

FY 2022 Borough Budget Consultations

Manhattan - Department of Homeless Services

Meeting Date 9/18/2020

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 faced unprecedented cuts and new funding requirements this year due to COVID 19. Can you list the previously unplanned cuts to the FY 21 budget due to COVID and the new initiatives necessitated by the emergency? Please discuss the expected timeline for the new initiatives. What programs and capital projects will be continued uncut. Of the cuts in spending for FY 2021, please identify the most significant cuts that are currently expected to be permanent [or continued at the reduced level into FY 2022].

What is the overall budget decrease for FY 21 adopted budget compared to FY20 budget?

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 FY21 and projected priorities and operational goals for FY22?
2. What are the current proposed FY21 and FY22 service and operational goals and proposed funding?
3. Which programs is the agency adding, dropping, or changing for FY21 and projected for FY22?
4. What are your benchmarks for new and existing programs and what are your benchmarks/key performance indicators for measuring success?

AGENCY RESPONSE:

The FY21 Adopted Budget has been impacted by COVID-19. The Plan includes anticipated COVID-related costs. As of the FY21 Adopted Financial Plan, the total DHS budget is \$2.29B (\$1.4B City) in FY20 and \$2.06B (\$1.13B City) in FY21.

- For COVID emergency response work, federal funding of \$140M in FY20 and \$127M in FY21 have been added to the DHS budget.
- Due to the economic impact of COVID-19, the DHS FY21 Adopted Budget includes these initiatives:

- Reduction in nightly hotel rate for DHS shelter usage.
- Security savings building upon the reforms reflected in the budget at Exec21, focusing on a more trauma-informed and social services centered approach to shelter safety.
- Indirect cost rate adjustment for contracted service providers.

The Five-Year DHS Capital Strategy (FY 20-24) totals \$482 million (\$480 million City). The Capital Plan funds:

- Adult and Family Shelter Projects
- IT/Equipment projects
- City Council-funded projects

- III.
1. What are your benchmarks for new and existing programs and what are your benchmarks/key performance indicators for measuring success?

The agency produces key statistics and performance matrixes. Please see the 2020 Mayor’s Management Report:

https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/operations/downloads/pdf/pmmr2020/2020_pmmr.pdf

MEETING NOTES:

NEW INFORMATION:

FOLLOW-UP COMMITMENTS:

AGENDA ITEM 2: Safe Havens

1. DHS has created many new Safe Haven and Stabilization beds for the emergency. Do you expect all or most will remain permanent or in use for at least current and next fiscal year. Is there funding to continue to create more new Safe Havens?
2. Last year we asked what is the biggest obstacle to creating more Safe Haven beds—funding, community resistance, available locations or other? Were new Safe Haven and Stabilization beds created without community notification due to the emergency and did that account for ability to create new beds.
3. Last year we asked if there any plans for “wet” safe havens. In light of so many street homeless choosing to stay on the street, is this being considered as a possible strategy to eliminate a barrier to shelter? Is this to any degree a funding issue?

AGENCY RESPONSE:

We have and will continue bringing new resources online to serve unsheltered New Yorkers, including new Safe Haven and stabilization beds, which are specialized beds dedicated to supporting New Yorkers who have lived unsheltered and helping them get back on their feet. In 2020, we have opened approximately 600 stabilization beds, including stabilization beds that we established in commercial hotel locations, with

hundreds more beds coming online. These stabilization beds have been vital tools for outreach teams over the past several months, helping hundreds of New Yorkers come in off the streets and subways. As part of this effort, we have also intensified our outreach efforts at high-priority end-of-the-line subway stations citywide, with the goal of bringing more unsheltered New Yorkers off the subways amid the COVID-19 crisis. Hundreds of these New Yorkers have accepted services and entered shelter, safe havens, and stabilization beds, where they receive continued services/support.

We remain committed to ensuring that all New Yorkers experiencing homelessness have access to safe and secure shelter placements. Together with our network of providers, DHS is working hard to protect shelter residents and our shelter staff during this time.

To ensure resident safety, we have been securing new safe haven and stabilization beds to help clients experiencing homelessness on the streets and in the subways, including opening such beds in commercial hotel rooms and soliciting additional beds.

