to meeting the challenges we face.  
20 You have heard that the budget is a moral document.  
21 The budget will distinctly show what this city and  
22 this administration values. While the city commits a  
23 mere \$232.5 million in expense to NYCHA, look where  
24 we choose to spend our money.  
25

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At yesterday's public safety hearing, we heard that NYPD has again, as it has historically with impunity blew pass this overtime budget by more than double. Spending as of April 23, \$715 million, in addition to the \$121 million in lawsuit, misconduct lawsuit payouts since last year.

Compare that to the \$232 million allocated to NYCHA. \$800 million bottomless overtime and misconduct lawsuits. I wonder what New York and the NYCHA residents could do with \$800 million. For starters, we could plug the NYCHA gap deficit. We could restore the reserve fund. We could fully fund all the remaining arrears that were left out. We could ensure capital projects for playgrounds and community centers that are now being put on the back burner because of lack of funding could actually get built. We could purchase adequate maintenance equipment and hire appropriate level workers to support the campuses. We could fund some needed repairs and vacant unit readiness program.

Lastly, our city made a capital commitment to NYCHA of \$3.49 billion over five years. It sounds like a lot. We as a city committed \$9.6 billion over five years to build new jails. Do you see the

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1 difference? Do you see what our city is valuing?

2 That does not include the hundreds of millions of  
3 dollars in capital for the Department of Corrections.  
4

5 If housing is truly a priority, if NYCHA is a  
6 priority, we need to fully fund and invest in NYCHA  
7 the way we invest in policing and in jails. What we  
8 see in this executive budget is a contradiction to  
9 that stated goal of housing as a priority. I look  
10 forward to hearing from the interim director of the  
11 authority on how we can partner for a strong adopted  
12 budget that builds on its existing investments and  
13 goes much further. Thank you to the Committee Staff  
14 who have helped to prepare this hearing, Dan Kroop,  
15 Conner Mealy and to Jose Conde, Ricky Chawla, Jack  
16 Storey, Chima Obichere, and my Legislative and Budget  
17 Director Kristina Botego, Chief of Staff Edward  
18 Sterna and a reminder for NYHCA residents that  
19 members of the public, that all public testimony in  
20 the Executive Budget will be held May 24<sup>th</sup> and you  
21 can appear in person here in the Chambers or over  
22 Zoom.

23 NYCHA is kindly reminded to keep its oral  
24 testimony; unlike myself right now to a much shorter  
25 timeframe, so we can hear Council Member questions.

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1 Thank you and I will now pass the mic back to the  
2 Finance Chair.  
3

4 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Thank you Chair Avilés.  
5 We've been joined by Council Members Williams, Barron  
6 and Sanchez. I will turn it over to Committee  
7 Counsel Mike Twomey to swear everyone in.

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Good afternoon, could you  
9 raise your right hands please? Do you affirm that  
10 your testimony will be truthful to the best of your  
11 knowledge, information and belief and you will  
12 honestly and faithfully answer Council Member  
13 questions? Interim CEO Bova-Hiatt?

14 LISA BOVA-HIATT: I do.

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: CEO Trimble?

16 EVA TRIMBLE: I do.

17 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Executive Vice President  
18 Lescott-Martinez?

19 ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: I do.

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Senior Vice President  
21 Sinderbrand?

22 JOY SINDERBRAND: I do.

23 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. You may begin.

24 LISA BOVA-HIATT: Chairs Alexa Avilés and Justin  
25 Brannan, member of the Committee on Public Housing

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1 and Finance, other distinguished members of the City  
2 Council, NYCHA residents, community advocates, and  
3 members of the public, good afternoon. I am Lisa  
4 Bova-Hiatt, NYCHA's Interim Chief Executive Officer.  
5 I am pleased to be joined by Chief Operating Officer  
6 Eva Trimble, Executive Vice President of Finance and  
7 Chief Financial Officer Annika Lescott-Martinez,  
8 Senior Vice President for Capital Programs Joy  
9 Sinderbrand, and other members of NYCHA's team.  
10 Thank you for this opportunity to provide updates on  
11 NYCHA's fiscal outlook for 2023, as well as our work  
12 to transform our organization and improve residents'  
13 quality of life.  
14

15 First, I'd like to commend the hard-working  
16 members of our Finance team, for the 19<sup>th</sup> year in a  
17 row, NYCHA was recognized for excellence in financial  
18 reporting by the Government Finance Officers  
19 Association of the United States and Canada.

20 Making the best use of the limited funding  
21 available to improve living conditions for NYCHA  
22 residents is at the forefront of our mission. As we  
23 discussed with the Council in March during the  
24 preliminary budget hearing, growing rent arrears,  
25 which have risen sharply since the start of the

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1 pandemic, have made NYCHA's fiscal predicament more  
2 dire. Rent payments are one-third of NYCHA's  
3 operating budget, funding that's vital to the efforts  
4 to maintain and repair NYCHA developments. This is  
5 an especially critical situation considering that our  
6 aging buildings already suffer from more than \$40  
7 billion in major capital needs, the result of decades  
8 of federal disinvestment.  
9

10 However, thanks to the commitment of partners  
11 like Governor Hochul, the State Legislature and Mayor  
12 Adams to the well-being of public housing residents  
13 and the future of this agency, NYCHA residents will  
14 be receiving up to \$163 million to cover a portion of  
15 the arrears accumulated during the pandemic.

16 Additionally, the state budget has allocated  
17 \$135 million to NYCHA for capital projects and other  
18 improvements. And we were allocated \$387 million in  
19 expense funds and \$841 million in capital funds,  
20 including funding for our PACT program from the city  
21 this year, city's Fiscal Year 2023 through the  
22 Executive Plan.

23 We are incredibly grateful for the support,  
24 which will go a long way in stabilizing the  
25

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1  
2 Authority's finances and enabling the repairs that  
3 residents deserve.

4       In terms of federal funding, based on  
5 preliminary information, we expect that we will  
6 receive more operating funding than initially  
7 anticipated in our budget. This will help to close  
8 our \$35 million deficit for 2023. We received a \$752  
9 million federal capital grant, \$43 million more than  
10 last year. We appreciate the efforts of New York's  
11 Congressional Delegation to raise awareness about the  
12 imperative to providing for public housing.

13       NYCHA'S Section 8 program is sufficiently  
14 funded. NYCHA applied for 377 HUD stability  
15 vouchers. Administered in partnership with the New  
16 York City Continuum of Care, these vouchers provide  
17 vital assistance to the city's most vulnerable  
18 families, including those experiencing or at risk of  
19 homelessness.

20       Our outlook regarding expenses has not changed.  
21 We continue to make strategic investments with the  
22 limited funding available to address the mandates of  
23 our HUD Agreement and to improve living conditions  
24 for our residents.

25

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1  
2 I must stress that NYCHA's finances are till  
3 precarious. We are only collecting about 63 percent  
4 of the rent owed and, as of April 2023, rental  
5 arrears currently stand at over \$500 million, several  
6 times greater than they were in 2019 and well beyond  
7 the ERAP funding NYCHA residents will receive.

8 Additionally, NYCHA has had to draw on reserves to  
9 fulfill its obligations to residents and there is  
10 currently less than one month of reserves remaining.  
11 HUD recommends three to four months of operating  
12 reserves.

13 For these reasons, we continue to advocate for  
14 additional funding beyond ERAP to help address the  
15 shortfalls in our operating budget. We are  
16 developing a plan to restart the approximately 70  
17 capital projects that we paused as a result of our  
18 operating budget constraints. We are also developing  
19 a plan to remediate delays in façade inspections and  
20 repairs required between 2020 and 2025 by DOB's  
21 Façade Inspection Safety program for which we have  
22 faced funding shortages in both our operating and  
23 capital budgets. We want to first secure additional  
24 funding before finalizing these plans to restart the  
25 paused projects and expedite our façade inspections

1  
2 and repairs based on a complete review of our budget  
3 situation.

4 It should be noted it would cost over \$3 billion  
5 for NYCHA to address all the façade repairs needs  
6 across our portfolio. Additionally, each five-year  
7 cycle of required façade inspections cost between  
8 \$150 and \$200 million, excluding the cost of any shed  
9 installation and maintenance. In most cases, federal  
10 funding must be used for this work. In the past five  
11 years, NYCHA has invested more than \$137 million in  
12 façade repairs and spent about \$82 million on  
13 sidewalk sheds and associated costs.

14 During our conversation with the Council at the  
15 preliminary budget hearing, we discussed a range of  
16 efforts underway to become a better landlord for  
17 residents and strengthen this vital institution so  
18 that it can continue to provide affordable housing to  
19 future generations of New Yorkers.

20 These efforts include housing preservation  
21 initiatives such as PACT, the Public Housing  
22 Preservation Trust, and Comprehensive Modernization,  
23 which will bring revitalized homes and improve  
24 building services from elevators to heating to  
25 residents.

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We are also focused on improving the way we operate, bringing faster and more efficient repairs through Transformation Plan initiatives, such as Work Order Reform and the Neighborhood Model.

We are making progress with these initiatives and we are happy to answer any questions about our work that you may have. Thank you for your partnership and our shared mission of service.

CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Thank you. We've also been joined by Council Member Salamanca and Restler. I'm going to jump right in with regard to the Vacant Unit Readiness Program. The Executive Plan includes a PEG to NYCHA's Vacant Unit Readiness Program. The savings initiative swaps \$31.6 million in expense for an equivalent amount of capital funds through FY27. Can you confirm and tell us what we're doing to make sure that the PEG will have no programmatic impact on the Readiness program?

EVA TRIMBLE: Thank you Council Member. We've been working with OMB over the course of the last year on the Vacant Readiness Program and its been a very successful partnership. We have already leased up 70 percent of the units that were funded through this program. We don't expect any problem with this

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1  
2 proposed PEG. OMB has been funding us on an ongoing  
3 basis because each unit takes a different amount of  
4 time to complete, depending on the level of  
5 environmental issues such as lead or asbestos in the  
6 apartment. And so, we get reimbursed as we spend  
7 based on our actual costs and we haven't had any  
8 problems with OMB reimbursing us for our needs.

9 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: So, what is the baseline  
10 amount remaining in the program over the plan? Can  
11 you tell us how much it is per year?

12 EVA TRIMBLE: Sure, the baseline amount for the  
13 program is \$250 million.

14 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: 2-5-0?

15 EVA TRIMBLE: Correct, over the five-year plan  
16 from Fiscal Year 2023 to 2027. So, in Fiscal Year  
17 2023, there's \$78 million, \$42 million in Fiscal Year  
18 2024, \$43 million in Fiscal Year 2025, \$43 million in  
19 Fiscal Year 2026 and \$43 million in Fiscal Year 2027.

20 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Okay, the Executive Plan  
21 follows a PEG of \$31 million in the November Plan.  
22 The PEG reflected that the program was taking longer  
23 than expected and couldn't use all the funding. Data  
24 from last April showed that among the vacant units  
25 still on the rent rolls, it took an average of 371

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1 days, so over a year, to make them ready for new  
2 tenants. The Council's Preliminary Budget response  
3 called for that first \$31 million PEG to be restored  
4 in order to add in the capacity that was missing. Do  
5 you have an idea of why OMB did not restore that  
6 funding?  
7

8 ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: So, we're grateful for  
9 the city's ongoing support, including the funding for  
10 this program. And as Eva mentioned, we have not had  
11 any issues getting reimbursed for any of our costs  
12 related to remediating the units.

13 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: So, to what do you account  
14 the delay? The over a year on average to get the  
15 units ready?

16 EVA TRIMBLE: So, at the end of 2021, we had to  
17 adjust all our entire program to be able to comply  
18 with the new lead standard of 0.5. And so, in  
19 starting in January 2022, we had to work with our  
20 vendors to you know adjust our equipment and our  
21 program and so, there was a delay in scaling up the  
22 program in the start of 2022. It took us a few  
23 months but since then, we have caught up and we are  
24 now doing almost 300 lead abatements a month. And  
25 so, we don't foresee any issues going into 2024. We

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1 think we have this program moving at the right pace.

2 We know you know we wish it could be faster and we  
3 are continuing to work. We've actually been meeting  
4 weekly as a team to look at our vacant units and our  
5 process to continue to find ways to improve the  
6 process.  
7

8 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: What was the average time  
9 it took before the new lead laws?

10 EVA TRIMBLE: I'd have to get back to you on  
11 that number.

12 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Okay, I'd appreciate that.  
13 Uhm, okay, has NYCHA spoken to the Administration  
14 about the relationship between fixing the vacant  
15 units more quickly and finding solutions for the  
16 influx of asylum seekers?

17 LISA BOVA-HIATT: The answer is no but I can  
18 with respect to the asylum seekers, we are discussing  
19 whether or not NYCHA can be a resource with our  
20 federal partners.

21 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Okay, alright, I want to  
22 talk about arrears in the ERAP program. Tenant  
23 arrears as we know is a serious issue for NYCHA and  
24 over \$450 million in total arrears across 73,000  
25 households at the end of 2022, which was up from \$125

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1 million in 2019. Could you tell us what the total  
2 amount of arrears is currently today?  
3

4 ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: Thank you for the  
5 question Council Member. The total amount of arrears  
6 is \$501 million as of April 30<sup>th</sup> and growing.

7 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: At what percentage of the  
8 tenant rent has been collected over the past three  
9 months?

10 ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: We've collected 63  
11 percent.

12 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Okay, are there - how many  
13 tenants are just refusing to pay their rent?

14 ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: So, in April, there  
15 were 27 percent of our households who did not send  
16 any rent payment. So, roughly \$42,000.

17 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: What's the plan for those  
18 tenants?

19 LISA BOVA-HIATT: Our goal as a housing agency  
20 is to keep people housed and I think that now that we  
21 have an influx of ERAP money, we're going to  
22 hopefully see people getting back on the path that  
23 they were prior to the pandemic. The pandemic was  
24 both a health crisis and an economic crisis,  
25 especially for tenants at NYCHA. And I believe at

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1  
2 our last hearing we talked about the fact that the  
3 average household income of a NYCHA family is \$24,000  
4 and the average amount of arrears is \$7,000 or you  
5 know between \$6,000 and \$7,000.

6 So, it's an overwhelming amount of money but  
7 what we're trying to do and what we will do once we  
8 have access to the ERAP money is really work with the  
9 tenants to get them on a payment plan, connect them  
10 with outside resources and make sure that people get  
11 back into the proper cadence of paying rent.

12 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Yeah, I believe NYCHA is  
13 expected to get \$163 million in funds, is that  
14 correct?

15 ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: Correct.

16 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: And do we know when we'll  
17 get that money?

18 ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: We do not know. We  
19 are currently going to be meeting with the state  
20 later this month and we expect that they will release  
21 the payments expeditiously.

22 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Okay, I know the state  
23 budget also included \$250 million appropriation that  
24 would allow the state to spend any additional federal  
25 funds that may flow into the ERAP program. Do we

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1 know what the likelihood is of us getting any of that  
2 extra \$250 million?

4 ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: We do not.

5 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Okay. Uhm, I want to talk  
6 about RAD PACT. What is being done and what's the  
7 plan to dispel some of the mis info and dis  
8 information that's out there? I think it's  
9 important, ultimately the tenants have to decide but  
10 it's important that they have the facts and I'm  
11 concerned that they don't. We have to swear you in  
12 if you're going to speak.

13 LISA BOVA-HIATT: I'd love to introduce Jonathan  
14 Gouveia, he's our Executive Vice President for Real  
15 Estate.

16 JONATHAN GOUVEIA: Good afternoon.

17 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Actually, we need to swear  
18 you in, sorry.

19 JONATHAN GOUVEIA: I'm sorry.

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Do you affirm that your  
21 testimony will be truthful to the best of your  
22 knowledge, information and belief and you will  
23 honestly and faithfully answer Council Member  
24 questions?

25 JONATHAN GOUVEIA: Yes.

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1  
2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you.

3 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Yeah, so what's being done  
4 to make sure the tenants have the information they  
5 need to make the right decision? I'm worried that  
6 there's a lot of dis or misinformation out there.

7 JONATHAN GOUVEIA: Sure. So, we have put a lot  
8 of effort into enhancing our resident engagement  
9 process. So, what we typically do now is three to  
10 six months before we put out an RFP or procurement,  
11 we work with residents to explain to them what the  
12 PACT program is, what it can do for them, their  
13 rights and protections and go through the whole  
14 process with them. And it can actually take longer  
15 than six months. We're willing to work at the pace  
16 that the residents are comfortable at. And once the  
17 residents have indicated to us that they would like  
18 to move forward, then we move to the procurement  
19 stage.

20 And then one of the other things that we've been  
21 doing is having residents sit on our selection  
22 committee, so they review proposals and they  
23 interview our respondents and help select the teams.  
24 In addition, we've developed a PACT resource program  
25 and it's funding that allows us to give residents the

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1  
2 opportunity to seek third party experts on any range  
3 of topic. So, it could legal advice, urban planning  
4 advice, what have you, whatever the issue of concern  
5 is within their specific neighborhood and in their  
6 specific development, they can get that third party  
7 guidance to cross check us, challenge us and ask  
8 questions.

9 So overall, I think we've really moved the ball  
10 in terms of engagement and dispelling some of the  
11 myths.

12 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Could you walk us through  
13 how many units and developments are set to be  
14 converted to PACT each fiscal year through the  
15 completion of 2026 with the \$1.51 billion?

16 JONATHAN GOUVEIA: So, we currently have about  
17 21,000 units that are in predevelopment and resident  
18 engagement. And so, we expect to close and convert  
19 about 9,000 units in Fiscal 2024 and so, the balance  
20 would roll off in 2025 and 2026 with roughly an  
21 equivalent amount each year.

22 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: And how much does an  
23 average PACT bundle cost them to complete?

24 JONATHAN GOUVEIA: So, it varies because of  
25 course we actually have a range of different building

1 typologies that are in varying degrees of  
2 deterioration. And so, there's a lot of complexity –  
3 it's hard to give one number but what we're seeing  
4 these days is that the cost has broken about \$400,000  
5 per unit. That is a fairly common number. Sometimes  
6 it is actually significantly higher, other times it's  
7 a bit lower but \$400,000 per unit is generally the  
8 current number.  
9

10 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: What's the size of the  
11 personal services budget associated with the capital  
12 spending for PACT?

13 ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: Sure, so the budget  
14 for the real estate department is \$4.3 million and  
15 that supports 39 full time positions.

16 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Can you tell us how many  
17 developments; I don't know if you said it, how many  
18 developments are in predevelopment or resident  
19 consultation right now?

20 JONATHAN GOUVEIA: We have 18,000 that are in –  
21 where we've designated a developer and they're in  
22 predevelopment and we have another 3,400 currently in  
23 procurement.

24 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: And that's in addition to  
25 the 21,000 you mentioned?

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1  
2 JONATHAN GOUVEIA: No, that gets to the 21,000.  
3 That's roughly the 21,000 and then there's a number  
4 of folks that we're talking to and we don't put that  
5 in our count because until as I mentioned before,  
6 until resident leadership has said to us they are  
7 ready to go and move forward, we do not put them in  
8 our counts but we are having conversations with other  
9 tenant leaders across the city.

10 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Okay, I just have one more  
11 and I want to give it to the Chair. The Big Apple  
12 Connect, what has the coordination been like between  
13 NYCHA and DoITT or any other agencies or companies  
14 that are involved. Who all is engaged in all that?

15 EVA TRIMBLE: We are coordinating and taking the  
16 lead from the Office of Technology and Innovation  
17 OTI. They are the leading agency for Big Apple  
18 Connect but we work closely with them. Big Apple  
19 Connect right now covers 200 out of 274 NYCHA  
20 properties but all the programmatic decisions are by  
21 OTI.

22 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: How many NYCHA residents  
23 are connected to this service?

24 EVA TRIMBLE: We don't have data on actual  
25 resident connections or subscription rates.

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1  
2 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: So, how do keep track of  
3 it?

4 EVA TRIMBLE: We don't keep track of it.

5 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: So, how many buildings  
6 have we done in it?

7 EVA TRIMBLE: So, there's 201 properties, 201 of  
8 our developments are connected out of 274. But  
9 individual subscription rates of you know residents,  
10 we don't have that data.

11 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: The 201 buildings have Big  
12 Apple Connect?

13 EVA TRIMBLE: 201 developments.

14 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Developments, sorry you're  
15 right. Okay, uhm, will there be, has there been  
16 discussion with OMB with - there's concern around a  
17 funding cliff for this program after FY26. So, have  
18 there been any considerations given to securing the  
19 long-term funding for Big Apple?

20 EVA TRIMBLE: We are not part of those  
21 conversations. That is between OTI and OMB.

22 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Okay, I'm going to turn it  
23 over to Chair Avilés. Thank you. We've also been  
24 joined by Council Members De La Rosa, Farias, Stevens  
25 and Moya.

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1  
2 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: Thank you Chair. I'd like  
3 to go back to the arrears question. Given that the  
4 \$160 million that NYCHA anticipates getting from the  
5 state is much less obviously than what is owed. What  
6 are NYCHA's next steps on the tenant arrears issue?

7 LISA BOVA-HIATT: Once we have our conversations  
8 with OTI, excuse me, not OTI, OTDA and have a path  
9 forward, we are going to work with tenants like I  
10 said earlier to get them on payment plans, get them  
11 connected with resources and if necessary, we will  
12 take people to court for nonpayment.

13 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: How will NYCHA decide given  
14 the incredible gap? Who will be able to access those  
15 funds or how they will allocated to tenants?

16 ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: Sure, so we submitted  
17 applications worth \$128 million across 33,000  
18 households, so those are the applications that would  
19 processed by OTDA. For the \$35 million we're waiting  
20 our conversations with the state to learn more about  
21 how that money is to be allocated.

22 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: So, will you be determining  
23 that or the state will be determining that?

24 ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: I'm not sure.  
25

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CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: Okay, so let's segway quickly to staffing. Headcount decreased from 11,343 in December 2022 to 11,301 in April 2023 with a budgeted headcount of 12,212. That's over 900 vacancies. Why did the vacancies increase over the past four months?

ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: So, we don't have specifics on why particular vacancies increase or decrease but we can say that we continue to actively hire. There is a certain level of attrition that we see. Each year we see a lot of turn over, people coming in and coming out of the agency.

CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: What's the general attrition rate?

ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: It's around ten percent and it depends on the title. There's some titles where we see higher turnover, like say a caretaker, and there are other titles where we see lower rates of turnover.

CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: How many vacancies are in the titles associated with repairs and maintenance?

ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: Sure, so our skilled trades, we have 179 vacancies as of April 15<sup>th</sup>, our pay period eight and in our maintenance workers, we

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1  
2 have 101 vacancies. And that's both roughly seven  
3 and eight percent, which is similar to the agency as  
4 a whole.

5 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: And are there titles that  
6 have the most vacancies in the agencies?

7 ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: There are. Our  
8 housing assistant title has the most vacancies  
9 currently at 119. Again, we are actively hiring  
10 followed by the maintenance workers as I just  
11 mentioned with 101 vacancies.

12 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: And what is NYCHA doing to  
13 hire for those titles?

14 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Just have to swear you in.

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Do you affirm that your  
16 testimony will be truthful to the best of your  
17 knowledge information and believe and you will  
18 honestly and faithfully answer Council Member  
19 questions.

20 KERRI JEW: I do.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you.

22 KERRI JEW: I'm Kerri Jew, I'm the Executive  
23 Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer.  
24 Good afternoon Council Members. So, in terms of  
25 trying to reduce our vacancies, we made a lot of

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1  
2 efforts in cooperation with DCAS. We've been  
3 attending the various hiring hauls that they've put  
4 together, which has been very helpful. We've also  
5 been able to schedule additional call ins. For  
6 example, for housing assistance in April, in early  
7 April we had a 6A call in resulting in approximately  
8 50 appointments that are in the process of being  
9 onboarded, so that they can see number that my  
10 colleague Ms. Lescott-Martinez gave you will be  
11 reduced hopefully in a few weeks as individuals have  
12 been identified and are in the process of being  
13 onboarded.

14 We've also begun direct hiring by HR at some of  
15 these call ins so that for these civil service list  
16 positions where we are confident that our colleagues  
17 in HR are able to make the decisions on behalf of the  
18 hiring managers.

19 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: And what is the breakout of  
20 the actual headcount of the 11,301 between properties  
21 and operations and the central office?

22 ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: Sure, so active or  
23 budgeted headcount?

24 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: That would be I guess  
25 active, yeah.

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1  
2 ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: Sure, so for active  
3 headcount as of April 15<sup>th</sup>, we have 11,301 full time  
4 positions, 9,398 are in the properties and operations  
5 and 1,903 are in our central office departments.  
6 That leaves us those 911 open positions.

7 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: Got it, thank you. Is  
8 NYCHA asking OLR to use the \$70 million for DC 37  
9 equity fund to help increase pay for the hard to  
10 recruit positions?

11 KERRI JEW: So, NYCHA is welcoming the  
12 opportunity to provide input to OLR and DC 37 in  
13 their discussions about how they are going to go  
14 about the unit bargaining process. We would like to  
15 see money allocated towards the hard to recruit  
16 titles but as you know, we are one entity in several  
17 who are offering input into those decisions.

18 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: So, the Executive Budget  
19 includes the labor costs from DC 37 Collective  
20 Bargaining Agreement. At NYCHA, the cost is \$80.3  
21 million over the plan from Fiscal 2023 to 2027. The  
22 contract impacts it looks like 1,365 active NYCHA  
23 employees and 905 NYCHA retirees. So, what is  
24 NYCHA's estimation on how the new contract will  
25 impact employee recruitment and retention?

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1  
2 KERRI JEW: Our hope is that the new contract  
3 will enable us to recruit employees more readily,  
4 just like our sister agencies and of course with the  
5 new contract, our current employees will choose to  
6 remain employed by NYCHA.

7 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: It seems like thousands of  
8 employees are actually not covered by the contract.  
9 How much is that exactly?

10 KERRI JEW: I'm sorry, do you mean how many  
11 employees are not DC 37 covered? DC 37 represents  
12 about almost 15 percent of our workforce.

13 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: Okay, so in terms of do you  
14 know how many other employees that are covered by  
15 other labor contracts and when those are set to  
16 expire?

17 KERRI JEW: I don't have the exact number in  
18 front of me, so we can get that to you.

19 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: Okay, let's talk about  
20 revenue sources really quickly before I - I have so  
21 many questions hand it over to my colleagues.  
22 According to NYCHA's five-year operating plan, the  
23 federal subsidy is expected to increase from \$1.02  
24 billion in 2022 to \$1.32 billion in 2026. Why is  
25 this rising?

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1  
2 ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: So, we've seen over  
3 the course of the last five years steady increases in  
4 both our operating and capital federal grants and so,  
5 we're just sort of estimating in that manner.

6 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: And are there unaccounted  
7 for risks from possible reductions in federal support  
8 for HUD?

9 ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: So, every year we redo  
10 our five-year plan. So, for example, this year you  
11 will see a new plan that would include our 2024 going  
12 to 2028. So, we do refresh those projections and use  
13 our latest knowledge to make sure that we are taking  
14 into account any changes at the federal government,  
15 changes in attitudes or support for public housing  
16 and then our budget projections every year include  
17 that.

18 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: And I guess back to ERAP,  
19 in terms of the \$163 million that NYCHA anticipates  
20 to allocate for ERAP, does this include the share of  
21 statewide funding for Section 8 residents?

22 ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: It does not.

23 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: Okay.

24 LISA BOVA-HIATT: And if I may just correct the  
25 record for just a second. With respect to the \$35

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1 million, NYCHA is going to come up with a plan that  
2 OTDA has to approve.  
3

4 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: Got it. Thank you. How  
5 will NYCHA operationalize tenant relief through these  
6 new ERAP funds? I know you talked about you're still  
7 in the process of working that out.

8 LISA BOVA-HIATT: I think at this point it's  
9 hard to say until we have our discussions with OTDA  
10 later this month.

11 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: Got it. Is NYCHA leaving  
12 any possible federal money on the table at this  
13 point?

14 ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: We are not. We assure  
15 you that we continue to work with our city, state and  
16 federal partners to advocate for our residents. We  
17 apply for any and all grants that we are eligible for  
18 on the federal side and will continue to do so.

19 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: Thank you. I think maybe  
20 I'll take a pause here and open it up for my  
21 colleagues who would like to ask questions or I can  
22 keep going you all.

23 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Okay, we have questions  
24 from Barron followed by Restler.  
25

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1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you. First, let  
3 me give another perspective of tenants that are not  
4 paying rent. We need to talk about the living  
5 conditions they live under as well. Not to justify  
6 not paying rent but it's hard to be happy about  
7 paying rent when you got rats running around, when  
8 you got elevators breaking down you know every other  
9 day. When you have heat problems in the winter time.  
10 When you have even water problems sometimes and when  
11 you have repair problems in the apartment even with  
12 PACT. Although we did see some nice units being done  
13 but there are plenty units that are not done and even  
14 some units under PACT that people are having problems  
15 with. We talked about the holes and they're trying  
16 to fix them up.

17 So, I don't want people to think these  
18 irresponsible tenants who are aren't paying rent and  
19 that's the problem because that's not the problem.  
20 It's hard to pay rent when you don't appreciate the  
21 conditions that you're forced to live under. I've  
22 always been against the PACT RAD and I don't trust  
23 the trust, even if it does bring in more than  
24 admittedly than the state and feds and city's  
25 responsibility because that's where my anger really

1  
2 lies is in the federal government. It's in the state  
3 and it's in the city, not doing their part. We  
4 wouldn't have to go private as it's happening now.

5       And then just some of the more information about  
6 RAD and PACT, I don't think tenants were given a  
7 clear understanding when we said disclosure of  
8 information on what it really meant moving from  
9 Section 9 to Section 8. You know we have brought in  
10 lawyers to meet with some of the tenants. Because my  
11 position was, I'm against privatization but I don't  
12 live there, the tenants do and they have to make that  
13 final decision and whatever decision they make, we're  
14 going to work with them to make that decision work  
15 whether it's something that I think should have  
16 happened or not. Because they have to live with it.  
17 But during that whole process, we had to bring in  
18 lawyers to let them know some of the consequences of  
19 going to Section 8 and no longer having the federal  
20 protections under Section 9.

21       In the long run and some of it immediately. So,  
22 they weren't given proper information because I  
23 attended the meetings when management and NYCHA was  
24 meeting with RAD and PACT and the tenants. A matter  
25 of fact, they were very disrespectful. They didn't

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1 want us at the meeting. We got cut off many times.  
2 They tried to not allow us to explain or have our  
3 perspective out there as much. We had to fight for  
4 that kind of thing because if everything is so  
5 wonderful, you have nothing to hide, you should be  
6 more open for a critique or another perspective. So,  
7 I was very, very concerned about that whole process.  
8 Many tenants were told that if in fact they don't  
9 have a new lease they they'll be evicted. And I  
10 called you up on several occasions, not you, I'm  
11 talking about the flag catcher. I called them up on  
12 several as of - they're threatening the tenants. Let  
13 me look into it. Let me get into it.  
14

15 So, that's the other truth of what happened with  
16 that whole process and then a lot of - they called me  
17 and I said, I can't make this decision for you. It's  
18 your decision. Here's the facts, here's the  
19 information but a lot of them were threatened into  
20 RAD and PACT. And then I'm also concerned about the  
21 long range you know commitment to this. It looks  
22 nice initially when you're fixing up stuff but you  
23 know as we talked about in Lyndon Houses, what about  
24 the piping. You know some of the deeper  
25 infrastructure issues and not the cute stuff that

1 they're going to see visibly but some things like  
2 piping. If the pipes are 50 percent alright, then  
3 they're not getting new pipes. So, they have those  
4 same old pipes, even if it's just 50 percent. So,  
5 there's a lot of issues around privatization and  
6 we'll see what happens with the trust.

7  
8 Finally, I always that because my colleagues  
9 say, my last question and ask ten more but finally,  
10 the position on the Section 3 you know that has not  
11 been honored and they said the transferring over,  
12 that wouldn't effect that, so I'd just like some more  
13 information on that because Section 3 has never been  
14 fully honored in NYCHA and that is hiring the  
15 residents to do that. And then when NYCHA does get  
16 money from the city, the Mayor is saying we're only  
17 going to give capital money to those developments  
18 that are in PACT. Now that's not right. That's like  
19 if you ain't in PACT, then you're not going to get  
20 the Mayor's money. It's almost like a bribe. It's  
21 almost like you know only those 21,000, 22,000 but  
22 they'll get the PACT - if they get into PACT then  
23 they can get some of the capital money. So, if you  
24 can respond to some of those things and by the way, I  
25 appreciate you coming to the neighborhood. You met

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1  
2 with all of our tenant leaders and when you said you  
3 would come back and meet again, you did and we're  
4 still going through it. So, while I have my major,  
5 major criticisms of PACT and RAD and NYCHA, that I do  
6 appreciate that you honored your commitment and came  
7 and actually spoke with the residents.

8 LISA BOVA-HIATT: I'm happy to return to the  
9 extent that you invite me back. I think I'm going to  
10 turn it over to Jonathan to talk a little bit about  
11 some of the questions and comments that you made  
12 about PACT.

13 JONATHAN GOUVEIA: Thank you. So, you know over  
14 the last four or five years, we've been continually  
15 working to improve the program and some of your  
16 comments go directly to the Co-Chairs opening comment  
17 or question to me about misinformation. And it is  
18 true that some these older projects and some of the  
19 projects that are actively under construction in your  
20 district are actually, although currently under  
21 construction, older projects. They started under a  
22 different framework. And so, we have learned from  
23 you and from the projects in that district to really  
24 build out the engagement process.

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1  
2 So, uhm, look there is definitely some confusion  
3 as it relates to some of the developments in your  
4 district that were going through the process but we  
5 learn from that and we have been working on future  
6 projects to make that engagement a lot better. So,  
7 that was one question. What other issue should I be  
8 addressing right now?

9 LISA BOVA-HIATT: I can also just address your  
10 point about uhm, tenants not paying rent. I will say  
11 that we've never suggested that people who have not  
12 paid there are irresponsible. As I said earlier, the  
13 pandemic was both a health crisis and an economic  
14 crisis especially for the tenants at NYCHA and we are  
15 very hopeful that with this influx of ERAP money that  
16 we will be able to also work with tenants to get them  
17 on payment plans, to connect them with HRA and make  
18 sure that we get to a place where we were  
19 prepandemic. If you look at the numbers with respect  
20 to the percentage of rent collection that we had  
21 prior to the pandemic, we know that a lot of people  
22 or most people who live in public housing are very  
23 hard working and really do want to pay their rent.

24 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Okay, now we have  
25 questions from Restler followed by Stevens.

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1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Great, thank you so  
3 much to our distinguished Co-Chairs and before  
4 Jonathan ruined it, it was great to have a dais full  
5 of women leaders at NYCHA, so sorry Jonathan.

6 I wanted to firstly just ask a question on  
7 behalf of my colleague Council Member Sanchez who had  
8 to run and back to the West Bronx, but she I think is  
9 concerned that NYCHA's capital needs assessments  
10 underestimate the actual physical needs in our  
11 buildings and the true costs that we are facing. And  
12 on RAD projects, so I'm glad you stayed up here  
13 Jonathan, that therefore undermines the success of  
14 the potential conversion projects because we've  
15 underestimated the real cost for the capital upgrades  
16 and repairs. What do you make of that?

17 JONATHAN GOUVEIA: So, I can speak to the RAD  
18 PACT piece of it and then Joy can maybe fill in the  
19 PNA more broadly. So, I think a couple of things.  
20 One the current PNA that we're working off is from  
21 2017. Obviously, it's been escalated since 2017 but  
22 you're right. Obviously there's been ongoing  
23 deterioration. It's hard to know what's happening  
24 behind the walls.

25

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1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Council Member Sanchez  
3 is right, just to be clear.

4 JONATHAN GOUVEIA: Sorry, and so, you know when  
5 we designate a development team and they go into the  
6 buildings and they're starting to do their  
7 inspections, it is true that from time to time, they  
8 are finding more complex situations to deal with,  
9 more deterioration than was obvious before you opened  
10 up a wall or a ceiling or what have you.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Right.

12 JONATHAN GOUVEIA: So, it is a challenge. We  
13 work through the whole process. We make sure that we  
14 are getting enough capital into the deals to make the  
15 repairs that are necessary. Thus far, we had been  
16 fortunate that we did not need additional city  
17 subsidy to make those deals happen. As you are  
18 aware, going forward, some of these deals are going  
19 to need some city capital because there is such  
20 deterioration and we want to make sure that we are  
21 delivering a good product to our residents.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Yeah, I think that  
23 she's got a major bundle underway in her district.  
24 She wants to see a mission driven developer be you  
25 know identified for it and wants to see somebody who

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1 is actually going to have the resources to make the  
2 improvements that we need. We saw you know a major  
3 bundle in our district in District 33 and I think  
4 things have generally gone okay but especially in the  
5 section of our district, people complain of the  
6 cheapness of the work that was done. And I think  
7 there was really good work on new boiler system and  
8 other things but I think there are concerns about the  
9 quality and if we're underestimating the costs, it  
10 forces them to cut corners to make it pencil out.  
11 So, it's a concern and I think going off of a fiscal  
12 needs assessment that's six years old when we know  
13 how rapidly NYCHA is deteriorating and we know the  
14 fiscal needs assessment - the real fiscal needs is  
15 much greater, it is I think a really important  
16 concern.

17  
18 I had a couple questions of my own if that's  
19 okay? I'm sorry. I just firstly want to say to Ms.  
20 Lescott-Martinez, I've really appreciated your direct  
21 answers. I feel like that is an unusual thing that  
22 we encounter at hearings and so I just wanted to  
23 thank you for providing those direct answers as  
24 clearly as you have. And I wanted to continue to ask  
25 a little bit more about the funding in the state

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1 budget. So, with \$163 million allocated, meeting  
2 with the state later this month to get more  
3 information on when those funds will be available to  
4 us and how they can be disbursed, it still only  
5 covers about one-third of the need of back rent that  
6 we're facing and I believe you've advised us, NYCHA  
7 has advised us in previous hearings that you're not  
8 able currently based on federal law to forgive rent.  
9 So, can you begin to outline with us the framework of  
10 a plan for how we can incentivize, if not backpay of  
11 old rent, certainly an increase in rent collection  
12 with the disbursement of these resources. Is that  
13 something that you're all actively thinking about,  
14 trying to pull together and what do you think that  
15 could look like?  
16

17 ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: Sure, thank you for  
18 the question and for the compliment. I think that  
19 the state funding was certainly a significant step in  
20 the right direction and it sets us down a better  
21 path. As you mentioned, we still do have a large  
22 amount of arrears. As my colleagues have mentioned  
23 previously, we are going to work with all of our  
24 partners to figure out ways to continue to help our  
25 tenants. So, that means working with HRA on one-shot

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1 deals for their arrears that might remain after the  
2 ERAP funding. It also means working internally to do  
3 payment plans as appropriate for our tenants right.  
4 We are also capped in how much we can ask a tenant to  
5 pay every month. A payment plan can't go above 40  
6 percent of their income for example.  
7

8 So, we're hoping to sort of tag all of those  
9 things together. Those are just two examples and  
10 help our tenants to continue to pay down these  
11 arrears balances. As Lisa mentioned, we know that  
12 our tenants want to be current in their rent. We  
13 know that they have been struggling and so we're  
14 going to do all we can to help them.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: I think many of my  
16 colleagues, I would certainly be eager to organize  
17 evening events with NYCHA where we encourage all of  
18 the residents in Wycoff Gardens to come down the  
19 Community Center and we work with them one by one to  
20 try to get them on a path to accessing the one-shot  
21 deal. Bring HRA on site, give the framework for what  
22 they'd be able to access from ERAP and develop a  
23 payment plan and try to get back into a better  
24 process. We know that NYCHA needs these resources  
25

1  
2 and it's critically important that we collect the  
3 rent that is owed.

4       The other thing I wanted to just ask about, if I  
5 may, is to just go back to Eva who I always  
6 appreciate so much, your responsiveness and  
7 partnership on issues across our district. You know  
8 the hearing that Council Member Avilés chaired a few  
9 months ago about the increase in the delays from  
10 turnover of vacant apartments from 486 days in  
11 January of 2022 to 3,593 days in January of 2023.  
12 It's one of the single most startling statistics that  
13 I've encountered in my 16 months as a Council Member  
14 and it is deeply concerning to me that we've cut the  
15 vacant readiness program \$31 million over four years  
16 is just profoundly counterproductive and I cannot  
17 understand the decisions of this Mayor and OMB to  
18 reduce funding and turnover and access to housing  
19 when we are in a housing crisis and desperately need  
20 each of these units to come online as quickly as  
21 possible.

22       So, I was just wondering if you were able to  
23 give us an update on the length of time to repair  
24 apartments that are vacant if we haven't updated kind  
25 of a turnover period. The average time to prepare

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1  
2 vacant apartments increased 98 percent from 131 days  
3 to 258 days. So, it's now nine months was I believe  
4 the last data point that you provided to us. Is that  
5 still the most recent data point and is there  
6 anything that we can do to assist and support NYCHA  
7 to speed up the turnover of apartments to get  
8 families housed?

9 EVA TRIMBLE: That is still the most recent  
10 number I can provide; however we are seeing an  
11 increase in our turnover rate just through as I  
12 mentioned our ability to scale up the program. That  
13 average is drawn down by the fact that we did have  
14 some delays as we scaled up our new lead and asbestos  
15 program and you know it's very important and a top  
16 priority for us to ensure that our apartments are  
17 lead free and asbestos safe at turnover. It's a  
18 unique opportunity to work on the apartment without  
19 having to you know inconvenience the resident. You  
20 know and have them move out to do that work. And so,  
21 it's critically important that we get that done  
22 during turnover and that take depending on the level  
23 of environmental hazard in the unit, anywhere from  
24 four to six months or more in order to make sure its

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1  
2 clean. So, even as we move fast, that is you know a  
3 critical point for us but a really important one.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: I appreciate the lead  
5 work. It's really important. We have to get it done  
6 once and for all but the seven-fold increase in the  
7 number of vacant apartments in just a year from 486  
8 to 3,600 when we're in a housing crisis and then to  
9 cut the funding on the Vacancy Readiness Program, it  
10 just, it doesn't make any sense. It really is  
11 problematic and so, the last time you were before us  
12 I believe the number was 3,593 vacant apartments. Do  
13 we have an updated number on the current vacant  
14 apartments in NYCHA?

15 EVA TRIMBLE: Yes, so right now the number of  
16 vacant apartments is and I think this isn't one to  
17 one with the number you just referenced. We can walk  
18 that back but right now our total adjusted vacant  
19 units is 6,697. Of which, 1,717 are what we consider  
20 temporarily off the rent role and so those are off  
21 the rent roll for a variety of reasons and so, our  
22 vacant units available to rent right now would be  
23 3,932 and we have an additional 1,048 that are vacant  
24 but already matched to residents. And again, we

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1 stopped our matching process last year in order to  
2 improve that program.

3  
4 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Yeah, look its helpful  
5 contacts but a long way of saying we have more vacant  
6 apartments than the last time you testified on this  
7 issue and it's unacceptable and recognizing the  
8 crisis we have with asylum seekers, recognizing the  
9 crisis we have in our homeless shelters, recognizing  
10 the affordability crisis we have in New York City,  
11 this is desperately needed affordable housing. And  
12 the fact that this Mayor has defunded the Vacancy  
13 Readiness program is unconscionable. And I  
14 appreciate that you are doing the best you can but if  
15 you don't have the resources to do this work, it's  
16 only going to continue to get worse and we're going  
17 to be sitting with - I joined Borough President  
18 Reynoso for a press conference this week, calling on  
19 REDNY and the real estate industry to fill vacant  
20 apartments with people who don't have housing, when  
21 it's our own public housing that is failing to do the  
22 job. When we are sitting with thousands of vacant  
23 apartments that should be housing families, that  
24 could be making a difference, that would prevent  
25 ultimately people from sleeping in gyms or in jails.

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1  
2 And so, I just, I'm sorry to get so worked up  
3 but this is just awful.

