

FY 2021 Borough Budget Consultations

Manhattan - Department of Homeless Services

Meeting Date 9/13/2019

AGENDA ITEM 1 : General Agency Funding Discussion:

The purpose of holding the Borough Budget Consultations is to provide Community Boards with important information to assist in drafting their statement of District Needs and Budget Priorities for the upcoming fiscal year. As you know, Community Board Members are volunteers who may not be familiar with the budget process and how agencies' programs are funded. At the same time, Community Board members are very knowledgeable about local service needs.

This year's Manhattan agendas have three sections:

I. Agencies begin the consultation with a presentation of their goals, funding decision process, and highlights of their funding needs.

II. Then, the agenda continues with Community Boards asking about specific program funding.

III. Lastly, the agendas include Boards' requests on district-specific budget questions. We request that the agency respond in writing, but have any further discussions on these items with the Community Boards outside of the consultation.

For the first section, please present on the four topics below for 10-15 minutes at the beginning of our Consultation. Also, please provide written responses or even a PowerPoint presentation that we can use to fully and accurately educate our Board Members.

1. What are your priorities and operational goals for FY20 and projected priorities and operational goals for FY21?
2. What are the current proposed FY20 and FY21 service and operational goals and proposed funding?
3. Which programs is the agency adding, dropping, or changing for FY20 and projected for FY21?
4. What are your benchmarks for new and existing programs and what are your benchmarks/key performance indicators for measuring success?

AGENCY RESPONSE:

BACKGROUND ON HOW WE GOT HERE: HOMELESSNESS INCREASING OVER DECADES

- How we got here: Homelessness in New York City and jurisdictions across the country is the very real result of decades of changes in our economy and past choices made in New York City, Albany, and Washington, increasing 115 percent between 1994 and 2014—including growing nearly 40 percent to more than 51,000 in just three years between 2011 and 2014 following the end of the Advantage rental assistance program as a result of State and City cuts.
 - o From 1994-2012, the City suffered a net loss of about 150,000 rent-stabilized units, or 16 percent of the total rent-regulated stock.
 - o From 2005-2015, rents increased by 18.4% whereas incomes increased by only 4.8%
 - o While the city's overall rental vacancy rate of 3.5 percent poses problems for people of all incomes, renters only able to afford an apartment costing \$800 or less must search in a market with a vacancy rate of just 1.15 percent in 2017, down from 1.8 percent in 2014.
 - o Today, 70 percent of the people in our shelter system are families. Over one-third of families with children have an adult who is working, with the vast majority of those families headed by a single mother—underscoring the economic factors driving homelessness, like stagnant wages not keeping pace with rising rents as well as a tighter

housing market that can contribute to overcrowding and discord. Today's face of homelessness is a mother with young children—families who cannot afford to make ends meet despite having steady income.

ADDRESSING THE CITYWIDE CHALLENGE OF HOMELESSNESS:

- Breaking trajectory and headed in right direction: While the devastating impacts of economic inequality and past inaction from prior administrations led to the homeless crisis we face today, the initiatives of the Department of Social Services (HRA and DHS) are beginning to reverse the trend. A Furman Center study, for example, found that the year over year shelter census growth from calendar year 2015 to calendar year 2016 was the lowest increase since 2011 before the Advantage program ended. And the shelter census for 2017 and 2018 remained roughly flat year over year for the first time in more than a decade, and is now beginning to move down.
 - o After nearly four decades of an ever-increasing homeless population in NYC, the de Blasio administration has finally broken the trajectory of growth in homelessness and the new programs, reforms, and investments we are implementing headed in the right direction, holding the DHS census essentially flat year over year in 2017 and 2018, and is beginning to move down. We've also made progress driving down the number of families experiencing homelessness and residing in shelter on any given night, with the peak number of individuals across those families declining by nearly 2,600 between 2014, when families in shelter on a given night were comprised of 43,208 individuals, and 2018, when families in shelter on a given night were comprised 40,612 individuals.
 - o Without the administration's initiatives, projections indicate there would be 71,000 people in shelter today instead of the current number of less than 60,000.?
- Since coming into office, Mayor de Blasio has taken aggressive action: restoring the City's rental assistance and rehousing programs, directing unprecedented resources toward a new comprehensive and holistic approach to fighting homelessness focused on prevention, street homeless outreach, expanded transitional housing options, averted shelter entry, improved shelter conditions, expanded civil legal services, and more robust rehousing and aftercare services.
- And in February 2017, the Mayor announced "Turning the Tide on Homelessness in New York City," his comprehensive plan to turn the tide on homelessness, neighborhood by neighborhood, laying out a blueprint for transforming a shelter system that built up in a haphazard way over decades, including taking the reforms that resulted from the 90-day homeless services review in 2016 even further, finally ending the use of ineffective stop-gap measures that date back decades, like the 19-year-old cluster program and use of commercial hotels on and off since 1960s, through an achievable, operational commitment to completely phasing these locations out and replacing them with a smaller number of high-quality borough-based transitional housing facilities.
 - o The plan has four core pillars: preventing homelessness whenever we can; addressing street homelessness; rehousing families and individuals so they can move out of shelter or avoid homelessness altogether; and transforming the haphazard approach to providing shelter and services that has built up over the last four decades by shrinking the Department of Homeless Services' footprint by 45 percent and ending the use of 360 "cluster" shelter and commercial hotel locations while opening a smaller number of 90 borough-based shelters in all five boroughs. This will allow us to maintain a vacancy rate to ensure the flexibility we need to implement a more equitable, borough-based system that takes into account the individual needs of the children and adults we must shelter.
 - o The plan offers our homeless neighbors the opportunity to be sheltered closer to their support networks, such as schools, jobs, health care, families, friends, and houses of worship, by providing shelter in the borough they last called home. Together, we are ending the band-aid approaches of the past and implementing a truly comprehensive strategy for finally turning the tide on homelessness.
- Our strategies are starting to take hold, headed in the right direction: as indicated above, the shelter census for 2017 and 2018 remained roughly flat year over year for the first time in more than a decade, and is now beginning to move down; and through the strategies outlined above and below, we've already reduced our shelter footprint by nearly 30 percent, from the 647 buildings we reported in the Turning the Tide plan a year ago to our current use of 450 buildings following ending use of 200+ shelter buildings during the last two years.
 - o Immediately upon taking office, the de Blasio Administration stepped in to fill the gap left by the City and State's cancellation of the Advantage rental assistance program in 2011 (which led to a 38 percent increase in homelessness between 2011 and 2014) by creating and implementing new rental assistance programs as well as reinstating rehousing programs—which have helped more than 120,000 children and adults exit or avoid shelter altogether through this commitment of permanent housing resources, with the vast majority exiting shelter.
 - o Already reduced the number of cluster units in the Giuliani-era program from the high point of more than 3,600 down to approximately 1,400 in two years, including through converting cluster units to permanent affordable

housing.

o Announced 46 high-quality borough-based shelters under the Mayor’s Turning the Tide, 25 of which are already offering families and individuals the opportunity to get back on their feet closer to support networks and home boroughs

o Provided emergency rental assistance to 264,000 households, helping rent-burdened New Yorkers at risk of eviction stay in their homes

o Aggressively expanded free legal assistance for New Yorkers in danger of illegal eviction, increasing funding for legal services for tenants more than 20-fold, from roughly \$6 million to more than \$120 million. Evictions then dropped by approximately one third and more than 100,000 New Yorkers were able to stay in their homes in 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2018.

o Phasing in over the next five years the funding necessary to provide universal access to legal services for all New York City tenants facing eviction in housing court.

MEETING NOTES:

COMMENTS:

Susan Stetzer raised the concern that many street homeless individuals do not like Safe Havens or shelters because they seem unsafe.

Open RFPs help to open as many beds as possible and safe havens

NOTES:

AGENDA ITEM 2 : Safe Havens

1. What are the plans to increase the number of safe havens?
2. What is the biggest obstacle—funding, community resistance, available locations or other?
3. Are there any plans for “wet” safe havens?
4. How long is average stay in safe havens and what is path to housing? What is retention rate in housing after safe havens?

AGENCY RESPONSE:

BACKGROUND ON NYC’S COMPREHENSIVE EFFORTS TO ADDRESS STREET HOMELESSNESS:

- HOME-STAT (Homeless Outreach & Mobile Engagement Street Action Teams) is the City’s 24/7/365 street homeless outreach effort: As part of the citywide HOME-STAT outreach effort—the most comprehensive in the nation—hundreds of highly-trained not-for-profit outreach staff, including licensed social workers, canvass the streets, proactively engaging homeless New Yorkers, offering services and assistance, and working to gain their trust with the goal of addressing the underlying issues that may have caused or contributed to their street homelessness in order to ultimately help these individuals transition off the streets.