MEETING NOTES:

NEW INFORMATION:

FOLLOW-UP COMMITMENTS:

AGENDA ITEM 3: Shelter Security

1. What are the benchmarks/results of community engagement teams at shelters? (this question was asked last year but we did not receive any information specific to the community engagement program.) Is the funding for this program threatened?
2. Will DHS peace officers continue to be trained by NYPD, and will NYPD continue to be responsible for the review of DHS shelter security. If NYPD is still responsible, will funding come from NYPD or DHS? What would be the cost of adding DHS Peace Officers to every shelter, including those that are run by providers?
3. Did DHS cut security head count at DHS shelters and provider shelters? Please explain the shelter security savings for FY 21 and projected for FY 22?

AGENCY RESPONSE:

1. DHS will build on the strong shelter security model to manage shelter safety through a client-centered approach.

DHS is committed to providing safe and secure shelter. Under this Administration, we implemented recommendations made in 2016 following a 90-day review which led to the integration of DHS and HRA under the DSS umbrella.

As part of a current transformation, the NYPD is no longer directly managing shelter security at DHS – instead, that responsibility, including the management of DHS Peace Officers as well as contracted security, will be shifted to DHS. This transition is underway. These reforms, which build on our City's

existing framework and progress continually improving security/reporting in shelters, will enable us to shift towards a more client-centered approach to ensuring safe, secure shelter for clients and staff alike.

2. In the FY2021 budget, \$4.5M in funds will be shifted from NYPD to DHS to support services for New Yorkers experiencing homelessness.
 - DHS will build on the strong shelter security model to manage shelter safety through a client-centered approach.
 - DHS is committed to providing safe and secure shelter. Under this Administration we implemented recommendations made in 2016 following a 90-day review which led to the integration of DHS and HRA under the DSS umbrella.
 - As part of a current transformation, the NYPD is no longer directly managing shelter security at DHS – instead, that responsibility, including the management of DHS Peace Officers as well as contracted security, will be shifted to DHS. This transition is underway. These reforms, which build on our City’s existing framework and progress continually improving security/reporting in shelters, will enable us to shift towards a more client-centered approach to ensuring safe, secure shelter for clients and staff alike.
 - We have implemented 200 hours of enhanced training for all new and in-service DHS Peace Officers, going above and beyond State requirements for such security officers. This enhanced and standardized curriculum provides comprehensive training on security-related topics, including de-escalation, access control, understanding mental health and disorder, victimization and trauma, domestic violence, crisis communication, physical training, tactical training, scenario-based exercises, and naloxone administration. We’ve also enhanced access control procedures and we have enhanced our reporting procedures.

3.
 - Throughout this Administration, with the help of our provider network, we’ve been focused on developing a more person-centered and trauma-informed approach to our work with New Yorkers most in need.
 - As part of our City’s continued work to shift away from the enforcement and mass incarceration approaches of the past, we are also making reforms at DSS-DHS to the way we provide security, building on the shelter security model we have developed to date, which has consistently improved reporting. This effort includes decriminalizing our approach to shelter security and instead focusing on empathetic understanding and strengthening productive engagement of those who seek our help getting back on their feet.
 - And we have worked to develop training material that reflects and promotes these values, with much of that training set to pilot this summer.
 - Examples of this approach include trauma-informed care, motivational interviewing, cultural competency, mental illness and substance use, understanding violence, crisis intervention, and suicide assessment and prevention.
 - These efforts to continually improve how we serve and support our clients are vitally important to our ongoing work to raise the bar across DHS.