4 EVA TRIMBLE: We absolutely agree that it is a  
5 top priority and to be clear, some of the growth in  
6 the vacant units since the time of our last hearing  
7 is actually intentional because we are holding  
8 apartments for our comp mod and other modernization  
9 programs in order to do the comprehensive rehab that  
10 these developments desperately need. In order to do  
11 that, we have to have the units based to relocate  
12 residents to checkerboard them during that process.  
13 So, there is some legitimate reasons for those  
14 numbers to go up.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Those comp mod projects  
16 are in my district. I'm very proud that Wykoff and  
17 Gowanus are moving forward. We signed a fund  
18 document today to demonstrate the progress with our  
19 TA presidents and hopefully we'll do the same in  
20 Gowanus soon but I have not gotten updates on the  
21 number of apartments that we have been holding vacant  
22 at the adjacent developments. We would welcome that  
23 update. My understanding is that it's very few. We  
24 still don't know whether we're going to be relocating  
25 tenants from those apartments yet based on the work

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1 that's happening certainly at Wykoff. Gowanus may  
2 have some asbestos and lead issues that need to be  
3 addressed but that's a small, small fraction of the  
4 number we're talking about and I feel like it's  
5 frankly a distraction from the broader issue. We  
6 have a housing crisis. We are letting thousands upon  
7 thousands of NYCHA units sit vacant because we're not  
8 investing the resources to turn them over. We're  
9 actually cutting them. It's backwards, it is wrong  
10 and the Mayor needs to fix it and if there's anything  
11 that we can do to support it, please let me know. I  
12 will certainly be advocating for the Council to step  
13 up in the Mayor's negligence. Thank you.

14  
15 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: Thank you. I'd like to ask  
16 a follow up question. Ms. Trimble, what does NYCHA  
17 need to move these apartments faster to get them  
18 ready? To move them quicker through the process?

19 EVA TRIMBLE: So, that is an excellent question  
20 that we have been exploring through the dimension.  
21 We set up a working group that is meeting weekly and  
22 it is meeting weekly and it includes staff from  
23 across the organization. In order to look at the  
24 process, we are looking at both vendor run programs  
25 and staff run programs in order to turn over our

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1 units. So, we're looking at both models. We're  
2 looking at ways to improve productivity in both  
3 models and again, some of it is just how long it  
4 takes to do environmental work and some of it is the  
5 work that we have to do in the apartments and again,  
6 it reflects the fact that these apartments have a  
7 really long occupancy history. Some you know  
8 typically 25 years without any type of comprehensive  
9 improvement. And so we're doing you know a full of  
10 almost like a full rehab of individual units. It  
11 includes carpentry, plastering, painting and so, it's  
12 just a lot of work that has to get done but we are  
13 actively looking at ways to increase that turnover  
14 rate, because we agree with everything Council Member  
15 Restler said about the importance of this affordable  
16 housing resource.

18 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: So, when can expect a  
19 concrete plan on what the plan of action will be to  
20 move that forward.

21 EVA TRIMBLE: I don't want to commit to anything  
22 right here but we will definitely get back to you  
23 with the timing on that.

24 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: How much resource do you  
25 think a plan like this will require?

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1  
2 EVA TRIMBLE: I'll get back to you as part of  
3 our plan.

4 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: Okay.

5 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Now, we have questions by  
6 Council Member Stevens followed by Hanks.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER STEVENS: Hello, good afternoon.  
8 I just have a couple questions and just the first one  
9 I want to start with the vacancy issue. Can you just  
10 talk a little bit about what you're doing to work  
11 with the residents to fill some of those vacancies?  
12 Because I think that you know, I know there has been  
13 before in the past a given priority to residents but  
14 especially I know you said you're going to like  
15 hiring hauls and things like that. Are you having  
16 hiring sessions at developments and things like that  
17 around these vacancies that you have?

18 KERRI JEW: Thank you for that question. Of  
19 course we are always looking to ensure that residents  
20 know about open positions at NYCHA. All of our job  
21 postings state that NYCHA residents are encouraged to  
22 apply.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER STEVENS: Yeah, I know that but  
24 I'm saying, what are you doing to ensure that, right?  
25 I heard you're going to hiring hauls but I think

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1 wouldn't it make sense to have some of those hiring  
2 fairs at NYCHA developments to actually get the  
3 residents engaged and not just posting up a flyer?  
4 Because I've been there and I've seen them. They'll  
5 be up in the building but I'm saying like, the same  
6 effort we're putting at these hiring hauls, wouldn't  
7 that kind of make sense to kind of start there? And  
8 it's just the recommendation of thinking about ways  
9 and being a little bit more innovative of getting  
10 them engaged?  
11

12 KERRI JEW: So, as far as working with hiring  
13 hauls, we also have to be mindful that we must abide  
14 by the civil service laws. So, where there's  
15 competitive testing of course for a position, we have  
16 to participate in the hiring pools and hire  
17 candidates from a certified list. We have colleagues  
18 in our resident services department who do outreach  
19 and who use our resident training academy to provide  
20 a pipeline for our caretaker hiring, which is the  
21 highest number of employees that we have and we also  
22 partner with various apprentice programs.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER STEVENS: Yeah, so I just wanted  
24 to make sure that that's like really highlighted  
25 because I think it's important that you know we start

1 home right when we're thinking about these jobs  
2 because a lot of them can use them. And even  
3 thinking about you know when they're being promoted  
4 and things like that.  
5

6 But I have two specific, well, one specific  
7 question. So, one of the developments in my district  
8 before the last Council Member left, uhm, they had  
9 allocated the money to get elevators fixed and right  
10 now we're still waiting for it to happen and we're  
11 being told this is more seen an air right that it  
12 will start in July. But my question is, that's a  
13 really long time. Like, it's a year and a half later  
14 this money was allocated before our predecessor left  
15 and just really thinking about what are you doing to  
16 kind of like expedite these capital projects that we  
17 are allocating money for and it's taking so long for  
18 it to be processed? Because it's really unacceptable  
19 because before she left, she was waiting a year and  
20 so, now I've been here, I'm waiting a year and a  
21 half, so I really would love to talk about like just  
22 this process of how long it's taking for projects  
23 that are fully funded to get started?

24 JOY SINDERBRAND: So, thank you for that  
25 question and it is definitely a challenge to keep

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1 money moving but you're talking about a specific  
2 truant of projects that after the last, this hearing  
3 last year, we put extra attention and staffing on to  
4 make sure that City Council funded projects from  
5 before 2020 had our attention to be expedited to be  
6 completed. And I'm looking for the specific project  
7 you're talking about.  
8

9 COUNCIL MEMBER STEVENS: Well, it's air rights  
10 and I know it's late, it's to start July and we're  
11 being told that we're still waiting for parts but  
12 like, that's crazy. We're waiting a year and a half  
13 later and we're still talking about parts.

14 JOY SINDERBRAND: Sure, so elevator parts in  
15 particular, we have to do a significant amount of  
16 work before the actual construction starts. The  
17 construction and the elevator placement only takes  
18 three or four months but the acquisition of the  
19 custom parts for the entire development requires a  
20 long lead time.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER STEVENS: Someone would like to  
22 be sworn in. Hello.

23 BRIAN HONAN: Hi Council Member, how are you?

24 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Before you will hone in,  
25 I'll just.

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BRIAN HONAN: Sure.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Do you affirm that your  
testimony will be truthful to the best of your  
knowledge, information and belief and you will  
honestly and faithfully answer Council Member  
questions.

BRIAN HONAN: I do.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you.

BRIAN HONAN: So, Council Member, I'm very  
familiar with the project and Borough President and  
Council Member Gibson funded for the senior bills  
because we were hearing so many complaints about  
seniors being stuck in the lobby or stuck in their  
apartments. And the good news is that number one,  
the project is starting, which is great but we're  
going to do the entire development. So, we took the  
Council Members funding, which is your funding, we  
bundled it with the additional funding, so now it's  
not just one building.

COUNCIL MEMBER STEVENS: Yeah, it's all  
elevators.

BRIAN HONAN: It's all the buildings, right.

COUNCIL MEMBER STEVENS: I'm aware. I know the  
project, I'm happy about it. I just need it to get

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1 done, right? Like, and it's just taking so long and  
2 so, that's what I'm saying like, why is it taking so  
3 long for these projects to happen? Especially when  
4 they're fully funded because the longer it takes,  
5 often you have to come back to us with additional  
6 costs.  
7

8 BRIAN HONAN: It was fully funded for one  
9 building. We want to make sure that we do the entire  
10 development. I look forward though to coming back  
11 with this team with very sharp scissors and making  
12 sure that we cut the ribbon for the entire  
13 development and that will be you know sooner than  
14 later.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER STEVENS: I just want to also say  
16 it was fully funded for all the buildings before BP  
17 Gibson left and we had those conversations before she  
18 left to transition out. So, it's been about a year  
19 and a half because I've been here a year and a half,  
20 so that's a long time for a project to even get  
21 started and we're still not starting. We have a  
22 start date of July. That's excessive whether you  
23 want to admit it or not, like a project should not be  
24 taking that long and I don't think it took a year and  
25 a half to do an assessment or whatever was said

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1  
2 before. I think that we have to get to a place where  
3 we are getting these projects off the ground.

4 And just, and that's it. I don't have any more  
5 questions.

6 BRIAN HONAN: Okay, thank you.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER STEVENS: Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Council Members Hanks  
9 followed by Farias and we've been joined by Council  
10 Member Ossè.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER HANKS: Good afternoon. Thank  
12 you so much for your testimony. It's good to see  
13 you. So, my question is kind of relates to what  
14 Council Member Barron was talking about and the PACT  
15 and the Public Housing Preservation Trust. Are there  
16 workforce development programs attached to the Public  
17 Housing Preservation Trust?

18 BRIAN HONAN: So, for the Trust net as of yet,  
19 but we are going to - the good thing is that we have  
20 a lot to learn from the RAD team that's been in place  
21 already. They've been very successful in hiring  
22 residents. This is federal funding that will be  
23 going into the trust, so the Section 3 requirements  
24 will be there and we look forward to the opportunity  
25 to making sure that residents not only get the

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1  
2 apartment upgrades, get investments into their  
3 properties but also get economic opportunities as  
4 well.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER HANKS: Yeah, so just so you  
6 know, Youth Build is national and they are supposed  
7 to have some sort of a partnership with NYCHA in  
8 which many of their part of Youth Build is building  
9 affordable housing. And being part of the building,  
10 it's part of their work experience, so it's a  
11 construction program and there's I believe 19 youth  
12 builds throughout the city and it's one of those  
13 things that it's just a great fit because you, in  
14 order for you to get federal funding, you have to  
15 have a worksite. And so, I've never really  
16 understood why NYCHA and the US Department of Labor  
17 and Youth Build programs, there's many of them that  
18 would be a natural fit. So, I would love to talk to  
19 you offline about that.

20 But is there an investment or numbers broken  
21 down by borough when it comes to the RAD or PACT  
22 programming?

23 JONATHAN GOUVEIA: So, specific to Section 3 or?

24 COUNCIL MEMBER HANKS: Yes, thank you.  
25

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1  
2 JONATHAN GOUVEIA: I don't have that available  
3 but we can produce that for you.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER HANKS: Okay, I would appreciate  
5 that because you know I would like to know how  
6 council members can you know play in a key role in  
7 identifying sites. In Staten Island, we have several  
8 NYCHA programs. I know that there's one in West  
9 Bright and that we're really excited about how that's  
10 going to play out but we would love to know if  
11 there's any further projects in the pipeline. In  
12 particularly Stapleton Houses, it's one of the  
13 largest housing developments. We have Jersey Street  
14 and these are in dire need of upgrades. So, that was  
15 my only question. Thank you so much but I hope we'll  
16 talk offline okay, thanks.

17 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Council Member Farias.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: Thank you Chairs. Hi  
19 folks from NYCHA. Thanks for all being here. I will  
20 try to be quick and swift through my questioning.  
21 Often times it takes months for NYCHA to get  
22 contractors in to fix issues in residents apartments.  
23 Unfortunately when someone comes to make repairs, it  
24 is usually a band aid fix that doesn't truly resolve  
25 the problem holistically. What is NYCHA doing to

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1 address the payment to contractors that do the work  
2 and do not necessarily fix the entire issue?

3  
4 EVA TRIMBLE: So, we have a quality assurance  
5 department that reviews the work of our vendors.  
6 It's a sampling of the work but through that, we're  
7 able to make recommendations on what's working,  
8 what's not working, where are the delays and the pain  
9 points. You know, we work you know it is, we know it  
10 is a painful process but we're also working to  
11 streamline how we record when vendors are coming into  
12 our developments to do work. We're starting, we're  
13 working right now on a virtual log book so that all  
14 vendors have to sign in with the developments, so we  
15 know when they're there. When we know that they are  
16 doing the work and then we can better trace back and  
17 record you know when they actually did the work and  
18 make sure that that payment happens more swiftly.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: Is there a process that  
20 you're working with maybe tenants or maybe the  
21 Community Center wherever the work is being done to  
22 do that quality assurance to go check in with them to  
23 say how was the quality of work? What was the  
24 experience with this vendor?

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1  
2 EVA TRIMBLE: Yes, it's something we're looking  
3 at resident feedback portion is something we're  
4 looking to bring into the process.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: Do you know when you're  
6 going to bring that in?

7 EVA TRIMBLE: No, but I'm happy to follow up  
8 with you separately on that.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: That would be great,  
10 awesome. There are issues in my district with  
11 building management offices not processing work  
12 orders or resident complaints. I mean, we I'm sure  
13 as you've heard in previous hearings and maybe even  
14 here today, you know there's compounding tickets with  
15 maybe even folks having days off from work to wait  
16 for someone to come but then they never come, but  
17 then the work order ticket says that they did come  
18 and it's a really unfortunate cycle like that where  
19 both my residents times is being wasted along with  
20 the work still not being completed. So, what are  
21 management offices doing to help catalog all the  
22 issues with developments that are facing and how are  
23 we rectifying the ticketing issue with work  
24 completion?

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1  
2 EVA TRIMBLE: Thank you. We completely  
3 understand those issues that are going on with the  
4 residents and it's unproductive for both the  
5 residents taking off of work and for our workers when  
6 there are missed appointments on both sides. So,  
7 we're tackling this in a couple of different ways.  
8 First, we are looking to roll out this June a new  
9 communication tool where residents when they call the  
10 CCC will get an email receipt of that call when they  
11 schedule a maintenance work ticket.

12 Right now, you call the CCC and you have to make  
13 sure you're jotting down your work order number on  
14 some piece of paper that you don't ever lose, or then  
15 you've lost it forever. And so, we're looking to  
16 have a new email communication to residents and then  
17 not that will show that the work order was scheduled,  
18 the maintenance ticket was scheduled, it has their  
19 work order number and it's something that we hope to  
20 build on in order to be able to follow up on work  
21 tickets.

22 In addition, when we rolled out the work order  
23 reform program we created neighborhood planners in  
24 order for residents to have a single point of contact  
25 for skilled trade repairs. And so, the skilled trade

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1 repairs should be scheduled at the residents  
2 convenience by the neighborhood planner to make sure  
3 that it's a time that works for them and if they need  
4 to reschedule, they can talk to the neighborhood  
5 planner. What we have to do better at and it's  
6 something we're looking at is to make sure that if  
7 our workers are running late, if they're caught up in  
8 an emergency or something else, that that  
9 neighborhood planner is still communicating with the  
10 resident to reschedule from our end and that is  
11 something we're working to do better at.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: Okay, and I'm sorry if I  
14 missed it, when are you planning to roll out the  
15 communication tool?

16 EVA TRIMBLE: In June and we'll let you know  
17 when that goes out.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: Like tomorrow then,  
19 that's great. It's practically tomorrow. Is NYCHA  
20 providing any enforcement against maintenance and  
21 management employees after complaints from residents  
22 are submitted?

23 EVA TRIMBLE: Yeah, so we an investigative team  
24 within our quality assurance that looks into  
25 complaints about worker performance and we

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1 investigate it and if it's found to be legitimate, we  
2 will proceed with appropriate disciplinary actions.  
3

4 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: Okay, can you give us an  
5 example of actions. Like, what actions have been  
6 taken if anything happened?

7 EVA TRIMBLE: It can be suspensions. It can be  
8 counseling memos in their record depending on the  
9 infringement.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: Okay, great. I have two  
11 last questions Chairs, if you don't mind. Thank you.  
12 Justin does look like he minds but it's okay. Uhm,  
13 many of us have daycares on our NYCHA campuses with  
14 unsafe, unsightly, and unkept playgrounds. Daycares  
15 like Saditty Kitty in Soundview Houses in my district  
16 are forced to walk to nearby parks to get a decent  
17 play space for the children there, which then leaves  
18 our children open to the public as well during a  
19 daycare hours. What is NYCHA doing to update and  
20 maintain playgrounds connected to daycares on their  
21 campuses and is there a plan in place for renovations  
22 for those? And lastly, if there are playground  
23 renovations in the pipeline on certain campuses, can  
24 NYCHA prioritize play spaces connected to daycare  
25 centers?

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1  
2 EVA TRIMBLE: So, unfortunately our community  
3 centers, daycare centers, a lot of the same building  
4 system problem and ground problems in our buildings  
5 are facing a few years of disinvestment. So, we you  
6 know right now funding for community centers and  
7 playgrounds are typically funds that are provided by  
8 elected officials or other sources. It's not part of  
9 our main capital program right now but we're happy to  
10 work with you. If there are certain site issues that  
11 you want to identify offline we can talk to you about  
12 it.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: Yeah, I'd particularly  
14 love to talk about this playground and maybe do a  
15 deep dive background on what was provided, if  
16 anything was provided by predecessors and what I can  
17 support going forward with the capital.

18 EVA TRIMBLE: Absolutely, we'd be happy to have  
19 that conversation.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: Awesome and then just my  
21 last question I have around the NYCHA's plans to  
22 withdrawal \$65 million from reserves with still the  
23 anticipation of having about \$35 million deficit.  
24 What do we have in reserve and why not pull the  
25

entire amount if we can do so versus moving on with  
the deficit.

ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: That's a great  
question. So, we estimate that we have around \$211  
million in reserves, which is less than one month.  
As indicated, we have compliance requirements related  
to the HUD agreement. All the various repair needs  
at the properties. And so, we thought it prudent to  
use our reserves in order to do some of that work.  
It's not ideal certainly but in the face of declining  
tent revenues, it's either use your reserves or  
forego the repairs or the staffing or the compliance  
requirement.

COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: Sure, so just for  
clarification. We have \$211 million in reserve.

ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: Correct.

COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: And we're withdrawing  
\$65 million and leaving us in a deficit of \$34.8.

ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: That leaves you with  
an operating deficit.

COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: An operating deficit.

ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: But we do anticipate  
that because we'll have additional federal operating  
funds that we'll be able to close the deficit in that

1  
2 manner. We won't make another withdrawal from our  
3 reserve.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: What's the projection on  
5 closing the deficit?

6 ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: The projection on, I'm  
7 sorry?

8 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: On closing the deficit  
9 with the federal funds coming down.

10 ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: So, we anticipate by  
11 year end will probably be a balance.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: End of year, okay.  
13 Thank you so much. Thank you Chairs for the allotted  
14 time. Thank you for answering my questions.

15 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: Great, thank you. I just  
16 want to jump in really quickly. In the five-year  
17 operating plan it includes \$232.5 million from city  
18 and revenues in 2023 yet in the testimony given  
19 earlier, you said that there's \$387 million. What  
20 explains the difference and when will NYCHA issue an  
21 updated plan with the additional city funds?

22 ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: So, the difference is  
23 actually because we're on different fiscal years, so  
24 our fiscal year is calendar year and the city fiscal  
25 year runs through June. So that explains why you

1 don't see the same number in both places. As for our  
2 operating plan, we do one operating plan per year per  
3 HUD requirements but we do make sort of midyear  
4 updates to our board or executive leadership as  
5 needed. So, that's something that we will consider  
6 doing if the circumstances change.  
7

8 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: Okay, thank you. And in  
9 terms of - I'd like to just quickly segway to  
10 resident engagement on NYCHA's budget for resident  
11 participation and civic engagement fell by \$2 million  
12 between the calendar years of Fiscal 2022 and 2023.  
13 PS costs were cut by \$1.5 million driven by a ten  
14 percent vacancy reduction and the transfer of seven  
15 positions to another department. Why was the 2023  
16 resident engagement budget cut?

17 ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: Sure that's a great  
18 question. So, resident engagement is really  
19 important to us and we do allocate significant  
20 resources to these activities overall. But as we  
21 mentioned as part of our 2023 Operating budget, we  
22 did have to cut the budgets in all central office  
23 departments in order to reallocate funds to the  
24 pillar areas and our properties. So, resident  
25 engagement was not immune from those cuts. The seven

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1 positions that were reallocated were reallocated  
2 within that same area, so their still doing resident  
3 service worker, just not in resident and civic  
4 engagement.  
5

6 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: So, with the 58 positions  
7 that remain, how will the work get organized and what  
8 are the metrics for success in resident engagement?

9 EVA TRIMBLE: Thank you, so resident engagement  
10 is obviously really important and we work closely  
11 with our budget team to make sure that we're still  
12 able to achieve what we want to achieve. For our  
13 resident participation civic engagement team, we have  
14 a total of 59 staff members and our current scope  
15 includes conducting resident association elections,  
16 administering TPA and Councilmanic funds, engaging  
17 with resident leadership groups, supporting the  
18 citywide Council President and resident roundtable  
19 and other resident organizations. We have a variety  
20 of metrics that we use to gage their productivity,  
21 including the number of residents engaged, number of  
22 canvassing events, number of elections, number of  
23 resident outreach activities, meetings and things  
24 like that and we're happy to follow up with you and  
25

1 do a deeper dive into some of those metrics and  
2 activities.

3  
4 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: Great, we'd like to  
5 definitely see a breakdown per development on how  
6 developments are meeting their metrics. In terms of  
7 - given that the preservation trust is going to be  
8 quiet a substantial amount of work, how do we make  
9 sense of cutting resident engagement and yet having  
10 to prepare for this very important engagement and  
11 time intensive engagement with residents to  
12 understand.

13 ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: Sure, so as we  
14 mentioned, we have to cut our expenses. We don't  
15 have enough to balance and so, in order to continue  
16 to do the repairs in the pillars, do the emergency  
17 needs at the properties, every central office  
18 department including mine, legal, all of us have to  
19 shoulder that burden. The other option is cutting  
20 services at the actual properties, which we do not  
21 want to do.

22 In terms of the trust, we have a board in place  
23 but we are not up and running as of yet and so, as we  
24 set that up, we will consider what additional  
25

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resources are needed to be added at the authority to  
ensure the success of the trust.

