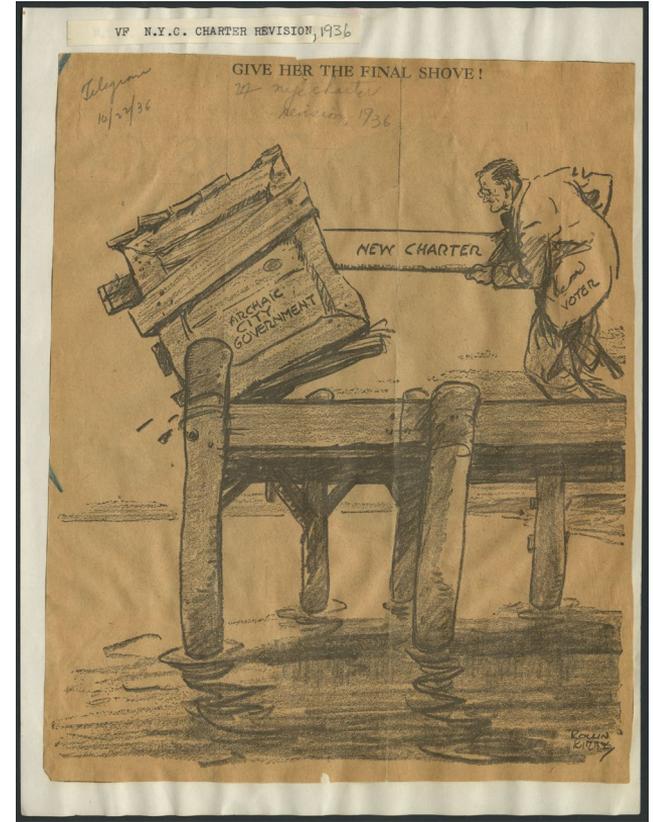


CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION

Public Meeting
Wednesday, May 14

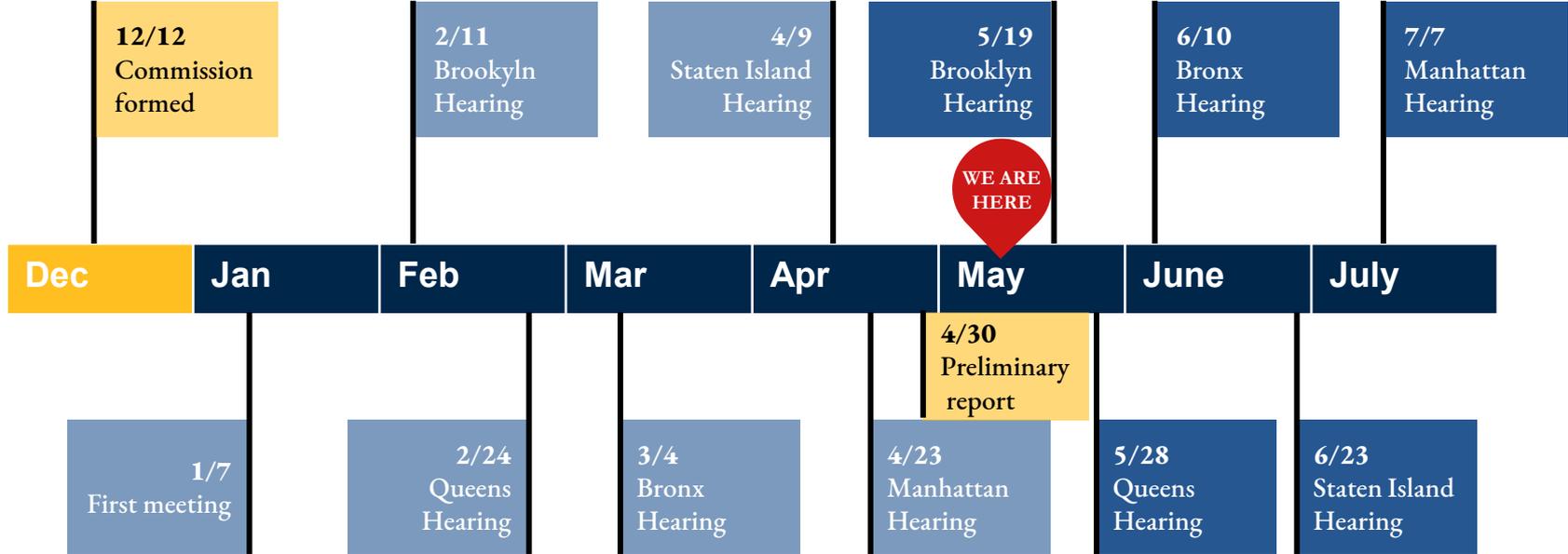
THE CITY CHARTER

- New York City Charter dates to the city's consolidation in 1898
- Enumerates powers, responsibilities, and procedures of New York City government
- Various changes can be made by either the State, charter revision commission, petition and referendum, or local law
 - Numerous changes over the decades
 - Major overhauls in 1901, 1936, 1989



A political cartoon from the *Telegram*, October 22, 1936. NYC Municipal Library, Vertical Files.