- Citywide team effort utilizing innovative partnerships with experienced social service outreach providers with long-standing ties in communities and years of results: There is no one-size-fits-all approach to ending homelessness. With a dedicated not-for-profit provider for each borough (the Manhattan Outreach Consortium, led by CUCS, in partnership with Breaking Ground and Goddard-Riverside, in Manhattan; Breaking Ground in Brooklyn and Queens; BronxWorks in the Bronx; and Project Hospitality on Staten Island), HOME-STAT outreach teams working around the clock across the five boroughs helped more than 2,200 New Yorkers living on the streets transition indoors, and remain off the streets, since the first year of the program.

o Manhattan: Manhattan Outreach Consortium (MOC), led by CUCS, includes:

? CUCS

? Goddard Riverside (subcontractor of CUCS)

? Breaking Ground (subcontractor of CUCS)

o Brooklyn and Queens: Breaking Ground

o Bronx: BronxWorks

o Staten Island: Project Hospitality

o Subways: Bowery Residents Committee (BRC)

- Helping New Yorkers come off the streets and subways and remain off through persistence and compassion: Since the launch of HOME-STAT, the most comprehensive street homeless outreach program nationwide, outreach teams have helped more than 2,200 homeless New Yorkers off the streets, and remain off the streets, thanks to new investments and a doubling of the size of those outreach teams—and we are committed to continuing and improving that work every day, committing unprecedented new resources to street outreach programs and providers:

- Getting to know each and every New Yorker experiencing unsheltered homeless, person by person: Central to the HOME-STAT effort, these outreach teams continue to build the City's first-ever by-name list of individuals known to be homeless and residing on the streets, more effectively enabling the teams to directly and repeatedly engage New Yorkers in need where they are, continually offering supports and case management resources while developing the trust and relationships that will ultimately encourage these individuals to accept services and transition off of the streets.

- New Yorkers sleeping on the streets are our most uniquely challenging population to engage— With higher rates of mental health and substance use disorders, medical difficulties, and disabilities, and with each individual finding his or her way to the street via different paths, it can take time to bring these individuals indoors from unsheltered environments (several months on average), involving hundreds of contacts with outreach teams to build the trust and relationship that will result in ultimately accepting services.

- Building the trust and relationships to break through resistance and provide services: Accepting outreach efforts, including services that will help homeless New Yorkers transition indoors from the streets, is voluntary—and, in accordance with NYS Mental Hygiene Law, street homeless New Yorkers cannot be involuntarily removed from the streets unless they are posing a danger to themselves or others. But our teams remain undeterred in their efforts to help them transition off the subways. To that end, all street homeless outreach teams have access to:

- o licensed clinicians who work with clients on the streets, provide on-going case management, and assess each individual for immediate risk/crisis during each encounter

- o psychiatrists who perform psychiatric evaluations on the streets, as needed, helping understand and better meet the individual needs of each street homeless New Yorker

- o substance use resources, including ability to immediately connect individuals to detox and other rehabilitation programs—and are trained in naloxone administration

- o Additionally, not-for-profit CUCS deploys their Street Medicine program in Manhattan, Queens, and Brooklyn, through which a team of mobile Nurse Practitioners offers medical assessments and minimally invasive treatments to homeless people where they live, including providing medical care to those on the street who are in need of medical attention. Some of the services they provide on the street are: risk assessments, wound care, referrals to medical and mental health providers, administration of antibiotics and blood pressure and diabetes screening.

- Enhancing collaboration with expert stakeholders, including City Agency partners: DHS also performs joint operations with community partners, including the NYPD, DOT, DOHMH, Parks Department, and area stakeholders, in an effort to engage individuals living on the street and encourage them to accept services. During these operations, law enforcement partners attend in case there is a need for any enforcement actions, including arrest or summons.

HOME-STAT HIGHLIGHTS:

- Since 2014, we have continually redoubled our outreach efforts, dedicating unprecedented new resources to street outreach programs and providers:

- o Helping more than 2,200 individuals off the streets and subways, and remain off the streets and subways, since the launch of HOME-STAT in April 2016.

- o More than doubling the City's investment in street homeless programs, increasing by more than from approximately \$45M in 2013 to approximately \$126M today.

- o More than doubling the number of outreach staff canvassing the streets engaging New Yorkers 24/7/365 since 2014, from 191 to nearly 400, with those dedicated staff spending months building relationships by making regular contact with street homeless New Yorkers to build trust and encourage them to accept services and transition off the streets.

o This Administration has tripled the number of emergency ‘safe haven’ and ‘stabilization’ beds dedicated to serving street homeless New Yorkers citywide since 2014, with hundreds of beds opened during this Administration, increasing the operating total from roughly 600 beds to approximately 1,800 beds, and hundreds more set to open in the coming years, ultimately bringing the total to 2,100 beds dedicated to serving street homeless individuals available to HOME-STAT outreach teams citywide.

o Building the City’s first-ever by-name list of individuals known to be homeless and residing on the streets to improve delivery of services.

o Increasing joint outreach operations with City Agency partners to utilize each Agency’s expertise, engage more New Yorkers, and offer more supports, including expanding joint outreach operations with NYPD in Midtown, Manhattan to seven days per week.