BRIAN HONAN: And Council Member too I would  
like to add to. We're not going to be running the  
elections for the trust, we have an outside  
independent vender who will be running those  
elections. A lot of time and energy is spent by  
resident engagement, running elections and I know you  
brought this up as an issue in the past, having that  
outside help will definitely cut down and a number of  
staff does need it.

CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: I appreciate that. The  
elections definitely need some support but before we  
get to the elections, we need a robust engagement for  
residents. And that is what I'm having a hard time  
understanding given the level of cuts that we're  
experiencing in resident engagement. Given that this  
is a standard problem no matter what you're talking  
about, outages, standard maintenance repairs, just  
communication in general.

BRIAN HONAN: It will not only be resident  
engagement staff who will be doing that outreach.  
There will be also members of the executive team,  
members of the real estate team and we will have a

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1 full-time presence in developments where we are  
2 holding elections.

3  
4 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: Okay, I see we're going to  
5 be in a downward spiral here. Can I ask how many  
6 total – how many people in total work to engage  
7 residents around Section 8 conversion programs?

8 EVA TRIMBLE: Sure, we have our resident  
9 outreach for conversion and modernization services  
10 department, which is 32 full time staff and some  
11 seasonal aids and that's just from resident  
12 engagement and then there's also –

13 JONATHAN GOUVEIA: And in addition within the  
14 real estate group, there's a team of about eight  
15 folks, community planners who work with the teams  
16 that were already discussed to talk about the  
17 conversion to PACT and explain how those processes  
18 work.

19 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: Right, okay. In terms of  
20 the scope and budget of the civic engagement unit,  
21 what are the metrics there?

22 EVA TRIMBLE: Those are the metrics I was just  
23 referring to, yeah.

24 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: Got it. Lastly, the  
25 resident, excuse me, hold on one second. What

1 contracts were cut in the zero-based budgeting  
2 exercise as it relates to resident engagement and  
3 participation?  
4

5 ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: So, as we mentioned in  
6 the previous hearing, no specific contracts are cut  
7 as part of our zero-based budgeting exercise. Each  
8 department receives a budget allocation and they sort  
9 of determine how to shoulder that across their  
10 department. So, there's no specific contract or  
11 specific vendor.

12 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: Okay, okay, and so did  
13 NYCHA make a request to OMB for city funds to prevent  
14 cuts to the resident engagement budget?

15 ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: We continue to work  
16 with our city, state and federal partners to advocate  
17 for funding. We do not make any specific requests  
18 related to resident engagement.

19 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: So, now requests, okay. I  
20 believe we, excuse me.

21 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Okay, we have questions  
22 now from Council Members Ossè followed by Won.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER OSSÈ: Thank you Chairs and good  
24 afternoon everyone. According to a December 2022  
25 statistic, there were a total of 121 vacant units in

1  
2 my district and because of the housing crisis, as  
3 we're all aware of, because of the migrant crisis, as  
4 we're all aware of, it should be a top priority to  
5 make sure that no vacancies exist within our NYCHA  
6 developments. Obviously any opportunity to fill  
7 these units must be taken and I wanted to ask since  
8 there is now an additional \$7.9 million added into  
9 the fiscal year 2024 budget for vacant unit  
10 readiness, will any of this money go towards any of  
11 the vacant units in my district and has any progress  
12 been made since December of 2022 in terms of those  
13 121 vacancies?

14 EVA TRIMBLE: So, we haven't decided which units  
15 we will be turning over as part of the 2024  
16 allocation. It's something we're looking at right  
17 now and I can see if there are any units as part of  
18 the 2023 allocation that were part of your district.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER OSSÈ: Thank you and when do you  
20 think you could get back to me about that?

21 EVA TRIMBLE: Probably towards the end of June,  
22 we're working through that now.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER OSSÈ: Alright and any progress  
24 since December of 2022 in terms of the vacancies that  
25 have been filled?

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1  
2 EVA TRIMBLE: Yes, we – as part of the 2023  
3 allocation, we've leased up 70 percent of the units  
4 under VRP.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER OSSÈ: Citywide or within my  
6 district?

7 EVA TRIMBLE: Citywide.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER OSSÈ: Could you get me those  
9 numbers for –

10 EVA TRIMBLE: I will get you your specific  
11 district.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER OSSÈ: Thank you very much.  
13 Thank you Chairs.

14 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Council Member Won  
15 followed by Brewer.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER WON: Thank you so much Chair  
17 Brannan and Chair Avilés. Hello, it's good to see  
18 you. I saw you last at the NYCHA walk through. So,  
19 for Queens Bridge Houses, we've had a sinkhole in the  
20 playground for more than two years now and it is  
21 still an outstanding repair that I had physically  
22 shown you and your team, asking for repair again and  
23 again and now almost half a year has passed and the  
24 sinkhole remains as well as the playground itself.  
25 The padding I had shown you and we had taken pictures

1 of it coming off the ground. This is the only  
2 playground that Queens Bridge North has and it has  
3 been inaccessible for more than two years now. Could  
4 you please explain when this will get fixed?  
5

6 JOY SINDERBRAND: So, yes, I remember walking  
7 through it and we looked into it. This is a  
8 significant capital issue. It's not a maintenance or  
9 repair issue and we think we're estimating - Brian,  
10 do you have the number for this? But it's a  
11 multimillion-dollar project that right now is not yet  
12 funded unfortunately.

13 BRIAN HONAN: Council Member, yeah it is  
14 unfunded that is correct. We at last testament  
15 looked at it, it's about a \$40 million fix. So, it  
16 is not something that is funded now. Once we find  
17 the funding, we will of course meet with you to  
18 discuss a repair plan.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER WON: Why has it been unfunded  
20 for two years and you haven't made the funding  
21 request for capital?

22 BRIAN HONAN: \$40 million is quite a significant  
23 amount of money. We've been you know talking you  
24 know today and you know in other past hearings about  
25

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1 both our capital and operating deficits and you know,  
2 we just don't have the funding.

3  
4 COUNCIL MEMBER WON: So, you're just going to  
5 continue to let it be a sinkhole for children to fall  
6 into the ground for the next few years?

7 BRIAN HONAN: It is safe at this time but it is  
8 something that if we had the money and if the money  
9 could be identified and we'd be happy to work with  
10 you to identify the money to fix it but it is just  
11 not there.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER WON: What's the latest status  
13 for Woodside Houses heating plant that has been also  
14 - it's been unfixed for many years now?

15 BRIAN HONAN: Sure, I'm happy to report that all  
16 the boilers are back on line and the chimney also  
17 passed the test and we can go as soon as you'd like  
18 to see and announce the reopening of the Woodside  
19 boiler.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER WON: So, will the mobile boilers  
21 be removed?

22 BRIAN HONAN: The mobile boilers will be  
23 removed, correct.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER WON: And for all of the  
25 contracts for the internet - I don't even know what

1  
2 it was but you had all these contracts that didn't go  
3 through procurement for years. Then you had to  
4 procure it from Canada. What is the status of that  
5 contract now?

6 EVA TRIMBLE: We can follow up with you  
7 separately on the intercom issues that you were  
8 referring to. I think we're down to only a few  
9 intercoms that are still waiting for their parts, but  
10 we'll follow up with you separately on that.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER WON: I just want to reiterate  
12 that these are years and years and years of basic  
13 needs that need to be met, like heat, a playground so  
14 that children can play within the NYCHA complex as  
15 well as elevators that need to be fixed and intercoms  
16 so that people get in and out of their apartment.  
17 That continue to plague NYCHA for Queens Bridge  
18 Houses, Ravens Wood Houses and Woodside Houses year  
19 after year and I don't know how much more we could  
20 allocate and I don't see a difference year after year  
21 no matter how much capital funding is allocated, so  
22 I'm very concerned.

23 BRIAN HONAN: Council Member, I wish I could say  
24 that is unique to your district. In fact, it is  
25 something that we've been talking about for more than

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1  
2 a generation. Public housing is in crisis, not only  
3 in New York City but throughout the country. It is  
4 underfunded and we are doing the best we can under  
5 really bad circumstances.

6 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: Thank you Council Member.  
7 I think one of the things we mentioned earlier that  
8 I'd like to point out again is our city committed  
9 \$3.4 billion for capital for NYCHA and it committed  
10 Council Member, \$9.6 billion to build jails. Where  
11 is our priority? It's a city issue, thank you.

12 Can I just ask an additional question around the  
13 capital needs? How much of the city's five-year  
14 capital need commitment plan for NYCHA was mandated  
15 under the federal monitors agreement? And what I'm  
16 asking is like, either number or percentagewise.

17 ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: Thank you for that  
18 question. So, of the - what year are you looking  
19 for?

20 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: Uh, this I guess it would  
21 be this year.

22 ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: Sure, so for Fiscal  
23 Year 2024?

24 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: Yes.  
25

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ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: Okay, great. So, the  
total amount of city capital to NYCHA in fiscal year  
2024 is \$1.9 billion. There is \$1.5 billion in city  
capital for NYCHA, of which \$882 is executed  
agreement funding and \$624 is our regular capital  
funding. There's \$440 million for PACT.

CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: So, \$882 million is?

ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: Just for the  
equipment, correct.

CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: Got it. Even those numbers  
are incredibly telling. Do you foresee any issues  
drawing down from the \$135 million new capital  
commitment from the state?

ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: We do not.

CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: Is it reimbursable funding?

ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: Correct, all capital  
funding is reimbursable city, state and federal. We  
will be working with our state partners to come up  
with a plan for how to program that \$135 million but  
we don't anticipate any specific issues.

CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: Given the potential of  
having little to no reserve left after the draw down?  
I'd like to understand that math a little better  
offline.

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ANNIKA LESCOTT-MARTINEZ: Sure.

CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Council Member Brewer.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Thank you. I've been listening so I hope this question wasn't answered. I'm always wondering, I know you talked about the vacant units but how much does it cost to get units that had a fire or needed help? I had a fire recently. Ryan knows everything of course. I don't know how long does it take and how much does it cost? And then under PACT, obviously you're also renovating. Is it the same cost to renovate that unit? That's my question.

JONATHAN GOUVEIA: Hi there, thank you for the question. So, as it relates to the per unit cost to do a PACT renovation, what we're seeing right now is that most projects are coming in at about \$400,000 per unit. Some are significantly more than that, some are under that but generally around \$400,000.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay and how much does it cost you at NYCHA just to do a regular renovation of a unit? Fire or moving out or you know again generally?

JONATHAN GOUVEIA: So, for oh yes -

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1  
2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Do you affirm that your  
3 testimony will be truthful to the best of your  
4 knowledge, information and believe and you will  
5 honestly and faithfully answer Council Member  
6 questions?

7 KEITH GROSSMAN: Yes sir.

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you.

9 KEITH GROSSMAN: So, for fire jobs they vary  
10 obviously it depends on the extent of the damage and  
11 so there's no, to give you a cost would be unfair.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Well, just generally. I  
13 mean, in other words somebody moves out. I just gave  
14 that as an example but it could be anything. The  
15 average?

16 DANIEL GREENE: So, \$63,000 max, \$45,000 average  
17 and I can swear myself in, not myself but uh.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay, so \$45,000 to  
19 \$63,000 is what you're saying?

20 DANIEL GREENE: Yeah.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: So, why is it so much  
22 more? Is it a better job or what's the?

23 DANIEL GREENE: More extensive repairs and  
24 Jonathan can explain the scope of that.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: That's a big difference.

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1  
2 JONATHAN GOUVEIA: Well yeah, I mean the PACT  
3 program is bringing comprehensive repairs. So, we're  
4 talking about full renovation of the apartments, the  
5 systems, the common areas.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Alright, so the \$45,000  
7 \$63,000 is not the piping, it's just the renovation  
8 of the apartment? Okay.

9 JONATHAN GOUVEIA: The \$400,000 that I  
10 mentioned.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: No, I'm not talking  
12 about for the regular one.

13 DANIEL GREENE: It's similar to like a  
14 replacement in kind. We do abate.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: But you said \$45,000 or  
16 \$450,000?

17 DANIEL GREENE: No, \$45,000.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: That's what I thought  
19 you said.

20 DANIEL GREENE: \$63,000.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Yeah.

22 DANIEL GREENE: That's driven heavily by the  
23 environmental costs. So, we're doing more of a  
24 replacement in kind. We're not doing upgrades.  
25 We're not changing -

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1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: You're not doing a  
3 renovation, a full renovation?

4 DANIEL GREENE: No, we are abating the lead. We  
5 are abating asbestos as necessary making an asbestos  
6 date but it's replacement kind work really.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay, now the other  
8 question quickly is the FAB key problems. I don't  
9 know if this came up but that's obviously part of the  
10 \$400,000 but it's a problem. Is that something that  
11 you're dealing with? These FAB keys are not working.

12 JONATHAN GOUVEIA: Yes, uhm, I believe you're  
13 speaking of Wise Towers and certainly aware of the  
14 situation.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: And PS 139 and all of  
16 them. I call it everybody in Manhattan.

17 JONATHAN GOUVEIA: Yes, we know we're having  
18 some challenges with the Manhattan bundle, so we are  
19 working with the PACT partner to make sure that  
20 residents have appropriate access and that they have  
21 tools that they you know, that are not cumbersome. I  
22 understand that there have been some issues with the  
23 electronic systems.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Alright, okay, thank  
25 you.

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1  
2 JONATHAN GOUVEIA: Thank you.

3 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: In terms of uhm, we know  
4 that NYCHA has generally not evicted residents during  
5 the course of the now ended Coronavirus emergency and  
6 since the eviction moratorium lifted in January 2022,  
7 NYCHA has executed eight evictions and only two in  
8 2022 and six in 2023. What is the current total  
9 number of evictions filed?

10 LISA BOVA-HIATT: So, just to correct that  
11 number, we have a total of nine.

12 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: Nine.

13 LISA BOVA-HIATT: Two in 2022 and seven in 2023,  
14 one happened just recently. As I've said repeatedly,  
15 our goal is to keep people housed. With that being  
16 said, we do need rental income, so at the moment, we  
17 have 650 non-payment cases and 480 hold over cases.  
18 As you may also be aware because I know that we've  
19 discussed at previous hearings, historically we had  
20 tens of thousands of hold over and nonpayment cases  
21 going on at any given time. During the pandemic  
22 under the guides of our transformation plan, we  
23 actually really took a hard look at the cases that we  
24 were bringing. We discontinued 31,000 cases and have  
25 focused on the greatest number of arrears for the

1 longest amount of time. The population in that 650  
2 number have about \$30,000 worth of unpaid rent to  
3 NYCHA.  
4

5 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: And in terms of the, we  
6 note that NYCHA currently has 914 active repayment  
7 plans. How many tenants are still not in the  
8 repayment plan?

9 LISA BOVA-HIATT: So, it's a very hard thing to  
10 un-prove. I can't say why individuals have not  
11 signed a repayment plan. I think now that we have an  
12 influx of ERAP money coming in, we will see people  
13 utilizing that as an available tool to get them back  
14 on track to paying rent. As Annika mentioned  
15 earlier, we can only charge 40 percent, so 30 percent  
16 of rent and then if somebody has a repayment plan,  
17 the most that we can ask them to pay each month is 40  
18 percent.

19 So, there are some people who are reluctant to  
20 or maybe reluctant to sign a repayment plan because  
21 the number is so overwhelming. But that is one of  
22 the tools that we will use to get people back on  
23 track. How many evictions do you estimate may happen  
24 this year?  
25

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1  
2 LISA BOVA-HIATT: That's a very hard to  
3 estimate. We do have 650 nonpayment cases. Our goal  
4 again is to keep people housed, connect people with  
5 resources. So, you know it's - I can't really tell  
6 you how many we will have but I'm sure at the next  
7 hearing we can report back on where we are at the end  
8 of this year.

9 CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: Thank you. I think uhm, in  
10 terms of the just segwaying quickly to capital  
11 discretionary projects. We've had ongoing  
12 discussions around due to this funding crisis. NYCHA  
13 having to deprioritize discretionary capital projects  
14 like playgrounds, green spaces and community centers.  
15 In an earlier hearing, you testified it will cost  
16 between \$5 million and \$10 million to cover the  
17 personnel required to keep these capital  
18 discretionary projects moving forward. Are you still  
19 planning to suspend these?

20 JOY SINDERBRAND: These projects are on pause  
21 right now and as the amount and the timing of funding  
22 comes to bear, we'll be able to work with our budget  
23 office to determine how we can expedite that list of  
24 projects back and active.

CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: And have you informed residents about what is happening with these projects that are going to be on pause?

JOY SINDERBRAND: Throughout the month of April and May, we've been meeting individually, in person with all of the tenant association presidents and resident leaders to talk about the paused projects and answer any questions they have.

CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: Does that include communication to NYCHA residents at large? We understand some of the TA's don't have the capacity to contact thousands of residents around a playground.

JOY SINDERBRAND: We have not done robocalls or bill inserts if that's what you're asking.

CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: So, if the projects are paused, under what circumstances will they be activated again and moved into the capital pipeline?

JOY SINDERBRAND: So, as this new funding becomes clearer and is the priority staff funding are determined across the agency, capital will leverage whatever we get to reactivate all of these really important projects that we paused only as really a measure of last resort.

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CHAIRPERSON AVILÈS: Okay. I think we might be  
- I think while we have a good number of additional  
questions still we understand we have a hearing that  
is proceeding this one, so we will follow up with  
NYCHA on all those specific questions and would like  
to receive certainly a response. I think as I said  
in the opening, you know our budget is a moral  
document and what the city seems to be prioritizing  
is clearly not public housing residents and not New  
York City Housing Authority and I am deeply, deeply  
disturbed by the fact that our city really enjoys  
investing in policing and building jails for our  
residents and not in making sure that they have safe,  
secure housing that is not killing them.

I want to thank the NYCHA team for being here.  
I know you are working very hard at your jobs.  
Nevertheless, what we see here is a culmination of  
defunding, consistent defunding of public housing at  
every level of government and it is wholly  
unacceptable. We will continue to make sure to hold  
NYCHA accountable to meet its targets to create  
metrics that make sense and we will not allow the  
rhetoric of this is really important but we're going

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1  
2 to defund it anyway, which is very much what we're  
3 seeing across city agencies right now.

4 So, I want to thank you for your time and I'll  
5 pass it over to Chair Brannan.

6 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Chair and your team, thank  
7 you so much. We look forward to working with you.  
8 With that, we're going to conclude this hearing and  
9 we're going to hear from Department of Correction  
10 after a brief pause. Thank you so much.

11 BREAK [04:37:48]- [04:50:16]

12 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: [GAVEL] Okay, good  
13 afternoon and welcome to our third and final  
14 Executive Budget Hearing of the day, day nine of  
15 Executive Budget Hearings and we're going to focus on  
16 the Department of Correction and I'm pleased to be  
17 joined by my colleague Council Member Carlina Rivera,  
18 Chair of the Committee on Criminal Justice. We have  
19 been joined by Council Members Brewer, Hanif, Ariola,  
20 Paladino, Schulman, Carr, Farias is still with us,  
21 Won is still with us and Mercedes, the long haul  
22 since this morning.

23 Hanks, yeah you've been here though. Stevens,  
24 Hanks is here, everyone's here. We're all here,  
25 okay. We're all here, oh and Abreu.

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Welcome Commissioner Molina and your team.

Thank you for joining us today to answer our questions. Just to set the table on April 26, 2023, the Administration released the Executive Financial Plan for FY23 to FY27, with a proposed FY24 Budget total of \$106.7 billion. DOC's proposed FY24 Budget of \$1.17 billion represents roughly one percent of the Administrations proposed FY24 Budget in the Executive Plan.

This is a decrease of \$30 million or 2.5 percent from the \$1.2 billion originally allocated in the Preliminary Plan. This decrease is mostly due to insourcing contracted services less than anticipated personal services spending and a uniform overtime reduction.

My questions today will largely focus on the supervision in the facilities, the borough-based jails and absenteeism among the uniformed officers. And I want to turn to my Co-Chair for this hearing, Council Member Carlina Rivera for her opening remarks.

CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: Thank you very much. Good afternoon. Thank you Chair Brannan. My name is Carlina Rivera, Chair of the Committee on Criminal

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Justice and this afternoon, we will review Fiscal  
2024 Executive Budget for the Department of  
Correction.

The Department of Corrections Fiscal 2024  
Executive Budget totals over \$1 billion. A decrease  
of about \$110 million from the Fiscal 2023 Adopted  
Budget. We will also discuss the Departments capital  
commitment plan totaling \$9.6 billion across the plan  
period and ten-year capital strategy which totals  
\$10.6 billion.

The Executive Budget supports 8,790 employees,  
approximately three percent of the city's total  
workforce and there are approximately 6,000 people in  
the Departments custody. The Executive Budget  
introduces modest new needs in Fiscal 2024 and  
follows a familiar pattern of readjusting the  
inaccurate overtime budget at adoption. In addition  
to the program to eliminate the gap or PEGs in the  
November and Preliminary Plan, the Executive Plan  
includes \$47 million in savings bringing the total  
PEG to approximately \$125 million in Fiscal 2024.

Of particular concern to the Committee is the  
inclusion of a \$17 million PEG as a result of  
insourcing programmatic contracts. The Committee is

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1  
2 profoundly concerned about DOCs inability to deliver  
3 the invaluable and critical services of trusted  
4 providers. While its delivery of its core operations  
5 remains tenuous. \$17 million is just 1.5 percent of  
6 the Departments totals budget in Fiscal 2024 and  
7 today I'm interested in understanding this decision  
8 and how this funding can be restored and true  
9 efficiencies found.

10 I would like to thank my staff and Committee  
11 Staff for their hard work Finance Analyst Casey  
12 Laskey, Policy Analyst Natalie Meltzer, Counsel  
13 Jeremy Whiteman, my Director of Communications Ed  
14 Amador, my Chief of Staff Katie Loeb. I'd also like  
15 to thank Commissioner Molina and his team for being  
16 here today to answer our questions and I'll turn it  
17 over to Chair Brannan.

18 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Thank you Chair Rivera.  
19 Now, we're going to go to Committee Counsel Mike  
20 Twomey to swear in the Commissioner and his team.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Good afternoon if you raise  
22 your right hands please? Do you affirm that your  
23 testimony will be truthful to the best of your  
24 knowledge, information and belief and you will  
25

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1 honestly and faithfully answer Council Member  
2 questions, Commissioner Molina?

3  
4 LOUIS MOLINA: I do.

5 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Deputy Commissioner Lyons?

