APPENDIX N:

**Written Comments on DEIS
and
Transcript of Public Hearing**

DEIS Response for Bay Street Rezoning

March 11, 2019

Introduction by Council Member Rose

I am deeply disturbed by the lack of planning work that has been conducted by the city agencies before the CPC hearing on the Bay Street Rezoning. Staten Islanders deserve the same level of attention and investment that all other boroughs enjoy. This rezoning would allow for a major change in land use for a community that was not built to handle this level of development. According to DCP's DEIS, this rezoning is expected to have impacts on almost every facet of life for residents in and around the rezoning area including: traffic impacts at almost every intersection along Bay Street, impacts to already overcrowded local buses and schools, lack of required day care facilities, and displacement of low-income residents and businesses. The DEIS was insufficient in the lack of analysis of emergency services and medical facilities, and there is no serious mitigation proposed in the DEIS.

I have operated in good faith with this Administration to provide clear goals that we need to achieve before we can vote on this project, and I'm only growing more concerned that my community does not have the necessary information to believe this proposal is in their best interests.

We have a long way to go before I can say confidently that this project will be good for my constituents. I urge the Administration to get serious, or we have no project.

Affordable Housing

Over 48% of renter households in CD1 in Staten Island are rent burdened, and over 34% of renter households are paying 50% or more of their income in rent[1]. The highest rent burden is experienced by those earning less than $49,000 per year.

Rent Burden of Low Income Households in Staten Island CD1[2]

1. American Community Survey PUMA Data Staten Island CD1
2. American Community Survey PUMA Data Staten Island CD1
3. Urby, Staten. "Staten Island Urby | Studio, 1 & 2 BR Apartments | Now Leasing". *Urbystatenisland.Com*, 2019, https://www.urbystatenisland.com/.
4. "HPD - About - What Is Affordable Housing". *www.nyc.gov*, 2018, https://www1.nyc.gov/site/hpd/renters/area-median-income.page.

Household Income	Less than $10,000	$10,000-$19,999	$20,000-$34,999
Share of Total Population	24.4%	14.4%	15.3%
Percentage Rent Burdened	60.1%	77.1%	81.7%

Rent Burden for Middle Income Households in Staten Island CD1[2]

Household Income	$35,000-$49,000	$50,000-$74,999	$75,000-$99,999
Share of Total Population	8.4%	13.7%	8.6%
Percentage Rent Burdened	71.4%	34.7%	7.6%

To address the rent burden of low income households, commitments need to be made to provide housing that is affordable at these incomes. Decisions about the most effective MIH options for Bay Street should be informed by this need. Additionally, market-rate units within the corridor are currently priced at a level affordable for those earning 120% Area Median Income (AMI)[3, 4]. Studio, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom apartments at URBY Staten Island, are renting at or below HPD's affordability thresholds for this income bracket ($1,823, $2,292, and $2,759 respectively)[3,4]. This means that the so-called "Workforce" MIH option is an inappropriate MIH option for the North Shore. The 75% of "market rate" units will continue to satisfy this demand.

Instead, HPD should aggressively reach out to property owners about entering into HPD subsidy programs to prevent displacement in one- to four-family buildings where rent-burdened lower-income families reside. For those low-income tenants displaced between the date of adoption of the resolution and the full build-out of Bay Street, HPD should consider establishing a fund to help relocate tenants within the study area of the socio-economic chapter of the DEIS.

Only development of affordable housing should be considered on City-owned properties that are part of this application (besides the 55 Stuyvesant Site) including the use of the ELLA term sheet to reach lower levels of affordability.

The City should use the HPD term sheets as the model for providing affordable housing along the waterfront.

HPD's Partners in Preservation pilot program needs to be expanded to Staten Island CD1 to ensure that there are on-the-ground, community-based anti-displacement initiatives to combat tenant harassment, and to provide a centralized location for tenants to have access to education about their rights as renters.

Community Facilities

Schools

Our elementary schools are overcrowded. The DEIS found that there are significant adverse impacts associated with the proposed actions on local elementary schools. Even with the addition of the new 357 Targee Street School (that will account for 748 new elementary school seats)[1] the elementary schools in

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[1] DEIS, Bay Street, 4-15

Subdistrict 4 of CSD 31 will still be overcrowded with a utilization rate of 131% and a deficit of approximately 3,327 seats *without the approval of the Bay Street Rezoning.*

If this rezoning is approved, the overcrowding in our elementary schools will increase to a utilization of 137% and a deficit of 4,043 elementary school seats

To mitigate these impacts a plan needs to be developed and presented to the public that would outline what kind of strategies SCA and DCP are taking to reduce overcrowding in our schools to under 100% capacity by 2030. These strategies should include: new funding for school seats, building new schools in Stapleton Waterfront*,* acquiring the former Staten Island Hospital site for a new school*,* identifying mixed-use development projects near Bay Street that could incorporate a new SCA school, and other strategies that can be conducted to encourage families to use existing underutilized DOE facilities.

Our high schools are overcrowded. According to the DEIS, Staten Island high schools are already overcrowded with a 106% utilization rate.

Even with the introduction of 307 new high school seats, overcrowding is expected to worsen to a utilization rate of 126% - a deficit of 4,198 seats, *without the Bay Street Rezoning being approved*.

If this rezoning is approved, Staten Island high schools are expected to see worsened overcrowding, with a utilization rate of 129% and a deficit of 4,531 high school seats.

However, the CEQR methodology does not accurately capture the impacts to high schools in scenarios where there is existing overcrowding. For this reason the DEIS does not show impacts to high schools.

The Council has previously made our opinion clear that the thresholds in overcrowded districts should be different than those with no existing overcrowding in the local subdistrict. The 3% increase will make a significant overcrowding problem in our high schools even more significant. The FEIS should have a detailed plan to alleviate overcrowding in Subdistrict 4 of CSD 31 by 2030. See above for potential strategies to reduce overcrowding.

Daycare facilities

The DEIS identifies a significant adverse impact to local daycare facilities. The City should allocate funding for the additional 72 publicly-funded childcare slots. NYC HPD should include language in their RFP for the disposition of the publicly-owned property on Jersey Street (part of the ULURP actions in this application) that indicates a preference for respondents who include daycare space in their development proposals. ACS should work with local private land owners to lease or purchase property to run daycare facilities near the Bay Street corridor.

Public Libraries

The approval of the Bay Street Rezoning would increase the NYPL Stapleton Branch and St. George Library Center catchment area population by 15.49% and 7.19% respectively. This is far above the quantitative threshold in CEQR methodology; however, the City expects the local branches to make up for this deficit through increased services, with no funding allocated to improve the local libraries. The City should identify funding to add a new library, identify and fund needed capital upgrades to local NYPL branches, and provide public Wi-Fi access via the LINKNYC program, or provide free publicly-accessible computer labs near the Bay Street corridor.

Police, Fire, and Health Care Facilities

While the CEQR methodology does not require the City to conduct a detailed analysis for impacts to local NYPD, FDNY, or local health care facilities, it would be irresponsible for the City to not take this issue seriously with the introduction of a new neighborhood of this size to the North Shore.

According to the DEIS, Richmond University Medical Center was designed to serve 22,000 people annually; however, the medical center now receives over 65,000 outpatient visits every year. The City should allocate funding to increase staffing and inpatient treatment facilities at RUMC or add additional capacity at another location in the North Shore.

A full accounting of local NYPD, FDNY, and health care services is the least that could be done to assure residents that they will have access to the same amount of emergency services before and after this rezoning. The FEIS should include letters from the Commissioners of the FDNY, NYPD, and DOHMH that there will be no significant adverse impacts in local police, fire, and health care services in the North Shore with the approval of this rezoning.

Open Space

Even accounting for the additional 12 acres of waterfront recreation space that was promised with the 2006 Stapleton waterfront rezoning, the Bay Street corridor would need to add approximately 6.25 acres of open space (including 2.25 acres of active open space) to avoid significant open space impacts. There are limited vacant properties located in and around the project area making the siting of new parks difficult within the study area.

The City should make commitments to improve the quality of existing open space in the study area. The replacement of Cromwell Center at Lyons Pool should be funded in the 2020 Capital Budget. The City should outline the timeline and funding gaps for completion of the Tompkinsville Esplanade to connect the entire waterfront along from Stapleton to the Staten Island Ferry Terminal. The City should commit additional funding to help complete this critical waterfront connection to not only reduce the significant adverse impacts to local open space due to the rezoning, but to encourage alternative methods of transportation via bike and walking. Additionally, the City should fund the necessary improvements at Pier 1 to open the pier to the public. Commitments must also be made for general improvements; including funding for comfort stations, upgrades to playground equipment, and the addition of other amenities in Tompkinsville Park, Tappen Park and Luis Lopez Park.

Shadows

The DEIS does not show significant adverse shadow impact to Lyons Pool from the incremental shadows of new development in Subdistrict A of the proposed Bay Street Rezoning. Nevertheless, there will be new incremental shadows over Lyons Pool during the peak summer hours for almost three hours in the afternoon. Lyons Pool is the largest public pool in Staten Island and a major piece of our open space and recreation network. Proposed development adjacent to Lyons Pool could significantly impact the public's enjoyment of this critical amenity. The City should consider covering the Lyons Pool to allow year-round enjoyment of the pool to mitigate impacts from shadows. Alternatively, the City should analyze what kind of changes to the zoning text are necessary to eliminate new shadows from proposed development on Lyons Pool.

Transportation

The proposed rezoning would create significant adverse impacts at 21 intersections (out of the 31 analyzed in the EIS), *with the proposed mitigation in the EIS*. The challenges to mitigating traffic call for more thoughtful solutions than normal signal timing and restriping. This rezoning is an opportunity to help improve residents' lives, but the lack of a detailed analysis to help mitigate impacts on our local streets does not further that goal.

The final Traffic Monitoring Program should outline how the capital improvements, suggested by NYC EDC and NYC DOT in the Staten Island North Shore Transportation Improvement Strategy (TIS) can help alleviate traffic congestion at: Richmond Terrace and Ferry Terminal, Bay Street and Victory Boulevard, and Richmond Terrace and Wall Street. DOT's Transportation Improvement Strategy should also study the creation of a new bus lane along Bay Street between Victory Boulevard and the ferry terminal and along Richmond Terrace between St. George Ferry Terminal and St. Peters Place. Further to alleviate congestion, the 120th NYPD Precinct should be relocated to the large city-owned parcel (Block 556, Lot 80) on Hill Street between Warren Street and Tompkins Avenue. Interim action to alleviate traffic congestion could include providing free parking for NYPD in the Wheel or Outlet mall parking lots. A freight management plan for the North Shore - similar to the Off-Hour Truck Delivery Pilot Program should be created in the North Shore of Staten Island. Traffic Enforcement Agents (TEAs) need to be deployed during rush hour at all intersections that have unmitigated traffic impacts as a result of this rezoning. DOT should coordinate with DOB to identify opportunities for sidewalk widening when new development occurs in the Bay Street corridor. Bus and ferry timing needs to be coordinated to ensure ferry riders have adequate buses prepared to pick them up.

Transit

Capital investments need to be made in the area of the Bay Street Corridor. I agree with the Staten Island Borough President in his request to have the MTA and SIR commit in writing to an evaluation and redevelopment of public transit in and around the Bay Street Corridor. SIR Stations at Tompkinsville and Stapleton are in dire need of new lighting, additional wayfinding and safety measures, and bicycle infrastructure near the train stations. Any future upgrades to SIR stations should ensure that they are all ADA accessible. Finally, the MTA should identify strategic locations to expand park and ride along the SIR to encourage more ridership and deter commuters from using single-occupancy private vehicles to get to work.

Bus Transit infrastructure needs additional investment. The MTA will need to commit in writing to fund new buses along the S40, S42, S48, S51/81, S74/84, S76/86 and S78 Routes, expand the TSP hardware and software on MTA buses that serve the Bay Street Corridor, to allow buses to move more quickly in congested areas and provide a status update on the BRT along the North Shore.

Ferry service to Staten Island is being expanded and this is welcome news. EDC should study expanding the East River ferry service to include a new ferry route between Stapleton and Brooklyn, along with committing to funding the opening of Pier 1 and identifying the funding gaps for the Tompkinsville Esplanade.

Stormwater Management and Sea Level Rise

The DEIS did not identify any impacts to stormwater management or wastewater treatment facilities. However, the DEIS does not consider localized flooding issues due to faulty sewer infrastructure that serves the wastewater treatment facilities. Therefore, DEP should release its updated drainage plan for the Bay Street Corridor. The drainage plan should identify all areas of recurring localized flooding in the corridor, the timeline for implementing drainage improvements, and the capital investment needed to handle new development in the Bay Street corridor.

Climate change is an existential crisis to humanity which requires urgent attention. We cannot encourage development within the current 100- and 500-year flood zones without planning for sea level rise and climate change. The city should require a commitment from future developers in the Stapleton Waterfront (Phases II and III) to design the developments on the site to accommodate potential flooding up to a new Design Floor Elevation based on Sea Level Rise projections. The FEIS should also identify green and grey infrastructure improvements along the waterfront and inland to mitigate the impacts of future flooding events to new and existing commercial and residential development in and around the project area.

Stephanie Shellooe (DCP)

Re. Project: **C 190113 ZMR - Special Bay Street Corridor District**

- Application Number: **C 190113 ZMR**
- Project: **Special Bay Street Corridor District**
- Public Hearing Date: **02/27/2019**
- Borough: **Staten Island**
- Community District: **1**

Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement received by the 10th calendar day following the close of the public hearing will be considered by the lead agency.

Submitted by:

Name: **Steve Joseph**
Zip: **10301**

I represent:
- **A local community group or organization**

Details for "I Represent": **Lyons Pool Lap Swimmers Group**

My Comments:

Vote: I am **opposed**

Have you previously submitted comments on this project? **Yes**
If yes, are you now submitting new information? **Yes**

I have attended or will attend the City Planning Commission's Public hearing on this project: **Yes**

Additional Comments:
Please see attached pdf. I emailed a copy of this to an email address: 16DCP156R_DL@planning.nyc.gov that was given to me. I don't see this as an option here so I am submitting it again. Forgive me if this is a duplicate

The *Draft Environmental Impact Statement / Bay Street Corridor Rezoning and Related Actions* (CEQR No. 16DCP156R) issued by the Department of City Planning acknowledges that the proposed rezoning will generate high-rise new construction in the area immediately adjacent to and west of Lyons Pool in Tompkinsville. Such development would result in "sizable incremental shadow coverage [on the pool] during the summer analysis days," the EIS notes.

Despite the "sizable" increased shadows on the pool and its facilities, the EIS concludes that this reality "would not result in a significant adverse impact on the usability of this resource."

As a user of Lyons Pool for over 40 years, and a member of its Lap Swimming Group, I am writing to challenge the assumptions behind this optimistic EIS conclusion.