MEETING NOTES:

COMMENTS:

Goal is to have 2,100 Safe Haven Beds

NOTES:

AGENDA ITEM 3 : Shelter Security

1. What are the benchmarks/results of community engagement teams at shelters?

2. What data is used to measure whether shelters are more or less safe both for shelter residents and for neighborhood residents?

3. Why is DHS so resistant to requesting increased funding for DHS police? Is this strictly a funding issue?

4. Since the NYPD has taken over the review of DHS shelter security, how many facilities have they recommended to have an increase in DHS Police?

5. What would be the budgetary impact of funding that increase? What progress has been made to follow these recommendations?

AGENCY RESPONSE:

• Protecting the health and safety of the New Yorkers we serve as they get back on their feet is our number one priority. That’s exactly why the NYPD now oversees shelter security citywide—and their management is showing results improving shelter security, with increased reporting, enforcement, transparency, and accountability by the most effective police force in the nation. To that end:

o We continue to transform a haphazard shelter system decades in the making with unprecedented investments in historically-underfunded programs, including more than doubling our funding for security, opening the first centralized DHSPD Peace Officer training academy, and implementing a 200-hour training curriculum going above and beyond state requirements to teach best community policing practices like de-escalation, access control, understanding mental health and disorder, victimization and trauma, and crisis communication.

o We publicly share information related to our progress improving safety and security through a number of different channels, including verified NYPD arrest data, Social Services critical incidents data, and annual data on the homeless individuals who’ve passed away every year, which shows fatalities are down to the lowest levels in years.

o And we revamped our Social Services critical incident reporting workflow, including implementing new agency procedures, updating our glossary of incident types and categories, and streamlining our Client Assistance and Re-housing Enterprise System (CARES) module as well as staff training, all to ensure the most comprehensive and standardized incident reporting across all shelters, with more staff completing the training and reporting of incidents increasing as a result of these enhancements.

MEETING NOTES:

COMMENTS:

HRA is currently working on implementing the body-worn cameras for Peace Officers

Working with access control, deescalation, mental health and disorders, crisis communication and trauma training

CBs would like more DHS Peace Officers in adult male shelters. Susan says, "We aren't complaining about the training, we are complaining about the lack of peace officers."

Mark mentioned that security is only exists in the interior of the shelter, not outside. Peace Officers outside would really assist in the safety of the homeless.

NOTES:

HRA recommended telling Leilani if there are any particular shelters that are concerning

CBs should follow up with Jermaine about any concerns about supportive housing facilities

AGENDA ITEM 4 : "Crusties" Program 1

For the last three years there has been specific questions regarding seasonal "traveler" street homeless, who identify themselves as " crusties." The agency response was for homeless in general and did not discuss programs or plans for this subset of the homeless population that do not respond to MOC outreach efforts. DHS specifically responded regarding "panhandlers." While some crusties may be panhandlers, this does not define the population nor does "panhandlers" specifically focus on homeless. There are still no programs funded and seemingly no attempts to resolve how to engage this population.

Last year DHS responded "DHS is in the process of collecting data and developing additional interventions to address the needs of this population as appropriate."

1. Can you report on the data collected and progress made in interventions for this population?

AGENCY RESPONSE:

Please see attached response.

MEETING NOTES:

COMMENTS:

HRA said that they see seasonal spikes but not year after year spikes.

The success of placing an individual into shelters is really based on building relationships

Nurse practitioners, medical care, psychiatric training, etc. is the knowledge of the street outreach teams

What is your success rate with the "crusties" group? Susan said that in the past they've asked for pilot programs like harm-reduction programs, shelters that allow pets. HRA responded that the open RFP does include providers that allow pets.

Susan is saying that making the pets be support animals is a barrier. The homeless should just be allowed to bring any pet they have.

NOTES:

AGENDA ITEM 5 : Street Outreach Teams

1. What percentage of street outreach teams include social workers, psychiatrists or clinical workers?
 - 1A. Other mental health professionals?
2. What percentage of street outreach workers hold at least a bachelor's degree with training in outreach?
3. What is the follow up to these evaluations?
4. What is benchmark to monitor the success of these evaluations and follow ups?
5. What other models of engagement has DHS analyzed and tried that may have been used in other cities?
6. What is the average number of engagements for a homeless person to accept shelter? How does this differ among populations? (such as time spent on street or age?)