6 PATRICIA LYONS: I do.

7 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Deputy Commissioner Torres?

8 FRANCIS TORRES: I do.

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: General Counsel Shechtman?

10 PAUL SHECHTMAN: I do.

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. You may begin.

12 LOUIS MOLINA: Good afternoon Chair Brannan and  
13 Chair Rivera and member of the Committee on Finance  
14 and Committee on Criminal Justice. I'm Louis Molina  
15 of the Department of Corrections Commissioner. I'm  
16 joined today by the Department General Counsel Paul  
17 Shechtman, Deputy Commissioner of Finance Patricia  
18 Lyons, and the Deputy Commission of the Division of  
19 Programs and Community Partnerships Francis Torres.

20 We are here to discuss the Departments Executive  
21 Budget for Fiscal Year 2024 and what lays ahead for  
22 the agency in the coming Fiscal Year. I have spoken  
23 with you often in the past six months about the  
24 strides that have been made under the Adam's  
25 Administration to improve the quality of our city's

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1 jail facilities. Absenteeism has dramatically been  
2 reduced, slashings and stabbings are down almost 20  
3 percent fiscal year to date and almost 35 percent  
4 calendar year to date. New hires with broad  
5 correctional experience have given us new  
6 perspectives and are helping to initiate cultural  
7 change. The disciplinary backlog in our trials  
8 division has been tackled and reduced, core  
9 production is now at 95 percent. Our intake  
10 facilities are clean and orderly and 99.5 percent of  
11 new admittees are not housed in less than 24 hours.  
12 All of this is the result of the hard work of  
13 dedicated people. All of it is praise worthy  
14 although it is not fashionable to praise the success  
15 that we have had at the Department of Corrections as  
16 of late.  
17

18 The Departments Fiscal Year 2024 Executive  
19 Budget is \$1.17 billion. The vast majority of this  
20 84 percent is allocated for personal services and 16  
21 percent for Other Than Personal Services. The Fiscal  
22 Year 2024 Executive Budget is \$196.3 million less in  
23 this years budget of \$1.36 billion. A reduction of  
24 \$30.4 million in Fiscal Year 2024 and \$30 million in  
25 Fiscal Year 2025. Due to our actual uniformed

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headcount continuing to remain below our budgeted  
headcount.

A reduction of \$17 million annually in Fiscal  
Year 2024 resulting from a discontinuation of  
multiyear program provider contracts. An increase of  
\$112 million in Fiscal Year 2023 to offset the  
projected overtime spending. An increase of \$2.4  
million annually in Fiscal Year 2023 to fund phone  
calls for persons in custody. An increase of \$5  
million in Fiscal Year 2023, \$4.7 million in Fiscal  
Year 2024, \$6 million in Fiscal Year 2025 and \$7.6  
million in Fiscal Year 2026 to reflect the DC 37  
Collective Bargaining Agreement. And a uniformed  
overtime cost avoidance of \$30 million commencing in  
Fiscal Year 2026.

In the coming fiscal year, the Department will  
undertake a major shift in the way that programs and  
services are delivered to individuals in our jails.  
To comply with the Mayor's mandated four percent  
budget reduction, the Department reviewed all aspects  
of its budget to reach the required savings of \$47  
million. Those savings could not be sustained from  
our Personal Services budget alone. In our Other  
than Personal Services Budget, the most significant

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1  
2 funding resides in programs, facility maintenance,  
3 nutritional services, commissary and wages for  
4 incarcerated individuals. After careful review, we  
5 determined that the required reductions could be  
6 taken only from programs that the other categories  
7 could not be cut. Our plan is for programs to re-  
8 assign staff, increase the delivery of service in  
9 congregate settings, leverage technology, and expand  
10 partnerships with government entities and volunteer  
11 groups.

12 With regards to capital funding, the Fiscal Year  
13 2024 Executive Capital Budget and Commitment Plan  
14 totals \$11.6 billion, which covers Fiscal Year 2024  
15 through 2033. Included in this capital plan is an  
16 increase of \$1.4 billion in capital appropriations  
17 for the borough-based jail facility in Brooklyn.  
18 Appropriations had to be increased to meet the  
19 proposal from the apparent winner for the design and  
20 build project. As of Fiscal Year 2024 Executive  
21 Budget, the borough-based jails programs total \$9.2  
22 billion over the ten-year plan and is allocated as  
23 follows of today. The Brooklyn Facility \$3.3  
24 billion, Manhattan Facility \$2 billion, Queens  
25

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1 Facility \$1.9 billion, Bronx Facility \$1.9 billion,  
2 Queens Parking Garage \$17.3 million.

3  
4 Further included in the Department's Capital  
5 Plan is \$46.6 million for the restoration of funds  
6 for critical infrastructure projects on Rikers  
7 Island. The deterioration of Rikers infrastructure  
8 can no longer be ignored, regardless of when Rikers  
9 closes, its core infrastructure, steam tunnels, main  
10 electrical feeders and the powerhouse, must be in a  
11 state of good working order. Rikers now houses more  
12 than 6,000 incarcerated individuals and thousands of  
13 staff work there every day. We fail them with  
14 perhaps disastrous consequences if our facilities are  
15 in disrepair.

16 We continue to work diligently to attract and  
17 retain civilian and uniformed staff. The  
18 Department's authorized headcount remains unchanged  
19 from the Preliminary Budget totaling 8,790 staff  
20 members, 7,060 uniformed positions, and 1,730  
21 civilian positions. Our actual staffing levels  
22 continue to remain well below our authorized  
23 headcount. We are exploring creative advertising and  
24 marketing strategies to promote employment with the  
25 department. This, in conjunction with the

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1  
2 elimination of the college requirement for the  
3 Correction Officer exam, should aid with increasing  
4 the Department's staffing levels.

5 This Administration is committed to reform and  
6 to jail facilities that are safe and humane. Over  
7 the past 16 months, you have seen what our staff can  
8 do when they are properly led, trained, and mentored.  
9 The Executive Budget gives us the resources to  
10 continue the progress that has been made and to  
11 deliver on the promises that are long overdue.

12 I thank you for the opportunity to testify and  
13 look forward to answering your questions.

14 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Thank you Commissioner.  
15 I'm going to jump right into it. The monitors April  
16 3<sup>rd</sup> Report noted that although the practice of  
17 assigning awarded posts have been suspended. There  
18 are still a little over 1,650 staff on awarded post.  
19 It is nearly a quarter of the uniformed workforce.  
20 Could you explain what these awarded posts are and  
21 what functions they fill and how people get them?

22 LOUIS MOLINA: Thank you for your question.  
23 That number is incorrect. The actual number that are  
24 currently on awarded posts is about 1,100. Awarded  
25 posts are critical within corrections because what it

1  
2 allows is an opportunity for senior staff members  
3 through seniority that may have to fill critical but  
4 ancillary positions to compliment the operations of  
5 our jail. Those officers are awarded those posts.  
6 Sometimes that's in our clinic areas. Sometimes  
7 that's in our mailroom operations. There are a  
8 number of awarded posts that are critical to the  
9 functioning of the facility. With that being said,  
10 in our review of awarding posts, I think historically  
11 the Department has maybe awarded, has designated  
12 posts as awarded posts that probably should have  
13 never been awarded posts. An example of that would  
14 be if you have a correction officer working in the  
15 investigations division, that is a specialized  
16 assignment. It should not be considered an awarded  
17 post.

18 So, what we are doing is evaluating all of the  
19 posts that has a designation of being considered  
20 awarded posts and determining if those posts should  
21 continue to be eligible for an awarded status.

22 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: So, that's part of the  
23 review that you're doing.

24 LOUIS MOLINA: That's correct.  
25

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CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Okay, when do we expect  
the review to be completed?

LOUIS MOLINA: I can get back to you on that but  
I would say it's in the near future within the next  
month or so. It's not going to take much longer.

CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: The Executive Budget has a  
budgeted headcount of 703 captains with only 567  
filled as of the plans release, is that right?

LOUIS MOLINA: That sounds about right, yes.

CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: So, does this headcount  
allow the Department to achieve its optimal ratio of  
lined supervisors to officers?

LOUIS MOLINA: We think that it will given how  
much correctional officers we have lost over the last  
three years. We did promote about 25, 26 captains.  
We had not had a promotional class of captains in  
about five years. So, that rank state sort of like -

CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: What's the ratio that you  
like to have?

LOUIS MOLINA: Well, optimally I would say about  
one to six, one to eight would be optimal. For us,  
when you look at other uniform law enforcement  
agencies, that first line of supervisors to officer  
ratios within the one-to-six-month range, which

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1 allows for better standard control of the management  
2 of officers.  
3

4 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Now that the PBA contract  
5 has been ratified, can you give the Committee an  
6 update on when you expect DOC's uniform collective or  
7 bargaining agreements to appear in the budget?

8 LOUIS MOLINA: That I couldn't give you right  
9 now because there's a negotiation led by the Office  
10 of Labor Relations. Happy to update you when we get  
11 closer to thinking when that might happen.

12 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: And the PBA contract  
13 included a pilot program for extended tours. Do you  
14 think that's something that might work for DOC?

15 LOUIS MOLINA: So, you're speaking of the 12-  
16 hour tour chart?

17 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Yup.

18 LOUIS MOLINA: So, we have been doing - as you  
19 know, we have been largely a paper-based agency and  
20 one of the things we have been doing as we're  
21 evaluating not only post assignments, is thinking is  
22 there a cadre of scheduling of tours that may allow  
23 for more workforce optimization? So, we're going  
24 through that analysis now to determine that, and  
25 obviously if there's any pilot incentive in the

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1 Collective Bargaining Agreement that we would work to  
2 sort of work that out and evaluate it.  
3

4 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: And could you give us,  
5 Zoom in a little bit and give the Committee an update  
6 with the timeline for transitioning to borough-based  
7 jails. I know back in March; you told the Council  
8 that you had to defer to DDC. Have you received any  
9 updates from them regarding the timeline?

10 LOUIS MOLINA: The only update I have is what I  
11 think you may have sir, which is that the first  
12 facility of the [05:05:36], which is Brooklyn, will  
13 not be opened any earlier than 2029. And that  
14 signals to me that the other facilities will either  
15 be open on or about or later than that date, which  
16 obviously passes the 2027 deadline of when Rikers  
17 needs to be closed. Operations need to seize there.

18 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Okay, I have one last  
19 question then I want to give it to Chair Rivera.  
20 Absentee rates, I know you mentioned it in your  
21 testimony, has the absentee rate increased or  
22 decreased since the preliminary hearing?

23 LOUIS MOLINA: Since the Preliminary Hearing uhm

24 -

25

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CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Just at the Prelim, you mentioned it was at an all-time high over the last several years.

LOUIS MOLINA: No, I think I mentioned it might have been at an all time low. So, absenteeism has decreased 70 percent since January of 2022, so I can just give you an example of that. In January of 2022 on any given day, we had 2,600 individuals calling out sick collectively between people calling out new sick and people that may have been sick 30 days or more which is a long-term sick.

Today, collectively that in number as of yesterday was 474 but I think what's really impressive is in January 2022, I believe persons calling in sick one or two days amounted to about 1,500 unique persons calling in for an average sick issue and yesterday, that number was 62.

CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: 62 and what's the full headcount?

LOUIS MOLINA: 5,706 correction officers.

CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: And what's your vacancy rate right now, even percentage wise?

LOUIS MOLINA: Percentage wise, I know we have about 500 correction officer vacancies approximately.

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CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Okay, thank you  
Commissioner. I'm going to turn it to Chair Rivera.

CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: Thank you. Let me just  
follow up on that and before I get into programming,  
what is the number 62 again?

LOUIS MOLINA: So, 62 was the number of  
individual officers that called in sick yesterday.  
That number in January of 2022 was near 1,500.

CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: The Nunez Federal Monitor  
reported in October that DOC identified 1,029  
officers as chronically absent. What progress has  
been made with those officers?

LOUIS MOLINA: So, we've done a lot of movement  
in there. As you know, we have initiated when called  
for either medical separation or medical  
incompetency, which is the disciplinary process to  
address issues where we think that there might be  
abuse of sick leave. So, we might have individuals  
that have that chronic designation but are now coming  
to work and going through a disciplinary process.  
What I can tell you from a medical incompetency  
number, is that we have initiated - just give me a  
moment.

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CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: And do you know how many  
have returned to work consistently and are actually  
working with incarcerated people?

LOUIS MOLINA: I mean the number has gone up  
significantly because as I said earlier, 70 percent  
of people out sick have returned back to work. Now,  
someone could have a designation of being chronic  
because of their absences but that doesn't mean that  
they're not working today. It just means that we can  
possibly pursue discipline if we think that's the  
correct course of action. If they're in an awarded  
post, it would make them eligible to possibly lose  
that awarded post. And people could be chronic for a  
number of issues.

CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: Understood and I get the 70  
percent. You mentioned since January 2022, I gave  
you a number of over 1,000 that was reported in  
October. So, my question was how many are actually  
back to work with incarcerated people and how many  
have been terminated? And how many are still on the  
payroll while exhibiting chronic absenteeism?

LOUIS MOLINA: So, chronic absenteeism is a  
designation that doesn't necessarily prevent an  
individual from working. It just means that you have

1 shown a – you have been out sick. I believe the  
2 number is more than 12 days in a 12-month period.  
3 So, you could be chronic and we not pursue medical  
4 incompetency because medical incompetency would not  
5 be triggered until you've been out sick for 40 days  
6 or more in a 12-month period.  
7

8 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: But that's why I  
9 specifically asked you how many are actually working  
10 with incarcerated people, because from what I  
11 understand, some people do return to work but are not  
12 working directly with people that are incarcerated.

13 LOUIS MOLINA: So persons like that would be  
14 designated medically monitored restricted level 3 and  
15 I believe approximately the number of individuals in  
16 that category is around I want to say 400.

17 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: Will the Department be able  
18 to generate additional savings by addressing  
19 absenteeism?

20 LOUIS MOLINA: We'll, we've been addressing  
21 absenteeism.

22 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: It's a chronic problem  
23 absenteeism and I commend you for the reduction that  
24 has happened but it's still an issue. So, I've asked  
25 for specific numbers in terms of the 1,029 officers

1 that were identified in October. If you can get back  
2 to me with how many have been terminated. How many  
3 have returned to work and are actually working with  
4 incarcerated people, I would appreciate that number.  
5 I want to get to the programming though because that  
6 is really a really big concern of mine. So, I'm  
7 going to go to that because I have a lot of  
8 colleagues here who want to ask questions.

9  
10 So, this week DOC informed six nonprofits:  
11 Fortune, Osborne, Fed Cap, Green Hope, SCO and the  
12 Hort that their contracts to provide reentry, job  
13 training and therapeutic programming in the city  
14 jails will all end completely on June 30, 2023. Per  
15 the providers, these programs currently serve  
16 approximately 1,500 people every weekday, 90 to 150  
17 minutes of programming per day in each of over 192  
18 housing areas in seven different jails.

19 Participants are also able to continue  
20 programming in the community after their release.  
21 Per the Mayor's April 2023 PEG, ending these  
22 contracts will save DOC \$17 million. DOC claims that  
23 DOC staff will provide the programming instead. How  
24 was the decision made to insource these services in  
25 order to meet the PEG target? Were you directed by

1  
2 OMB to find efficiencies in these contracts or was  
3 this determined by the Department?

4 LOUIS MOLINA: Thank you for your question and  
5 just before I answer that, I just found a number.  
6 So, in 2023 – in 2022 alone, we initiated 357 medical  
7 incompetency cases and 99 medical separation cases.  
8 Through 2023, we initiated 650 medical incompetency  
9 cases and 180 medical separation cases to your  
10 earlier question regarding chronic. And before I  
11 turn it over to my colleague Deputy Commissioner  
12 Francis Torres, on your question regarding  
13 programming, although the Department valued the  
14 partnerships and services afforded by the contract  
15 providers, that was under the Department of the  
16 Division of Programs, had displayed an extraordinary  
17 tenacity at times when needed for services was the  
18 greatest.

19 An example of this was the height of the COVID  
20 pandemic, where facilities in many other  
21 jurisdictions went on 24-hour lockdown. Our program  
22 staff continue to service individuals including those  
23 in COVID positive units. So, we are confident of our  
24 ability to be able to assume these additional  
25 responsibilities previous carried out by contracted

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1 providers because during that COVID pandemic, the  
2 majority of these contract providers were not  
3 performing these services. So, I'll hand it over to  
4 DC Torres to give you some nuance answers to your  
5 question.  
6

7 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: Do you still have the  
8 number of programming staff steady from being 233  
9 people?

10 FRANCIS TORRES: Yes we do ma'am.

11 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: Okay.

12 FRANCIS TORRES: Good afternoon everybody. Good  
13 afternoon Chair Rivera. My name is Francis Torres,  
14 I'm the Deputy Commissioner for the Division of  
15 Programs and Community Partnerships. In response to  
16 our mandated to reduce the budget by four percent as  
17 you are well versed, there was an exam or an analysis  
18 of DOTPS of five of the largest of OTPS budgets in  
19 our department: Programs, nutritional services,  
20 commissary, facility maintenance, on the wages that  
21 are paid to our persons in custody.

22 In looking closely as to how to meet these  
23 tasks, programs was ultimately selected for a  
24 reduction of its budget. Targeted approach jail-  
25 based services provided by five of the six providers

1 that you have mentioned, actually contract that  
2 providers to provide 90-minute group or individual  
3 counseling in housing areas. The groups vary  
4 according to what is designed by the providers and  
5 what the needs of our population are. It is  
6 important for me to share with you this afternoon a  
7 couple of things regarding programming on Rikers  
8 Island as well as services.

10 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: I just want to – may I call  
11 you Ms. Torres?

12 FRANCIS TORRES: Absolutely.

13 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: Ms. Torres, I appreciate  
14 that. I did read that in the – I heard that in the  
15 Commissioners testimony and I just want to know, how  
16 was the decision made? Were you directed by OMB to  
17 find these efficiencies? Did the Department explore  
18 any other contract efficiencies other than these  
19 programs to meet the Departments PEG target? I mean,  
20 I have to ask and bring up vacancies for example.

21 FRANCIS TORRES: Sure, so when it came to us, we  
22 looked at DOTPS. When it came to our largest of  
23 programs, these are the providers with the largest of  
24 financial demands on our division budget. It is a  
25 total of \$17 million and in looking at the footprint

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1  
2 and also the services that are afforded, we were able  
3 to determine that our own divisional staff, very  
4 specific civil service titles would actually be able  
5 to do that job. It's not ideal. It's not what we  
6 have been doing for the last few years but it is a  
7 job ended. It was a responsibility that between 2016  
8 and 2019 was handled by our own staff. Meaning the  
9 Associate Correctional Counselors, the Associate  
10 Correctional Councils Level 1, Level 2 and also  
11 Program Counselors.

12       When it comes to the targeted approach that we  
13 are talking about, I need to emphasize that there is  
14 a section of the population that our partners have  
15 been servicing. Those are the adult population.  
16 When it comes to emergent adults, as well as those  
17 who are in enhanced supervision housing, those  
18 services are already insourced. Meaning, our program  
19 counselors as well as other civil service titles are  
20 the ones already pro-abiding the services. In fact,  
21 in enhanced supervision, we provide five days of  
22 programming for nearly eight hours a day.

23       When it came to looking at insourcing, we pay  
24 close attention to the number of facilitators in  
25 compassed by our partnering providers, as well as the

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1 staff levels that we had. And so, presently, 64 out  
2 of the scheduled 89 providers, are the one's doing  
3 the group facilitation in the housing areas. Alike  
4 them through our counseling services unit, we have 69  
5 active staff members out of 84 counselors. So, when  
6 we look at the footprint that our providers have  
7 targeting this adult population, our counseling staff  
8 members are able to take on that responsibility,  
9 which they had done in the past prior to the targeted  
10 approach.  
11

12 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: So, you have your plan.  
13 You've thought this through and you think, I really  
14 need to know what is DOC's plan to replace these  
15 programs as of July 1, while ensuring that you meet  
16 the mandatory requirement of five hours of  
17 programming per day? And has anyone been appointed  
18 by the Department leadership to oversee and manage  
19 this transition? Are any, you know right now the  
20 nonprofit contract providers have about 120 staff  
21 lines allocated to run these programs and they do so  
22 from a very, very culturally humble place with people  
23 who have been impacted, who have lived experiences  
24 and they have been doing this work for a very, very  
25 long time.

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1  
2 So, if you can get into as concisely as possible  
3 the plan for July 1 to take over these services when  
4 we've had some really amazing nonprofits and  
5 community-based organizations with institutional  
6 knowledge, with a legacy inside of Rikers Island in  
7 terms of discharge planning, educational programming,  
8 therapeutic programming. Just again, concisely what  
9 is the plan and the transition and has the department  
10 assigned leadership to oversee it?

11 FRANCIS TORRES: When it comes to the transition  
12 plan, we're working internally. It is an effort  
13 being led by our division with direct communication  
14 with the Commissioner and other Deputy Commissioner  
15 inside the Department.

16 When it comes to us, we are mapping out a draft  
17 that we will be more than happy to share with you in  
18 the future. There are a couple of things that we  
19 need to do. Number one, we are currently engaged in  
20 conversations with our labor relations because in  
21 order for our counselors to embark in what they used  
22 to do back in 2016 and 2019, we need to modify their  
23 task and standards. We'll be able to discuss that at  
24 a later time.

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1 We have also engaged in the posting, as well as  
2 the feeling of our vacancies, which we currently have  
3 52. The job postings are already out. They are  
4 disseminated. We have very specific numbers of staff  
5 members that are being onboarded, meaning internally,  
6 we know it as on the pipeline between HR and OMB  
7 approval and it is our goal that we're able to bring  
8 those in the next couple of months. In doing this  
9 transition, we are also going to be looking at how  
10 best to maximize programming within congregate  
11 settings. How best to rely on our technological  
12 advances, such as the distribution of tablets. And  
13 also, we're going to expand our partners or  
14 partnerships with other entities, including faith  
15 based and volunteer groups.  
16

17 Oh, Madam Chair if I may?

18 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: Of course.

19 FRANCIS TORRES: I know you want me to be  
20 concise and brief, but I need to share something with  
21 you. We do value what our partners bring to the  
22 table but if you give me one minute, I would like to  
23 share with you the value that we have internally and  
24 it is the value of dedicated staff members assigned  
25 to our division. In a very informal pool that we did

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1 of volunteers, we actually interviewed 190 staff  
2 members from our division. Those members are between  
3 counselors, as well as recreation supervisors and  
4 directors. And I need to share with you that out of  
5  
6 -

7 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: Well, let me just ask  
8 because we don't have a lot of time.