LOWER POOL TEMPERATURES

Lyons Pool is located at the edge of New York Harbor, so often the wind speed there is higher than it is further inland. This contributes to the cooling effects on the pool. Lower water temperatures affect all users of the pool, and permanent shadows will exacerbate this. The Parks Department has set aside a portion of the pool for adult lap swimming during the general swim hours. This section is also used by those who walk in the pool, rehabilitating from injuries to strengthen their legs. These people would also be affected by shadows on the pool. If the pool is in shadow with just a little wind, bathers will find the pool too cold to use. Buildings casting shadows on a public amenity that Staten Islanders have enjoyed for generations will make it unusable even when the sun is on it if the water temperature is too cold.

THE SHADOW STUDY RAISES QUESTIONS

As drawn on Figure 6-4 to 6-5 starting on page 16 the projected development shows a single tower on the north end of the property at Victory Blvd. and Bay St. If the entire property is developed to 165' height it will cast an even larger shadow on the pool. Also did this shadow study factor in Victory Blvd. and Bay St. is 20' higher than the pool deck? Both would cause shadows to enter the pool site earlier. The pool now closes when the lifeguards can no longer see the bottom of the pool. Will early evening shadows from projected development cause the pool to close earlier or force the Parks Department to install new lighting? In addition the report states on "June 21, the summer solstice and the longest day of the year" would have incremental shadows cast on the main pool for a "maximum duration of 1 hour and 28 minutes," yet on August 6 with the sun lower in the sky the additional shadow would be only 1 hour. https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/planning/download/pdf/applicants/env-review/bay-street-corridor/06-deis.pdf

A One Day Example

As an example on Monday July 11 2016 at 7:30am the pool was 72 degrees during the Lap Swimming Program. Cloudy cool weather which included rain on July 8 and 9 had a lot to do with the low temperature. (The pool was tolerable on Friday July 8 for the morning Lap Swim.) If 72 degrees sounds warm, you need to know that your body looses heat 20 times faster in water than it does in air. Indoor pools are typically held at 79 degrees (considered cool and good for competition) to 82 degrees.

Parks Department rules only allow white t-shirts on the pool deck. On afternoons when the pool is in shade, sweatshirts will not be allowed.

ACTUAL POOL TEMPERATURES

To my knowledge the morning Aquatics Lap Swimming program has the only record of the early morning pool temperatures or for that matter temperatures taken at any time of the day. I urge the planing commission to compare those pool temperatures to the weather or degree days.

ERRORS IN WHEN THE POOL IS IN USE
The Final Scope Work Environmental Impact Study of the Bay Street Corridor states the pool is open from 11am to 7pm with a break for cleaning between 3-4pm. The pool is actually open from 7am to 8:30pm or dusk.

The report states incorrectly the pool is open from Memorial Day to Labor Day; it is open from the last few days of June to the weekend after Labor Day. The shadow study only covered one day in the summer the pool is open, August 6.

HOW LYONS POOL IS ACTUALY USED
From 7-8:30am weekdays there is the Aquatics Lap Swimming Program. Other programs before the pool opens to the general public at 11am include Senior Splash, Adaptive Aquatics for people with Disabilities, Children's Learn to Swim, and the Youth Swim team. Between 7-8:30 pm there is Adult Learn to Swim, a Water Exercise Class and the Evening Lap Swimming Program.

FUTURE POOL USERS
There will be thousands of additional residents with the proposed rezoning and there will likely be more people using the pool in both the early and late afternoon sessions. This report concedes there will be less sunlight in the afternoons on the pool deck and the pool. Just because fewer swimmers used the pool in the afternoons in 2017 does not mean we should make the pool less desirable for future bathers? As already pointed out, less sunlight on a pool that is heated by the sun will result in cooler pool temperatures throughout the day. The cumulative effect of less sun every day will mean it will take longer to warm up after rain or cool nights.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS
Limit the height of buildings that would cast a shadow on the pool.
Require developers to have solar panels that would heat the water in a developer installed system.
Reflectors on top of new construction could direct late afternoon sun on to the pool.
One lap swimmer has suggested an enclosure with a retractable roof. This would allow the heat to be retained on cooler nights and could also allow the pool to be open all year.

Steve Joseph
Lyons Pool Lap Swimmers group
wardhill@rcn.com

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Stephanie Shellooe (DCP)

Re. Project: **C 190113 ZMR - Special Bay Street Corridor District**

- Application Number: **C 190113 ZMR**
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Submitted by:

Name: **Aron Feldman**
Zip: **11206**

I represent:
- **Myself**

Details for "I Represent":

My Comments:

Vote: I am **other**

Have you previously submitted comments on this project?
If yes, are you now submitting new information?

I have attended or will attend the City Planning Commission's Public hearing on this project:

Additional Comments:
190113 ZMR creates a new section 135-14 that will allow breweries in commercial districts subject to certain limitations. With the change in brewing technology and market demand, I believe the CPC should create a new use group for small breweries that will be allowed in all commercial districts, that can be based on the proposed section 135-14.

MAS Comments on Bay Street Corridor Rezoning & Related Actions for the City Planning Commission, CEQR No. 16DCP156R

March 11, 2019

Position

The Municipal Art Society of New York (MAS) believes the Bay Street Corridor Rezoning poses several opportunities and many challenges for Staten Island's North Shore. On one hand, the rezoning has the potential to foster a more vibrant downtown environment and add a substantial number of affordable housing units. However, concerns about flood resiliency in relation to new development, significant traffic congestion, the unmet shortage of public school seats and lack of open space resources to support new growth must be addressed before MAS will support the project.

Taken together, these issues reflect a need for transparency and comprehensive planning. Currently, the Bay Street Corridor Rezoning lacks both. Our support for the project is also contingent on all impact calculation methodologies being disclosed and critical infrastructure deficiencies being addressed in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS).

Background

The rezoning will affect a 20-block, 45-acre area in Staten Island's Tompkinsville, Stapleton, and St. George neighborhoods in Community District 1. It will result in an incremental increase of 2,736 housing units, 25 to 32 percent of which will be affordable under the City's Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH) Program. The rezoning would introduce 7,031 new residents to the area.

In addition to the 2.7 million square feet (sf) of new residential development, the project is expected to add 183,555 sf of commercial space and 105,700 sf of community facility uses. The rezoning also includes the disposition of three City-owned sites for future development.

MAS Recommendations and Comments

Our comments are in response to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) of the Proposed Actions and the subsequent amended zoning text application (A-Text Application) that was filed on February 12, 2019.

Public Policy

The DEIS estimates that approximately 30 percent of new residential floor area on projected development sites will be affordable under MIH. However, over 7,000 new residents will be introduced to an area in which the median household income ($43,071) is significantly lower than Staten Island ($74,021) and New York City ($55,191). This raises concerns about indirect displacement of lower income residents as those with higher incomes move to the area, as well as concerns about indirect displacement of area businesses, as new residents may seek goods and services not affordable to lower income residents. This situation also raises questions about the actual affordability of the new housing under the proposal. As such, it is critical that the FEIS specifies and evaluates MIH options and the potential impacts that differing income levels can have on socioeconomic conditions in the Project Area.

According to the U.S. Census (*American Community Survey* 2016 5-year estimates), 35 percent of the households in the Project Area have incomes that are less than 30 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI), $24,500 for a three-person household.[1] The deepest affordability option under MIH would require that 20 percent of the residential floor area be affordable to households earning 40 percent of AMI ($32,640 for a three-person household). The MIH option at 60

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[1] Based on the Socioeconomic Study Area, or Census Tracts 3, 7, 9, 11, 17, 21, 27, 29 (Richmond County, NY).

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percent of AMI ($49,000 for a three-person household) would be above the neighborhood's median household income of $43,071.

Therefore, MAS recommends that the deepest level of affordability be applied to the rezoning area to ensure that a significant portion of new affordable housing will be within reach of current residents.

Socioeconomic Conditions
The project has the potential to directly displace 244 employees in 30 local businesses, the majority of which are located within the Bay Street Corridor. Despite this, the DEIS concludes that the rezoning would not have adverse impacts on local businesses. The DEIS further assumes that any potential for commercial displacement would be offset by the ability of displaced businesses to relocate within the Study Area.

While we support the use of Development Site 5 for new housing, the direct displacement of the Western Beef Supermarket would leave the Bay Street Corridor without a large grocery store and current residents without affordable grocery shopping options. According to the DEIS, the opportunity for new commercial development under the rezoning would alleviate the loss of the supermarket. MAS finds this conclusion to be unsubstantiated. Creating the opportunity for new commercial development does not directly lead to the creation of new stores. Even with the tax benefits offered through the FRESH program, there is no guarantee that new grocery stores would serve or continue to serve similar demographics. The DEIS further states that the presence of other grocery stores outside of the Project Area, such as the Key Food supermarket at 155 Bay Street, would offset the displacement of Western Beef. However, the Key Food in question is decidedly smaller in size and does not have a parking lot. Therefore, MAS recommends that the City explore and identify sites within the Project Area for the development of a new grocery store before closing Western Beef to ensure that the Bay Street Corridor does not become a food desert. The City must also ensure that the corridor is not without a large grocery store during the 12-year project build-out period.

Community Facilities and Services
As proposed, the rezoning would greatly exacerbate the lack of school seats currently plaguing North Shore public schools. With a total enrollment of 11,869 students, elementary schools in the study area are now at 119 percent capacity. The utilization rates for the Bay Street Corridor and Canal Street Corridor zoned schools range from 101 to 138 percent. Accordingly, the area would need an additional 1,906 elementary school seats to resolve the current deficit and address severe overcrowding.

Based on the revised numbers in the proposed A-Text Application, the rezoning would introduce an additional 766 elementary school students to the Study Area. This would bring the already pronounced deficit to 4,049 seats and the utilization rate to a staggering 138 percent in 2030. Considering the size of existing and projected deficits, North Shore families need more than the "exploration and discussion" of potential mitigation measures. MAS urges the City to commit to building additional schools in the Rezoning Area, especially elementary schools, to address current and future overcapacity issues. We expect the FEIS to address this recommendation.

In addition to our concerns about the data and methodology used in the DEIS to arrive at the No-Action Condition numbers on projected enrollment, the new information in the A-Text Application fails to disclose the updated school seat multipliers used to estimate the number of students generated by the rezoning.[2] This blatant lack of transparency not only fails to abide by CEQR regulations, it also impedes the public review process.

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[2] The Technical Memorandum indicates that new multipliers were developed by the Department of City Planning in consultation with the Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination (MOEC) using 2012-2016 American Community Survey (ACS) – Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) data, but that the 2014 CEQR Technical Manual has not been updated to reflect these new thresholds. Technical Memorandum 001, p.3.

Open Space

The Project Area is grossly underserved by open space. The DEIS discloses that the total open space ratio within the residential (0.5-mile) Study Area is expected to decrease by 5.22 percent to 1.22 acres per 1,000 residents under the With-Action Condition. This is well below the citywide average of 2.5 acres of open space per 1,000 residents and significantly below the Department of City Planning's (DCP) recommended goal of 1.5 acres. The active open space ratio would be nearly 75 percent lower than the total recommended ratio. These ratios would only worsen with the addition of 179 dwelling units in the A-Text Application scenario.

The DEIS also projects that total new open space acreage within the 0.25-mile and 0.5-mile Study Areas will increase by 11.63 acres under the No-Action Condition. Some 7.5 acres – about 64 percent of this total – is expected to come from the NY Wheel project, even though this development is no longer slated to be completed due to funding issues and it is unclear what will be built in its place. As such, we find this evaluation to be exceedingly misleading.

The open space evaluation in the FEIS must be revised to exclude the undeveloped portion of the NY Wheel project in its calculations for the No-Action Condition. More importantly, MAS urges the City to create additional open space within the rezoning area to help fill this critical gap. We suggest examining the disposition sites as a possible opportunity for new open space.

Shadows

The proposed project would cast incremental shadows of varying durations on six sunlight-sensitive resources in the Project Area, including the landmark designated Lyons Pool Recreation Center, a valuable recreational facility for the neighborhood. According to the DEIS, sunlight on the main pool would be reduced by 1.5 hours on the May/August and June analysis days. Despite this, the assessment concludes that the project would not result in significant adverse shadow impacts based on the expectation that "public enjoyment would not be significantly impacted."[3] Given the scarcity of recreational and open spaces in the area as well as the high use of the pool during the summer months, we urge the City to examine design changes that eliminate or reduce shadow impacts on Lyons Pool.

Climate Change and Resiliency

Almost 38 percent of the Rezoning Area, including 12 Projected Development Sites, is within the 2015 100-year flood zone.[4] Based on most recent sea level rise projections by the New York City Panel on Climate Change (NPCC), by 2050, 76 percent of the residential construction expected under the rezoning would occur within the 100-year flood zone, a 55 percent increase. The two Project Areas that will accommodate the greatest amount of development under the rezoning, Bay Street Corridor and Stapleton Waterfront, will have 72 percent and 100 percent of its new built floor area within the 2050 100-year flood plain, respectively. Despite this, the DEIS states that addressing resilience for privately owned development sites is not practicable through the rezoning. Given the impacts of Superstorm Sandy on Staten Island and growing concerns about future storm resiliency, we find this conclusion unacceptable. We urge the City to develop an appropriate regulatory framework for new housing design and construction in flood-prone Rezoning Areas to address the increasing risks from storm surges and coastal flooding.

MAS further recommends that the City consider using a Land Disposition Agreement for the City-owned Stapleton Waterfront Phase III Sites, requiring a commitment to design new construction to accommodate potential flooding up to the future Base Flood Elevations as per NPCC Sea Level Rise projections.

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[3] DEIS, p. 6-13.
[4] The majority of the southern half of the Bay Street Corridor and all of the Stapleton Waterfront Phase III Sites are located in FEMA's 2015 preliminary FIRM 100-year floodplain zone AE. DEIS, p.16-13.

The Municipal Art Society of New York

MASNYC

Transportation

Traffic
Currently, Bay Street functions as the area's main traffic corridor. It is a two-way street shared by cars, buses, and bicycles, and lacks the capacity to support the increase in traffic predicted under the Rezoning proposal. According to the DEIS, significant adverse traffic impacts will occur during various peak hour evaluation times at 31 intersections in the project area, 22 of which – a whopping 71 percent – would remain unmitigated. According to the A-Text Application, the project would result in an additional 12 impacted lane groups and 6 impacted intersections compared to the DEIS With-Action with Mitigation Condition.

Other major nearby intersections would also be affected. For example, service levels would deteriorate at two consecutive major intersections along Victory Boulevard (at Cebra Avenue and Jersey Street) during the evening peak hour, and would no longer be mitigated during the Saturday midday peak hour and weekday AM peak hour, respectively, according to the A-Text Application. Combined wait times would more than double from just under a minute to almost two minutes.

Even some smaller intersections would not be immune to significant traffic impacts. During the weekday evening peak hour, the intersection of Front and Wave Streets would deteriorate at a four-fold rate from an average delay of 9.6 seconds to over 38 seconds.

Transit
The DEIS projects that the Proposed Actions will result in an increase in passenger trips at seven MTA bus routes, including the S51/81, S74/84, S76/86, and S78, to accommodate the influx of new residents expected under the rezoning. Additionally, according to the A-Text Application, the project is expected to further strain service on the northbound and southbound buses during weekday AM and PM peak hours, representing 21 and 22 percent increases, respectively, in bus trips in comparison to what was identified in the DEIS. This would result in significant adverse bus impacts.