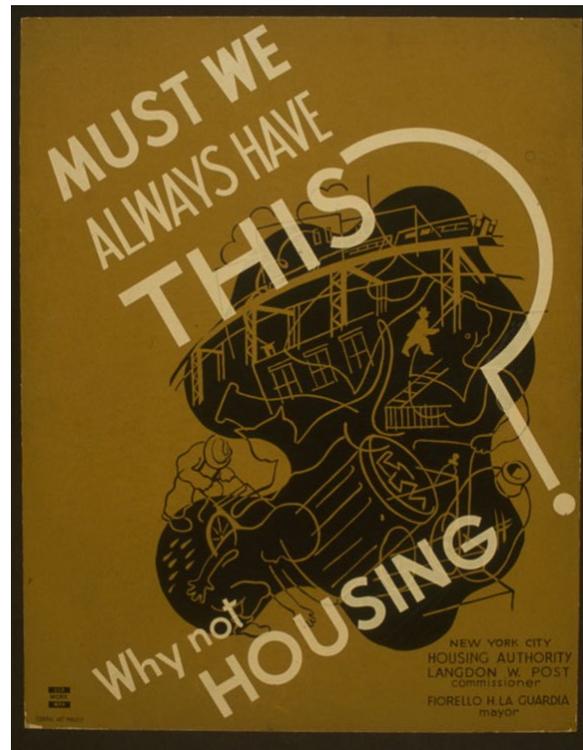
2025 CHARTER REVISION PROCESS



16 HOURS of TESTIMONY • 400+ ATTENDEES • 450 WRITTEN COMMENTS

HOUSING: The Crisis We Face

- New York City faces the worst housing crisis in decades
- This crisis impacts our city in many ways:
 - Segregation
 - Dynamism
 - National Presence

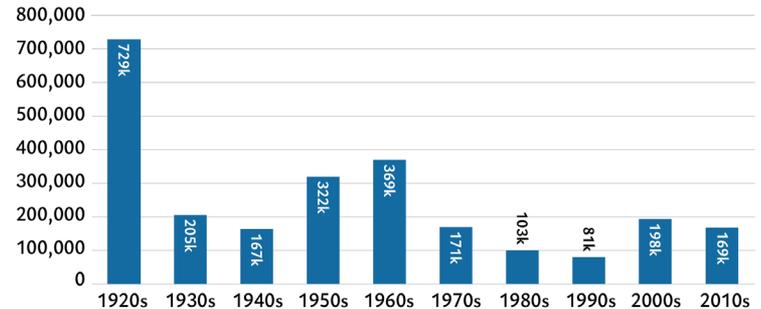


A poster about housing, 1936. Library of Congress

HOUSING: The Crisis We Face

- New York City is not building enough housing to meet New Yorkers' needs
 - NYC produces less housing than we used to, when the city was more affordable

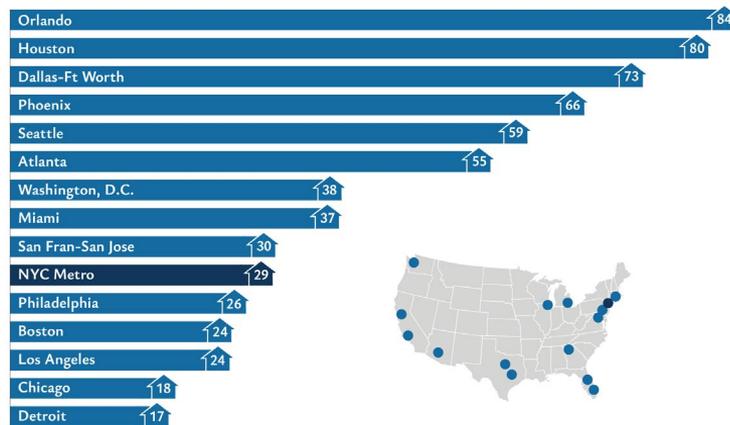
New Housing Production by Decade



HOUSING: The Crisis We Face

- New York City is not building enough housing to meet New Yorkers' needs
 - NYC produces less housing than we used to, when the city was more affordable
 - NYC produces less housing than other parts of the country that are more affordable

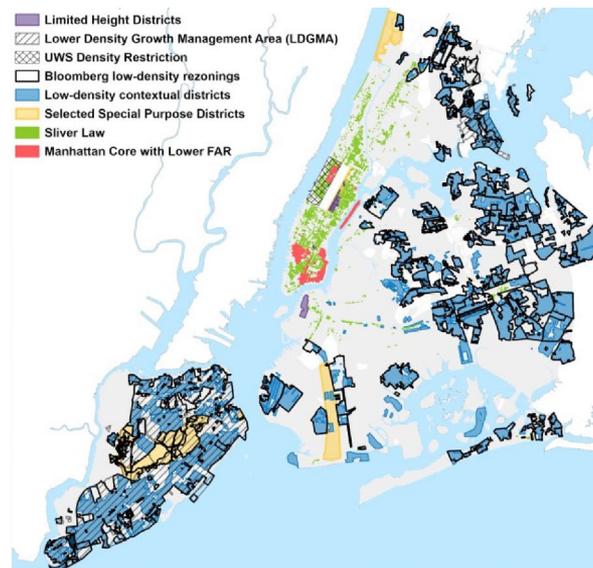
Housing Units Permitted per 1,000 Residents (2022), 2013 to 2022



Source: U.S. Census Bureau BPS Annual Files; NYC DCP Housing Database v22Q4; U.S. Census Bureau Population Estimates Program (PEP) 2022 Vintage; U.S. Census Bureau Delineation Files

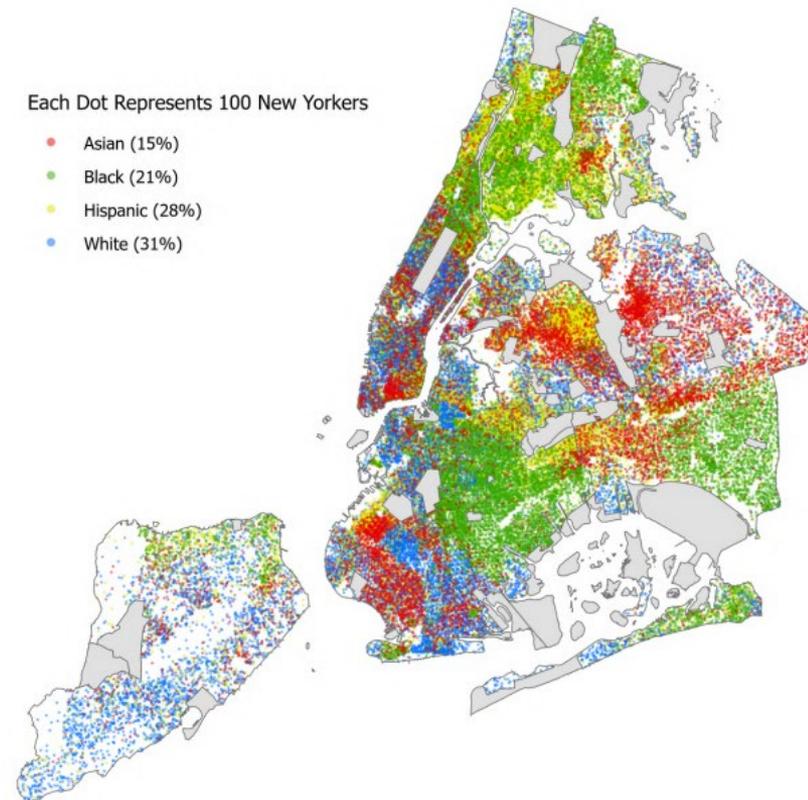
HOUSING: The Crisis We Face

- New York City is not building enough housing to meet New Yorkers' needs
 - NYC produces less housing than we used to, when the city was more affordable
 - NYC produces less housing than other parts of the country that are more affordable
 - A major driver of the housing shortage: in much of the city, zoning makes it illegal to build more housing



HOUSING: The Crisis We Face

- The housing shortage drives:
 - High rents
 - Displacement pressure
 - Segregation
 - Homelessness
 - Tenant harassment



Source: ACS 2019-2023, five-year estimates. Table DP05 tract-level data.

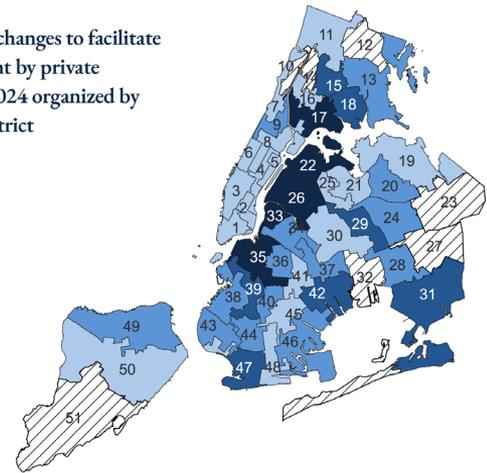
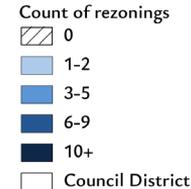
HOUSING: What can the Charter affect?

- Many key issues are outside the Charter
 - Rent stabilization
 - Property taxes
 - Budgetary support for housing (local, state, federal)
 - Environmental review
- Charter does control:
 - Land use process
 - Who makes decisions

HOUSING: What We Heard

- New York does not produce enough housing, and the housing we do produce is geographically uneven.
- ULURP does not work in many parts of the city, or for small projects.
 - Of 194 approved private applications for zoning map amendments in areas that allow housing in the last decade:
 - four City Council districts saw no applications at all
 - only five City Council districts averaged more than a single application per year
 - Of 120 approved private rezoning applications to facilitate housing in the last decade:
 - only one sought an increase of less than 40% residential capacity
 - only two sought a change to a “low density” district (R5 or below)

Adopted ULURP map changes to facilitate housing projects brought by private applicants from 2014-2024 organized by 2013-2023 Council District



HOUSING: What We Heard

- This status quo is a result of structural factors:
 - ULURP (created in 1975)
 - The City Council (empowered in 1989)
 - Member deference (grew more significant in 2000s)

The result: No housing proposal has been approved through ULURP over the local member's objection in 16 years.

| Year | ULURP # | Description | Category |
|------|----------------|---|----------------------------|
| 2021 | 210351ZMM | New York Blood Center | Commercial |
| 2009 | 090403 PSQ | New York Police Academy | City Project |
| 2009 | 090184 ZSK | Dock Street Development | Residential / Mixed-use |
| 2009 | 090415 HUK | Broadway Triangle Rezoning | Residential / Mixed-use |
| 2009 | 090470 PPQ | College Point Corporate Park | Commercial |
| 2007 | 070315 (A) ZRQ | Jamaica Rezoning | Residential / Mixed-use |
| 2007 | 20095400 SCQ | Maspeth High School | City Project |
| 2004 | 040217 ZSK | Watchtower Development | Residential / Mixed-use |
| 2004 | 040445 ZSM | Harlem Park Hotel | Commercial |
| 2003 | 030158 PSK | NYCEM Headquarters | City Project |
| 2002 | 010602 ZSM | Special Permit for a Manhattan Parking Garage (Upper West Side) | Other |
| 2001 | M 820995 | Hotel near La Guardia Airport | Commercial |

HOUSING: Member Deference

Leaders from across the spectrum have denounced the effects of member deference:



Jumaane Williams:

“There comes a time when member deference is running afoul or running against what the body says it wants to do. We, as a body, have said repeatedly we want to get deep affordability in our projects, and we want to make sure that projects move forward. But member deference, at times, has prevented that from happening, and it continues the segregation of the city.” (11/14/17)



U.S. HUD letter to Chicago:

“By limiting the availability of affordable housing, the local veto disproportionately harms Black and Hispanic households... The local veto perpetuates segregation... [and] effectuates opposition to affordable housing based on racial animus.” (10/24/23)



Donovan Richards & Ritchie Torres:

“Each of us was elected to be a responsible steward of the public good, not a feudal lord who gets to arbitrarily rule over public land as though it were a personal fiefdom. “Member deference” has its place, to be sure. But it becomes dangerous when it morphs into veto power over the growth of the city’s economy.” (8/3/20)



Marjorie Velazquez:

“Opponents of a plan, even if they are few, know that the very best way to prevent a project is to convince a councilmember to vote against it and they focus their attention on the local member. Simply put, a small vocal minority can get in the way of an affordable housing for a majority of residents who so desperately need it... With member deference, what was originally intended to be an avenue of input for all residents in the district, it's become a bludgeon for a few outspoken residents.” (3/4/25)

HOUSING: Areas to Explore

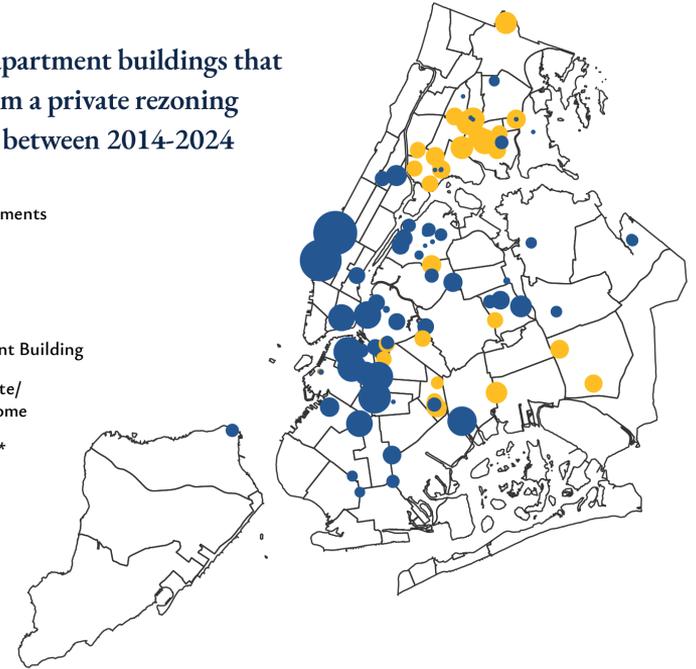
- Reducing Process Costs
 - “Fast Track” Land Use Review Process
 - General Changes to ULURP
 - Other Land Use Procedures
- Elevating Citywide Needs
 - Comprehensive Approaches to Planning
 - Empowering Boroughwide and Citywide Actors
- Leveraging Public Land
 - Faster Dispositions
 - Additional Disposition Process
 - Acquisitions

Permitted apartment buildings that resulted from a private rezoning application between 2014-2024

Number of Apartments



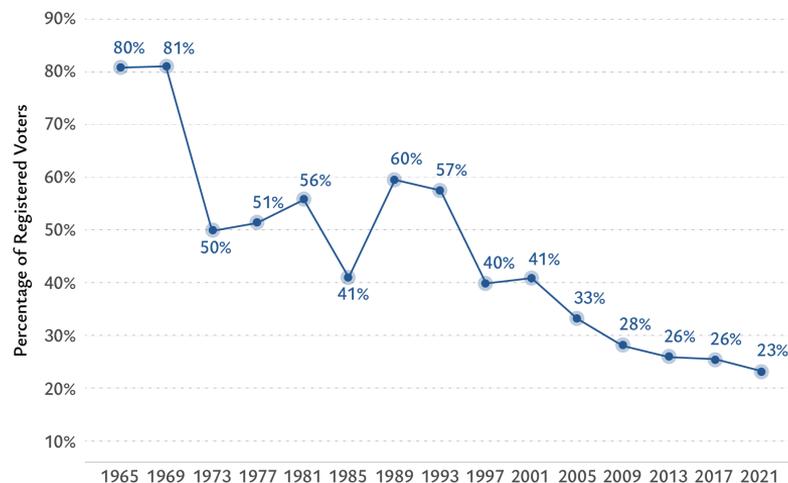
Type of Apartment Building



ELECTIONS: What We Heard

- New York has abysmal voter turnout in municipal elections
 - Turnout is especially low in minority communities and among young people
 - People who are not registered with a major party are largely locked out of the most important elections
- The CRC has received more written testimony calling for election reform than any other subject
- New York's shift to ranked choice voting in 2021 has shown promising results thus far

New York City Voter Turnout in Mayoral General Elections, 1965-2021



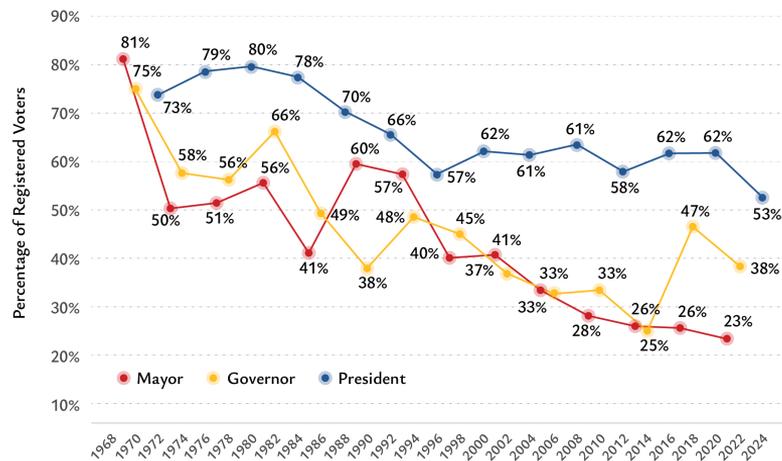
Source: NYC Board of Elections 2022 Annual Report

ELECTIONS: Areas to Explore

- Even-Year Elections

- New York's turnout in presidential election years is more than twice as high as odd years.
- Voter turnout is consistently higher in municipalities with even-year elections, and the electorate looks more like NYC.
- IBO estimates that consolidating elections would save the City \$42 million every two years.
- Supported by the CFB, Brennan Center, Citizens Union, Common Cause, and others.
- *Would likely require changes to both local and state law.*

New York City Voter Turnout in General Elections, 1968-2024

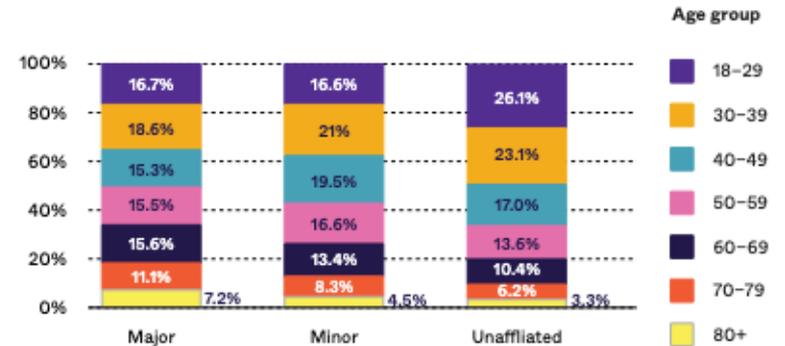


Source: NYC Board of Elections 2022 Annual Report & 2024 Election Survey Results Summary, NYS Board of Elections 2024 Enrollment Data

ELECTIONS: Areas to Explore

- Even-Year Elections
- Open Primaries
 - More than 1 million unaffiliated voters are today excluded from primary elections.
 - Jurisdictions throughout the U.S. offer alternative models to New York’s “closed primary” system, including “top two,” “top four,” or “jungle” primaries.
 - One notable proposal from Citizens Union: an open primary, with RCV, followed by a top-two general election.
 - CFB: “Opening New York’s closed primary system to unaffiliated voters would likely increase voter turnout and make the electorate more representative.”

Figure 6.2: Percent of voters by political party group, by age group



Source: NYC Campaign Finance Board, 2024 Voter Analysis Report

NONPROFIT PROCUREMENT & PAYMENT

- What We Heard
 - Nonprofits play a vital role in delivering essential services, but frequently face payment delays
 - Many bodies play a role in the procurement and payment process: the Procurement Policy Board (PPB), the Mayor's Office of Contract Services (MOCS), the Mayor's Office of Nonprofit Services, and the Comptroller
- Areas to Explore
 - Elevating and Empowering MOCS
 - Contract Advances, Partial Payment, and Interest for Late Payment
 - PPB Structural Changes
 - Discretionary Contracts
 - Additional Methods to Streamline Contracting

CLIMATE AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- What We Heard

- New York’s climate and infrastructure efforts are slowed or otherwise made more difficult by our own bureaucratic hurdles and processes.
- Land use laws in the Charter received their last major overhaul in 1989 — just one year after NASA scientist James Hansen first testified to the U.S. Senate about the existence of a “greenhouse effect.” Our Charter was not designed to address the climate emergency with the urgency it requires.

- Areas to Explore

- Promoting Resiliency on Public Streets and Property
- Voluntary Buyout Programs
- Electric Vehicle Infrastructure

THE CITY MAP

- What We Heard
 - The City Map is an obscure but critical part of the approval process for many housing and infrastructure projects
 - The map itself consists of five different sets of maps, one for each borough, totaling over 8,000 individual paper maps
 - Map alterations, confirmations, and address assignments can add delays to important projects
- Areas to Explore
 - City Map centralization and digitization