9 FRANCIS TORRES: Okay.

10 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: So, the staff that will  
11 take on these programmatic roles, they currently  
12 already have full-time responsibilities correct?

13 FRANCIS TORRES: That's correct.

14 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: So, how will current DOC  
15 programming staff be able to take on the work of 100  
16 plus people when presumably they already have full  
17 time responsibilities?

18 FRANCIS TORRES: Because in order for us to do  
19 that, we are distributing their task assignments.

20 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: So, right now the Executive  
21 Budget reflects a reduction of 244 vacant civilian  
22 staff positions and if you could explain how it's  
23 such a high civilian vacancy rate? The DOC plans to  
24 continuously provide these services and programs  
25 while simultaneously not being able to recruit

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1 employees to fill the vacant positions that already  
2 exist.

3  
4 FRANCIS TORRES: That's a great and our  
5 Department continues to go through that exercise. As  
6 it relates to our division, we have already completed  
7 the exercise and the number of vacancies that we have  
8 right now are vacancies that as I shared with you  
9 before, we have already job postings or we have  
10 people on the pipeline. Know that the vacancies that  
11 existed in our division were more as a result of low  
12 salaries and we are currently engaged with labor  
13 relations as well as our division of human resources  
14 on how best to address that.

15 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: I hear you but if you've  
16 ever tried to get a job with the city, it take a  
17 little longer than about a month and a half to  
18 actually get a job with the city but I appreciate the  
19 job postings comment. Alright, my last two questions  
20 before I turn it over to my colleagues and I do have  
21 more questions.

22 So, how can you ensure that the existing DOC  
23 programming staff have the training and expertise to  
24 fully provide the services that have been cut and  
25 will there be an interruption in programming in any

1 of the jails between July 1 and whenever sufficient  
2 DOC staff can be trained and deployed to provide  
3 these services?  
4

5 FRANCIS TORRES: Our staff has been trained and  
6 undergoing training sessions through every single  
7 year. We have trained our staff on evidence based to  
8 include DBT, CBT, trauma informed care, anger  
9 management and many other different curricula. The  
10 curricula that we have trained our staff speaks to  
11 their assignments to very specific populations.

12 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: I just feel like, you know  
13 I wonder how much it would save to eliminate the 52  
14 vacancies but does it make more sense to eliminate  
15 vacancies than cut funding that costs jobs with  
16 trusted partners?

17 FRANCIS TORRES: We're not disputing the trust  
18 that we have in our partners. What we are doing is  
19 meeting the demand or the request to reduce our  
20 budget by a four percent.

21 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: Again, what my point is to  
22 explore other avenues than cut \$17 million with  
23 trusted providers that are providing invaluable  
24 programming. But with that, I'm going to turn it  
25

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1  
2 over because I know my colleagues have many, many  
3 questions. So, Mike.

4 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Thank you Chair Rivera.  
5 We've been joined by Council Members Avilés,  
6 Williams, Ossè, Cabàn, Marte and Restler and now  
7 we'll start with questions from Won followed by  
8 Schulman.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER WON: Thank you so much Chair  
10 Brannan and Chair Carlina Rivera. I am extremely  
11 concerned as you heard from both Chairs on the  
12 external contract cutting. And as you see right here  
13 in my district in Long Island City, we have Fortune  
14 Society that has serviced more than 500 people in  
15 just a few months of this year. So, can you help me  
16 understand your justification, they have not serviced  
17 those people, so what are you benchmarks on how many  
18 people you expect them to serve and how you justify  
19 your decisions on moving these contracts away?

20 FRANCIS TORRES: Good afternoon ma'am. I need  
21 to provide clarity here. The determination to  
22 actually reduce or eliminate those contracts had  
23 nothing to do with performance of our partners. It  
24 had to do with a budget decision and I need to  
25 emphasize on that.

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1  
2 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: So, can you help me  
3 understand how – how many people within your  
4 organization currently because you, Commissioner  
5 Molina has repeatedly said over and over again how  
6 important it is for providers to have the same lived  
7 experience of being formerly incarcerated, and that's  
8 what fortune society provides. Those are the people  
9 that are going to lose jobs because you're cutting  
10 about \$5 million from Fortune Society, so can you  
11 help me understand within DOC who are now going to do  
12 this work in house, how many people have been  
13 formerly incarcerated that's on your staff that's  
14 going to be working on this now?

15 FRANCIS TORRES: Actually, if you want us to  
16 provide you with that response, I would ask that you  
17 give us time to actually go into our human resources  
18 records to pull that information but what I do need  
19 to share with you is that over the years and as a  
20 division, as well as a department, we have employed  
21 and we have on staff individuals with lived  
22 experiences. People that indeed have been part of  
23 either the juvenile criminal justice system or the  
24 criminal system or the criminal system itself. They  
25 are individuals that have also been impacted or have

1  
2 been through the foster care who have also been  
3 through the challenges of substance abuse and they  
4 are the ones who actually are leading in our  
5 counseling within our division. We're not disputing  
6 the wealth of knowledge and the experience that our  
7 providers bring and have afforded to us. What we are  
8 sharing is that in order for us to meet the  
9 programmatic needs that our population will continue  
10 to have, we will need to rely on our staff. Thank  
11 you.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER WON: So, could you expand on  
13 that? How do we ensure that eliminating these  
14 external programs that are relied on heavily by our  
15 communities will not lead to increased violence,  
16 which of course will threaten staff and incarcerated  
17 people alike? And how many hours of programming are  
18 you currently providing daily by DOC programming  
19 staff, so that we can compare of the hours of  
20 programming that is provided by our contractors  
21 versus how many you currently provide and how many  
22 you will be expected to provide to fill in this gap?

23 FRANCIS TORRES: We will be more than happy to  
24 send you that ma'am.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER WON: Okay, thank you.

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CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Council Member Schulman  
followed by Brewer.

COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: Thank you Chair  
Brannan and Chair Rivera. The Department of  
Corrections proposed cuts to eliminate contracts for  
discharge planning, which helps those leaving Rikers  
Island is more likely to impede public safety than  
enhancing it.

My late life partner Adelaide Connaughton worked  
at the Fortune Society, which is one of the  
organizations targeted by the proposed \$17 million  
cuts and these organizations have helped so many to  
rebuild their lives and I know this on a personal  
level because I have formerly incarcerated people  
coming up to me periodically who know, who find out  
who I am and tell me that my partner saved their  
lives.

Public safety investments like this should not  
be undermined by budget cuts. With that I have two  
questions. How many DOC nonuniformed staff have the  
time of counselor, case manager or group facilitator  
and how does that compare to the number of community  
providers who come in under the targeted approach to  
cover 179 housing units serving 1,500 people?

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1  
2 LOUIS MOLINA: So, before DC Torres answers the  
3 numbers question, I will let you know that as far as  
4 reentry and mental health services, they're not  
5 receiving program cuts. MOCJ oversees discharge  
6 planning. It is my understanding that those  
7 discharge planning contracts are still ongoing by  
8 MOCJ because it took discharge planning away from the  
9 Department of Corrections prior to this  
10 Administration.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: Nonetheless, the cuts  
12 are going to effect the services that they provide,  
13 okay. So, answer that question.

14 FRANCIS TORRES: And ma'am, I'm looking for my  
15 specific notes. When it comes to our counseling  
16 staff members, we have 69 active staff members out of  
17 84 in the title of ACC 1. We have 10 active members  
18 out of 15 in the title of associate correctional  
19 counselors number 2. We have 28 program counselors  
20 active out of 36 when fully staffed. I can also  
21 provide you with additional numbers that include  
22 intervention specialists that we use as well as  
23 social workers.

24  
25

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1  
2 Currently, we have four social workers and we're  
3 awarding seven more. We have nine intervention  
4 specialists.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: Okay, well please send  
6 us the information and the breakdown and how that  
7 compares with the targeted approach that the  
8 community providers give now.

9 My second question because I'm running out of  
10 time. Will the Department of Correction be taking  
11 the budget line, a budget line from the Risk  
12 Management Accountability system and putting that  
13 towards this initiative?

14 LOUIS MOLINA: The Risk Management  
15 Accountability System was replaced with the enhanced  
16 Super Visionary Housing because our risks are  
17 restrictive housing model had to be approved by the  
18 federal monitor. He's approved our current visionary  
19 housing, so we've transitioned the responsibility to  
20 what would have been in those positions to the  
21 Enhanced Super Visionary Housing and that's how we're  
22 able to provide; I think DC Torres correctly pointed  
23 out was eight hours of direct service to those that  
24 are in restrictive housing by our program staff.

25

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1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: Okay, thank you very  
3 much.

4 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: We have Brewer followed by  
5 Ariola.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Thank you very much. I  
7 want to second what my colleagues have stated about  
8 Fortune Society and everywhere else. It's just,  
9 nobody can do it better, so I don't want to add to  
10 the discussion but just to second and third that.  
11 The transportation, I want to thank you for working  
12 with the oversight and investigation staff because  
13 we're all trying to figure out, I think we all want  
14 to figure out how to go from custody to court and  
15 back in a timely fashion. So, I just had a few other  
16 questions about this. I wanted to know the monthly  
17 data from January 2018 to present. The number of  
18 persons in your custody produced to all court  
19 appearances if you have that number? And the number  
20 of court appearances scheduled for people in your  
21 custody and then just the success of when this is  
22 done correctly of persons in custody you know,  
23 figuring out the first two questions. Does it work?  
24 Is it successful?

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1  
2 LOUIS MOLINA: Thank you for your question. So,  
3 what I can share with you is that Fiscal Year to date  
4 our court production success rate citywide has been  
5 hovering about 90 percent.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay.

7 LOUIS MOLINA: Over the last few months, we've  
8 increased it to about 95 percent.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay.

10 LOUIS MOLINA: So, we're having greater success  
11 as maybe your team was able to observe when they went  
12 on their tour of even getting those that were  
13 historically refusing to go to court, to go to court  
14 and go through their adjudicating court process.  
15 Happy to follow up with you with specific numbers of  
16 how many people were scheduled on x-day and how many  
17 were produced.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay.

19 LOUIS MOLINA: Happy to share that with you and  
20 follow up because I don't have that type of detail  
21 off the top of my head but we are at about 95 percent  
22 right now core production success in transportation.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Alright.

24 LOUIS MOLINA: I know we're scheduling and  
25 you're going to see other facilities as well.

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1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Right, right, thank you  
3 and just in terms of food, maybe I should – you've  
4 said this in the past but what is the cost, I know  
5 it's all catered. What is the cost of per meal?  
6 What is the general and how much do you spend per  
7 year on food or some statistic that would be  
8 relevant?

9 PATRICIA LYONS: Good afternoon. The  
10 departments annual budget for nutritional services is  
11 \$22 million.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay.

13 PATRICIA LYONS: I don't have the cost per meal  
14 on me but we could certainly get that for you.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay and so, it's \$22  
16 million, that's for the entire year?

17 PATRICIA LYONS: Correct.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: And is that going up or  
19 down do you know? Obviously maybe up because of the  
20 cost of food I assume?

21 PATRICIA LYONS: Correct, so this budget's been  
22 pretty stable in terms of what's been funded each  
23 fiscal year but the costs have risen, so we  
24 creatively figure out ways within our own budget to  
25

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1  
2 absorb those costs but we may not be able to continue  
3 to do that moving forward.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: So, you might have more  
5 people, higher prices of food but you're still  
6 managing to stay within the budget.

7 PATRICIA LYONS: Correct.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Which scares me because  
9 that might mean that they have less food or I don't  
10 know if you can have worse food, I'm sorry.

11 PATRICIA LYONS: Well, I think what it will come  
12 to is new needs requests as it relates to pricing.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Alright.

14 LOUIS MOLINA: And all of our food ma'am meets  
15 the nutritional service requirement.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I know but nutrition  
17 doesn't mean it's any good. I'm just saying.

18 Alright, so I appreciate that, thank you.

19 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Okay, we have Ariola  
20 followed by Hanif.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER ARIOLA: Thank you Chairs. Thank  
22 you so much Commissioner and all the Deputy  
23 Commissioners that are here today to testify.

24 Congratulations on I heard you had a new class  
25 graduate today. How many members were in that class?

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1 LOUIS MOLINA: Approximately 85.

2  
3 COUNCIL MEMBER ARIOLA: And what are some of the  
4 things you're doing to increase recruitment and  
5 improve training?

6 LOUIS MOLINA: Sure, so one of the things that  
7 we've done to improve training is as you know, we are  
8 having our own correction academy built but until  
9 that new academy is built, we entered into  
10 partnership with the NYPD to use their state-of-the-  
11 art training facility, which was significant for our  
12 staff to be able to train in the latest  
13 infrastructure available to train them how to be  
14 correction officers and we had that graduation today.

15 In addition to that, we are looking forward to  
16 having another class in mid-July and what we have  
17 done is we've eliminated the minimum college  
18 requirements to be hired as a correction officer.  
19 It's a vocational job, so whether you have a PHD or  
20 high school diploma, you still have to go through an  
21 intensive academy to be certified as a correction  
22 officer and we have hundreds of individuals that for  
23 maybe economic reasons going to attend college but  
24 are looking forward to joining our ranks and we're  
25 looking forward to that.

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1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER ARIOLA: Thank you. As a  
3 Commissioner, what have you done to combat drugs and  
4 contraband entering the facilities?

5 LOUIS MOLINA: So, I've done a number of things.  
6 We have trained our K9 dogs to be imprinted. To be  
7 able to detect Fentanyl. In prior occasions you can  
8 detect fentanyl only if it was mixed with another  
9 drug like cocaine or marijuana or tobacco possibly.  
10 But fentanyl also come in in letters, in books and  
11 articles of clothing. So, we have eight K9 dogs with  
12 our partners with the feds that were trained to  
13 imprint on fentanyl. So, we've had an increase of 26  
14 percent last year and in addition of drugs of coming  
15 in through the mail and significant increases fiscal  
16 year to date. In addition to that, we've instituted  
17 body scanning at one facility. We're expanding on  
18 that as well as randomized vehicle checkpoints for  
19 drugs that are maybe coming into the facility and  
20 we've mitigated a lot against these drugs coming in  
21 and I'm happy to report that this year alone, we have  
22 had no overdose deaths and that's huge for our  
23 Department.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER ARIOLA: That is, thank you. You  
25 also mentioned that your population is increasing and

1 could reach \$7,000 by the end of next year. They  
2 also seem to a more challenging to manage kind of  
3 population given the article yesterday about an  
4 officer being stabbed in the face with a pen. What  
5 does that population look like and how do you intend  
6 to manage them?  
7

8 LOUIS MOLINA: Yeah, so our population has a  
9 higher concentration of persons that have a high  
10 propensity to commit violence. One of the things  
11 that we've done, many things that we've done, is one,  
12 we've increased tactical search operations and we're  
13 more effective in our facility operation searches to  
14 remove contraband weapons from the facility. Over  
15 the last 16 months, we've removed over 5,000  
16 contraband weapons and over 1,300 contraband  
17 narcotics or narcotics paraphernalia. In addition to  
18 that, we have a more effective restrictive housing.  
19 So, if someone commits an act of violence against  
20 another incarcerated person or a staff member, we can  
21 put them in restrictive housing and we have been  
22 working with the Bronx DA's office to rearrest those  
23 that commit violent crimes while incarcerated and  
24 we've increased the rearrest of those committing  
25 violence in 2022 by over 80 percent.

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COUNCIL MEMBER ARIOLA: Thank you Commissioner.

LOUIS MOLINA: You're welcome.

CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: We have Hanif followed by  
Farias.

COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: Thank you Chairs and  
thank you Commissioner for being here. I was deeply  
concerned to hear that the Admin is considering using  
OBCC as housing for asylum seekers. As Chair of the  
Immigration Committee I want to explicitly state that  
I'm firmly opposed to using any facility on Rikers  
Island for this purpose. We want to work creatively  
to meet the needs of asylum seekers but jail  
facilities as housing must be off the table. Can you  
speak to the status of this proposal and as  
Commissioner, do you believe that OBCC is suitable  
for housing asylum seekers?

LOUIS MOLINA: Thank you for your question. So,  
what the Administration has asked and it's an all  
hands on deck crisis as we have I believe over 65,000  
asylum seekers in our city and no telling when the  
number of asylum seekers may come to lessening. With  
that being said, I think the responsible thing to do  
as an Administration to govern this city was to just  
assess all of the city's assets that could possibly

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1  
2 be used in an emergency basis for emergency  
3 sheltering of those that are seeking asylum and  
4 choosing to come to New York City while they go  
5 through their asylum process. No decision has been  
6 made to house any asylum seekers on Rikers Island or  
7 in any of our jail facilities but every facility is -  
8 every city asset is being assessed and if you have  
9 other recommendations of where a person should be  
10 housed, the Mayor's Office would be happy to hear  
11 from you.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: We as a Council are doing  
13 our part in sharing those recommendations but just to  
14 clarify in your response, you agree that OBCC could,  
15 should be used to house asylum seekers if need be?

16 LOUIS MOLINA: What I'm telling you is that our  
17 facilities went through an assessment like every  
18 other department in this city as to how we would  
19 operationalize that if the decision had to be made  
20 due to the emergency crisis that the city is in  
21 seeking shelter for these asylum seekers.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: And then moving on, the  
23 monitor suggested in their April 3<sup>rd</sup>, report that  
24 "reducing overall jail population is necessary to  
25 support the overall reform efforts and in particular

1 because it would reduce the number of people exposed  
2 to the dangerous conditions in the facilities. Given  
3 the imminent risk of harm to those incarcerated in  
4 New York City's jails, all stakeholders must continue  
5 to maximize every possible avenue to reduce the  
6 population by reducing the number of people sent to  
7 jail expeditiously processing court cases or  
8 rereleased to the community."

9  
10 But a portion of the jail population over which  
11 you have the most control, the number of people  
12 serving city sentences is up more than 200 percent  
13 since you became Commissioner. What is your process  
14 for reviewing and selecting people for possible early  
15 release under 6A?

16 LOUIS MOLINA: Yeah, so I committed a long time  
17 to this Council when I first became Commissioner to  
18 use 6A a lot more than used and I will tell you that  
19 as Commissioner, I have released more individuals  
20 under the 6A program than any Commissioner in history  
21 with the exception of maybe the COVID releases, which  
22 were done because of the global pandemic that was  
23 taking place at that time. We evaluate individuals  
24 on a regular basis that are eligible to released

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1  
2 early and we've done that. I believe we've released  
3 somewhere about mid-60, 62.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: 62 this year?

5 LOUIS MOLINA: No, 62 since I've been  
6 Commissioner.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: Since Commissioner.

8 LOUIS MOLINA: And we've had a 90 percent  
9 success rate I'm happy to say, with those individuals  
10 that we have released early.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: Could you share the  
12 number of release this year?

13 LOUIS MOLINA: Stand by, do we have that? Oh, I  
14 can get it back to you, how many we released.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER HANIF: That breakdown would be  
16 important and seeing a comparison to the previous  
17 years, especially the previous Commissioners and to  
18 really understand your ten year as well. And  
19 definitely want to push for your Administration to  
20 expand this process given the increases because we  
21 have an obligation as a city to reduce the jail  
22 population in order to close Rikers by 2027 and this  
23 is a very important tool in your discretion, in your  
24 control to get us to this goal safely.

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1  
2 LOUIS MOLINA: Yeah, I just want to point out  
3 that we only have approximate you know our average  
4 sentence population has been about 400. So, it's not  
5 you know the majority of the population that really  
6 needs to move through its adjudication process is the  
7 pretrial detainee process. So, we're working with  
8 the Office of Court Administration. Like I shared  
9 earlier, we have increased significantly our ability  
10 to produce individuals to court so that they can go  
11 through their adjudication process. It is the  
12 pretrial detainee population that needs to move  
13 forward.

14 LOUIS MOLINA: Now we have Farias followed by  
15 Narcisse.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: Thank you Chairs. Hello  
17 Commissioner, team DOC. A lot of my questions were  
18 already asked by most of my colleagues around the  
19 elimination of outside contracts but I just wanted  
20 some clarification on some of the things that were  
21 already stated. Are your estimates on providing  
22 services based off of the current staffing that you  
23 have or the projects to be fully staffed?

24 LOUIS MOLINA: I think both right?  
25

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1  
2 FRANCIS TORRES: So, I'm very glad that you  
3 asked the question. If I may address you as well as  
4 Council Member Schulman because I was able to find  
5 the numbers while other questions were being posed.  
6 When we take a look at three very specific civil  
7 service titles that we have, presently between ACC  
8 2's, which are associate correctional counselors,  
9 levels 1 and 2 as well as our program counselors, we  
10 have 69 members active out of 84, which we can  
11 compare to the 64 members active out of 89 of the  
12 providers. This is just three very specific civil  
13 service titles under our counseling services area.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: Okay, so just so I can  
15 hear correctly because I'm not a mathematician and  
16 throwing numbers at me is sometimes I want to make  
17 sure I have it right. So, you're saying right now  
18 out of 84 potential positions that we have, we have  
19 69 filled and active.

20 FRANCIS TORRES: That's correct.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: And that is a direct  
22 comparison to what the providers, our outside  
23 contract providers had of 64 people out of the 89  
24 they could have had?

25 FRANCIS TORRES: That's correct.

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1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: So, for me, what that  
3 sounds like is technically 69 plus 64, we had 130  
4 people potentially working within these contracts to  
5 help folks on Rikers or within Department of  
6 Corrections, within our facilities. Are we planning  
7 to bump up because these were working you know  
8 simultaneously with one another right? 69 that we  
9 have in our agency and then 64 on our outside  
10 contracts. Now, we're eliminating 64 titles because  
11 that was one of my questions and we only have the  
12 capability to get up to 84. Is there a goal to bump  
13 that number up to 100, 120 folks to be working within  
14 corrections to answer for the contracts that we're  
15 losing?

16 FRANCIS TORRES: So, we are currently  
17 onboarding. Remember how I mentioned that we still  
18 have 52 vacancies?

19 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: Yeah.

20 FRANCIS TORRES: And we're still hiring.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: Are those vacancies  
22 going to be disseminated between the different  
23 programs and the different titles that need to be  
24 filled to meet -

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1  
2 FRANCIS TORRES: Exactly, that will be part of  
3 the additional staff that will go under the  
4 counseling unit.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: Okay, is there a way  
6 that you folks can break down what titled positions  
7 were within those contracts that we are now  
8 eliminating where we are with those positions and how  
9 we plan to offset with just the 52 that were  
10 [05:48:05] because I feel like the number is going to  
11 be larger than 52.

12 FRANCIS TORRES: So, I'm sorry to interject. I  
13 know that we've been told that we're pressed for  
14 time. We do have that information. We'll be more  
15 than happy to send it to you rather than I taking the  
16 time to go provider by provider, line by line and we  
17 do have that information.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: I'm happy to look at it  
19 after the hearing. And the only - oh, and my only  
20 other question was why wasn't there an approach to  
21 maybe take a transitional contract like elimination  
22 of contract period over time being that we're still  
23 trying to fill vacancies versus just an outright  
24 couple weeks away elimination of outside contracts  
25 where we still might need to fill the gap?

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1  
2 PATRICIA LYONS: Good afternoon. Thank you. I  
3 can answer that for you. So, the provider contracts  
4 spans three years, fiscal year terms. So, from July  
5 1 to March 31<sup>st</sup> would have been the last term of  
6 their contract. It was mid-year, so that's why we  
7 chose the July, of the June 30<sup>th</sup> termination date  
8 because then we'd be entering the new fiscal year and  
9 essentially like the last term of each contract.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER FARIAS: Okay, thank you. Thank  
11 you Chairs.

12 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: We have Narcisse followed  
13 by Abreu.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Thank you Chairs and  
15 thank you Commissioner and all staff that's here. A  
16 missed medical appointment for those housed at  
17 Rikers. In May 2022 last year, a state judge ruled  
18 out that New York City's Correctional Department  
19 failed the detainees the timely medical care. On  
20 that note, as we requested in the preliminary hearing  
21 in February, people in custody completed 9,774 phone  
22 calls to a Correctional Health Services hotline. In  
23 the same month, individuals in custody refuse to  
24 attend medical appointments 8,952 times. If there is  
25 an update you can provide with regards to the number

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1  
2 of individuals in your custody that have missed their  
3 medical appointment and why?

4       LOUIS MOLINA: Yes, so as I've shared before  
5 with the Council, we have done significant  
6 improvement in a person possibly missing a medical,  
7 scheduled medical appointment because we didn't have  
8 a staff member available to escort them. We've done  
9 a number of things. In certain facilities we allow  
10 an incarcerated individual to go on their own  
11 unescorted to a clinic appointment, to make sure that  
12 they can go to their appointment. We've allowed  
13 staff to be available. We have a significant  
14 increased staff available to escort individuals to  
15 appointments. We have over 50,000 scheduled  
16 appointments a month and I want to say we can confirm  
17 these with you later but I think those that are  
18 missing appointments specifically because they could  
19 not be escorted at that time is around one percent or  
20 less than one percent.

21       The majority of missed appointments, the  
22 majority of data is refusal from the patient for  
23 whatever reason not wanting to go and we can give you  
24 that breakdown.

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1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Okay, how many staff  
3 have received suicide prevention refresher training  
4 this fiscal year?

5 LOUIS MOLINA: So, we conduct suicide refresher  
6 training every year.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: While you're checking  
8 on this, I have another question for you. For  
9 Correction Health Services, there are about 1,150  
10 people with serious mental health in the jails, only  
11 about half in some type of specialized mental health  
12 unit, okay. CHS believes it is necessary to open  
13 more pace units for people with serious mental  
14 illness. However, to date DOC has not been unable to  
15 allocate the needed staff. Do you plan to increase  
16 the number of based units in 2024 and when and how  
17 many ones do you plan to bring online?

18 LOUIS MOLINA: Got it, so just to provide some  
19 clarity, one is 80 percent of our staff has gone  
20 through suicide prevention training. It's an ongoing  
21 thing that happens every year. We have four  
22 different types of mental health housing within  
23 Rikers Island and 794 persons are housed in those  
24 units to provide those services. So, we're  
25 constantly evaluating housing units to see if we can

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1  
2 open up additional housing to support those suffering  
3 from mental illness and we have done that for  
4 addiction. So, at the request of Correctional Health  
5 Services, we did open up what's called gate housing,  
6 which is groups for addictions and treatments  
7 enhancement and we have placed patients there as well  
8 as we're supporting a step program, which is a  
9 support for a transitional engagement program at the  
10 request of CHS.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Thank you Chairs.

12 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Okay, we have Ossè  
13 followed by Cabàn.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER OSSÈ: Thank you Chairs and good  
15 afternoon Commissioner. I just wanted to follow up  
16 on an answer that you provided in regards to taking a  
17 stand against some of the opioid problem that we've  
18 seen at Rikers. You said that you have K9 units that  
19 are sniffing mail for drugs. What else are they  
20 sniffing?

21 LOUIS MOLINA: Well, if people mail packages,  
22 they also check, inspect packages to make sure that  
23 there's not contraband narcotics in packages. We  
24 also have dogs that have the ability to pick up the  
25

1 scent of electronics in case there could be  
2 contraband electronics in the facilities as well.

3  
4 COUNCIL MEMBER OSSÈ: And are these dogs  
5 inspecting some of your officers, some of your  
6 correction officers?

7 LOUIS MOLINA: So, we do have access control  
8 points in all of our facilities. Our K9 units are  
9 deployed inside our facilities. We do conduct random  
10 vehicle checkpoints and they do check vehicles and  
11 there could be a possibility that a dog because a  
12 person is there, whether a staff member or a visitor  
13 that happens to be in the vicinity of an area could  
14 alert on a person and if that happens we would take  
15 action.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER OSSÈ: And what does that action  
17 look like?

18 LOUIS MOLINA: Well, depending if we were to  
19 discover something of a contraband nature, depending  
20 on the individual that may mean arrest. That may  
21 mean, if it's an employee, it could be arrest or it  
22 could be suspension. It could be a number of things  
23 like that.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER OSSÈ: Okay, and how many  
25 instances of that has happened under your leadership?

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1 LOUIS MOLINA: Like what?

2 COUNCIL MEMBER OSSÈ: In terms of contraband  
3 being found on correction officers, especially when  
4 it comes to opioid.  
5

6 LOUIS MOLINA: So, we have open investigations,  
7 so I can't talk about open investigations that we may  
8 have against staff but on occasion when staff members  
9 are discovered with contraband, of course either we  
10 or we work with our partners in DOI and a person is  
11 placed under arrest when that happens and prosecuted.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER OSSÈ: I also want to highlight  
13 that the Council recently introduced Intro. 1035  
14 sponsored by my colleague Council Member Hanif, which  
15 would bring Narcan to Rikers and train CO's to  
16 dispense the medication. Narcan as we all know is  
17 the difference between life or death when there is an  
18 overdose. Is there any Narcan currently on Rikers  
19 and what is the current protocol on handling an  
20 overdose?

21 LOUIS MOLINA: Thank you for your question. So,  
22 we've actually expanded the placement of Narcan  
23 within our facility. So, it used to be that Narcan  
24 was only in our A stations, which are also known as  
25 bubbles and they're available for staff members or

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1 anyone that wants to use it if they think that  
2 someone may be suffering from an overdose. We have  
3 trained over 4,800 correction officers on the use and  
4 deployment of Narcan. We've done that. We are  
5 buying, currently going through the process of  
6 procuring equipment and additional Narcan so that  
7 officers can actually carry Narcan on their person.  
8 And we've also placed Narcan in our court pens as  
9 well as within our transportation units as well.

10  
11 COUNCIL MEMBER OSSÈ: Alright, thank you  
12 Commissioner and thank you Chairs.

13 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Now we have Cabàn on Zoom  
14 followed by Restler.

15 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÀN: Thank you. One moment,  
17 just trying to get my technology working here. Okay,  
18 can you all hear me okay?

19 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Yes, we can.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÀN: Okay, great thank you.  
21 So, I want to kind of go back to a lot of questioning  
22 that many members touched this far to the cancelation  
23 of the contract with outside providers and dig a bit  
24 deeper there.

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To begin I want to ask specifically if any of  
the programming staff is out long-term sick,  
medically restricted or otherwise unavailable to work  
directly with incarcerated people at the moment?

FRANCIS TORRES: Thank you for the question.  
When I gave the numbers that I provided the other  
Council Members, as I referred to that 69 members who  
are active out of 84. It basically is responding to  
who is active right now out of the total numbers that  
we have currently employed on those titles.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABÀN: Okay, so moving away from  
long-term sick, medically restricted, what's the  
average number of program staff who call out sick  
each day?

FRANCIS TORRES: That is a response that I can  
get back to you with.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABÀN: Okay, I look forward to  
that. And you know I think this was asked before but  
I don't actually think it was answered in much detail  
at all, so I'm going to ask it again. Will there be  
an interruption in programming in any of the jails  
between July 1<sup>st</sup> and whatever sufficient DOC staff  
can be trained and deployed to provide the services.  
And to be clear, I don't think that these contracts

1 should have been canceled but under the plan that you  
2 all are moving forward with or proposing uhm, what  
3 are we looking at in terms of an interruption in  
4 programming?  
5

6 FRANCIS TORRES: What we are doing internally is  
7 making sure that we are finished with the  
8 communication with labor relations in order for us to  
9 modify the task and standards of our counseling  
10 staff. In order for us to be able to avoid any gaps  
11 or lacks in services.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÀN: But you do anticipate  
13 some sort of a gap or lack in services for a period  
14 of time, correct?

15 FRANCIS TORRES: At this moment, we are not  
16 anticipating it.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÀN: So, you're saying that  
18 there will be less staff, internal staff than was  
19 provided by these outside providers. That you are  
20 going to have to staff up or hire to be able to  
21 fulfill the obligations under programming but there's  
22 not going to be any interruption in programming or  
23 any gap?

24 FRANCIS TORRES: What we are saying is that  
25 we're developing a transitional plan to ensure that

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1  
2 the comparable staff members that we have, meaning  
3 the 69 counselors comparing them to the 64 of the  
4 providers are actually in place to assume the new  
5 responsibilities.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÀN: And can you share that  
7 transitional plan with us, the logistics of it, the  
8 timeline, the ramp up?

9 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

10 FRANCIS TORRES: We'll be more than happy to  
11 share it with you and the rest of the City Council  
12 once we finalized it.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÀN: Okay and Chairs, may I  
14 ask one more question?

15 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Yes.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÀN: I just want some basic  
17 numbers from the folks who have been served by these  
18 outside providers, those contracts in this past  
19 Fiscal Year, so can you tell us under those contracts  
20 with all those groups, how many people with serious  
21 mental illness have been served? How many young  
22 adults have been served by those contracts and how  
23 many women have been served by those contracts?

24

25

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1  
2 FRANCIS TORRES: We will be more than happy. We  
3 have the information with us but we'll be more than  
4 happy to turn around and send them to the Council.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER CABÀN: Thank you.

6 FRANCIS TORRES: You're welcome.

7 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Okay, now we have Restler  
8 followed by Aviles.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Thank you so much.  
10 Always good to see you Commissioner Molina. I know I  
11 give you a hard time but -

12 LOUIS MOLINA: Because you care, so I  
13 understand.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: I care and you know  
15 we've worked together for a long time and I  
16 appreciate you. But I'm - somebody got ahead of me  
17 on the but, Gale did. Thank you Gale. But I am  
18 deeply concerned about the \$17 million cut. You know  
19 I think there's one thing that everybody in this room  
20 agrees on that New York City has the best reentry  
21 providers in the country and reentry has to begin at  
22 day one and the work that Fortune and Osborne and  
23 others have been doing in our jails to help prepare  
24 people for post Rikers is absolutely pivotal to the  
25 safety of our communities. I think unfortunately too

1 many people leave Rikers in worse shape than when  
2 they entered. That's going to get dramatically worse  
3 if this cut that you all have proposed is executed.  
4 And it's hard for me to understand and I appreciate  
5 Council Members Cabàn and Schulman and Farias and  
6 others, certainly Chairs Rivera and Brannan for their  
7 leadership have asked on these questions but it's  
8 tough for me to follow. Just 45 days before the  
9 start of a new fiscal year we're talking about  
10 nonprofits that have allocated 120 staff positions  
11 that are engaging 1500 detainees per week getting  
12 immediately eliminated with no real plan to replace  
13 them. Just yes or no, does DOC expect that 100 plus  
14 officers are going to be working to do this work, to  
15 step up beyond the 100 plus full-time dedicated  
16 personnel are going to be working to engage people  
17 starting July 1?

19 LOUIS MOLINA: So, correction officers provide  
20 ancillary support to our program services but as DC  
21 Torres has pointed out, I believe the number is 69  
22 correctional, nonuniformed professionals in those  
23 positions will be able to provide that service and I  
24 agree with you, re-entry is critical and the re-entry  
25

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1 discharge planning contracts that lay within MOCJ are  
2 not going to be interrupted.  
3

4 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: \$17 million is about 60  
5 DOC staff just as you said. It's really hard for me  
6 to wrap my head around this though considering DOC  
7 has over 1,000 chronically absent officers. Over  
8 1,000, that's the equivalent of \$276 million a year  
9 that we are wasting away on officers that aren't  
10 showing up to do their job and yet we're cutting \$17  
11 million from the absolutely essential work that  
12 community-based organizations are doing to support  
13 reentry work. Why would we not cut the funding and  
14 eliminate the staff lines from our chronically absent  
15 workforce?

16 LOUIS MOLINA: So I have taken significant steps  
17 with the support of the interagency taskforce that  
18 the Mayor created and working with our trials  
19 division as well as our investigations division and  
20 as you all know, I have and I just reminded the  
21 Council have adjudicated over 3,000 disciplinary  
22 cases where unfortunately in almost 300 of those  
23 cases, we've had to forcibly separate staff. We've  
24 decreased staff absenteeism by 70 percent. Like I  
25 said earlier, only 62 people called out sick

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1 yesterday when that number used be almost 1,500  
2 people in January of 2022. We've made significant  
3 improvement and while we do have staff members that  
4 may have a chronic designation, you get that  
5 designation after calling out sick 12 days in a 12-  
6 month period, which allows us to monitor your  
7 progress to ensure that you are a productive member  
8 of the department.  
9

10 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Commissioner Molina, I  
11 would recognize that there are some areas of  
12 improvement. I'm not sure that I would except each  
13 of the numbers that you just cited but I would  
14 recognize some areas of improvement and that you are  
15 trying to get staff to show up and do their jobs.

16 What I'm struggling with though is that rather  
17 than cutting from a bloated workforce, where we have  
18 the highest ratio of corrections officers to  
19 detainees of any correctional system in the country,  
20 more officers than detainees, whereas around the  
21 country you see a four to one ratio. Here, we see a  
22 ratio of more, four and a half officers to 40  
23 detainees. So, we're struggling. We are paying  
24 enormous sums of money to people who are not showing  
25 up and doing their jobs. We are overstaffed in our

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1  
2 correctional system, rather than cutting a modest  
3 number of positions there, we're cutting from the  
4 providers that are doing the most transformative work  
5 in our jail system.

6 LOUIS MOLINA: But ill just correct and say  
7 this, there have been significant cuts to what was a  
8 significant sizable workforce. Over the last three  
9 years, we lost over 3,000 correction officers to  
10 attrition and a majority of those lines were  
11 eliminated. In addition to that -

12 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: What is the number?  
13 How many DOC employees do you have today?

14 LOUIS MOLINA: In all uniformed ranks 6,409.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: How many DOC detainees  
16 do you have today?

17 LOUIS MOLINA: 6,040.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: So, we have over a one-  
19 to-one ratio of officers to detainees.

20 LOUIS MOLINA: No, we have less than a one-to-  
21 one ratio -

22 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: You have a one-to-one  
23 ratio of officers to detainees and unlike any other  
24 correctional system in the country.

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1  
2 LOUIS MOLINA: And I'll tell you why that exists  
3 because the majority of every other correctional  
4 system in this country practice warehousing and we do  
5 not practice that here. Detainees are out of their  
6 cells on an average of 14 hours a day.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: But it's really hard  
8 for me to listen to you say you're not practicing  
9 warehousing when we're removing the transformative  
10 work the community-based organizations are doing in  
11 the jails providing therapeutic care, reentry  
12 services and mental health supports that are  
13 essential to the future of our detainees.

14 LOUIS MOLINA: That whole support is not being  
15 cut.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Supports that Fortune  
17 provides, that Osborne provides, these therapeutic  
18 care that they provide to support the detainees is  
19 transformative and it gives them a chance of success  
20 post stay at Rikers. Instead, we have the highest  
21 ratio of officers to detainees in the country. I  
22 think we're cutting from the wrong places. I hope  
23 that these changes can - I will certainly do  
24 everything in my power to push on the Councils side  
25 for these changes to be reversed. I hope that you

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1  
2 all can see there is very strong support for these  
3 organizations and the work they do in our jails and I  
4 hope that you will reverse course as well because I  
5 believe the decision you've made is wrong. Thank  
6 you.

7 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Council Member Avilés  
8 followed by Stevens.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÈS: Thank you Chairs. I  
10 guess following along the lines of my colleague. I'd  
11 like to understand better that even with 6,000  
12 correctional officer employees, how do you explain  
13 the departments inability to provide the minimum  
14 standard of care for people in your custody?

15 LOUIS MOLINA: We provide the minimum standards  
16 of care that are due to the person in custody and we  
17 have 5,706 correctional officers.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÈS: So, can you explain why  
19 the Mayor is still issuing executive orders to  
20 suspend minimum standards?

21 LOUIS MOLINA: The Mayor has issued that  
22 emergency executive order to ensure that as we go  
23 through the action plan, I'm just going to remind  
24 this Council, this department was in the brink of  
25 collapse in January of 2022. Violence was rampant.

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297

1  
2 There was no control in the Department. We had a  
3 significant staffing crisis and to ensure that  
4 there's no interruption and all of the strategies  
5 that this Administration has put in place to ensure  
6 that we keep evolving and reforming, so that these  
7 reforms can be sustainable, that is the purpose of  
8 that executive order, to deal with that issue.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÈS: We are definitely well  
10 aware of the problems of this agency including the  
11 highest record of deaths under your custody. Can you  
12 tell me why video calls have been limited to Friday  
13 now?

14 LOUIS MOLINA: Well, tele visits are on Friday  
15 because what we have done is expanded in person  
16 visitation. For a long time, we did not have in  
17 person visitation. We reactivated that and we  
18 recently expanded in connection with Mother's Day  
19 holiday so that loved ones and family members can  
20 visit their loved ones on the weekends in case that  
21 they don't have to take off from work to do  
22 visitation. Just last week, I think we had about  
23 1,200 persons do visitation and a few hundred that  
24 visited just on Mother's Day alone.

25

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1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÈS: So, Commissioner Molina,  
3 I wasn't sure if I heard correctly around the  
4 rational behind making the choice of not cutting  
5 vacant positions versus cutting these essential  
6 services that these providers offer.

7 LOUIS MOLINA: We did both.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÈS: I'm sorry, you did - you  
9 fully cut \$17 million in contracts of the providers?

10 LOUIS MOLINA: We did both. We also cut vacant  
11 positions.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÈS: An incredible number of  
13 vacant positions. Why not reduce the vacant  
14 positions when you already have a decent one to one  
15 ratio and you provide the services?

16 LOUIS MOLINA: We reduced the number of vacant  
17 positions that would not effect our operations. And  
18 though we may have about a one-to-one ratio as the  
19 population stands right now, because of that, it is  
20 at a low number of 6,040, that population is  
21 increasing. And like I said earlier, most  
22 jurisdictions, jails and prisons, practice  
23 warehousing where individuals are locked in their  
24 cells for the majority of their day. And in this  
25

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1 state, we allow for 12-14 hours of persons to be out  
2 of cell, which requires staff to do that.  
3

4 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÈS: Commissioner are you  
5 aware of any other correctional agency where how  
6 many, where are we 19, 21 people have died in  
7 custody?

8 LOUIS MOLINA: Yeah, there are actually other  
9 jurisdictions that had many more deaths than that.  
10 Compared to similar jails of our population and size,  
11 we have achieved a significant reduction in custody  
12 deaths per 1,000 per custody.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÈS: Sir, one death is too  
14 much.

15 LOUIS MOLINA: In fact, yeah, I agree with you  
16 one death is too much. But many people come with  
17 preexisting health conditions that effect their  
18 health and we have not had one overdose death, thank  
19 God this calendar year. And the death that we had at  
20 the beginning of the year was due to natural causes.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÈS: I stand with my  
22 colleague in making the statement that we absolutely  
23 reject the \$17 million in contracts of these  
24 providers. Not only in the impact of detainees but  
25 probably on staff and in the outside communities.

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120 positions, it's a completely disturbing decision  
when you have vacant positions, you could have cut.

CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Council Member Stevens  
followed by Paladino.

COUNCIL MEMBER STEVENS: Good afternoon. I  
don't necessarily have a question. I just feel like  
I do because I feel a little confused about some  
things. I just want to get some clarity. One, I  
just want to say, the Commissioner, you talked about  
even in your opening how you know slashings are down  
and you know have been working to really change the  
culture in there. And part of that change in the  
culture, didn't the CBOs who were doing the work with  
you guys help change that culture?

So, aren't you afraid that removing them will  
set you back because they're part of the culture  
there? And so, I need help understanding what this  
plan is and I'm a little uncomfortable that we're  
cutting programs now and you're saying you're working  
on a transition plan that's supposed to take place  
July 1 and we hear it's May.

So, I'm really uncomfortable around that. Like  
a transition plan when you made the decision, you  
should have already had a transition plan or had one

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1  
2 or two. So, I don't think a transition can happen  
3 but I'm just confused about how we're going to ensure  
4 that we are having a consistent program.

5 And then also too, you said you have 69  
6 counselors, is that correct?

7 FRANCIS TORRES: Yes ma'am.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER STEVENS: And so, we have 6,000  
9 folks in custody, what is their caseload going to  
10 look like? What is this really going to look like in  
11 actualizing? Because I feel really confused about  
12 what this plan looks like and I need a little bit  
13 more detail around like your transition plan. I know  
14 you're working on it but if you're working on it, you  
15 should at least have something to present to us today  
16 to give us some clarity around the steps that you're  
17 taking. Because I don't feel like I have any at this  
18 point.