We urge the City to perform a comprehensive traffic study and develop an appropriate transportation mitigation plan that adequately addresses worsening traffic congestion.

Alternatives Evaluation
The DEIS evaluates three alternatives: No-Action, No Unmitigated Significant Adverse Impacts, and a Reduced Rezoning Area Alternative, which excludes the Canal Street Corridor Project Area from the rezoning. MAS recommends that the FEIS include an evaluation of an alternative in which the rezoning is restricted to the Canal Street Corridor, the west side of the Bay Street Corridor, and the three City-owned disposition sites to reduce impacts of development in the floodplain.

In addition, given the fact that the three city disposition sites offer more than 150,000 sf of developable area outside of the 2050 100-year flood plain, we recommend that the FEIS include an evaluation of an alternative in which the three disposition sites are explored as locations for affordable housing, schools, and new open space.

Mitigation
MAS finds that the DEIS lacks concrete mitigation measures for addressing the considerable adverse impacts on North Shore residents, including school overcrowding, a shortage of open spaces, and traffic congestion. For a project of this importance, MAS urges the City to ensure that the FEIS contains a schedule of mitigation measures and the agencies responsible for monitoring and implementation. Furthermore, we recommend that no certificates of occupancy should be issued for new development under the rezoning unless mitigation commitments and conditions are met.

Conclusion
The Bay Street Corridor Rezoning proposal has the potential to bring about major changes for the Staten Island North Shore community. With more than 7,000 new residents coming to the neighborhood, the City must do all it can to ensure that the area has sufficient open space, public school capacity, and transportation infrastructure to support the intended

growth. Given the significance of the project and the increasing risk from storm surges and coastal flooding, we further stress the importance of identifying resiliency measures as part of the rezoning proposal.

MAS has many serious concerns that need to be addressed in the current proposal before we can support it. We urge the City to consider our recommendations as part of the plan.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this important project.

Stephanie Shellooe (DCP)

Re. Project: **C 190113 ZMR - Special Bay Street Corridor District**

- Application Number: **C 190113 ZMR**
- Project: **Special Bay Street Corridor District**
- Public Hearing Date: **02/27/2019**
- Borough: **Staten Island**
- Community District: **1**

Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement received by the 10th calendar day following the close of the public hearing will be considered by the lead agency.

Submitted by:

Name: **Leticia Remauro**
Zip: **10314**

I represent:
- **A local community group or organization**

Details for "I Represent": **Bayview Community Council, Inc. dba Staten Island Downtown Alliance**

My Comments:

Vote: I am **in favor**

Have you previously submitted comments on this project? **No**
If yes, are you now submitting new information?

I have attended or will attend the City Planning Commission's Public hearing on this project: **Yes**

Additional Comments:
Please see document attached for testimony by Leticia Remauro on behalf of the Staten Island Downtown Alliance

Stephanie Shellooe (DCP)

Re. Project: **C 190113 ZMR - Special Bay Street Corridor District**

- Application Number: **C 190113 ZMR**
- Project: **Special Bay Street Corridor District**
- Public Hearing Date: **02/27/2019**
- Borough: **Staten Island**
- Community District: **1**

Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement received by the 10th calendar day following the close of the public hearing will be considered by the lead agency.

Submitted by:

Name: **Kelly Vilar**
Zip: **10301**

I represent:
- **A local community group or organization**

Details for "I Represent": **Let's Rebuild Cromwell Community Coalition**

My Comments:

Vote: I am **opposed**

Have you previously submitted comments on this project? **No**
If yes, are you now submitting new information?

I have attended or will attend the City Planning Commission's Public hearing on this project: **Yes**

Additional Comments:
Please consider a Maritime Education, Recreation Culture Corridor for Staten Island' north shore waterfront- as a viable option for economic development.--" A Silicon Valley of Maritime Education"

From:	Public Hearing Comments (Do not reply) <PublicComments_DL@planning.nyc.gov>
Sent:	Wednesday, February 27, 2019 11:23 AM
To:	Christopher Hadwin (DCP); Stephanie Shellooe (DCP); statenislandcomments_dl@planning.nyc.gov
Subject:	Comments re: C 190113 ZMR - Special Bay Street Corridor District

Re. Project: **C 190113 ZMR - Special Bay Street Corridor District**

- Application Number: **C 190113 ZMR**
- Project: **Special Bay Street Corridor District**
- Public Hearing Date: **02/27/2019**
- Borough: **Staten Island**
- Community District: **1**

Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement received by the 10th calendar day following the close of the public hearing will be considered by the lead agency.

Submitted by:

Name: **Nicholas Zvegintzov**
Zip: **10301**

I represent:
● **Myself**

Details for "I Represent":

My Comments:

Vote: I am **opposed**

Have you previously submitted comments on this project? **Yes**
If yes, are you now submitting new information? **Yes**

I have attended or will attend the City Planning Commission's Public hearing on this project: **No**

Additional Comments:
Subject: 190114 ZRR, 190114(A) ZRR The zoning of the Stapleton Waterfront Phase III Sites (A and B1) should not be amended under at this time in this action. These two sites (7.2 acres of City-owned land between Lyons Pool and Urby) are part of the last open waterfront in the City with a full view of the harbor. - They are not on Bay Street or Canal St. - They are not City disposition sites (like three other inland properties that the City proposes to rezone and sell in this action). - They do not add any housing units to this action (since the Special Stapleton Waterfront District is already zoned for housing). - City–owned land on the remaining open harbor waterfront should not be rezoned piecemeal pending a re-appraisal of how all this land should be used. The City owns approximately 43 acres on the Staten Island harbor waterfront, the last unassigned waterfront property with full views of the Harbor. It should be used for

community value – parks, active recreation, educational purposes. It is City-owned land already (no acquisition costs). Sites A and B1 are approximately 17% of this acreage. It should not be disposed to a private developer at this time. Like Central Park or the High Line or the Brooklyn Waterfront, community use will only enhance property values in the area, and far outweigh the one-time profit from disposing it to developers. (end)

NYC

**Department of
Housing Preservation
& Development**
nyc.gov/hpd

MARIA TORRES-SPRINGER
Commissioner

LEILA BOZORG
Deputy Commissioner

Office of Neighborhood Strategies
100 Gold Street
New York, N.Y. 10038

**Testimony of Michael Sandler, Director of Neighborhood Planning at the
Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD),
on the Bay Street Corridor Neighborhood Plan
City Planning Commission
February 27, 2019**

Good afternoon Chair Lago and members of the City Planning Commission. I am
Michael Sandler, Director of Neighborhood Planning of the Office of Neighborhood
Strategies at HPD, here today in support of the Bay Street Corridor Neighborhood Plan.

The Bay Street rezoning will help to revitalize this corridor and help to address a serious
gap in the housing market in this neighborhood of multi-family and affordable housing.
Over half of all Staten Island's North Shore households are low-income, and nearly a
quarter of households are extremely low-income, earning $26,000 a year or less. While
North Shore has a higher proportion of homeowners than renters compared to New York
City, the North Shore has more renters compared to Staten Island overall. The vast
majority of these renters live in unregulated small, one- to four-family homes, which
make up 90% of the housing stock. Renters in this neighborhood describe months-long
searches to find available apartments and a lack of quality options at affordable prices.

The rezoning proposal before you today is crucial to help address the limited rental
opportunities by developing new market rate and permanently affordable rental
apartments in the transit-rich section of Staten Island. Under *Housing New York*, the City
has made historic strides in building new affordable homes for low-, moderate-, and
middle-income New Yorkers, but the North Shore has seen very little affordable housing
created in recent years—of the nearly 40,000 new affordable apartments constructed
across the City since the start of the Mayor's Housing Plan, less than 1% has been
constructed on Staten Island. A big reason for this is low-density zoning that makes
affordable new construction nearly impossible.

Alongside the proposed rezoning, HPD created the Draft Bay Street Corridor Housing
Plan that provides a set of strategies to ensure that existing residents are protected from
displacement and have the critical resources they need.

You should already be familiar with our approach, so what I would like to emphasize
today are our tools and policies to keep North Shore tenants safely in their homes and the
ways in which we are supporting low- and moderate-income homeowners.

For Preservation:

- To help low-income homeowners make critical repairs and stay in their homes, last year we announced the creation of HomeFix, which is a new program that pairs financial counseling with financial assistance and helps homeowners in small properties fund home repairs. In neighborhoods like the North Shore, helping small property owners provides significant benefit to renters as well, who are likely to be living in the second unit of an owner-occupied small home.
- HPD offers other financial and tax incentives to renovate and repair existing buildings in exchange for preserving affordability for existing tenants.
- We are conducting more proactive and strategic outreach to property owners than ever before to let them know about our financing programs to make building improvements and extend affordability. As of August 2018, HPD has reached out to 136 property owners representing a total of 3,745 homes. We've conducted mailers, robo-calls, and events to reach these properties in the North Shore, including those with expiring tax benefits. HPD's Neighborhood Education and Outreach Unit will be hosting a landlord and tenant fair at the Staten Island Museum at the end of March.
- Our new Neighborhood Pillars initiative will dedicate funding for non-profits and mission-based organizations to acquire and rehab unsubsidized rent-stabilized buildings so they can maintain the affordability of this crucial housing stock that is limited in the North Shore. Just last month we released a Request for Qualifications to identify organizations who can access this funding.
- In addition, we are implementing a Certification of No Harassment pilot program in the North Shore to protect certain tenants from being harassed from their homes.
- We are also working to combat the impact of zombie homes by holding noncompliant banks and mortgage servicers accountable for failing to maintain vacant properties on the brink of foreclosure.

For new development:

- First, the implementation of Mandatory Inclusionary Housing in the rezoning area will facilitate the construction of up to approximately 450 permanently affordable homes on privately owned sites.
- We are working with agency partners to advance affordable housing development on City-owned sites, including the Jersey Street Sanitation Garage and future phases of the New Stapleton Waterfront.
- HPD financing programs also support the creation of deeply affordable rental housing. In response to community feedback, last year we added $1.9 billion to the Housing Plan to do more to address the needs of the lowest income New Yorkers. Whenever HPD funds housing development, it will require more apartments for those making less than $25,770 and up to $42,950 for a three-person family. We also now require at least a 10% set aside for homeless families in nearly every project. Lastly, whenever HPD funds a project within the Bay

Street rezoning area, we will require an additional 15% of apartments to be permanently affordable.

- We are also looking to create new affordable homeownership opportunities in Staten Island and around the city. HPD launched the new Open Door Program last year, which finances the new construction of affordable homes in multifamily buildings for first time buyers earning a range of incomes.

I thank the community for their relentless advocacy for the neighborhood, and to you all for the opportunity to speak in support of the Bay Street Corridor Neighborhood Plan.

COMMENTS TO THE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
ON THE PROPOSED BAY STREET CORRIDOR REZONING

February 27, 2019

Good morning and thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Chris Walters and I am the Rezoning Technical Assistance Coordinator for the Association for Neighborhood and Housing Development (ANHD). ANHD is a coalition of community groups across the city working to build community power to win affordable housing and thriving, equitable neighborhoods for all New Yorkers.

In offering my testimony today I want to echo the vital concerns raised by community members asking who this rezoning will actually serve and how to fix it. This is a concern that is borne out by looking at the numbers. The DEIS acknowledges that the Bay Street rezoning will bring in a higher income population than exists in the study area today. The DEIS further identifies a low-income population of renters in unprotected units who are vulnerable to the increase in rents the rezoning could bring. But the DEIS errs in assuming that the projected affordable housing this rezoning will bring will be enough to offset that displacement risk.

First and foremost this assumption is wrong because DCP is currently proposing to map the highest income MIH options as part of this rezoning. This includes the Workforce Housing Option – which sets affordable rents at an average of 115% AMI, or over $100,000 a year for a family of three. It also includes Option 2, which sets affordable rents at an average of 80% AMI, or over $75,000 for a family of 3.

Yet currently 58% of households on the North Shore earn less than $75,000 a year, while 43% earn under $50,000 a year. Once an MIH option is mapped it's the developer's discretion as to which option to choose. Mapping Option 2 and the Workforce Option would mean there's no guarantee that almost any housing below 80% AMI would be built, putting both the affordable and unregulated units out of their reach for over half the district. These numbers are even starker when you consider race – 66% of Latinx households and 68% of Black households on the North Shore earn less than $75,000. These are the very same households facing the highest rent burdens in the district – 70% of families earning less than $75,000 pay more than a third of their income towards rent, as opposed to just 3% of families earning more than $75,000 a year. These

are the households that stand to gain the least, and lose the most, from this rezoning and these are the households that must be served.

This is especially true for an area like the North Shore where the vast majority of renters live in unregulated units without tenant protections. At the end of their current lease – if they even have a lease - most of these tenants can be displaced without cause. Unregulated tenants such as these are especially vulnerable to the changing rental markets that the rezoning might bring.

There are several steps that can and must be taken to remedy these problems. First is to ensure that only the deepest affordability options for MIH are made available as part of this rezoning. This means mapping only MIH Option 1 and the Deep Affordability Option – which would set aside 20-25% of new units as affordable for families earning $37,000 to $56,000 on average. In the technical memorandum for the A-text Application submitted by the City there are troubling indications that the Deep Affordability Option is not being proposed as part of this rezoning. This must be clarified and corrected.

Second is to ensure that public land is used for maximum public good. As part of this rezoning, the City is taking steps to eventually transfer four public disposition sites to private developers, including the large Stapleton Phase 3 site along the waterfront. Yet only two of the four city disposition sites listed are currently committed to providing affordable units, and only one of those will be 100% affordable. But public land is exactly the place where the City can achieve the deepest and broadest affordability; it is entirely in their control what gets developed on these sites, as we've seen with HPD's commendable move to use the AIRS program to increase the number of affordable units being provided on the Jersey Street site. If the Jersey Street, Central Street and – most importantly - Stapleton Phase III sites were all developed as 100% affordable housing, it could mean over 900 units of affordable housing for the North Shore, on top of MIH.

Taken together, these changes could help create a rezoning that would ensure that 50% of new units are affordable, at levels that serve those households most in need. The City must not pass up this opportunity. We urge the CPC to heed the voices of the community and make this a rezoning that works for everyone.

TESTIMONY BY

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

MICHAEL BLAISE BACKER

NEW YORK CITY

DEPARTMENT OF SMALL BUSINESS SERVICES

BEFORE THE

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

Wednesday, February 27th, 2019

Good morning Chair Lago and members of the City Planning Commission. My name is Michael Blaise Backer and I am the Deputy Commissioner for Neighborhood Development at the New York City Department of Small Business Services ("SBS"). At SBS, we aim to unlock economic potential by connecting New Yorkers to quality jobs, building stronger businesses, and fostering thriving neighborhoods. SBS has been working closely with our partner agencies, community-based organizations, businesses, and residents to implement new investments for small businesses and jobseekers along Bay Street with the goal of increasing economic activity and supporting long-standing businesses.