- This renewed and reinvigorated focus is particularly important today and particularly important at DHS, as Black and Latinx New Yorkers experience housing instability and homelessness more frequently than white New Yorkers, entering shelter at higher rates, with Black and Latinx New Yorkers representing the majority of the New Yorkers who we serve and support on any given night.
- Continuing to rethink our approach to security is one piece of this ongoing improvement.
- To that end, as you are probably aware, NYPD will no longer be managing our uniformed DHS Peace Officers.
- We are taking this opportunity to make several important changes that we are confident will continue to shift the paradigm for how we provide services—and as part of this ongoing reform process, in collaboration with the provider partners who do this work every day on the ground, we are analyzing need and deployment systemwide, working to streamline/consolidate where possible and add clinical support staff where necessary:
 - We are standing up an internal management team at DHS that will take on this responsibility, putting our person-centered and trauma-informed approach to engagement front and center in all that we do.
 - We are also making changes to our on-the-ground provision of security. This is both a reflection of the move away from enforcement and towards clinical services, as well as the need to reduce City spending while protecting safety and core shelter services.
- There are three primary changes on the ground:
 1. Security at intake and assessment sites, as well as shelters on Wards Island, will be wholly/solely staffed by DHS-managed Peace Officers, instead of the mix of peace officers and security currently in place. Contracted security headcount will be removed at these locations and reduced overall as a result.
 - Recognizing that the period when an individual or family may seek shelter with us often reflects the height of the individual crisis for many, we believe the presence at intake and assessment of DHS Peace Officers, managed by DHS and trained by DHS to work more seamlessly with social services staff, will go a long way toward smoothing the transition into shelter and appropriately setting the stage regarding the balance between responsibilities and supports while in shelter.
 2. Conversely, security at 24 mental health shelters will be wholly/solely staffed by contracted security, instead of the mix of peace officers and security currently in place. DHS Peace Officer headcount will be removed at these locations and reduced overall as a result, and we will add clinical staff at these locations to better serve clients' needs.
 3. Again, by decreasing overall security presence, shifting away from the hybrid model at these sites that at times created counterproductive overlap, and ensuring more standardized staffing and clear/consistent roles and responsibilities within sites, we will re-prioritize the role of social services staff and social services responses, including positive engagement, and de-escalation, with security playing a supporting role as a backstop.
 - And we will also be implementing these changes according to differing security needs by shift, with a reduced security presence during the day when social services staffing levels

are higher and an increased security presence at night when social services staffing levels are lower and the need for security is greater.

- We are confident this ongoing development in our approach to security will help further the creation of welcoming environments focused on personal engagement.
- And, from a financial perspective, these changes will also help us keep in place robust social services, even in the midst of unprecedented budget constraints.
- Working in partnership with our providers, we are moving immediately to implement these reforms – and will be acting quickly to change the configuration of on-the-ground security delivery to achieve the savings this year.

MEETING NOTES:

NEW INFORMATION:

FOLLOW-UP COMMITMENTS:

AGENDA ITEM 4: "Crusties"

For the last four years there has been specific questions regarding seasonal "traveler" street homeless, who identify themselves as "Crusties." Please discuss any new initiatives for this population, including harm reduction outreach if any.

AGENCY RESPONSE:

- 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.
- Since the launch of HOME-STAT, the most comprehensive street homeless outreach program nationwide, outreach teams have helped nearly 2,900 homeless New Yorkers off the streets, thanks to new investments and now a tripling of the size of those outreach teams—and we are committed to continuing and improving that work every day.
- New Yorkers who sleep 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, involving hundreds of contacts with dedicated, persistent, and compassionate outreach teams to build the trust and relationship that will result in street homeless New Yorkers ultimately accepting services.
- With a dedicated not-for-profit provider for each borough (the Manhattan Outreach Consortium, led by CUCS in partnership with Goddard-Riverside and Breaking Ground, in Manhattan; Breaking

Ground in Brooklyn and Queens; BronxWorks in the Bronx; Project Hospitality on Staten Island; and BRC in the subways), HOME-STAT outreach teams working around the clock across the five boroughs, building relationships by making regular—often daily—contact with street homeless New Yorkers: getting to know them, developing trust, and sharing information about the resources available to them.

- Not-for-profit outreach provider partners and outreach teams also have psychiatrists who perform psychiatric evaluations on the streets and thereby help outreach teams understand and better meet the individual needs of each unsheltered New Yorker. These clinicians and psychiatrists help outreach teams make more effective connections with clients who may be difficult to engage, in many cases due to significant mental health challenges. HOME-STAT also provides aftercare services, continuing to work with individuals who receive placements to ensure that they get the supports they need to remain in housing and off of the street.
- DHS performs joint operations with community partners, including DOT, DOHMH, Parks Department, and area stakeholders; and our role is to engage individuals living on the street and encourage them to accept services. During these operations, law enforcement may attend if there is a need for any enforcement actions, including arrest or summons.
- Additionally, in Manhattan, not-for-profit CUCS deploys their Street Medicine program in which a team of mobile Nurse Practitioners offers medical assessments and minimally invasive treatments to people directly on the streets, 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.

MEETING NOTES:

NEW INFORMATION:

FOLLOW-UP COMMITMENTS:

AGENDA ITEM 5: Shelter density

Is any permanent change in density specification or other safety measures planned in congregate shelters due to “lessons learned” due to COVID? This would relate to beds and recreation spaces and daycare and dining. If so, how will this be funded?

