

Testimony from NYCHA's Chief Operating Officer Eva Trimble
NYCHA's Electric Micromobility Policy
Committee on Public Housing
Monday, June 24, 2024 – 1 p.m.
New York City Hall Council Chambers

Chair Chris Banks, members of the Committee on Public Housing, other distinguished members of the City Council, NYCHA residents, community advocates, and members of the public: good afternoon. I am Eva Trimble, NYCHA's Chief Operating Officer. I am pleased to be joined by Brian Honan, Executive Vice President of Intergovernmental Affairs, and Joe Terranova, Director of Fire Safety.

I'd like to note that Mr. Terranova is NYCHA's first-ever Director of Fire Safety – he was brought on to oversee our fire safety team, which, as part of recent organizational and operational enhancements, is now a standalone unit dedicated to improving fire safety standards at the Authority's developments. NYCHA's transformation is guided by our mandate to strengthen the Authority and improve residents' quality of life. At the heart of these efforts are resident engagement and economic opportunities, as well as resident health and safety. Thank you for this opportunity to discuss today an important demonstration of this work in action – NYCHA's implementation of an electric micromobility policy that was shaped extensively by input from our stakeholders, including residents, advocates, other members of the public, and the City Council.

Engaging Stakeholders to Support Community Safety

Residents' quality of life is central to everything we do. To that end, we endeavored to craft an electric micromobility policy that balances the safety of the NYCHA community with the economic needs of residents who rely on these devices for work and for transportation, especially in transit deserts around many of our city's public housing developments. NYCHA's mission is to foster opportunities for residents, and we realize that e-micromobility is a vital tool for economic advancement.

Due to fire safety concerns, in 2022 NYCHA sought public comment and engagement on a potential ban on e-micromobility devices, including e-bikes, at our developments. We listened closely to the feedback we received and, based on this input, revised the proposed policy,

evolving it from a total ban to a restriction – the amended version was presented for public comment in November 2023.

In response to the feedback received from our stakeholders during this second comment period, NYCHA adopted guidelines addressing the use of electric micromobility devices in NYCHA buildings and apartments, which are intended to reduce fire risks and better educate the community on good practices, while ensuring that residents can safely store and charge these devices.

NYCHA's Electric Micromobility Policy

This policy went into effect on March 1, 2024. It allows residents to keep or charge e-bikes and e-scooters that are legal to operate in NYC bike lanes in their apartments. Those devices that cannot be operated legally in NYC, or that require DMV registration or a driver's license to operate, are prohibited in NYCHA buildings. The policy also includes the following safety guidelines:

- Only one e-bike, e-scooter, or battery may be charged at a time in a NYCHA apartment;
- An adult must be present and awake in the apartment during charging;
- Extension cords cannot be used for charging, and charging can't take place near radiators and other heat sources or apartment doors and other exits;
- Lithium-ion batteries that have been banned by NYC law are prohibited; and
- Charging and storage are not allowed in building common areas.

In addition to posting this new policy on our website, NYCHA also notified residents through an email blast, development postings, The NYCHA Journal, and rent inserts, among other outreach.

A Safe and Sustainable Future

Promoting sustainability is also a critical element of NYCHA's transformation, and we recognize that electric micromobility helps advance NYCHA's, and the City's, sustainability agenda.

Since 2022, NYCHA has participated in the Adams administration's Interagency Electric Micromobility Task Force, which brings together a variety of City agencies to develop and apply the City's Micromobility Action Plan; the task force promotes safe electric micromobility while

addressing the City’s fire and street safety priorities by collaboratively developing and deploying a range of comprehensive resources. NYCHA also continues to work closely with partners such as the NYC Fire Department and NYC Department of Transportation on best practices and the best way forward in terms of fire safety and electric micromobility.

In March 2023, Mayor Adams announced the “Charge Safe, Ride Safe Electric Mobility Action Plan,” which employs a multifaceted approach to reduce fires and promote safe usage of micromobility devices. Included in the plan was a pilot program between NYCHA and Con Edison to install outdoor charging and storage areas for micromobility devices at four developments: Queensbridge North and Queensbridge South in Queens, De Hostos in Manhattan, and Van Dyke 1 in Brooklyn. We expect that the contract will be executed this summer, and installation is anticipated to begin in early 2025.

NYCHA was also awarded a \$25 million grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation to expand micromobility charging and storage facilities to 53 more campuses. We are currently working with our City partners to implement this RAISE grant, and look forward to providing an update on this initiative in the coming months.

Forging a Path of Safety and Sustainability

Residents’ health, safety, and well-being guide every aspect of our work. We believe we have struck the right balance for promoting safety while fostering economic empowerment, transportation alternatives, and quality of life through our guidelines on the use of e-micromobility devices. We are also creating a safe charging environment for the community by investing in charging stations at our developments.

As always, we appreciate your input, and we look forward to our continued collaboration in service to NYCHA residents.

Thank you. We are happy to answer any questions you may have.