19 LOUIS MOLINA: Okay, we're happy to share it  
20 with you when it's completed.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER STEVENS: I would love to hear if  
22 you have anything or some of the steps that you're  
23 already taking. I know you're working on it and  
24 obviously a transition plan will be continuous but I  
25 think that it's a little disrespectful that you guys

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1  
2 will come here and not have more clarity around that  
3 transition plan.

4       LOUIS MOLINA: So, Deputy Commissioner Torres  
5 did share some of that clarity. We are updating  
6 individuals and working with the labor unions to  
7 update tasks and standards. We have reposted for  
8 positions within the programs unit to make sure that  
9 we fill the additional 52 vacancies that are there.  
10 We have an interagency taskforce that was created by  
11 the Mayor to make sure that all of our hires are  
12 accelerated through not only the hiring process on  
13 our end but through the OMB process and support of  
14 DCAS if we need that as well.

15       COUNCIL MEMBER STEVENS: But even when you are  
16 working on and hiring, are you working with some of  
17 the community-based organizations there to see if  
18 some of their staff can transition over to the roles  
19 that you guys have opened.

20       LOUIS MOLINA: A number of our programmatic  
21 staff have come from community-based organizations.

22       COUNCIL MEMBER STEVENS: No, but I'm saying  
23 currently if we know that these organizations aren't  
24 going to be there, are the staff that's already  
25 working there to try to keep some consistency. Have

1  
2 you guys intentionally been working with them to  
3 bring them in?

4 LOIUS MOLINA: I would welcome that if  
5 community-based organizations want to refer staff  
6 applicants to us. We will certainly vet them and see  
7 if they are suitable for hire.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER STEVENS: Yeah, I think that that  
9 should have been the start right and I think that  
10 should have been part of the transition plan because  
11 even now when I'm looking at some transition plans in  
12 my profits that's closing down, that's part of it.  
13 They're working with those CBO's to ensure the  
14 consistency of jobs. So, that's why I'm a little bit  
15 uncomfortable right. Like, those things should be  
16 part of that plan because the other thing is right,  
17 we know consistency is partly needed for our folks in  
18 custody.

19 And so, this change is also going to be abrupt  
20 and so, just thinking like this is going to set back  
21 a lot of the work that you lay the foundation for  
22 because it's so much change in so short of a time.  
23 But just really quickly, I think one of my colleagues  
24 already asked a little bit. But what was the  
25 rational, why didn't we think about like phasing out

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1 the program in increments instead of having something  
2 so abrupt? Because I think that's the other thing  
3 that is kind of disturbing of thinking about how do  
4 we not look at like maybe reducing the size this year  
5 and then doing something and phasing it out and  
6 looking at other places that we could save money  
7 because there's always money to be saved because we  
8 all know, we all work on these budgets. So, why  
9 didn't we think about that and using that as the  
10 first step instead of like saying, alright we have  
11 figured this out on in house. Because I just,  
12 honestly you know we don't have confidence in some of  
13 this stuff right, especially on the program side.

14 I worked a nonprofit for 20 years and I always  
15 feel disrespected that people just think that they  
16 can just do this job because it's just that easy.  
17 And so, that's what it sounds like and I know that's  
18 probably not your intention but that's what it sounds  
19 like. It's like well now we'll just do it in house  
20 because if you could do it in house, you wouldn't  
21 have had them there in the first place.

22 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Paladino followed by  
23 Williams.  
24

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CRIMINAL JUSTICE 305

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER PALADINO: Good afternoon  
3 Commissioners and thank you very much for joining us  
4 this afternoon. You mentioned that Rikers was one of  
5 the most violent facilities before you became  
6 Commissioner and now it seems to be one of the least  
7 problematic facilities. What was the process in  
8 making this a reality?

9 LOUIS MOLINA: Yeah, so thank you for your  
10 question. I think it was a number of initiatives  
11 that we undertook. One is, we went back to basics on  
12 making sure that we're doing the rudimentary  
13 responsibilities of safety and security by doing  
14 tactical operations and search operations, mitigating  
15 against drugs and weapon contraband from coming into  
16 the facilities. We align with the faith-based  
17 community who in the hundreds, many volunteer on a  
18 regular basis daily to engage with the population.  
19 Some of those in that faith community have lived  
20 experiences.

21 You know we have a program staff that's led by  
22 DC Torres and her team of associate and assistance  
23 commissioners that are highly credentialed and very  
24 effective in doing this work and I think all of that  
25 in totality is what has helped us reduce slashings

1 and stabbings fiscal year to date by 20 percent and  
2 almost 35 percent calendar year to date. And  
3 including to the lowering of use of force incidences  
4 in 2022 versus 2021 by 14 percent.  
5

6 COUNCIL MEMBER PALADINO: Well, I think those  
7 are pretty damn good statistics. Once again, you  
8 know I'm listening to you get questioned and  
9 interrogated. I want to come out on the side of you  
10 guys now. Are you still working triple shifts?  
11 Double and triple shifts?

12 LOUIS MOLINA: No, we've significantly  
13 eliminated triple shifts. We may have a few that  
14 happen from time to time but that has virtually been  
15 eliminated. Like I said, we've reduced staff  
16 absenteeism by 70 percent. We put an organizational  
17 health strategy in place to support staff and just a  
18 reminder again, 62 people called out sick yesterday.  
19 That number in January of 2022 used to be almost  
20 1,500. That is remarkable.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER PALADINO: Right, it certainly is  
22 and I want to commend you on that. Also, I want to  
23 know about the staff. So, are they able to take meal  
24 breaks and any other kind of breaks during the course  
25 of the day?

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1  
2 LOUIS MOLINA: Sure, so meal breaks are included  
3 in the scheduling of staff. On occasion of course  
4 there might be incidences and situations that come up  
5 where a staff member might be late or may miss a meal  
6 but we try to do everything we can to mitigate  
7 against that happening.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER PALADINO: Good and another  
9 thing, what is being done, last year when I sat here,  
10 you know everybody forgets that Rikers Island houses  
11 probably the most dangerous criminals there are in  
12 the City of New York. You're down to 6,000. Oh,  
13 you're up a little bit from last year but we got to  
14 keep in mind what's in Rikers right now. And the  
15 actual tone of this room kind of upsets me a little  
16 bit because everybody thinks that there's a simple  
17 solution for this when there is not.

18 One other thing about the sexual, if I'm  
19 allowed, how are we monitoring the sexual assaults  
20 that have been done in the past?

21 LOUIS MOLINA: Sure, so working with the Bronx  
22 District Attorney's Office, when we do have a person  
23 that is sexually assaulted and we had a number of  
24 correction officer, female officers that had been  
25 sexually assaulted. What we've been doing is

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1 immediately working with the Bronx DA to rearrest  
2 those individuals. So, we've made 18 arrests in  
3 calendar year 2019. For those that have committed  
4 sexual assault and we've arrested nine people this  
5 year. And they move expeditiously through the court.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER PALADINO: I guess my time is up  
8 because I did want to ask, you only had 85 people  
9 graduate today.

10 LOUIS MOLINA: Yeah.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER PALADINO: How many people  
12 actually have left this job?

13 LOUIS MOLINA: Over the course of three years, a  
14 little over 3,000 officers.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER PALADINO: Okay, so what got is  
16 85 people stepping up to be part of New Yorks post.

17 LOUIS MOLINA: Yeah.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER PALADINO: That's pretty sad and  
19 you guys need help. So, thank you very much and I  
20 appreciate your steadfast, the work that you do.  
21 Thank you.

22 LOUIS MOLINA: Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Council Member Williams.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Hello. I probably am  
25 going to sound like a broken record as well but I

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1 just had a quick question about the program and the  
2 current DOC staff that you're going to have now  
3 conducting the program. Can you share what the  
4 current DOC staff are doing now? Like, what are  
5 their current roles?  
6

7 FRANCIS TORRES: When it comes to our work, ACC  
8 once they focus specifically on social services and  
9 they also support the needs as it relates to mandated  
10 services. The ACC too of course are supervisors.  
11 So, when we talk about their task and standards and a  
12 review of the task and standards what we speak of is  
13 going back to task and standards that were used with  
14 them in 2016 through 2019.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: You mean the tasks and  
16 standards that they are supposed to be carrying out  
17 in their current role?

18 FRANCIS TORRES: That's correct versus what they  
19 would become. So, if you want me to go through very  
20 specific task and standards, I could do that the same  
21 way that we could send them with a package that has  
22 already been asked of us.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: You can go into  
24 detail.  
25

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CRIMINAL JUSTICE 310

1  
2 FRANCIS TORRES: Sure. So, when it comes to an  
3 associate correctional counselor level 2, there are  
4 very specific task and standards. Currently for the  
5 current task and standards, that title has six tasks.  
6 Task number one, responsible for the supervision of  
7 staff and interns.

8 Task number two, oversee case management  
9 services, which includes social services that are  
10 provided to individuals in custody by staff and  
11 provide services as assigned.

12 Task three, manages the records of services  
13 completed by staff and submit reports of these  
14 services. Four, liaisons with internal and external  
15 stakeholders to effectively support individuals in  
16 custody. Task Five, oversee the development and  
17 implementation of group provided by staff when  
18 applicable. Six, attend required meetings,  
19 conferences, trainings and workshops.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: And before you go on,  
21 so what will their new task and standards be?

22 FRANCIS TORRES: If you allow me to, we're  
23 currently in discussions with Labor Relations. We'll  
24 be more than happy to share those with you once those  
25 conversations have been finalized.

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1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Okay and as you  
3 negotiate with labor relations around amending the  
4 task and standards, are you able to share with us who  
5 will then be doing their existing work, now that  
6 they'll be doing new work or are you going to just  
7 add additional tasks to their portfolio?

8 FRANCIS TORRES: No, we will be more than happy  
9 to share with you once the negotiations are over.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Okay, so you can not  
11 provide any details on how you will shift their  
12 roles?

13 FRANCIS TORRES: We are currently in  
14 negotiations with Labor Relations. It will be unfair  
15 of me to actually discuss that without having brought  
16 in their unions.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Okay, no problem. Do  
18 you at least have a timeline as to when the  
19 negotiations will conclude?

20 FRANCIS TORRES: I cannot give you a timeline  
21 but I know that we have asked Labor Relations to  
22 schedule the meetings in the next two weeks.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Okay, so your goal is  
24 to conclude negotiations with Labor Relations,  
25 provide new task and standards. Is there going to be

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1  
2 a training for these workers and their new task and  
3 standards or how do you foresee next steps once you  
4 conclude the negotiations with labor relations?

5 FRANCIS TORRES: Sure, the advantage that we  
6 have is that the task and standards that are being  
7 proposed to labor relations are task and standards  
8 that we've used in the past. Our counseling staff is  
9 well versed.

10 As we continue the conversations with Labor  
11 Relations, there is always the need for us to also  
12 engage the membership and we will do that. Training  
13 of our members has been ongoing. They are well  
14 versed and familiarized with what would be required  
15 as they transition into the provision of groups and  
16 one on one. Thank you.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: I just have one more  
18 question about any state of good repairs on the  
19 capital plan. So, when we did a tour, there were  
20 obviously things that needed to be repaired  
21 immediately and I know prior to this administration,  
22 there was a lack of investment in some of the like  
23 state of good repairs. So, is there any allocation  
24 to current state of good repair?

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1  
2 PATRICIA LYONS: Good afternoon. Thank you for  
3 that important question. So, in terms of state of  
4 good repair that were capitally eligible for the  
5 specific facilities, they were defunded and no longer  
6 capitally eligible due to the Rikers timeline and the  
7 uhm, when the contracts would have been registered or  
8 the work would have been completed, but the success  
9 we had with this executive budget was at least  
10 restoring the infrastructure work that will aid in a  
11 better quality of life within the facilities in terms  
12 of ensuring we have repaired inoperable steam  
13 tunnels, electrical feeders to the island, water  
14 treatment for a power house, upgraded sewer mains,  
15 things that are important to the island  
16 infrastructure. In tandem, last Fiscal Year, as part  
17 of the adopted budget, I believe, we received almost  
18 \$11 million annually to support the maintenance  
19 division within the department that are now tasked  
20 with doing the work in the facilities.

21 Additionally, we recently registered several  
22 contracts called Job Order Contracting Systems which  
23 apply to plumbing, mechanical and electrical, general  
24 contractor, and in those contracts which we funded  
25 through the Expense Budget will be tackling things

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such as air conditioning installations and repairs,  
roof repairs, concrete work, other ADA compliance.

So, other work that is required within the facilities  
and in fire safety as well.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: So, how much in this  
budget for state of good repairs?

PATRICIA LYONS: Oh, what was restored back from  
Fiscal Year 2028 to the front window was a total of  
\$46 million in the capital plan.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Okay, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Chair Rivera.

CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: Hi there. Alright, I just  
want to follow up on that because I know doors have  
to be fixed. They have to be replaced. They  
currently weren't locking and putting people in  
danger. From what I understood, safety precaution  
according to the department, is that right?

LOUIS MOLINA: That's correct. We repaired 900  
doors at RNDC already and so, that project was  
completed.

CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: So, let me ask about that  
because the Department indicated a plan to reopen  
OBCC and close AMKC. So, what date does the  
Department plan to reopen OBCC and how many people

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1 does DOC plan to transfer there when reopened and  
2 from what I understand OBCC was being rehabilitated,  
3 fixed up I should say because of the door issue for  
4 example, right? There were capital needs?  
5

6 LOUIS MOLINA: So, let me just provide some  
7 clarity on that. So, OBCC always had a good state of  
8 mechanical locking system on its cell doors. When we  
9 closed OBCC we were still in the midst of a staffing  
10 crisis and the jail could not properly operate at  
11 that time, so we shut it down. But it also still  
12 needed repairs in other areas. Like we needed to add  
13 air conditioning to OBCC. We needed to do some  
14 repairs to the dormitory areas of OBCC and that work  
15 is ongoing right now.

16 So, the reason why we were moving to OBCC is  
17 because we had the same similar and alike problem  
18 with locking mechanisms at AMKC and it would have  
19 taken years to fix those doors because of supply  
20 chain issues and just a bandwidth of the ability to  
21 be able to that work in a faster timeframe. So, our  
22 intention is to shut down AMKC so that we can  
23 transition the majority of that population to OBCC  
24 and that timeframe I want to say is on target for  
25 between the middle of July and early August.

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1  
2 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: And will the closure of  
3 AMKC be permanent?

4 LOUIS MOLINA: If the state of AMKC remains the  
5 same, then I would say today it is likely that that  
6 could happen but I caution to say that if the  
7 population continues to increase, we might find  
8 ourselves in a situation where maybe sections of AMKC  
9 could be reopened but it is not my preference. It  
10 would depend on where our census levels are when that  
11 decision would have to be made.

12 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: Well, I'm going to get to  
13 the jail population reduction in a second. Will the  
14 Department - let's not live in what could be. So,  
15 but if you did close AMKC, will the Department be  
16 able to generate any savings from that closure?

17 LOUIS MOLINA: Well, there's a possibility. I  
18 mean, there are electric costs that could go down  
19 because the facility would not be open. We would  
20 continue to use the main kitchen in AMKC because it  
21 is our production kitchen to make all the meals. And  
22 we make approximately about 25,000 meals a day.  
23 Somewhere in that area, so that kitchen will still be  
24 open but all of the housing units would be closed if  
25 we close it out. So, there could be some cost

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1 savings. Staff would be reallocated obviously to  
2 OBCC, which is not open right now. So, there is a  
3 possibility of some efficiency savings there.  
4

5 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: And I just want to be very  
6 clear as to my language because I know I heard  
7 earlier somebody say you know how dangerous people  
8 are on Rikers. The majority of people there are  
9 actually just awaiting trial. So, I just want to  
10 make; I know you all know this, but I just want to  
11 make sure that as a body and as the public, we  
12 understand who is actually on Rikers Island.

13 The numbers that I have, the number of  
14 incarcerated people diagnosed with serious mental  
15 illness has increased since Mayor Adams entered  
16 office. The number I have from Freedom Agenda is 38  
17 percent. How does — and I also have a number 52  
18 percent of the people on Rikers have received a  
19 mental health diagnosis. Whether you have different  
20 numbers, I'd be interested to hear those. However,  
21 with what's been said, how does DOC plan to support  
22 those people especially with what I think is a  
23 mistake, the potential elimination of programs by  
24 community-based organizations.  
25

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1  
2 LOUIS MOLINA: So, I'll first say that mental  
3 health services programming is not being eliminated  
4 and mental health programming is with the majority  
5 provided by our correctional health service partners  
6 CHS, which is part of Health + Hospitals Corporation.  
7 You are right, approximately 50 percent of the  
8 average daily population has been diagnosed with a  
9 mental illness and 18 percent of the population is  
10 diagnosed with serious mental illness. Which is  
11 still a large number of people and I agree with you  
12 that the criminal justice system for too long has  
13 been used as the response mechanism for those who  
14 become justice involved because of their either  
15 mental illness or the co-occurring disorder of  
16 substance addiction.

17 So, I agree with you and I've talked about this  
18 in front of this body before, that we need to  
19 increase the bandwidth of not only substance abuse  
20 treatment but really get assistance from the state to  
21 increase in custody, in patient hospital beds for  
22 those that are suffering from mental illness because  
23 over the many decades there has been a serious  
24 reduction in the per capita availability of in  
25 patient hospital beds per 100,000 individuals where

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1 today it stands about 21 per 100,000 residents in  
2 this country. So, it's a serious issue. With that  
3 being said, it is the court system and judges that  
4 are placing these individuals in the custody of the  
5 Department of Corrections. We do not make that  
6 decision but we bear the responsibility when the  
7 courts do that.

9 And we would appreciate other diversionary  
10 methods, so that those that are driven because of  
11 mental illness to be able to divert it to a public  
12 health system versus a criminal justice system but  
13 that is not a unique situation to New York City. It  
14 is an American problem.

15 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: I agree. I do feel like  
16 right now Rikers is being treated essentially as a  
17 psychiatric center without the support and I commend  
18 CHS for doing what they can but we do not have enough  
19 of the people that are currently on Rikers even being  
20 produced for their appointments and we do have that  
21 data. I know it's a goal that we're striving to get  
22 to for 100 percent production at every single medical  
23 visit. I understand that.

24 Has programming or visitation been effected by a  
25 lack of staff?

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1  
2 LOUIS MOLINA: No, in fact we've expanded  
3 visitation. Now we have visitation on the weekends.  
4 We have more in person visitation. We still have  
5 tele video visit as an option for Friday's for those  
6 that want to utilize that as an option. So, we've  
7 actually over my tenure, expanded in person  
8 visitation for family and loved ones.

9 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: And just these last  
10 questions on OBCC because I wanted to ask what areas  
11 of OBCC do you intend to utilize? And do you intend  
12 to use restrictive housing units at OBCC?

13 LOUIS MOLINA: No and I intend on using every  
14 housing unit at OBCC.

15 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: Why waws OBCC selected for  
16 renovation and reopening when so many areas will  
17 remain unused?

18 LOUIS MOLINA: Well, I closed it at the  
19 beginning of my term because at that time we were  
20 still dealing with ramping of staffing to get staff  
21 returning to work. And the number of staff that they  
22 had at OBCC did not allow it to operate at an optimal  
23 level. So, the right decision at that time I  
24 believe, was to close it down. Reappropriate staff  
25 with OBCC to other areas where we needed improvement.

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1 For example, like EMTC to deal with the issue of  
2 intake and better managing intake and today we're at  
3 99.5 percent getting persons placed into their  
4 housing within the 24-hour time period requirement.  
5 But OBCC as a facility, why they need to work, had  
6 very good bones from an infrastructure standpoint.  
7 And more importantly in its cell housing area had  
8 mechanical locking mechanisms that actually  
9 functioned.  
10

11 So, now we are in a better place today to be  
12 able to address the minor infrastructure issues as  
13 well as air conditioning within OBCC, which will  
14 allow us to faster transition to having cell doors  
15 that are more mechanically reliable than the doors  
16 that exist at AMKC.

17 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: If it's rumor that the  
18 facilities - I shouldn't say rumor. If all  
19 facilities can potentially be used for migrant  
20 families for those seeking asylum, what would happen  
21 to the incarcerated that were -

22 LOUIS MOLINA: Well, that decision hasn't been  
23 made right and we would never mix if the decision is  
24 made persons in custody with persons seeking asylum.  
25 Like, that wouldn't happen. So, what was asked of

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1  
2 the Mayor was for every agency to do an assessment of  
3 its assets, which I think is the responsible thing to  
4 do given the severity of the asylum crisis with so  
5 many vulnerable individuals coming to New York City  
6 and such a limitation of not only regular shelters  
7 but emergency sheltering that is out there.

8 CHAIRPERSON RIVERA: The last thing I'll just  
9 say and I want to thank you for your testimony and  
10 for your time in answering our questions, I know  
11 we're going to send you a list of follow up and we  
12 would really appreciate as speedy as a response as  
13 possible. Anticipation for upcoming hearings is that  
14 you know I really do think that the \$17 million in  
15 cuts should be rejected, should be reconsidered.  
16 These are groups that have a very intentional  
17 important relationship. I understand that CHS  
18 provides mental health care. That's incredibly  
19 important but there is a difference between the  
20 relationship between a medical health expert and a  
21 person and the care and the expertise that many of  
22 these people bring from their nonprofits.

23 So, I know you've heard from a lot of us over  
24 the past two hours or so but again, we really want to  
25 underline and highlight their work and how important

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1  
2 we think they are to the system itself. We know that  
3 reform is needed and we feel like they are a critical  
4 part of that plan. So, I just want to thank you  
5 again and I'll turn it over to Chair Brannan for  
6 anything else outstanding and again, thank you for  
7 your time.

8 LOUIS MOLINA: Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Thank you Chair Rivera.  
10 We will follow up with you with some follow-up  
11 questions and hope we can get that information back  
12 asap.

13 LOUIS MOLINA: You got it sir.

14 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: We're going to start to  
15 negotiate. Okay, thank you so much.

16 LOUIS MOLINA: Thank you all for your feedback,  
17 appreciate it.

18 CHAIRPERSON BRANNAN: Thank you. Okay with  
19 that, day nine of Executive Budget hearings is  
20 adjourned. [GAVEL]

21

22

23

24

25

C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date June 11, 2023