Through our **Neighborhood 360° program**, which we initiated in 2015, SBS is investing in the community and working with local partners to identify, develop, and launch commercial revitalization projects. SBS first partnered with the Staten Island Chamber of Commerce to conduct a **Commercial District Needs Assessment (CDNA)** of the Bay Street Corridor to analyze the local commercial district and identify opportunities for investment along the corridor. In 2017, SBS awarded **$1.54 million in competitive Neighborhood 360 Grant funding** to Staten Island Chamber of Commerce, Staten Island Arts, and the 100 Gates Project to address the CDNA's key findings over a three-and-a-half-year span.

Since the grant's inception, we have been proud to support programming that includes holiday lights, beautification projects, district marketing, storefront improvements, and supplemental sidewalk cleaning services that benefit small businesses from St. George to Stapleton. In addition, our funding has supported an impactful array of community events, such as the Court Yard Fridays summer concert series at Borough Hall, the Sonic Gates audio sculpture installations, and the Cinema Connex film series, which saw more than 900 attendees at their first event, a 30th anniversary screening of Working Girl at the historic St. George Theater. Working with local stakeholders through community outreach and a Commercial

District Working Group convened by Councilmember Rose and Borough President Oddo, the Neighborhood 360 investment aims to strengthen Bay Street's existing small businesses and ensure that the corridor is vibrant and welcoming for residents and visitors alike.

Beyond Neighborhood 360°, SBS has significant assets on Staten Island's North Shore. SBS operates one of our seven **NYC Business Solutions Centers** just outside the Bay Street corridor, at **120 Stuyvesant Place**. At this center, Staten Island small businesses can access free business services such as business education courses, financing assistance, help navigating government, Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprise (M/WBE) certification, and legal assistance. These free services include our **Commercial Lease Assistance Program**, which allows small business owners to obtain free legal assistance regarding new leases, lease renewals and back rent negotiations, landlord harassment, and other issues such as lack of repairs and breach of contract issues.

SBS also operates one of our 18 **Workforce1 Career Centers** on the North Shore. The center, also located at **120 Stuyvesant Place**, connects jobseekers to employment and training opportunities and offers businesses cost-saving recruitment services. We look forward to continuing to work with the community to leverage the resources of the North Shore center to connect Staten Island residents with quality employment and training opportunities.

SBS also recently launched a **Mobile Outreach Unit** vehicle, which, in addition to our **Chamber On-the-Go** and **Compliance Advisor** teams, is another way we are able to bring our services directly to business owners and jobseekers in their own neighborhoods. We want to ensure our services are reaching all New Yorkers; for example, today our teams are holding a **Small Business Resource Fair** at the St. George Library. This interagency event provides an opportunity for business owners to learn about SBS' free services, participate in a business education course, and meet directly with representatives from City regulatory agencies to learn how to avoid commonly issued violations and save money.

SBS is committed to serving the residents and business owners of Staten Island and will continue to provide necessary services for the community's business owners and jobseekers. Thank you and I am happy to take any questions the Commission may have at this time.

Good morning Chair Lago and members of the Commission, my name is Nicholas Antonelli, I'm a cleaner at the DOE, have been a member of 32BJ for about 13 years, and I have lived on Staten Island for 32 years. I'm here today on behalf of my union, and especially our 35 hundred members who live and work on Staten Island, to speak about what the proposed Bay Street rezoning means for building service workers.

Like many of you, we believe that Staten Island residents need meaningful economic opportunities. In light of this, we support key elements of the rezoning plan that will bring good building service jobs. We are pleased that the City has made a commitment to ensure that the prevailing wage is part of projects where it is subsidizing residential development, including at the more than 600-unit proposed Stapleton Phase 3 site. Providing good, permanent jobs that allow working families to live with dignity is central to responsible development, and we are glad that the City and EDC are setting a strong standard.

However, we think that more needs to be done to make sure that the Bay Street rezoning brings economic opportunity to Staten Island before it is approved. Private property owners and developers in the rezoning area stand to reap significant benefits from the proposed plan, which will change many lots from manufacturing to residential and commercial uses and allow for large, new buildings that could net millions of dollars in profits. This rezoning is occurring without firm guarantees of what will be financed and built at private sites, and no firm guarantees from developers that building service workers will earn the prevailing wage.

We are calling on players like BFC, who hold property in the rezoning area, to follow the lead of the City and make early and credible commitments to providing good, industry standard wages for building service workers. We think it is
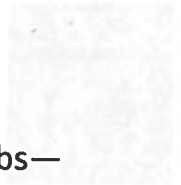
important to be able to have confidence that the rezoning will create good jobs—no matter what ultimately gets built.

The prevailing wage was established to ensure that workers in New York City can provide for their families and remain in their communities; it allows workers like me to breathe. As most building service jobs are typically filled by the local community, we believe that paying the prevailing wage, as well as doing local hiring, are important ways to ensure that current residents benefit from the plan.

We respectfully urge you to recommend that the private developers who will benefit this rezoning make an early commit to providing prevailing wage building service jobs for building service workers.
Thank you.

Testimony before CPC re: Bay Street rezoning
February 26, 2019
Jose Lopez, Director of Organizing
Make the Road New York (Member of the Housing Dignity Coalition)

Make the Road New York (MRNY) is pleased to testify today to the City Planning Commission on the topic of the Bay Street Corridor rezoning. MRNY is the largest immigrant grassroots community organization in New York State with over 22,000 members.

For the following reasons; we **currently oppose** the Bay Street Rezoning plan:

Process: For the past three years, since the release of the Draft Scope in May 2016, the Housing Dignity Coalition studied the draft scope, created community space to discuss the draft scope, and did the work of offering recommendations to improve the draft scope before official certification. Unfortunately, none of these recommendations were factored into the Environmental Impact Statement leaving us with mostly the same document that we have criticized since 2016. Here are our critiques:

Real Affordable Housing: As we understand, a 14 block stretch of Bay Street currently zoned for manufacturing only would be re-zoned to allow for an estimated 1,592 residential units in buildings ranging from 5 to 14 stories. Per the Mandatory Inclusionary Housing framework, the city projects 30% of the 1,592 new units as MIH units. Per this framework, this would mean 620 MIH* units and 972 market rate units. These 620 MIH units would be accessible to families with an annual income of $75,120 per year. The problem is that 58% of families on the North Shore earn below $75,000 per year. In fact, if you look at income data more deeply, you see that 43% of North Shore families earn below $50,000 per year. Additionally, 64% of all families earning below $75,000 are rent burdened – meaning they pay more than they should on rent. After review of these data sets, the question we should all be asking the city is why are the prescribed "affordable" units not actually affordable to 58% of North Shore families?

Public Land: Per the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), the City of New York will pursue a plan that transfers three public disposition sites – city owned land – to private developers. Of the three city disposition sites listed, only one will require a percentage of income-restricted units at affordability rates left unmentioned. Once again, we should be asking why the city would opt to transfer public land to private developers? These lots should be utilized to develop projects that the community, not the Department of City Planning, identifies.

Tenant Protections: The Department of City Planning (DCP) estimates that 1,753 low-income unprotected renters will be left potentially vulnerable to indirect residential displacement as a result of this rezoning. This projection is limited to the study area and does not assume displacement impacts for unprotected renters whom live beyond study area lines; in addition, <u>DCP assumes that all apartments within buildings with at least one rent-stabilized unit are themselves rent-stabilized, ignoring the fact that there are multiple avenues through which an apartment can leave stabilization, and so likely significantly under counting the number of renters who are unprotected</u>. Most important to point out is the lack of a mitigation plan in the EIS. There are two reasons for this. **1)** Despite identifying an at-risk population, there is no requirement in this process that a mitigation plan be put in place to support displaced renters. **2)** The City of New York cannot protect tenants whom today have no basic renter protections. These protections can only be created under State Law by passing "Good Cause Eviction" legislation. If we move forward with this rezoning, before we demand state action, we are making already vulnerable tenants much more vulnerable.

Over the next 50 days, the City Council will hold a hearing to gather testimony from constituents in the district. This hearing, like today, will be the final opportunity to call for the Bay Street we want to see. It will not suffice to simply have a pretty waterfront; we need a Bay Street that meets the needs of all families – including the 59% of low-income families left out of the proposal today. <u>Here is how you get there</u>:

- **Demand that public land be used for public good!** With 100% affordable housing on public sites currently slated for residential use, the North Shore will receive 314 more affordable units than under the current plan. *(Stapleton Waterfront)*
- **Demand the deepest affordability on Bay Street!** MIH Option 1, which sets aside 25% of all new units for families earning an average of $56,340, and MIH Option 3, which sets aside 20% of all new units for families earning an average of $37,560. The average two-bedroom apartment would rent between $810 and $1,280 under these options.
- **Demand a relocation mitigation plan for displaced tenants!** The City of New York must produce a mitigation plan that both supports relocation services for families displaced by the rezoning and offers fiscal support – in the form of a voucher – to help pay for increased rental costs.

If the Department of City Planning were to apply these recommendations – MIH options 1 and 3 plus 100% affordability at Stapleton – it would result in a <u>55% affordable and 45% market rate housing plan for the North Shore</u>; 1,341 affordable and 1,110 market rate. Additionally, it would require the city create a safety net for the thousands of tenants who will undoubtedly see rent hikes as a result of a new Bay Street corridor.

In closing, I would like to reference one more document pulled from the final scope of work dated October 26th, 2018. On page 140 you can review a response to the draft scope issued by Councilwoman Debi Rose. In this response, CM Rose calls for *"ensuring that affordable housing developed in the study area and on the disposition sites reach households making 40 percent or less of Area Median Income"*. CM Rose also writes, *"we should be exploring ways to achieve affordable housing when we are disposing of city-owned land"*. CM Rose draft scope response is consistent with demands of the Housing Dignity Coalition and we hope that you will consider these demands as you prepare your comments to the city.

Thank you.

To further discuss this testimony, please email Jose.Lopez@maketheroadny.org and Ivan.Garcia@maketheroadny.org

Good morning, my name is Ivan Garcia and I am the neighborhood rezoning coordinator for Make the Road and a member of the Housing Dignity Coalition. I have been doing outreach and informing tenants about this rezoning for over a year. I have presented at different clubs, organizations and churches throughout Staten Island.

After every presentation, every tenant in the room is upset that this is the plan the city has presented.

The DEIS claims that over 1,700 people will be indirectly displaced and they have said that this is a worst case scenario. The sad reality is that this is already happening. There are tenants who have given up and believe that this rezoning is a done deal and the city will do whatever they want. They are looking to move out of state or risk being homeless. The displacement of these tenants is not a matter of whether it will happen. It is a matter of when it will happen.

43% of the district makes less than 50k a year. Of those 43%; 75% are either rent burdened or severely rent burdened. This means they are paying more than 30% of their income on rent and are possibly one rent increase away from being homeless or displaced.

It also does not help that 85% of the housing stock on the North Shore is private: none of these tenants are protected by any laws. They do not have the right to a lease renewal and their rent increase does not have to follow the rent guidelines board.

According to NYC's human resource administration report on universal access to legal services:
67% of tenants, facing eviction, who received legal services in Staten Island were allowed to stay. Although this may sound great, it is a very low number compared to manhattan (93%), the bronx (90%) and brooklyn (83%). The report states this may be because of Staten islands higher

volume of owner occupied and single- or two family properties in Staten island. Even with an attorney 33% of tenants in housing court were evicted from their home. A rezoning will only speed up the displacement of tenants who have no protections.

A rezoning should protect existing tenants who call Staten Island home and should build affordable housing for any new tenants who want to move to Staten Island.

The housing Dignity Coalition has created a path to get a responsible rezoning and have spoken with the city numerous times on how to get there. A responsible rezoning that is truly affordable and is as close to a 50/50 deal as possible. We feel as if we have been ignored and our recommendations were not taken into consideration. Therefore, we are here against the rezoning.

February 26, 2018

Honorable members of the NYC Planning Commission,
The Let's Rebuild Cromwell Community Coalition LRCCC) which has convened and discussed the Bay Street Corridor Rezoning with hundreds of individuals and many community and church groups throughout the north shore since 2016, share with you our most urgent recommendations based on those discussions as you are all important actors in this ULURP process impacting the lives and livelihood of the people of Staten Island's north shore.

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February 26, 2018

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I am Rev. Janet Jones. I am one of the founding members of the Staten Island Housing Dignity Coalition which was founded in 2014 to advocate for housing affordability on Staten Island in the wake of Hurricane Sandy. I have served as pastor of the Rossville AME Zion Church for the last fifteen and a half years. I served as president of the Staten Island Council of Churches for three years and currently serve as co-chair of the Social Witness and Interfaith Committee and I'm a member of the Staten Island Interreligious Clergy Leadership.

Most of the congregants of the Rossville Church live on the Northshore. Many are homeowners and others are renters. In my years on Staten Island, I have seen Northshore residents with housing issues: Young adults who moved out of state, multiple families and multiple generations living in housing that was built for one family and, most recently, a young working mother with a child forced into a shelter because she could no longer afford the rent on her apartment. She is not alone on the Northshore. Many renters are one rent-increase away from homelessness.

Based on the city's own data, Housing Dignity research and efforts in the community and conversations with elected officials over the last four years, we cannot support a rezoning plan that will put millions of dollars in the pockets of developers and provide little benefit for the Northshore Community.

The Housing Dignity Coalition demands a development plan that provides. We demand local job training and employment meaning 50% of all new jobs be set aside for Staten Islanders. We demand equity in housing, that is, housing that supports all families, including extremely low-income families.

We cannot support the plan as it is written today. My faith commands me to name injustice and to seek justice in all facets of life. When the city puts forth a rezoning plan that increases the vulnerability of current renters – the 1753 that whom the City projects could face displacement; when the City puts forth a plan that ignores the 50% of Northshore families that earn less than $75,000 per year, When the City ignores the 43% of Northshore families that earn less than $50,000 per year 75% of whom are already rent burdened, – THAT'S INJUSTICE! Therefore, the Housing Dignity Coalition of Staten Island reject MIH options 2 and 4 and urge this Commission not to endorse the Bay Street rezoning Plan as it is written.

Do not endorse a plan that does not do justice to the Staten Island community.

Good afternoon, my name is Deacon Mary Bourne and I am a resident and faith leader in the North Shore. As a Deacon, I have heard many horror stories from tenants in the North Shore. Today I want to share a story by Kim Hinkson, who lives in 203 Targee Street, Staten Island, NY and is a member of First Central Baptist Church.

"I am a section 8 tenant residing on Targee Street. I have 3 daughters, 1 son and a 2-year old grandson. I am struggling with harassment from my landlord who does not want to fix the problems in my home. I have also struggled with too many rent increases in one years' time. I went to Section 8 to express my situation concerning the rent increases, the non-fixing of violations and the verbal abuse by my landlord. I've been told to move but how can I afford to move with the high rents. The places that I can afford present the conditions that I am experiencing now, some even worse. However, because of the constant rent increases and repairs that come out of my pockets, it's very difficult to make ends meet. My utilities are high. I pay for heat and hot water, and my apartment hasn't been painted in 8 years. My landlord wants me to sign paperwork stating he has completed repairs and if I refuse, he threatens me with eviction. I have called 311 with several complaints which just cause him to be more abusive. I need access to affordable housing that gives me and my children a life without so many issues and harassment, to put it simply, a new home where my family and I can live in peace and be proud. Please help me and people like me. Don't throw us away and forget about us."