AGENCY RESPONSE:

As our City responds to this pandemic, our top priority is protecting the New Yorkers we serve, 24/7, no matter what. With a legal and moral obligation to provide shelter to those who need it, we intend to keep our doors open to New Yorkers in need, now more than ever, and remain committed to putting our clients’ health, safety, and wellbeing first in all that we do. Our essential staff will meet our mission and match this moment every day and be ready to support the people of this City who turn to us for help.

As you may know, DSS developed a multi-pronged response for implementing City health guidance on isolation and mitigation to protect the health and safety of our City's most vulnerable constituents during this crisis. The use of commercial hotel rooms has been and continues to be an essential part of these efforts, with thousands of commercial hotel units brought online on a temporary, emergency basis to assist with maintaining appropriate social distancing in shelters. Through these strategies, targeting need based on individual site vulnerability as well as site configuration, we have proactively relocated New Yorkers who we serve (who are not sick and non-symptomatic, asymptomatic, or pre-symptomatic at this time) from larger shelter locations with congregate settings across the city to commercial hotel units where we can protect their health more effectively during this crisis. These temporary relocations provide greater social distancing for the relocated clients as well as for clients remaining in the targeted shelters from which clients have been moved.

As this unprecedented situation evolves, we are evolving with it and working to implement unprecedented solutions at a scale never before seen. We are coordinating closely around the clock with our providers and Agency partners to protect the New Yorkers we serve, including to implement best practices citywide, promote safety and cleanliness, and increase social distancing/limit gatherings. We continue to adapt and improve, committed to supporting our City's most vulnerable residents in all that we do.

MEETING NOTES:

NEW INFORMATION:

FOLLOW-UP COMMITMENTS:

AGENDA ITEM 6: Language access

The murders in Chinatown a year ago pointed to the need for language access. Some outreach workers speak Spanish; we are not aware of any speaking a Chinese language. Are there any initiatives planned to provide language access both on the street and in shelters? How is this dealt with in shelters. The stories that came out at the time of the murders showed this was an issue.

AGENCY RESPONSE:

All DHS staff, including the Street Solutions Outreach staff, have access to telephonic interpretation services 24 hours a day/7 days a week/365 days a year.

All shelter staff, including both DHS direct-run shelters and provider locations also have access to telephonic interpretation services 24 hours a day/7 days a week/365 days a year. Telephonic interpretation services are available in 180+ languages, including many dialects of Chinese. (The Agency has provided interpretation services in Mandarin, Cantonese, Fujian, Toishanese and Hakka. Other dialects are available too.)

Under Local Law 30 and DSS/HRA/DHS policy, all clients, residents and members of the public have a right to free language access services. That means that clients and members of the public should feel free to communicate with the Agency in the language of their preference. We will get an interpreter, either in-person or on the phone to provide support and understanding.

If any member of the public feels that we did not provide appropriate language services, complaints can be

made at Infoline or to 311.

MEETING NOTES:

NEW INFORMATION:

FOLLOW-UP COMMITMENTS:

AGENDA ITEM 7: Barriers to Shelter

How many DHS beds are now animal friendly? Do animals need to be registered support animals to be allowed with residents of DHS shelters. Is current funding to register support animals threatened? Are there any initiatives to look at harm reduction methods when outreaching to street homeless. This seems to be a major point of contention between advocates and DHS. How would a change impact funding?

AGENCY RESPONSE:

We appreciate the importance of pets in people’s lives, particularly the support and stability they provide, and it is our policy to permit service animals as well as emotional support animals as needed, with several New Yorkers experiencing homelessness and residing in shelter currently with their service or emotional support animals as they get back on their feet. At the same time, we must be mindful of the physical limitations of the haphazard shelter system we inherited, where not all locations may be effectively designed for pets and recognize that the one-size-fits-all approach of the past does not work. That is why we issued our Turning the Tide plan and modernized our open-ended request for proposals: to transform our shelter footprint, develop new approaches, increase the options available to those we serve, and raise the bar on services we provide. We encourage our not-for-profit partners to propose innovative new shelters and safe havens based on real-time needs they may be experiencing on the ground, including for pet-friendly locations.