AGENCY RESPONSE:

- With homelessness driven by a range of citywide, statewide, regional, national, and global factors, including economic factors, such as rents outpacing wages, socio-political factors, such as broader deinstitutionalization at every level of government, as well as nationwide mental health and substance use challenges, the estimated number of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness is not an effective measure of our work, but rather a measure of the need.
 - o Additionally, accepting outreach and services is voluntary—and, in accordance with New York State Mental Hygiene Law, unsheltered New Yorkers cannot be involuntarily removed from the streets or subways unless they are posing a danger to themselves or others.
- The progress of our work is best measured by the outcomes we achieve for the unsheltered New Yorkers we help off the streets and subways into transitional and permanent settings. These individuals often face complex, layered challenges, and may be resistant to accepting services.
 - o To that end, since the launch of the HOME-STAT programs, HOME-STAT outreach teams have helped more than 2,200 homeless New Yorkers off the streets, including 600 individuals off the subways – who have remained off the streets and subways – thanks to new investments and a doubling of the size of those outreach teams—and we are committed to continuing and improving that work every day.
- In the face of these systemic externalities and challenges, our outreach teams remain undeterred in their efforts to help these individuals transition off the streets and subways.
 - o Since 2014, the Agency has continually redoubled its homeless outreach efforts, dedicating unprecedented new resources to street outreach programs and providers and launching HOME-STAT, the nation's most comprehensive street outreach program, which transformed how outreach providers engaged with individuals experiencing homelessness and with each other.
 - o These investments in new outreach programs, staffing, emergency “safe haven” beds, and increased focus on joint agency outreach operations with City Agency partners demonstrate our commitment to turning the tide on homelessness.
- Unsheltered individuals often face complex, layered challenges, and may be resistant to accepting services, but our teams remain undeterred in their efforts to help them transition off the subways.
 - o To that end, all street homeless outreach teams have access to:
 - licensed clinicians who work with clients on the streets, provide on-going case management, and assess each individual for immediate risk/crisis during each encounter
 - psychiatrists who perform psychiatric evaluations on the streets, as needed, helping understand and better meet the individual needs of each street homeless New Yorker
 - substance use resources, including ability to immediately connect individuals to detox and other rehabilitation programs—and are trained in naloxone administration
 - Thanks to their persistent, compassionate efforts, NYC HOME-STAT outreach teams have helped over 2,200 homeless New Yorkers off the streets and subways citywide—and we're squarely focused on taking that progress further
- At the same time, citywide, this year's federally-mandated annual HOPE Survey estimates two percent fewer

people experiencing unsheltered homelessness on a given night in January.

UNPRECEDENTED INVESTMENTS ENHANCING 24/7/365 CITYWIDE OUTREACH EFFORTS:

- Since 2014, we have continually redoubled our outreach efforts, dedicating unprecedented new resources to street outreach programs and providers:
 - o Helping more than 2,200 individuals off the streets and subways and into transitional and permanent settings since the launch of HOME-STAT in April 2016.
 - o More than doubling the City's investment in street homeless programs, increasing by more than from approximately \$45M in 2013 to approximately \$126M today.
 - o More than doubling the number of outreach staff canvassing the streets engaging New Yorkers 24/7/365 since 2014, from 191 to nearly 400, with those dedicated staff spending months building relationships by making regular contact with street homeless New Yorkers to build trust and encourage them to accept services and transition off the streets.
 - o This Administration has tripled the number of emergency 'safe haven' and 'stabilization' beds dedicated to serving street homeless New Yorkers citywide since 2014, with hundreds of beds opened during this Administration, increasing the operating total from roughly 600 beds to approximately 1,800 beds, and hundreds more set to open in the coming years, ultimately bringing the total to 2,100 beds dedicated to serving street homeless individuals available to HOME-STAT outreach teams citywide.
 - o Building the City's first-ever by-name list of individuals known to be homeless and residing on the streets to improve delivery of services, with outreach teams now knowing approximately 1,700 street homeless individuals by name and actively engaging another 2,200 individuals encountered on the streets to determine whether they are homeless.
 - o Increasing joint outreach operations with City Agency partners to utilize each Agency's expertise, engage more New Yorkers, and offer more supports, including expanding joint outreach operations with NYPD in Midtown, Manhattan to seven days per week, and launching a collaborative, progressive pilot initiative w the NYPD, Manhattan DA, MTA, and HOME-STAT outreach provider BRC to divert unsheltered New Yorkers from unnecessary criminal justice processes towards shelter and services.

MEETING NOTES:

COMMENTS:

No questions

NOTES: