



## **CONTACT**

495 Flatbush Avenue  
Brooklyn, NY 11225  
(718) 440-7730  
eastflatbushcdc.org

## **WHO WE ARE**

The East Flatbush Community Development Corporation is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to develop and implement programs to empower and improve the quality of life for individuals and families in the East Flatbush Community of Brooklyn, NY. Our focus areas are Real Estate Development and Economic Development in the form of Incubation.

## **East Flatbush Community Development Corporation Testimony for 2023 City Council Redistricting Process September 29, 2022**

Good day, everyone. I would like to begin by extending a thank you to Chair Walcott, Executive Director, Dr. John Flateau, and the New York City Districting Commission for all the work that has been done to host hearings so that they can hear from people throughout the city about this critical issue.

My name is Rona Taylor. I am providing updated testimony to my original testimony given at Medgar Evers College on August 22, 2022. As stated before, I am the Executive Director of the East Flatbush Community Development Corporation. Our mission is to work hand-in-hand with a wide range of stakeholders to create a more fair and just East Flatbush and by extension a more fair and just Brooklyn through providing social services, neighborhood planning, and opportunities for economic development. I am also a resident of Flatbush and have lived here and raised a family for nearly 15 years, but I have lived in Brooklyn for nearly 25 years, including Bed Stuy. During that time my neighbors and I have seen a great deal of change, including the exodus of many African American, and Caribbean residents due, in part, to rapid gentrification. This unfortunately is the story for many Black strongholds in Brooklyn.

In my previous testimony I shared that in reviewing the decennial census data profile, from 2010-2020 in the 40th Council District, I found that although the population has slightly increased overall from 153,000 to 155,000, when you look at the populations of people who make up the current population of this council district, the Black non-Hispanic category has declined by 20% or 18,482 people.

In the neighboring 45th Council District, there was also an increase in population from 153,200 to 156,700. Although the shift in population is not as drastic as in the 40th Council District, I see the steepest decline in the Black non-Hispanic population of 6.2% or 7,279.

Lastly, in reviewing the same data set for the 36th Council District, although there was a nearly 11% decrease in the overall population there is a similar pattern – a 22% decrease in the Black non-Hispanic population, or 24,637 people.

My primary consideration in providing testimony is two-fold: 1) ensure that each of these neighborhoods remain intact, the way they are, and 2) ensure that communities of interest remain intact.

For the 40th Council District, I largely agree with the Commission's proposed changes which has mostly kept the 2012 lines, but now extends the new lines several blocks east into Council District 41, and picks up some blocks in Council District 45, south of Church Avenue (between Church & Snyder Avenues).

However, one change that we would like to make to the proposed lines is to add back in sections in the western and southwestern part of the district, namely; the area of 7th Street from Church Avenue to Avenue H, and the area that includes 18th Avenue to the north, Avenue H to the South, East 8th/East 10th to the east, and Ocean Parkway to the west. This would include our South Asian neighbors. Currently, they are split between three districts. The advantage to this is that they have more than one representative that is fighting for their interests.

Similarly, I largely agree with the proposed lines for the 45th Council District, with slight modifications to the north, west and south into Flatbush, and Midwood. I have provided proposed lines for these two districts here: <https://districtr.org/plan/142536>.

Lastly, in regard to the 36th Council District, which is largely made up of Bed Stuy, I propose pushing the lines west into Ocean Hill as illustrated in this map: <https://districtr.org/plan/142538>.

In each case, I believe that by moving the lines in these proposed directions the districts regain some of the cultural vibrancy and economic power that they have lost.

I thank you for your kind attention.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rana Rgh". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Rana" being more prominent than the last name "Rgh".