As we did before this unprecedented crisis, our HOME-STAT outreach teams continue their 24/7/365 outreach, helping unsheltered New Yorkers experiencing homelessness come in off the streets and subways into transitional and permanent housing. As part of those efforts, they canvass the streets and subways every day, offering a helping hand. During this pandemic, these essential staff are more essential than ever, focused on protecting our clients’ safety in addition to helping them transition off the streets and subways. To that end, they have integrated health experts’ latest guidance into their outreach practice, asking clients about their health/wellbeing, including to determine whether these individuals have experienced any symptoms— and we have implemented citywide protocols to ensure anyone who expresses symptoms is connected to hospital care if needed or to dedicated isolation units for monitoring and recovery.

All outreach teams have licensed clinicians who work with clients on the streets. In addition to receiving on-going case management, people are assessed for immediate risk/crisis during each encounter. The teams also have psychiatrists who perform psychiatric evaluations on the streets and thereby help us understand and better meet the individual needs of each New Yorker experiencing street homelessness. These clinicians and psychiatrists help our outreach teams connect with unsheltered individuals who may be difficult to engage. Many have fallen through every available safety net, and experience trauma and challenges, including mental health and substance use challenges that may make outreach more

complicated. Accepting outreach efforts, including services that will help New Yorkers experiencing street homelessness transition indoors from the streets, is voluntary, but we remain undeterred in our efforts to engage them proactively and aggressively, and offering assistance and services, until we make the connection that will help them transition off the streets. Our teams continue to reach out to these New Yorkers to offer services and help them come indoors. HOME-STAT also provides aftercare services, continuing to work with individuals who receive placements to ensure that they receive the support they need to remain in housing and off of the street.

MEETING NOTES:

NEW INFORMATION:

FOLLOW-UP COMMITMENTS:

AGENDA ITEM 8: Hotel Shelters

What is the projected timeline to eliminate use of hotels as shelters, outside of those that are temporarily employed to provide social distancing during the pandemic? What is the timeline for returning shelter residents back to their originally assigned shelters and if there is a series of milestones that must be met to allow their return, what are those milestones? How has funding for hotels impacted the DHS budget and have other programs been eliminated to support the hotels?

AGENCY RESPONSE:

As our City responds to this pandemic, our top priority is protecting the New Yorkers we serve, 24/7, no matter what. With a legal and moral obligation to provide shelter to those who need it, we intend to keep our doors open to New Yorkers in need, now more than ever, and remain committed to putting our clients' health, safety, and wellbeing first in all that we do. Our essential staff will meet our mission and match this moment every day and be ready to support the people of this City who turn to us for help.

As you may know, DSS developed a multi-pronged response for implementing City health guidance on isolation and mitigation to protect the health and safety of our City's most vulnerable constituents during this crisis. The use of commercial hotel rooms has been and continues to be an essential part of these efforts, with thousands of commercial hotel units brought online on a temporary, emergency basis to assist with maintaining appropriate social distancing in shelters. Through these strategies, targeting need based on individual site vulnerability as well as site configuration, we have proactively relocated New Yorkers who we serve (who are not sick and non-symptomatic, asymptomatic, or pre-symptomatic at this time) from larger shelter locations with congregate settings across the city to commercial hotel units where we can protect their health more effectively during this crisis. These temporary relocations provide greater social distancing for the relocated clients as well as for clients remaining in the targeted shelters from which clients have been moved. At the point at which public health guidance determines that clients can be relocated back to our congregate shelters from the temporary emergency relocation sites, we will inform you and the community.

MEETING NOTES:

NEW INFORMATION:

FOLLOW-UP COMMITMENTS:

AGENDA ITEM 9: WiFi

Will providers be required to provide Wi-Fi in family shelters year-around, not just during school year via DOE and DHS laptops?

AGENCY RESPONSE:

Giving our families and children an opportunity to succeed has been our top priority from day one — and in these extraordinary times, this mission is more important than ever, which is why we are redoubling our efforts to preserve as much stability as possible for students experiencing homelessness. From the start of this pandemic, DHS has worked closely with partner Agencies, including the Department of Education, to bring cellular-enabled learning tablets and remote learning to students in shelter citywide at a scale and speed never before seen. As the school year approaches, we are focused on adapting to an evolving situation, addressing any issues as they arise, and ensuring the children we serve have the same access to education as all other New York City children.

