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**Mayor Mamdani Releases Preliminary Citywide Racial Equity Plan and True Cost of Living Measure**

*Mayor fulfills obligation left unmet by previous administration and urges New Yorkers to share feedback*

*True Cost of Living report shows 62% of New Yorkers do not meet the true cost of living — a crisis falling hardest on communities of color*

**NEW YORK** — Mayor Zohran Mamdani today released the **Preliminary Citywide Racial Equity Plan (REP)** and the inaugural **NYC True Cost of Living (TCOL) Measure**, two reports that together establish a new framework for how New York City measures affordability, understands inequity and plans for a more equitable future.

The **Preliminary Citywide Racial Equity Plan** is the first governmentwide racial equity framework in the city's history, outlining data-driven agency goals, strategies and indicators to address long-standing disparities across public policy, services and practices. The **True Cost of Living Measure**, spearheaded by the Mayor's Office of Equity & Racial Justice in collaboration with the Urban Institute and the Mayor's Office for Economic Opportunity, provides a clear picture of what New Yorkers need to meet essential needs and achieve foundational economic security.

Both reports were mandated by successful voter referendums in 2022. You can download and review the [Preliminary Citywide Racial Equity Plan](#) and the [True Cost of Living Measure](#).

Together, the two reports make clear that New York City's affordability crisis is deeply tied to its history of racial inequity. Patterns of disinvestment, exclusion from homeownership, unequal access to health care

and employment and concentrated environmental burdens have shaped who has resources, who faces the greatest costs and who remains most economically insecure today.

“The True Cost of Living Measure offers an honest account of what it actually costs to live in this city — and who is being left behind. It shows that this is not a crisis affecting a small minority of New Yorkers. It is a crisis touching the vast majority of our city, in every borough and every neighborhood,” said **Mayor Zohran Kwame Mamdani**. “But we know this crisis is not felt equally. Black and Latino New Yorkers — who have been pushed out of this city for decades — are bearing the brunt. The Preliminary Racial Equity Plan is where we begin to reverse that pattern. These reports make one thing clear: we cannot tackle systemic racial inequity without confronting the affordability crisis head-on, and we cannot solve the cost-of-living crisis without dismantling systemic racial inequity.”

“Ensuring that New Yorkers can afford the actual costs of living and raising a family and that workers get a fair shot is at the center of our economic justice agenda. We also know that there cannot be true economic justice without dismantling structural racism and inequity,” said **Deputy Mayor for Economic Justice Julie Su**. “I'm proud to stand with Mayor Mamdani as we roll out these reports today. But the true impact of these reports will be felt far beyond the walls of this building. Our success will be measured by the transformation of the lives of everyday New Yorkers across the five boroughs.”

“Inequity has been embedded in the foundation of our city and nation since their inception; dismantling it requires a collective effort,” said **NYC Chief Equity Officer and NYC Mayor's Office of Equity & Racial Justice Commissioner Afua Atta-Mensah**. “The NYC Preliminary Citywide Racial Equity Plan reflects the city's commitment to systemic transformation—turning our values into actions. From housing and healthcare to education and infrastructure, every agency plays a pivotal role in reshaping how government serves New Yorkers. This plan outlines measurable goals and actionable strategies to advance racial equity, promote justice and create lasting change.”

“Our students are the youngest New Yorkers, and it is critical that we continue to examine how their lives and futures will be affected by racial inequities,” said **Schools Chancellor Kamar Samuels**. “When families cannot meet the true cost of living, the impact shows up in our classrooms. That is why with programs like Universal 3K/Pre-K, and our career readiness programs, we can provide students and their families with opportunities to be supported in our school system and beyond.”

“This plan delivers on a key priority of the Mamdani administration and reflects the voices of those who have called for its release. Inequities in access to food, health care, housing, education and economic opportunity persist in New York City, disproportionately affecting the health of communities of color,” said **NYC Health Commissioner Dr. Alister Martin**. “This marks the beginning of a new chapter in our history, as we chart a path toward building a city that reflects equity, justice and opportunity for all.”

“Mayor Mamdani's preliminary racial equity plan is a major step in our mission to not only make New York a more just and equitable city for all, but a truly affordable one,” said **SBS Commissioner Kenny Minaya**. “At SBS, we are proud leaders in equity. Our Jobs NYC Hiring Halls are held in communities that face historically high unemployment, and our new NYC Future Fund delivers flexible loans designed to meet the unique challenges faced by seasonal small businesses. The new racial equity plan expands our ability

to help even more New Yorkers, and address longstanding disparities in economic opportunity more effectively.”

“The Racial Equity Plan and the True Cost of Living Measure reveal the deep inequalities that continue to impact the affordability and livability of our city,” said **Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) Commissioner Sandra Escamilla Davies**. “While these findings underscore real challenges, they help us better understand what New Yorkers need to thrive and guide us in directing resources to the communities that need them most. At DYCD, we are committed to turning this insight into meaningful, targeted investments for young people, families and neighborhoods across the five boroughs.”

“DOB is proud to support this effort, a framework that voters decisively called into fruition to hold city government accountable for advancing racial equity and elevating community voices in decision making. The True Cost of Living Measure makes clear that most New Yorkers cannot afford to live in our city without support, with housing costs driving the burden for many families across the five boroughs,” said **Buildings Commissioner Ahmed Tigani**. “Under the Mayor’s leadership, we are working to make it easier to build housing, build it safely, build it efficiently and bring down costs so we can create the accessible and affordable city New Yorkers deserve. This framework means that our mission to safeguard buildings, protect workers and the public and make our city safer will be carried out in a way that serves all communities.”

“In 2022, New Yorkers mandated that our government see them and their financial struggles when they voted overwhelmingly for the City to annually calculate the true cost of living. They understood that meaningful solutions to the cost-of-living crisis are only possible when government officials can see and understand the myriad ways New Yorkers of all ages and family types struggle to live in our city,” said **Jennifer Jones Austin, CEO, FPWA, and former Chair, New York City Racial Justice Commission**. “We were made to wait four years, but in the first 100 days of the Mamdani Administration, the Mayor is releasing the measure and findings, and now it’s up to policymakers, advocates and every day New Yorkers to dig into the data and use it to inform and address affordability in the city.”

“Our continued work to ensure every New Yorker is fed, cared for, has access to learning and feels safe is strengthened by the release of the first government-wide Racial Equity Plan,” said **Grace C. Bonilla, President and CEO, United Way of New York City**. “For years, communities across our city have been calling for this level of transparency, accountability and alignment — and this plan reflects a long-overdue step toward meeting that moment. At a time when threats to SNAP and Medicaid risk deepening inequities, we know those impacts will fall hardest on communities of color. It is our collective responsibility to act with urgency, and we applaud Mayor Mamdani for moving this work forward.”

### **The Preliminary Citywide Racial Equity Plan**

The Preliminary Citywide Racial Equity Plan marks the first time any New York City administration has required major city agencies to examine their work through a racial equity lens and identify and eliminate disparities.

The plan sets goals across seven domains: Children, Youth, Older Adults and Families; Economy; Housing and Preservation; Infrastructure and Environment; Health and Wellbeing; Community Safety, Rights and Accountability; and Good Governance and Inclusive Decision-Making.

From the redlining that locked generations of Black and immigrant New Yorkers out of homeownership to highway construction that tore through Bronx communities in the 1950s and 1960s, the report confronts the City's role in creating structural inequities.

### **Context and Foundational data from the Preliminary Plan:**

- 45 City agencies participated in the first governmentwide racial equity planning process.
- The median household net worth of white New Yorkers is approximately \$276,900 — nearly 15 times greater than that of Black New Yorkers, at \$18,870.
- Black New Yorkers have the lowest life expectancy of any racial or ethnic group at 76.1 years, compared with 81.8 years for white New Yorkers.
- The plan proposes more than 200 agency-level short, medium and long-term goals, over 800 strategies for implementation, and 600 indicators to track and report progress.

### **Key Goals from the Preliminary Racial Equity Plan:**

- **Economic Opportunity:** Expand access to capital for underserved businesses, connect New Yorkers in high-unemployment communities to quality jobs, and help young people build generational wealth.
- **Housing:** Apply a racial equity framework to all new housing proposals to ensure fair geographic investment.
- **Health:** Ensure that every New Yorker has access to a primary care physician by 2034 and reduce truck-related pollutants in communities of color that are disproportionately affected by warehousing activity.

For the next 30 days, the Mamdani administration will gather public feedback before releasing a Final Citywide Racial Equity Plan. Public feedback can be shared at <https://bit.ly/MOERJRacialEquity>. In addition, the NYC Commission on Racial Equity (CORE), an independent accountability partner on the Racial Equity Plan, will share upcoming engagement opportunities (<https://www.nyc.gov/core>).

### **The True Cost of Living Measure**

The True Cost of Living Measure calculates what families must earn to meet essential needs across eight categories: housing, food, health care, child care, transportation, taxes, savings and other essentials.

Unlike the federal poverty line, the TCOL reflects the realities of New York City's economy and accounts for differences in family size, composition and location. The inaugural report uses 2022 data as a baseline for future tracking.

### **Key Findings:**

- **62% of New Yorkers — 5.04 million people — do not meet their true cost of living**, compared with roughly 18% to 20% identified as poor under traditional measures.
- The average annual resource gap is \$39,603 per family.
- **The median annual costs for a family with children are \$159,197** to achieve economic security but median resources are \$124,007 — a gap of more than \$35,000.
- **73% of children in New York City — 1.2 million — live in families that don't meet their cost of living**; in the Bronx, that figure rises to 87%.
- **New Yorkers with self-reported disabilities face the highest burden, with 92% unable to meet their cost of living and an average** resource gap of \$76,178.
- **Hispanic New Yorkers face the highest TCOL rate at 77.6%**, followed by Black New Yorkers at 65.6% and Asian and Pacific Islander New Yorkers at 63.3%, compared with 43.7% for white New Yorkers. **Intraborough racial disparities are starkest in Manhattan, where Hispanic residents face a TCOL rate of 85.3 percent and Black residents a rate of 80%** compared to 32.9 percent for white residents.
- Approximately 3.58 million New Yorkers earn above the federal poverty line but still don't meet their cost of living — a “missing middle” often largely invisible in traditional poverty measures.
- **Government supports, including stabilized housing, Universal Pre-K/3-K, SNAP and tax credits**, reduce the overall NYC TCOL rate by about 5 percentage points.

Today's releases come as new research underscores the urgency of the crisis. Columbia University's [Poverty Tracker](#), published this winter in partnership with Robin Hood, found that nearly 2.2 million people, including 450,000 children, lived in poverty in 2024 — the highest level in the study's 10-year history, with widening racial disparities. Asian and Latino New Yorkers were more than twice as likely to live in poverty as white New Yorkers, and Black New Yorkers faced similarly elevated rates.

The affordability crisis in New York City extends far beyond those counted in official poverty statistics. The TCOL will be updated annually to provide a clear, current accounting of what it costs to live here with dignity.

*The NYC True Cost of Living Measure was developed in collaboration with the Urban Institute using their Analysis of Transfers, Taxes, and Income Security (ATTIS) microsimulation model based on American Community Survey data. The Preliminary Citywide Racial Equity Plan was developed by the Mayor's Office of Equity & Racial Justice in collaboration with 45 city agencies.*

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