Unfortunately, Kim is not alone. I hear stories like hers every weekend. This rezoning is not a good plan for the tenants who really need affordable

Good afternoon, my name is Bernice Alleyne im a deacon at st Philips baptist church and I have served on the housing dignity coalition board. I became apart of the coalition for the simple reason to have a seat at the table, to bring back the issues that affect the community and my congregation. What is affecting the community is housing affordability as well as housing that is dignifying as our name states. Our concerns pour over to the bay street corridor that we believe will displace tenants and as you will hear today religious institutions that will hurt our community because the congregants will have to leave. Not only because the church cant stay but the rents in that location willl be to high.

Recently I received 2 phone calls, from members, to assist 2 different parishioners. One who must move and called the church seeking someone to rent an apartment with her because a studio is not affordable, so she decided to at least go for a 2 bedroom. Although she won't live on her own, at least she will get more space for her money. The other congregate is looking for a roommate because of the sale of her house. She doesn't want to give up her assets from the sale of the house to renting an apartment that is 2 times more than her mortgage was. They are both are looking for affordability and dignified residence, neither wanting to leave their familiar surroundings.

The rezoning does not give us dignified housing and we must therefore ask for the city planning commission to reject the plan.

Thank you for listening and hearing the cries and concerns of the community organizations who have come before you on their behalf.

Hello, my name is Deborah Poleshuck and I'm with SiaraPB.

I have lived on the North Shore of Staten Island for over 40 years. I have been a teacher on the North Shore of Staten Island for thirty-four years. My children grew up on Staten Island and attended public schools there. Presently four generations of my family are living on Staten Island My daughter with her husband recently returned to Staten Island when they became homeowners. As a result of my past and present experiences I care deeply about the community my grandsons will inherit.

I have felt privileged to live and work on the North Shore of Staten Island because it defied the stereotypes of Staten Island that the rest of the world believes is true.

To me it has been a small town in a larger metropolitan community that enables people of different classes, colors and nationalities to interact and find a home.

The recent example of the community's opposition to Amazon in Long Island City reflects the increased skepticism of New Yorkers to giving huge monetary abatements and incentives to the business community and receiving nothing in return. The Bay Street Corridor comprises one of the last opportunities for developers to exploit the New York City waterfront. So far development of this waterfront has been a detriment to Staten Islanders. The building of the mall has negatively affected the movement of public buses down Richmond Terrace and delayed commuters. The developers have no concern about how their projects will affect other Staten Islanders because their concept is that by using public and private money they will create a "bubble environment" with schools, transportation, public spaces and shopping dedicated to *their* housing projects. On Staten Island we need a plan that will greatly improve public transportation which is a disaster, decrease class size in public schools and preserve our public spaces for the enjoyment of all North Shore residents.

Part of the proposal is to rezone the R3X district west of Bay Street. This is a low-density residential district. Seventeen hundred tenants living in these one and two-family homes have no legal protections. 58% of tenants in the North Shore are paying 30% or more of their income toward rent. Tenants must not be forced out of their homes and into the streets. Option 4 which Borough President Oddo supports — a two-bedroom apartment with a rental of $2,759 per month — would be impossible for these tenants to pay. Allowing the destruction of current affordable housing should not be part of any plan. People on the North Shore want to *keep* and build affordable housing.

New people can bring their vitality and concerns to enrich the community. A comprehensive plan should ensure that no one on the North Shore should be made homeless. Opportunities for jobs and job training should be provided for North Shore workers. The Bay Street Corridor area already has a history of providing inexpensive opportunities for artists to create studios and display spaces. The Bay Street Corridor already has excellent ethnic restaurants reflecting the community.

Developers need to sell their new housing units as part of a so-called "safe environment". Tompkinsville is part of the proposed Bay Street Corridor. The murder of Eric Garner by the police was part of the effort of the developers to "clean up" this area and make it more attractive. That's why Staten Island Against Racism and Police Brutality was formed. We need planning to *preserve* affordable housing, not to destroy it. We need planning for more public spaces and social services not a plan to destroy them.

Betty Tucker, Deacon at First Central Baptist Church

As a senior, I'm living on a reduced income. Because of my age and my difficulty climbing stairs, I can no longer live in my home. As I find myself looking for an apartment, I continually find that the rents are too high for my limited income. I thought I would be able to find apartments specifically for senior citizens, but there is just not enough senior residences for Staten Islanders. Some senior buildings that are built, only offer 50% of the apartments to Staten Island seniors, limiting the availability even more. My family, friends and my church are all here on Staten Island. It scares me that I may be forced to move far from my support group. Nowhere in this rezoning is there any plan to accommodate the growing need for apartments for seniors. We have worked too many years and should not have to have these types of stumbling blocks in just trying to live out the remainder of our lives. I feel that we've been forgotten in this whole rezoning process. My question is – How can you let any rezoning happen that totally ignores the need of affordable housing, not only for senior citizens, but for all families with limited incomes living on the north shore of Staten Island. I urge the city planning commission to reject this rezoning due to the fact that it does not offer enough affordable housing and deeply affordable housing.

My name is Priscilla Briggs. I am a lifelong Staten Islander. I raised three daughters and wo nieces and a nephew, then my husband and I adopted three children who are now teenagers. There are not enough affordable apartments for families of three who earn less than $3,000 a year. Our home is over-crowded because two young adults parents who work every day cannot afford to provide their children and pay for an apartment. I'm with the Housing Dignity Coalition and I oppose this rezoning plan because it forgets about the 43 percent of Northshore families whose income is less than $50,000 a year.

My name is Taneequa Briggs. I am her with the Housing Dignity Coalition and oppose the Bay Street Corridor Rezoning Plan because it doesn't help single parents like me. I just got a subsidized apartment after living in a shelter. When I could no longer handle the rent on my previous apartment, I had no place for me and my child to go. My parents wanted to help but their home was already overcrowded; so I went to a shelter. If the City rezones a manufacturing area to provide housing, it should provide housing that helps families with a range of incomes including families like mine who earn less than$37,000 a year and are severely rent burdened.

My name is Debra Barone and I am a Staten Island resident. I'm here with the Housing Dignity Coalition to stand in opposition to the Bay Street Corridor Rezoning as it is currently written.

I am a homeowner, but I have two well educated, working sons. One son couldn't afford an apartment on his own; so, he was forced to move in with his girlfriend who also couldn't afford an apartment on her own. He was living at home until the age of 28. My 24-year-old son is a struggling musical artist and will be living at home for a long time. We have a 35-year-old cousin living with parents who cannot afford to live alone. My friend's 30- year-old daughter still lives at home.

All of these young people have college degrees and are working but cannot afford an apartment on Staten Island. I don't want my kids to be forced to move to New Jersey and be separated by a bridge. If I have grandchildren, I want to be near them. I don't want a bridge to separate me and my kids. My sons won't own a house until I die. Then they'll have my house.

I know old people with no pension and small social security checks. I know a woman who wants to leave an unhealthy and unhappy marriage but can't because Social Security isn't enough to pay rent anywhere.

My aunt had to move in with her son because her rent became so high she could no longer afford it.

I urge you to take another look at this rezoning plan and present one with deep affordability that will better address the needs of all Staten islanders.

February 27, 2019

My name is Rev: Faith Togba, senior pastor of Bethel Worship Center, an inter denomination and multicultural church on 402 Bay Street, Staten Island, New York 10301 for Seventeen Years.

Every day in our churches, congregants come forward to share their struggle with rising NYC rents. For decades, the gap between high housing costs and low wages has grown fueling an affordability crisis and exposing many of our loved ones to displacement and homelessness. (Data: 89,000 people are homeless today statewide) • In November 2019, the Department of City Planning certified a plan to rezone a 14 block stretch of manufacturing land on Bay Street. This plan would allow developers to convert their manufacturing sites into residential towers that span 6 to 14 stories. • While some are making the case for economic development on the North Shore, we think it is important to make the case for equitable economic development. Any Bay Street plan that moves must support all families; including extremely low-income families.

The rezoning hasn't yet taking place but the negative impact is enormous. Church members are seeing rent going up, landlord refusing to renew least, and as a result relocating and costing attendants to church tremendously reducing.

The city's plan under review would create 1,592 new residential units along Bay Street. Of those units, 620 are projected MIH ("affordable") units. However, the 620 MIH units are projected at MIH Option 2;

families would have to earn $75,120 per year to qualify for the "affordable" units. • Why is this problematic? According to data, 58% of families on the North Shore earn below $75,000 per year. So this projected plan would leave out over half of the district.

Other than income data, there is rent burdened data. Rent burden means that a family is paying over 30% of their income on rent. Of the 43% of North Shore tenants that earn below $50,000, 75% of these families are rent burdened.

We therefor ask that the rezoning be voted no if it will not include deeper affordable homes.

Thanks.

Good afternoon,

My name is Saul Lopez, and I am with Make the Road NY. I came to this organization 10 years ago as a community organizer in Staten Island.

This job has given me the opportunity to hear a wide arrange of issues that the community encounters. One of the most common problems is affordable housing. Majority of immigrant families have to rent from a private home owner and pay up to $2,000 and sometimes even more. They all need 2 jobs in order to pay for the apartment. On top of that, the landlord makes them pay for heat, hot water and repairs. There is also no laws in place to regulate the rents in these private homes. Tenants are being asked to move out if they can not pay the rent. The tenants have to decide if they want to pay the high rents or find another place to live. If they move, they will have to find a new job that is closer to home and taking their kids to school becomes more difficult. I urge the city planning commission to not support this rezoning without putting protections in place for current residents. This rezoning is not the solution.

North Shore DEIS Response from the Housing Dignity Coalition

An Open Letter to the New York City Department of City Planning, Department of Housing Preservation and Development, and City Council Member Debi Rose

Dear representatives of the New York City Department of City Planning, Department of Housing Preservation and Development, and City Council Member Debi Rose:

The Housing Dignity Coalition (HDC) – a coalition of over a dozen inter-faith leaders, tenant associations and community partners working to protect, secure and fight for every North Shore resident's right to have safe, dignified and affordable housing – is deeply concerned that Mayor de Blasio's current rezoning plan for the North Shore of Staten Island will leave behind too many low-income New Yorkers and fail to serve our community's most pressing needs. We are writing you today to outline our objections in detail.

Two years after releasing the Draft Scope, the Department of City Planning has kicked off the public review process for the Bay Street rezoning on the North Shore of Staten Island. This rezoning would drastically change a 14-block stretch of currently manufacturing zoned land along Bay Street by allowing the construction of an estimated 1,592 residential units in buildings ranging from 5 to 14 stories and allow the City to give multiple publicly owned lots on the North Shore to private developers for redevelopment of retail, office and residential space. HDC is deeply concerned that the current plan, if implemented, will not meet our community's needs for truly affordable housing, while actually fueling displacement.

Nearly one-half of our community district earns below $50,000 per year and one-third of the district earns below $35,000 per year. These are the Staten Islanders with the greatest need, and the highest rent burdens, and we cannot support any plan that ignores their urgent need. These Staten Island residents are members of our congregations. They are our neighbors. Many of them struggle for survival, while contributing immensely to the fabric of our community. They are employed in low-wage jobs at restaurants, in child-care and in retail. They have invested in our community and now it is time to invest in them.

If we believe in the simple principle of housing for all, we must ensure that any approved plan is a responsible and equitable one. The plan laid out in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) is neither. In fact, no significant changes have been made since the draft scope of 2016. Community calls to expand the total number of affordable units and deepen levels of affordability have gone largely ignored.

HDC believes that there is potential to adopt a North Shore rezoning that lifts up all families – low, moderate and middle income – but that will require this administration and council to listen to our community and shift their priorities. Below is a comparative list of what the city just certified and what HDC members have called for:

Public Land:
- The Department of City Planning continues to pursue a plan to transfer public disposition sites (city-owned land) to private developers. Of the three disposition sites listed, only one will require a percentage of income-restricted units at affordability rates left unmentioned.
  - HDC members call for the construction of 100% affordable housing on all public disposition sites. This would generate hundreds of new units affordable to a wide range of families, including the districts lowest income earners.

Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH):
- The Department of City Planning has applied all four MIH Options along Bay Street, which sets aside income restricted units for families earning as much as $122,070. The monthly average "affordable" two-bedroom apartment under the workforce option (MIH Option 4) will rent at $2,759.
  - HDC members call for the MIH Options that provide the deepest affordability along Bay Street: MIH Option 1, which sets aside 25% of all new units for families earning an average of $56,340, and MIH Option 3, which sets aside 20% of all new units for families earning an average of $37,560. The average two-bedroom apartment would rent between $810 and $1,280 under these options. Additionally, HDC members have called for tightened height restrictions to prevent 14-story towers on Bay Street.

Tenant Protections:
- The Department of City Planning estimates that 1,753 low-income unprotected renters will be left potentially vulnerable to indirect residential displacement as a result of this rezoning. This projection is limited to the study area and does not assume displacement impacts for unprotected renters whom live beyond study area lines.
  - HDC members call for increased tenant protections and landlord oversight to ensure that local tenants are not pushed out of their existing homes. Protections must include, but not be limited to, guaranteed legal representation for tenants facing harassment and better financing and tax benefits for homeowners who agree to keep existing rental units

affordable long-term. As we call for increased tenant protections, we acknowledge that the above 1,753 unprotected low-income renters will remain vulnerable. The State Legislature must move to pass Universal Rent Control, so that every tenant in New York, no matter where they live, receives the same basic tenant protections. Until this happens, the City of New York should reconsider the timeline for this local rezoning.

Local Jobs:

- The Department of City Planning projects a net increase of 1,312 total jobs as a result of the North Shore rezoning, but does not guarantee that those jobs will be filled by local residents.
  - o HDC members call for significant investment in local job training and apprenticeship programs with a guarantee that 50% of all new jobs be set-aside for local residents living within Community Board 1 of Staten Island.

Over the next six months, the local Community Board, Borough President, City Planning Commission and City Council will hold separate hearings. These hearings provide a final opportunity to call for the North Shore we want to see. It will not suffice to simply have a pretty and redeveloped Bay Street. We need a Bay Street that meets the needs of all families – including the 59% of low-income families in the district.

As faith and community leaders who believe in housing, dignity, and justice for all, we stand opposed to the North Shore rezoning as described in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). For two years, since the release of the Draft Scope, we have weighed in repeatedly with the city, demanding a fair and equitable rezoning. This long anticipated DEIS completely ignores our calls. We cannot endorse a community plan that is not written by the people.

Signed,
Executive Team of the Housing Dignity Coalition

Pastor Janet Jones, Rossville AME Zion Church
Pastor Faith Togba, Bethel Worship Center
Deacon Mary Bourne, First Central Baptist Church
Deacon Bernice Alleyne, St. Phillips Baptist Church
Ivan García, Make the Road New York

Testimony before the City Planning Commission Hearing for the Bay Street Neighborhood Rezoning | February 27, 2019 | 120 Broadway | NY, NY

My name is Leticia Remauro. I am the Secretary for the Staten Island Downtown Alliance, a 501(c)3 local development corporation which receives grants from NYC SBS and Councilmember Rose to retain and attract businesses to the downtown area so residents have the amenities they need to live comfortably and affordably. I offer this testimony in favor of the Bay Street Neighborhood Rezoning and urge you to adopt the MIH 2 option.

In 2011, Community Board 1 voted to dispose of the Stapleton Municipal Parking Lot so it could be turned into affordable housing under an HPD program. The name of the resulting building is The Rail. It houses tenants qualifying for rent subsidies at varying income levels. The construction of The Rail and Stapleton Court, (another residential building constructed on open space at a nearby NYCHA development), have added approximately 200 families to the local population. The Rail's commercial component provides a much needed amenity for the neighborhood.

The Staten Island Downtown Alliance supports the Bay Street Neighborhood Rezoning Plan because, like The Rail, it will increase the density along the Bay Street corridor which is the best way to retain and attract businesses. We support the adoption of the MIH2 option because it will provide approximately 2500 units of permanent, affordable housing for tenants at varying income levels including the deepest affordability. This type of economic integration in buildings is important because it provides anonymity for those who require rent subsidies while attracting individuals with more disposable income to the area to support local businesses. The model is similar to the one used by Battery Park City in lower Manhattan.

Successful urban development models begin with the creation of rental units with varying levels of affordability to attract young people, seniors, veterans and others for whom homeownership is not an option or desire. Historically, Staten Island has lost these demographics to Brooklyn, Manhattan or places further south like New Jersey, because our borough is mostly comprised of single family homes. By creating vertical, rental housing for all income levels within a public transportation corridor, we can retain these demographics; boost the local economy and turn unused city-owned parcels into income producing, tax paying properties.

Civic organizations and CB members who have worked for years to improve the living conditions along the corridor oppose the plan because they weren't able to get answers to their questions at the time of the presentation. If HPD, DOT, EDC and SBS were on

hand to address their concerns, we may have seen a more positive outcome. For example: many people misread the section of the document that discussed the potential displacement of 1700 low income individuals living in private apartments to mean that the plan would cause their displacement. If HPD were on hand they could have explained that these individuals are at risk for displacement whether or not the plan is adopted because the government can't mandate affordability for apartments in private homes. However, if the plan is adopted these individuals can relocate into one of the 2500 new apartments that will be mandated to remain affordable for as long at the building stands.

Another area of confusion was the level of affordability. Housing advocates stated that the affordability levels are not low enough for the area income level. HPD could have explained that MIH option 2 will create permanent deeply affordable units where currently none exist outside of NYCHA. When information is lacking, people tend to fill in the blanks with misinformation.

Recently DHS announced that there are 1,300 homeless Staten Islanders who need shelter. If that number is true, we must adopt this plan now because it will create 2,500 units of affordable housing in approximately the same timeframe it would take to build the 200 bed homeless shelter slated for a privately owned lot at 44 Victory Boulevard.

Homelessness experts report that permanent affordable housing is cheaper for the taxpayer and more beneficial for homeless individuals. Adopting this plan will fulfill our moral obligation to fight homelessness and our fiduciary responsibility to ensure that the taxpayer funds granted to organizations to improve the Bay Street corridor have the best opportunity for a successful outcome.

1   --X

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3   NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING

4   BAY STREET CORRIDOR PUBLIC HEARING

5

6   --X

7

8   120 Broadway
                    New York, New York

9

10   Wednesday, February 27, 2019
                          1:39 p.m

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2   A P P E A R A N C E S:

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4   MARISA LAGO, Chair

5   KENNETH J. KNUCKLES, Esq., Vice Chairman

6   ALLEN P. CAPPELLI, Esq.

7   ALFRED C. CERULLO, III, Commissioner

8   MICHELLE R. DE LA UZ, Commissioner

9   HOPE KNIGHT, Commissioner

10   ANNA HAYES LEVIN, Commissioner

11   ORLANDO MARIN, Commissioner

12   LARISA ORTIZ, Commissioner

13   RAJ RAMPERSHAD, Commissioner

14   YVETTE V. GRUEL, Calendar Officer

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1   PROCEEDINGS

2   MS. LAGO: Welcome to the City Planning

3   Commission Public Meeting.

4   MS. GRUEL: Good morning. This is a

5   City Planning Commission Public Meeting, held

6   at NYC City Planning Commission hearing room,

7   Lower Concourse, 120 Broadway. Today is

8   Wednesday, February 27, 2019. As a courtesy,

9   during the proceedings, we ask that you

10   please turn off all cell phones and

11   electronic devices. All speakers should fill

12   out a speaker's card. In addition, we ask

13   that those providing testimony, please

14   identify yourself, limit your remarks to

15   three minutes, and speak clearly into the

16   microphone. I will now call the roll.

17   Chair Lago?

18   MS. LAGO: Here.

19   MS. GRUEL: Vice Chairman Knuckles?

20   MR. KNUCKLES: Here.

21   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Cappelli?

22   MR. CAPPELLI: Here.

23   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Cerullo?

24   MR. CERULLO: Here.

25   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner De La Uz?

2   MS. DE LA UZ: Here.

3   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Douek?

4   MR. DOUEK: (No response.)

5   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Eaddy?

6   MR. EADDY: (No response.)

7   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Knight?

8   MS. KNIGHT: Here.

9   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Levin?

10   MS. LEVIN: Here.

11   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Marin?

12   MR. MARIN: Here.

13   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Ortiz?

14   MS. ORTIZ: Here.

15   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Rampershad?

16   MR. RAMPERSHAD: Here.

17   MS. GRUEL: A quorum is present.

18   The first item is the approval of the

19   minutes of the regular meeting of Wednesday,

20   February 13, 2019, and special meeting of

21   Monday, February 25, 2019.

22   MS. LAGO: On the minutes, all in

23   favor?

24   >>: Aye (chorus).

25   MS. LAGO: Opposed?

2   (No response.)

3   MS. LAGO: Minutes are approved.

4   MS. GRUEL: Scheduling: On Calendar

5   Numbers 1 through 9, we have resolutions for

6   adoption, scheduling Wednesday, March 13,

7   2019, for a public hearing, to be held at NYC

8   City Planning Commission Room, Lower

9   Concourse, 120 Broadway.

10   MS. LAGO: On the resolutions, all in

11   favor?

12   >>: Aye (chorus).

13   MS. LAGO: Opposed?

14   >>: (No response.)

15   MS. LAGO: The resolutions are adopted.

16   MS. GRUEL: The next part of the

17   calendar is the report section on page 20.

18   Borough of the Bronx, Calendar Numbers 10, 11

19   and 12, Calendars number 10C11C170438ZMX,

20   Calendar Number 11N17439ZRX, Calendar Number

21   12C170353MMX. In the matter of applications

22   for zoning map, city map and zoning tax

23   amendments concerning the Blondell Commons.

24   For favorable reports of Calendar Numbers 10,

25   11 and 12.

2   Chair Lago?

3   MS. LAGO: Yes.

4   MS. GRUEL: Vice Chairman Knuckles?

5   MR. KNUCKLES: Yes.

6   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Cappelli?

7   MR. CAPPELLI: Yes.

8   MS. GRUEL: Commission Cerullo?

9   MR. CERULLO: Yes.

10   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner De La Uz?

11   MS. DE LA UZ: Yes.

12   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Knight?

13   MS. KNIGHT: Yes.

14   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Levin?

15   MS. LEVIN: Yes.

16   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Marin?

17   MR. MARIN: Yes.

18   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Ortiz?

19   MS. ORTIZ: Yes.

20   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Rampershad?

21   MR. RAMPERSHAD: Yes.

22   MS. GRUEL: Favorable reports have been

23   adopted on Calendar Numbers 10, 11 and 12.

24   Borough of Brooklyn, Calendar

25   Numbers 13, 14 and 15. Calendar Number 13,

2   CD1N190083ZRK, Calendar Number 14,

3   C190084ZSK, Calendar Number 15, C190085ZSK.

4   In the matter of applications for a

5   zoning tax amendment and for the grant of

6   special permits concerning 103 North 13th

7   Street. For favorable reports on Calendar

8   Numbers 13, 14 and 15.

9   Chair Lago?

10   MS. LAGO: Yes.

11   MS. GRUEL: Vice Chairman Knuckles?

12   MR. KNUCKLES: Yes.

13   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Cappelli?

14   MR. CAPPELLI: Yes.

15   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Cerullo?

16   MR. CERULLO: Yes.

17   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner De La Uz?

18   MS. DE LA UZ: Yes.

19   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Knight?

20   MS. KNIGHT: Yes.

21   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Levin?

22   MS. LEVIN: I remain concerned that

23   we're seeing a stream of these applications

24   for a process that really is in an

25   experimental phase and we've not been able to

2   actually see how it's going to work out,

3   especially for 25 Kent. Now I've got some

4   more of these, so I do hope we get a chance

5   to understand how these special permits are

6   incentivizing the creation and preservation

7   of industrial space in these emerging

8   manufacturing zone districts. But I vote yes

9   on this one.

10   And I note that my little green button

11   just turned off and now I'm red.

12   MR. MARIN: We're all red.

13   MS. LEVIN: We're all red.

14   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Marin?

15   MR. MARIN: I concur with the comments

16   made by Commission Levin, and I vote yes.

17   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Ortiz?

18   MS. ORTIZ: Yes.

19   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Rampershad?

20   MR. RAMPERSHAD: Yes.

21   MS. GRUEL: Favorable reports have been

22   adopted on Calendar Numbers 13, 14, and 15.

23   Borough of Brooklyn, Calendar

24   Number 16, CV12C180171ZMK. In the matter of

25   an application for a zoning map amendment

2   concerning McDonald Avenue Catering. For a

3   favorable report on Calendar Number 16.

4   Chair Lago?

5   MS. LAGO: Yes.

6   MS. GRUEL: Vice Chairman Knuckles?

7   MR. KNUCKLES: Yes.

8   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Cappelli?

9   MR. CAPPELLI: Yes.

10   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Cerullo?

11   MR. CERULLO: Yes.

12   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner De La Uz?

13   MS. DE LA UZ: Yes.

14   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Knight?

15   MS. KNIGHT: Yes.

16   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Levin?

17   MS. LEVIN: Yes.

18   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Marin?

19   MR. MARIN: Yes.

20   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Ortiz?

21   MS. ORTIZ: Yes.

22   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Rampershad?

23   MR. RAMPERSHAD: Yes.

24   MS. GRUEL: A favorable report has been

25   adopted on Calendar Number 16.

2   Borough of Brooklyn, Calendar Number 17

3   and 18. Calendar Number 17, CD6C180294ZMK

4   Calendar Number 18, N180295ZRK. In the

5   matter of applications for a zoning map and

6   zoning tax amendments concerning 41 Summit

7   Street rezoning. For favorable report on

8   Calendar Numbers 17 and 18.

9   Madam Chair?

10   MS. LAGO: Yes.

11   MS. GRUEL: Vice Chairman Knuckles?

12   MR. KNUCKLES: Yes.

13   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Cappelli?

14   MR. CAPPELLI: Yes.

15   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Cerullo?

16   MR. CERULLO: Yes.

17   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner De La Uz?

18   MS. DE LA UZ: Recused.

19   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Knight?

20   MS. KNIGHT: Yes.

21   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Levin?

22   MS. LEVIN: I had my say about this on

23   Monday. This point, I recognize that the

24   modified zoning that's proposed here, R6A,

25   may very well be appropriate, but I regret

2   that we did not have a chance to consider an

3   R6B 'cause it's out of scope. So, I'm going

4   to abstain.

5   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Marin?

6   MR. MARIN: Yes.

7   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Ortiz?

8   MS. ORTIZ: Yes.

9   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Rampershad?

10   MR. RAMPERSHAD: Yes.

11   MS. GRUEL: Favorable reports have been

12   adopted on Calendar Numbers 17 and 18.

13   Borough of Staten Island, Calendar

14   Number 19, CD3N190066RCR. In the matter of

15   an application for the grant of a

16   certification concerning Nello Court for

17   adoption on Calendar Number 19.

18   Chair Lago?

19   MS. LAGO: Yes.

20   MS. GRUEL: Vice Chairman Knuckles?

21   MR. KNUCKLES: Yes.

22   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Cappelli?

23   MR. CAPPELLI: Yes.

24   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Cerullo?

25   MR. CERULLO: Yes.

2   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner De La Uz?

3   MS. DE LA UZ: Yes.

4   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Knight?

5   MS. KNIGHT: Yes.

6   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Levin?

7   MS. LEVIN: Yes.

8   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Marin?

9   MR. MARIN: Yes.

10   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Ortiz?

11   MS. ORTIZ: Yes.

12   MS. GRUEL: Commissioner Rampershad?

13   MR. RAMPERSHAD: Yes.

14   MS. GRUEL: Calendar Number 19 has been

15   adopted.

16   Borough of Staten Island, concerning

17   Calendar Numbers 20 and 21, concerning

18   99 Seacrest Avenue. This item has been laid

19   over.

20   Borough of Staten Island, Calendar

21   Numbers 22 and 23, concerning 93 Manny

22   Avenue, this item has been laid over.

23   The next part of the calendar is a

24   public hearing section on page 34. Borough

25   of the Bronx, Calendar Numbers 24 and 25.

2   Calendar Number 24, CD9C190102ZMX. Calendar

3   Number 25, N190103ZRX. A public hearing in a

4   matter of applications for zoning map and

5   zoning text amendments concerning

6   2069 Bruckner Boulevard rezoning.

7   MS. LAGO: We will have a team

8   presentation by Frank St. Jacques with Guido

9   Subotovsky and Emmanual D'Amore available to

10   answer questions.

11   MR. ST. JACQUES: Good morning, Chair

12   Lago and commissioners. My name is Frank

13   St. Jacques from Akerman, LLP, appearing on

14   behalf of the applicant, Azimuth Development

15   Group, LLC. I am joined by Guido Subotovsky

16   of Azimuth and Emmanual D'Amore of Aufgang

17   Architects. I'll present the latest actions

18   in the application and Guido and Emmanual

19   will be available for questions related to

20   the design and the affordability of the

21   project.

22   The proposed rezoning area and

23   development site are located in the Union

24   Port neighborhood of The Bronx and Community

25   District 9 at 2069 Bruckner Boulevard, which

2   is bounded by Bruckner Boulevard to the

3   south, Olmstead Avenue to the east and

4   Chatterton Avenue to the north, in a line 300

5   feet from Olmstead Avenue to the west. As

6   you can see, the Bruckner Expressway is

7   immediately south of the rezoning area. The

8   development site is shown on the area land

9   use map. It is located within an R5 zoning

10   district that is mapped, generally, north of

11   Bruckner Boulevard. Their existing

12   commercial overlay is mapped to the west of

13   Pugsley Avenue, along Bruckner Boulevard and

14   along Castle Hill Avenue to the east.

15   The development site is within an R5

16   zoning district. It is also within the

17   transit zone and in an area where fresh

18   discretionary tax incentives are available.

19   The site is an approximately

20   61,000-square-foot rectangular corner and

21   through lot with approximately 289 feet of

22   frontage on Bruckner Boulevard and Chatterton

23   Avenue, and 211 feet of frontage on Olmstead

24   Avenue. Bruckner Boulevard and Olmstead

25   Avenue are both wide streets and Chatterton

2   Avenue is a narrow street. The site is

3   improved with a one-story building with a

4   large surface parking lot. It was previously

5   used as a supermarket and most recently as a

6   house of worship. The site is located near

7   public transit. It's approximately a 1/2

8   mile south of the Parkchester station, which

9   serves the 6 Subway line, and it's also in

10   close proximity to several bus lines.

11   The applicant is seeking two actions

12   today -- a zoning map amendment to change the

13   current R5 zoning district to R7A, with the

14   C-24 overlay mapped from Bruckner Boulevard

15   to the center line of the site and to a depth

16   of 100 feet from Olmstead Avenue. The

17   applicant is also seeking a zoning text

18   amendment to establish a Mandatory

19   Inclusionary Housing area with MIH Option 1.

20   The zoning change map illustrates the

21   proposed zoning change from R5, shown on the

22   left, to R7A and R7A/C-24, shown on the

23   right. And you can see how the commercial

24   overlay wraps the site. Here it is again on

25   the tax map. Again, you can see the

2   commercial overlay wraps a portion of the

3   site. The proposed actions would facilitate

4   the development of two new buildings at the

5   development site. For all the proposed

6   development would contain 330 units,

7   approximately 83 of which would be

8   permanently affordable -- excuse me,

9   permanently income-restricted units under MIH

10   Option 1, with an additional, approximately,

11   50 permanently income-restricted units per

12   HPD's policy; that's an additional

13   fifteen percent.

14   So, as I mentioned, the proposed

15   rezoning would facilitate the development of

16   two buildings. There's a seven-story

17   residential building on Chatterton Avenue, on

18   the north side of a site, with 65 units,

19   approximately 64,000 square feet of

20   residential floor area. The building is 70

21   feet tall but steps down to 50 feet or five

22   stories at the western edge of the site.

23   Both buildings will have primarily brick

24   facades and will incorporate articulation and

25   use of other materials to create visual

2   interest and break up the massing. This

3   building will be financed through HPD's Open

4   Door Home Ownership Program, which I will

5   discuss in a moment.

6   The other building is a nine-story

7   mixed-use residential and commercial

8   building, which wraps Bruckner Avenue and

9   Olmstead Avenue frontages of the site. It

10   has 265 Units. It's approximately 199,000

11   square feet of residential floor area, with

12   about 18,000 square feet of commercial floor

13   area on the ground floor. The ground floor

14   would be a qualifying ground floor and would

15   be glazed for transparency to activate the

16   streetscape and enhance the pedestrian

17   experience. The building is 95 feet tall

18   above a 75-foot base with ten-foot setbacks.

19   It also steps down to 55 feet or five stories

20   at the western edge of the site. This

21   building also uses different colors of brick

22   and metal paneling in articulation. And this

23   building will be financed through HPD's

24   Mix-n-Match Rental Program.

25   The site plan illustrates the various

2   heights of the buildings and setbacks and

3   step-downs and a side yard on the western

4   edge of the site at the proposed zoning

5   district boundary between the proposed R7A

6   and the existing R5 district. The applicant

7   has proposed decking over the parking grade.

8   Now, I'll move quickly through the following

9   slides, which are floor plans for the cellar,

10   1st, and 2nd floors, that show how the

11   parking is treated at the site. This is a

12   cellar plan that shows that ninety-nine south

13   park spaces will be provided in a cellar

14   garage.

15   The 1st floor plan, showing an

16   additional sixty spaces at-grade. And the

17   2nd floor plan, which shows how the parking

18   will be decked over with a landscaped parking

19   structure. I'll run through these next few

20   slides quickly. These are massings, showing

21   different views of the building. Here's the

22   building from the south and from the

23   southeast, northeast, and finally from the

24   northwest. With respect to the proposed unit

25   distribution by building, as shown here on

 2   the slide. Again, there's sixty-five

 3   homeownership units and 265 rental units, for

 4   a total of 330 units in the overall project.

 5   I had noted that the MIH units will be

 6   proportional to the unit distribution shown

 7   on the slide. So, for Building A under HPD's

 8   open door program, these, again, are

 9   homeownership units -- one-bedroom

10   apartments, there are seventeen, would sell

11   for approximately $243,000. Two bedrooms,

12   there's thirty-three of those, would sell

13   for, approximately, $276,000, and three

14   bedrooms, there's fifteen of those, would

15   sell for approximately $340,000. This is a

16   relatively new program, and the applicant is

17   excited to be among the initial participants.

18   The rental building with 265 units will

19   utilize HPD's Mix-n-Match term sheet, with a

20   range of AMIs, shown on this slide. The "R"

21   space units on the left side of the screen

22   are set aside for formerly homeless families

23   at very low AMI's. As noted at the review

24   session on Monday, Community Board 9 and the

25   Bronx Borough President, issued

2   recommendations to approve the project. We

3   work closely with both offices before and

4   during ULURP and incorporate changes into the

5   project based on their input.

6   This concludes my presentation. We're

7   happy to answer any questions.

8   MS. LAGO: Questions from the

9   commissioners.

10   Commissioner Levin?

11   MS. LEVIN: Yes. I wonder if you could

12   talk to us a little bit about the commercial

13   overlay that you're proposing here. This is

14   not an area that has any ground floor retail

15   space at all. And so, if you or perhaps your

16   client would like to elaborate on how they

17   think retail is going to be successful here,

18   what kind of retail it might be, that would

19   be helpful.

20   MR. ST. JACQUES: Yes. I'd be happy

21   to. I'll start and I'll have Guido come up

22   to elaborate. I'm just going to pull up the

23   area map. As you can see, the site directly

24   adjacent to ours is a ten-story multifamily

25   building with a large surface parking lot but

2   a block further to the west. There are some

3   commercial overlays existing on Bruckner

4   Boulevard. There's also some existing

5   commercial along Castle Hill Avenue. The

6   area is predominantly residential, as you can

7   see from the area map. So, we feel like

8   there's an existing residential base that

9   will be served by new commercial, in addition

10   to the 330 new units that are being provided

11   at the site. The applicant, actually, just

12   received an approval last year for a project

13   approximately half a mile away to the west.

14   He's developing that project on Watson

15   Avenue. He's developing that project in a

16   similar fashion with a ground floor,

17   commercial and residential above, and has

18   received a lot of interest for the commercial

19   at that site. It's sort of similarly removed

20   from existing commercial and commercial

21   overlays, but has had a lot of interested

22   tenants for that site.

23   And to answer your second question, the

24   commercial is contemplated as serving the

25   local needs, so local retail. There's a

2   large shopping center to the Cross Bruckner

3   Expressway to the southeast that has larger

4   stores. So, this is intended to be a bit

5   smaller scale and can be broken up to serve a

6   different sort of local -- retail and service

7   needs.

8   MS. LAGO: Commissioner Ortiz?

9   MS. ORTIZ: Thank you. I also have

10   concerns about the commercial overlay and,

11   you know, do note that we're talking about

12   800 linear feet from an existing commercial

13   corridor. So, it is distinct and somewhat

14   isolated. What kinds of uses are

15   contemplated at this location? And, you

16   know, will those uses require parking to

17   succeed, you know? Is the site selection for

18   businesses? Is that going to be a concern

19   for them at this location?

20   MR. ST. JACQUES: To answer your second

21   question first -- with respect to parking,

22   this building provides more than the required

23   parking, both cellar and grade parking, to

24   give some flexibility for commercial tenancy

25   that would either require or want to have

2   parking --

3   MS. ORTIZ: That's contemplated

4   potentially for the commercial tenant?

5   MR. ST. JACQUES: It's -- partially,

6   yes. There's -- above the zoning

7   requirement, there would be no commercial

8   parking requirement for zoning. But we have

9   some flexibility because some of the spaces

10   are required, pursuant to zoning as accessory

11   residential and the balance is just permitted

12   parking. So, some of that could be allocated

13   for commercial uses.

14   As far as specific users -- Guido, do

15   you want to speak to the experience you've

16   had with 1755 Watson?

17   MR. SUBOTOVSKY: Good morning. I

18   represent the commission. My name is Guido

19   Subotovsky. I'm the president with Azimuth

20   Development Group. As Frank mentioned, we're

21   currently developing less than ten blocks

22   away, a project at 1755 Watson Avenue, which

23   is very similar in size and scale and

24   actually came through the Commission last

25   year. So, that project, which consists of

2   326 units of mixed-income housing and also

3   approximately 16,000 square feet of ground

4   floor retail, which you could say is a

5   similar situation in that it's not

6   necessarily surrounded by so many commercial

7   uses. That being said, when we introduce a

8   project of this size and scale of, you know,

9   300-some-odd units, in and of itself, in many

10   cases, creates a need for different types of

11   retail. And when I say, "retail," in many

12   cases users that we're approached by are

13   actually considered community facility users,

14   which obviously, as you know, can be included

15   in a commercial district.

16   But just so -- to give you an example

17   of some of the users that we've been

18   approached by -- at 1755 Watson, we've been

19   approached by many daycare operators. We are

20   actually negotiating a lease currently or a

21   Letter of Intent with an operator for a

22   13,000-square-foot daycare center. We get a

23   lot of interest, actually, from supermarkets,

24   of course, different types of medical uses,

25   which, again, of course, is considered

2   community facility, but also can be developed

3   within a commercial overlay. So, you know,

4   medical -- from urgent care to different

5   types of medical users that are prevalent in

6   the area. But we have had, also, educational

7   uses. Actually, we've been approached by the

8   Department of Education for universal pre-K

9   as well. But the interest in 1755 Watson,

10   quite frankly, has been even greater than

11   expected. And we expect a similar level of

12   interest on a site like this, which is

13   actually more visible than 1755 Watson.

14   MS. ORTIZ: You know, you made the

15   point that there is an interest in creating,

16   you know, ground floor retail commercial

17   space to activate the street. The uses that

18   you've mentioned, will those do that?

19   MR. SUBOTOVSKY: Certainly. I mean,

20   some users, obviously, rely more on foot

21   traffic, for example, than others. But, you

22   know, in a space of 18,000 square feet, I

23   would expect to have more likely two, if not,

24   three users. So, for example, I might

25   have -- again, it's an example. I might have

2   a daycare facility to occupy eight or 9,000

3   square feet, which isn't exactly -- let's

4   say -- a foot traffic use. But also with

5   that, I might have a fresh grocer, for

6   example, which is typically somewhere in the

7   neighborhood of a five to 7,000-square-foot

8   user, which will very much activate that

9   community. And, you know, a lot of the

10   options right there, for example,

11   supermarkets, aren't that close. You have

12   Westchester Avenue, which I wouldn't say is

13   necessarily walking distance; many people

14   would have to drive there. But my experience

15   in various larger scale developments that

16   I've had and rezones of this nature, has

17   absolutely been that, you know -- these uses

18   kind of activate, as you said, the immediate

19   area around it.

20   MS. ORTIZ: Is there any concern about

21   cannibalizing the retail activity along

22   Castle Hill? Do they have a vacancy issue?

23   Or how are businesses doing?

24   MR. SUBOTOVSKY: My experience, I mean,

25   this is -- we've had extensive discussions

2   with Community Board 9 and the councilmember

3   on this as well. I have not seen -- I mean,

4   in my driving up-and-down Castle Hill. I

5   haven't seen a real issue with vacancy there.

6   There's certainly nothing that strikes me,

7   but this particular area, you know, is close

8   enough to Castle Hill, but it's also far

9   enough that it kind of creates its own level

10   of demand. We would, you know, obviously,

11   with the level of financing that we're

12   undertaking, we, of course, wouldn't proceed

13   with such a large retail component, of

14   course, if we weren't extremely confident

15   that it would have a positive impact on the

16   project.

17   MS. ORTIZ: Thank you.

18   MR. SUBOTOVSKY: Sure.

19   MS. LAGO: Other questions?

20   Commissioner Levin.

21   MS. LEVIN: The borough president

22   raised a number of concerns. And one I

23   wanted to ask about in particular and that's

24   his request that you limit signs --

25   illuminated signs, that would be geared

2   toward drivers passing by and perhaps a

3   distraction. Are you planning any signage on

4   this building?

5   MR. ST. JACQUES: Not presently. I

6   will know -- and I don't have them in front

7   of me -- that this building will have --

8   although it's in a C2 overlay, the eliminated

9   and non-illuminated sign regulations will

10   govern. I don't know them offhand, but I

11   don't think there's any intention to,

12   certainly at this point --

13   MS. LEVIN: This is not a billboard

14   (indicating)?

15   MR. SUBOTOVSKY: No. That's what I was

16   getting to. The concern that was raised at

17   the Borough President's office was because

18   we're visible from the Bruckner Expressway,

19   things like, for example, billboards, which

20   there are absolutely no plans for or

21   thoughts, quite frankly, to have. We

22   wouldn't have anything more than signage

23   that's adequate for the users that are using

24   the retail space.

25   MS. LEVIN: Good. Well, and following

2   up on that. In as much as you're next to the

3   Bruckner Expressway, are there -- what

4   considerations are you going to have to give

5   for noise attenuation in the apartments that

6   overlook the expressway?

7   MR. ST. JACQUES: So, there's an

8   E-designation that's been placed on the site

9   with respect to window and wall attenuation

10   for the apartments. I don't have that

11   offhand, but it is any designation that's

12   been imposed on the site.

13   MS. LEVIN: Okay. Is it going to

14   require the triple glazed windows that

15   borough president recommends?

16   MR. ST. JACQUES: I don't know that it

17   rises to the level of the triple glazed

18   windows, but it does have to do with the

19   glazing and the exterior structure.

20   MS. LEVIN: Thank you.

21   MS. LAGO: We will have a post-hearing

22   follow-up at a review session, provide the

23   details of the E-designation. Also, I'll

24   note that the C-24 zoning is relatively

25   restrictive with respect to signs, and we'll

2   cover that again in post-hearing follow-up.

3   Other questions?

4   Commissioner De La Uz.

5   MS. DE LA UZ: The green light is

6   definitely not working.

7   I just wanted to say thank you for

8   providing detailed information about the AMI

9   breakdown of the unit breakdown. That pretty

10   much answered my questions.

11   MS. LAGO: Vice Chair Knuckles.

12   MR. KNUCKLES: With regard to the Open

13   Door Home Ownership component, will that

14   carry a community preference -- community

15   board preference in terms of potential

16   applicants' purchases?

17   MR. ST. JACQUES: Yes, that's my

18   understanding. The entire project will be

19   subject to the CD9 community preference for

20   fifty percent of the units as long as

21   that's -- I know there's a legal challenge to

22   that, but it is still pending.

23   MS. LAGO: Other questions?

24   >>: (No response.)

25   MS. LAGO: Thanks, to the applicant

2   team.

3   MR. ST. JACQUES: Thank you very much.

4   MS. LAGO: Our next speaker is

5   Sebastien Tertulien.

6   MR. TERTULIEN: Good morning, Chair

7   Lago, members of the commission. My name is

8   Sebastien Tertulien. I'm here on behalf of

9   the Union to share our concerns about the

10   proposed rezoning and development at 2069

11   Bruckner.

12   As you know, 32BJ believes that a key

13   element in creating a more sustainable New

14   York economy for working families is creating

15   good property service jobs that pay

16   family-sustaining wages and give workers

17   access to mobility and security.