Out of the more than 100,000 “students in temporary housing” citywide, on any given night there are approximately 13,500 school-aged children experiencing homelessness and residing in NYC DHS shelters. These students are the City’s top priority – and as such have been in DOE’s priority group for distribution of learning tablets. The devices are enabled with LTE, so they are fully internet-connected and do not need external Wi-Fi.

At this time, Wi-Fi in shelters is provided on a case by case basis, with some providers/sites able to install wiring throughout a site, others able to accommodate partial coverage, such as for common spaces, and others unable to provide any access at all due to cost and/or physical layout.

MEETING NOTES:

NEW INFORMATION:

FOLLOW-UP COMMITMENTS:

AGENDA ITEM 10: Removing Homeless Outreach from NYPD

Is there any need to replace NYPD homeless outreach headcount or can it be covered by existing DHS peace officers and MOC outreach teams?

AGENCY RESPONSE:

- 24/7/365 street and subway homeless outreach will continue to be led and conducted by DHS and contracted social service providers, including additional DHS street outreach nurses and DHS Street Medicine contracted providers, which will enhance DHS’ and outreach teams’ ability to respond to clients' medical or behavioral health needs.
 - In December 2019, we announced that we were increasing outreach staff from

approximately 400 to nearly 600 citywide as part of our efforts to continually enhance/redouble our City's homeless outreach efforts, which are and have been led 24/7/365 by experienced, dedicated, compassionate not-for-profit social service outreach providers. As indicated above, this latest funding shift will provide additional staff/headcount at DHS and at contracted outreach providers, including for example clinical staff/nurses.

- The City will continue to focus resources in our subways on unsheltered homelessness outreach, including our end of line subway program that has successfully moved more than 400 New Yorkers experiencing homelessness into shelter and stabilization beds since May. This work will continue to be done partnership with DHS and BRC.
- The Joint Command Center, which is based at DHS and includes dedicated DHS staff, including from our Street Solutions outreach division, will continue to operate, helping coordinate outreach efforts, placements, and response. However, NYPD will no longer directly participate in or be a routine part of homeless outreach, including at the JCC.

MEETING NOTES:

NEW INFORMATION:

FOLLOW-UP COMMITMENTS:

AGENDA ITEM 11: COVID Virtual & Digital Initiatives

What virtual and digital initiatives introduced because of COVID do you expect to continue? If some are continued, will they be a cost savings? Is waiver or legislation from state required?

AGENCY RESPONSE:

In these extraordinary times, social safety nets at every level of government are experiencing greater need than ever before—and our City is moving mountains to meet that need. We have implemented sweeping reforms to make all our benefits accessible online and via world-class app, reassigned and retrained more than 1,300 additional staff to process cases, and built a new remote access platform and deployed technology to enable as many staff as possible to process applications and interview clients from their homes. Thousands of users have affirmed the app's value with a 4.6/5 rating in Apple's app store. Now, the majority of public benefits that we provide to New Yorkers are available online—and we hope to keep building on this progress.

- New Yorkers applying for or already receiving public benefits like food stamps, cash assistance and rent payments, no longer have to seek help in person for any reason
- Can visit ACCESS/HRA at www.nyc.gov/ACCESSHRA to see if you qualify for SNAP/food stamps, Cash Assistance, and rent grants

MEETING NOTES:

NEW INFORMATION:

FOLLOW-UP COMMITMENTS:

AGENDA ITEM 12: Cleanup Operations

Which agency will be responsible for leading cleanup operations? Will this require additional funding at DHS?

AGENCY RESPONSE:

- In our City, we do not allow obstructions or encampments and coordinating across Agencies, the City addresses them quickly whenever they are found. At the same time, we are focused on continuing to build on the relationship and progress our outreach teams have developed with unsheltered individuals, encouraging them to accept services and transition off the streets. To that end, ahead of clean-ups by other agencies, we provide notice to New Yorkers experiencing street homelessness, outlining the process, next steps, and the options available to them. During clean-ups by other agencies, those outreach teams are present, engaging those in need, recognizing their essential humanity, and ensuring any property is respected and protected.
- Outreach teams coordinate closely with partner Agencies as well as property owners to help clients when conditions like this are being addressed, quickly and carefully whenever and wherever they may occur, while also encouraging unsheltered individuals to accept services and transition indoors—through pre-arranged, interagency efforts.
- As part of our HOME-STAT efforts, when conditions obstructing public space are observed, the City addresses them quickly and carefully—in a compassionate, coordinated manner. For outreach teams, that means preserving the relationships they have built with clients through engagement by providing advanced notice alerting them to the scheduled clean-ups by other agencies. Outreach teams are part of that process every step of the way, working closely with clients before, during, and after clean-ups to keep building the trust that will encourage them to accept services.
 - Joint outreach and/or clean-up operations by other agencies to address specific conditions include DOT, DOHMH, Parks Department, and area stakeholders; and our role is to engage individuals living on the street and encourage them to accept services.
 - These are carefully conducted interventions that take place when a known unsheltered individual has repeatedly refused services and has accumulated items that may obstruct an area, like a sidewalk, for example.
 - Accepting outreach efforts is voluntary and the City cannot forcibly remove an individual or their belongings without notice unless they pose

a danger to themselves or others. Clean-ups like these involve all participating agencies working together to build upon the trust and the relationship initially developed by outreach teams to ultimately encourage an individual to accept services and allow their accumulated belongings to be cleaned up. Each clean-up occurs on a case-by-case basis, responsive to dynamic circumstances on the ground regarding the particular known homeless individual.

- The City follows a careful citywide protocol regarding removal and storage of personal property belonging to homeless individuals who may be living on the streets—that protocol involves continued careful engagement by outreach teams, coordination across agencies, and notification to the individual that the property will be and, later, has been moved from the reported area, including details about how they can obtain the property. This collaborative process was developed in 2016 with the launch of HOME-STAT.
 - Because each case-by-case operation is based on the unique circumstances surrounding the reported belongings and the client, all partner agencies work to carefully assess all of the details of a given situation, including number and type of possessions and the physical location of the condition. In cases where a client may be mobile and moving their belongings with them, a careful assessment must be performed each time a client moves, as conditions have changed, potentially altering the clean-up plan agreed upon by all agencies after careful study of a situation. These assessments must be performed prior to every attempted clean-up to ensure safety and quality-of-life for the client, City staff, and the public are prioritized.
 - And because all clean-ups must be treated delicately so as not to undermine the progress our not-for-profit service provider outreach teams have made building relationships with clients, we address each condition with agency partners on a case-by-case basis, including soliciting clinical recommendations from the outreach teams most familiar with each case.
- Last December, we announced our “Journey Home” action plan to double down on the progress we have made through HOME-STAT—the nation’s most comprehensive street outreach program—and end long-term street homelessness as we know it within five years.
 - This “Journey Home” action plan calls for new permanent housing, new safe havens, new outreach staff, and new cross-agency collaborative intervention to ensure the HOME-STAT solutions that have helped nearly 2,900 unsheltered New Yorkers off the streets into transitional and permanent settings since 2016 also start to work for those unsheltered New Yorkers who have been the toughest to reach.
 - With new collaborative approaches and creative interventions, we intend to

achieve the breakthroughs and find the unique pathways off the streets that each of these individuals requires, in partnership with the dedicated, experienced outreach providers who have spent time getting to know them, building the trust and relationships that will ultimately change their lives.

- To learn more about this Administration's bold, unprecedented, historic plan to take action, visit nyc.gov/journeyhome.

MEETING NOTES:

NEW INFORMATION:

FOLLOW-UP COMMITMENTS:

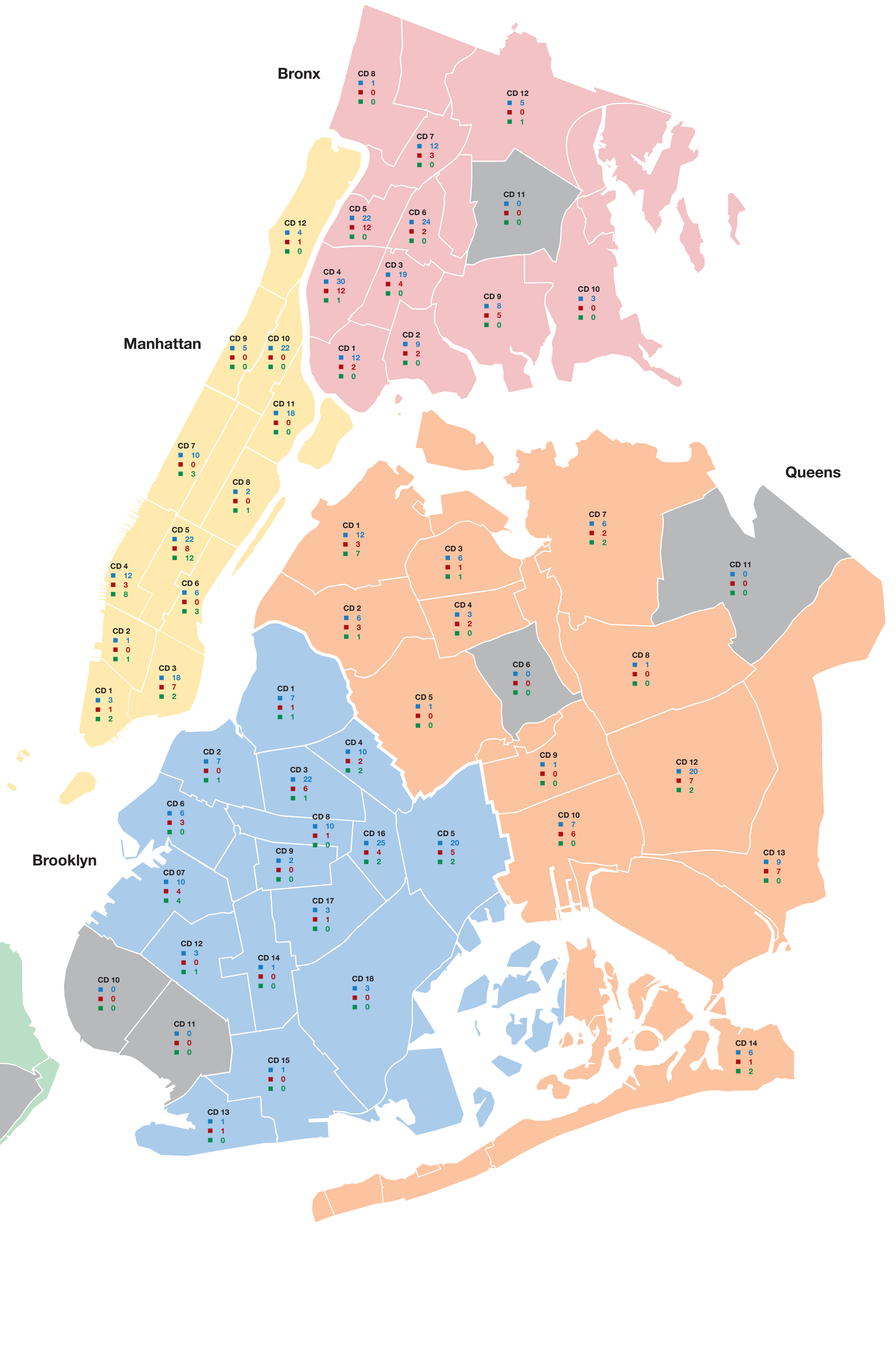
As of June 30, 2020, DHS provides shelter and services in **478 buildings**,

26% FEWER

than the 647 buildings reported in Turning the Tide in February 2017.

- All commercial hotel facilities and cluster buildings will be phased out as a part of Turning the Tide as we work to ensure shelters are distributed equitably across the five boroughs, including in
- communities that do not currently have any shelters.

This will enable us to offer homeless New Yorkers the opportunity to be sheltered in their home borough, nearer to their support networks, as they get back on their feet.



MANHATTAN	BRONX	BROOKLYN	QUEENS	STATEN ISLAND
■ 123 DHS shelter locations, including:	■ 145 DHS shelter locations, including:	■ 131 DHS shelter locations, including:	■ 78 DHS shelter locations, including:	■ 1 DHS shelter locations, including:
■ 20 Stop gap locations closing under Turning the Tide	■ 42 Stop gap locations closing under Turning the Tide	■ 28 Stop gap locations closing under Turning the Tide	■ 32 Stop gap locations closing under Turning the Tide	■ 0 Stop gap locations closing under Turning the Tide
■ 32 Temporary emergency commercial hotels to combat COVID-19	■ 2 Temporary emergency commercial hotels to combat COVID-19	■ 14 Temporary emergency commercial hotels to combat COVID-19	■ 15 Temporary emergency commercial hotels to combat COVID-19	■ 0 Temporary emergency commercial hotels to combat COVID-19