18   Unfortunately, the developer for 2069

19   Bruckner has refused to commit to good jobs

20   that pay the area's standard. We fully

21   support the development of affordable

22   housing. However, we believe that affordable

23   housing should not equate to low-road jobs.

24   It is unacceptable for-profit developers to

25   profit from affordable housing without a

2   responsibility to the community. Working

3   families in this community deserve jobs and

4   housing that allows them to live in dignity.

5   The building service jobs that this project

6   creates will most likely be filled by local

7   members of the community and should help

8   uplift those families. The Bronx deserves

9   better. For these reasons, we respectfully

10   request that you urge the developer to commit

11   to good property service jobs as part of your

12   recommendation. Thank you.

13   MS. LAGO: Thank you. Questions?

14   >>: (No response.)

15   MS. LAGO: Thank you, Mr. Tertulien.

16   Those are the only people who have

17   signed up to speak on this matter, but if

18   anyone is present and would like to testify,

19   please come forward.

20   >>: (No response.)

21   MS. LAGO: The public hearing is

22   closed.

23   MS. GRUEL: Borough of Brooklyn:

24   Calendar Number 26CD8C190181PQK a public

25   hearing in the matter of an application for

2   acquisition of property concerning 813

3   Sterling Place. We will have a team

4   presentation by Alyson Grant and John Casso

5   (phonetic).

6   MS. GRANT: Good morning, Chair and

7   commissioners. My name is Alyson Grant, and

8   I'm the Chief of Staff for ACS's Division of

9   Child and Family Well-being. And I'm joined

10   by John Casso from DCAS. We will be able to

11   address this and answer any questions you

12   have. I'll just quickly go through the

13   PowerPoint and then do a short presentation.

14   So, 813 Sterling Place is in Crown

15   Heights, Brooklyn. You could see, it's

16   Sterling and Rogers, aerial map as well, the

17   rooftop area -- so, let me just -- indoor

18   play area. So, when there's inclement

19   weather, multipurpose area. Exterior, with

20   some great signage. Interior, you could see

21   the endurance way and the office space as

22   well as the stairwell, and here's a

23   classroom.

24   And I'll just quickly say that I am

25   here in favor of the continued use of the

2   space as a daycare center. As you may know,

3   the space was designed specifically for

4   childcare services, and we would like it to

5   remain as such. This program is currently a

6   contracted program with ACS that runs the

7   EarlyLearn NYC Service. And the families at

8   the center earn up to two hundred percent in

9   the federal poverty level and they need to

10   have a reason for care, such as working,

11   being in school, or a training program, or

12   they may be homeless or looking for work for

13   up to six months.

14   The building could serve 204 children,

15   on their contract, they serve 165 three and

16   four-year-olds. And as of this week, they're

17   at seventy-six percent enrollment, which is

18   in line with what we usually have this time

19   of year. With that, we'll take any questions

20   you may have.

21   MS. LAGO: Commissioner Cappelli.

22   MR. CAPPELLI: I noticed sprinklers in

23   this photo, as well as some others, is the

24   entire building sprinklered?

25   MR. CASSO: Yes, the entire building is

2   sprinklered.

3   MR. CAPPELLI: Thank you.

4   MS. LAGO: Other questions?

5   >>: (No response.)

6   MS. LAGO: Thank you.

7   MS. GRANT: Great. Thank you.

8   MS. LAGO: There's no one else who has

9   signed up to speak on this matter. But, as

10   always, if anyone is interested, please come

11   forward.

12   >>: (No response.)

13   MS. LAGO: The public hearing is

14   closed.

15   MS. GRUEL: Borough of Brooklyn:

16   Calendar Number 27, CD5C190182PQK, a public

17   hearing in the matter of an application for

18   the acquisition of property concerning 370

19   New Lots Avenue.

20   MS. LAGO: We will have another team

21   presentation by Alyson Grant and Christine

22   Stoddard.

23   MS. GRANT: Hello. For the record, my

24   name is Alyson Grant, and I'm the Chief of

25   Staff for the ACS's Division of Child and

2   Family Well-being. I'm here today regarding

3   ACS's being in favor of the continued use of

4   the space at 370 New Lots Avenue in Brooklyn,

5   that's a daycare center. It was designed

6   specifically for childcare services, which

7   means it's in line with regulations and we

8   would like it to continue as such.

9   This building houses a program that's

10   contracted to provide center-based EarlyLearn

11   care. Meaning, the families earn up to two

12   hundred percent in the federal poverty level

13   and have a reason for care such as working,

14   being in school, or a training program, being

15   homeless or looking for work. I'll quickly

16   just run through this. So, here's the map

17   (indicating). It's, again, in Brooklyn,

18   Crown Heights area. This is an aerial map,

19   here's the exterior. Again, it's the same

20   contractor as the previous one, Friends of

21   Crown Heights -- and they're quite good with

22   their signage. The rooftop play area, play

23   set for young children, some really nice

24   indoor play area with furniture, interior

25   hallway, classrooms and other facilities.

2   I will just go back to the classrooms.

3   And I will just say that this site is

4   permitted to serve 160 children, but our

5   contract is for 100 preschoolers. As of this

6   week, they're at seventy-nine percent

7   enrollment.

8   And we are happy to take any questions

9   you may have.

10   MS. LAGO: Commissioner Cappelli.

11   MR. CAPPELLI: Same question, about the

12   sprinkler systems.

13   MS. STODDARD: Yes, there are sprinkler

14   systems throughout the building and they're

15   going to be upgraded.

16   MR. CAPPELLI: Okay. Because it does

17   not look like there's extensive coverage

18   there. So, what is the timeline for the

19   upgrade?

20   MS. STODDARD: Approximately one year

21   is the scope of work.

22   MR. CAPPELLI: And by acquisition, is

23   this a new lease that's going to be entered

24   into?

25   MS. STODDARD: Yes, it's a long-term

2   renewal, and we are currently under

3   negotiations, working towards twenty years

4   with two five-year renewal periods.

5   MR. CAPPELLI: Thank you.

6   MS. LAGO: Other questions?

7   >>: (No response.)

8   MS. LAGO: Thank you.

9   MS. STODDARD: Thank you.

10   MS. LAGO: And, again, there is no one

11   else signed up to speak on this matter, but

12   if anyone wishes to, please come forward.

13   >>: (No response.)

14   MS. LAGO: The public hearing is

15   closed.

16   MS. GRUEL: Borough of Brooklyn:

17   Calendar Numbers 28 through 31. Calendar

18   Number 28, CD3C190160HAK; Calendar Number 29,

19   C190161ZMK; Calendar Number 30, N190162ZRK;

20   Calendar Number 31, C190163HUK. A public

21   hearing in the matter of applications for

22   UDAAP designation, project approval,

23   disposition of city owned property, zoning

24   map and zoning text amendments and amendment

25   to the Saratoga Square Urban Renewal Plan

2   concerning 1921 Atlantic Avenue. We will

3   have a ten-minute team presentation by Felipe

4   Cortés, Dawanna Williams, Emilio Perez, and

5   then available for questioning, Lin Zang

6   (phonetic) and Sandy Rosario.

7   MR. CORTÉS: Good morning,

8   commissioners. I am Felipe Cortés with the

9   New York City Department of Housing

10   Preservation and Development. The proposed

11   development we are presenting today was

12   designated through HPD's M/WBE's Building

13   Opportunity RFP. A City initiative to build

14   capacity and development experience of

15   M/WBE's firms across the City. The

16   designated team is comprised of Dabar

17   Development Partners and Thorobird Companies.

18   The proposed project will result in a new

19   fourteen-story mixed-use building with

20   approximately 235 affordable units with

21   commercial and community facility spaces.

22   As you are aware, to facilitate this

23   project, HPD is seeking UDAAP designation and

24   project approval and disposition of

25   city-owned property, a zoning map amendment,

2   a zoning text amendment, and an amendment to

3   the Saratoga Square Urban Renewal Plan. As

4   indicated on the map, the development site

5   consists of both public and private land.

6   The development site is located on Atlantic

7   Avenue and faces the Long Island Rail Road.

8   And it is located between Prescott Place and

9   Bancroft Place. The development site is

10   well-served by public transportation with the

11   A and C Ralph Avenue station, subway station

12   located two blocks away. Local bus services

13   include the B47 and the B25. Surrounding

14   land uses include a mix of uses. But the

15   immediate surrounding area is defined by one

16   to three-story row houses, scattered vacant

17   lots and a smothering of lighting to serve

18   uses, such as parking facilities, junk yards,

19   and car repair shops. As you can see on the

20   map, there are two neighborhood playgrounds

21   in the surrounding area, the Weeksville

22   Playground and the South Pacific Playground.

23   HPD is seeking approval of the proposed land

24   use actions to develop 235 much needed

25   affordable units to further the mayor's

2   Housing New York Plan to build and preserve

3   300,000 affordable housing units in

4   ten years. Furthermore, approval of this

5   project will help activate this currently

6   blight section of Atlantic Avenue. At this

7   time, I'll turn the presentation to Dawanna

8   Williams from Dabar Development Partners.

9   She will provide details on the proposed

10   project.

11   MS. WILLIAMS: Thank you. As has been

12   stated, the project consists of 236 units.

13   It is a 14-story building. 15,000 square

14   feet have been allocated to the commercial

15   space on the ground floor. There will be

16   7,953 square feet for the community facility,

17   as well as below-grade parking for 44 spaces.

18   We have elected MIH Option 1, which is

19   twenty-five percent of the gross residential

20   floor area at twenty-five percent of the

21   units at sixty percent of AMI. As you will

22   see here (indicating) we have elected the

23   ELLA term sheet in accordance with HPD's term

24   sheets. The program provides for deep

25   affordability ranging from

2   twenty-seven percent of AMI to eighty percent

3   of AMI. The bedroom types range from studios

4   ones, twos, and three bedrooms and the

5   distribution is in the right column, as you

6   will see. The affordability levels, in terms

7   of rents, range from $251 a unit to $2,096

8   for a three-bedroom unit. Below is the

9   ground floor layout for the building. As you

10   will see, at the bottom of the diagram, the

11   pink space provides for 15,000 square feet,

12   as has been mentioned, for commercial space.

13   We anticipate a fresh grocery, which may

14   qualify for tax incentives by EDC. Above in

15   the diagram in the green area, you will see

16   that we've allocated four community facility

17   spaces out of the nearly 8,000 square feet.

18   They will be divided among -- in the right

19   quadrant, among social services provider,

20   Urban Pathways, Brooklyn Neighborhood

21   Services, an art gallery, as well as local

22   farms, which provides aquaponic and

23   hydroponic urban farming. They will also

24   provide educational workshops to the

25   community. In the cellar floor plan, you

2   will see that there is an allocation for 44

3   parking spaces, as well as storage. We have

4   also included, as you will see in the bottom

5   left quadrant, bicycle storage for the

6   tenants, and that space will provide some

7   area of protection as it will be accessed

8   through elevators as well as stairwells

9   dedicated to that part of the building. I

10   will now provide -- I will now introduce

11   Emilio Perez of GF55 Partners to provide more

12   details regarding the design.

13   MR. PEREZ: Good morning, Chair Lago

14   and commissioners. My name is Emilio Perez.

15   I'm an architect at GF55 Partners. With

16   regard to the street view of the project, the

17   design intent is to activate an underutilized

18   site as well as addressing safety concerns.

19   In this area, putting eyes and adequate

20   exterior lighting on the sidewalk with a

21   street frontage that provides high level of

22   continuous transparency. The commercial

23   space entry integrated into the storefront

24   system and placed on Bancroft Place provides

25   a clear pedestrian access and for customers.

2   Facilitating the much needed street and

3   sidewalk revitalization, as shown on the

4   existing state image. Bike parking increases

5   connectivity and supports transportation

6   options for retail customers and residents.

7   On the opposite side of the development site

8   on Prescott Place, residents are able to

9   access the building from a wide and clear

10   pedestrian path connecting the development to

11   the nearby public transportation access

12   points on Fulton Street. A distinct and

13   clearly marked residential entrance

14   facilitates residents, and this wayfinding.

15   Finally, on the sustainability side,

16   the building is being designed according to

17   standards and assistance, such as Enterprise

18   Green Communities, variable refrigerant flow

19   systems or VRFs, Energy Star, which is highly

20   efficient appliances. Also inclusion of

21   Green Roof as rainwater treatment, elements,

22   use of Watersense labeled fixtures and water

23   monitoring systems to detect any leak in the

24   plumbing system.

25   MS. WILLIAMS: As you will see from the

2   timeline, we have met with the full CB3

3   committee board and had a hearing with the

4   borough president. We've received extensive

5   feedback from the committee board, as well as

6   City Council. We have included their

7   comments within our planned programs.

8   We welcome any questions you may have

9   at this time.

10   MS. LAGO: Questions?

11   Vice Chair Knuckles.

12   MR. KNUCKLES: Thank you, Ms. Williams

13   for your presentation and that of your team.

14   There's a portion of the units that will be

15   provided for the formerly homeless. What

16   percentage of those units, approximately,

17   would be --

18   MS. WILLIAMS: That percentage is

19   ten percent.

20   MR. KNUCKLES: Ten percent. Will you

21   have or do you think it necessary to have

22   support services within the site for that

23   component of the tenancy?

24   MS. WILLIAMS: Yes, we do believe it is

25   necessary, and that is provided in the plan.

2   If you look at this diagram (indicating), the

3   green space just to the right just above the

4   pink space. It says, "community facility."

5   I believe that says, "UG4," Used Group 4.

6   That is a space provided exclusively for the

7   formerly homeless for support welfare

8   programs and services to them. Urban

9   Pathways will run that facility.

10   MR. KNUCKLES: Thank you.

11   MS. LAGO: Commissioner Cappelli.

12   MR. CAPPELLI: On the commercial piece,

13   do you have a tenant already locked up?

14   MS. WILLIAMS: We have letters of

15   intent for that space and they do happen to

16   be grocers. We have not determined

17   exclusively what it will be. As you will

18   see, that square footage is 15,012 square

19   feet. In order to qualify for the FRESH

20   Program for the tax incentives that are

21   available by EDC, the minimum requirement is

22   15,000. So, we do meet that requirement to

23   have them there. It is a food desert, as

24   well, in that location.

25   MS. LAGO: Commissioner De La Uz.

2   MS. DE LA UZ: That was one of my

3   questions, as well, about the program.

4   Because I think Emilio's points about

5   activating the street are very important at

6   that location, especially since the LIRR is

7   across the street and kind of creates a dead

8   zone in that particular area. So, I do hope

9   that works out. Because I think it would

10   bring a real great amenity to the community,

11   and would do exactly what you're hoping it

12   would do. I guess the question I had is,

13   given the proximity to the LIRR, are there

14   any sound attenuation measures that are being

15   taken? And then, on the 44 parking spaces,

16   especially considering the AMI mix, is the

17   intention for those to be primarily utilized

18   by the commercial and/or community facility

19   users? How much of that do you really

20   anticipate being used by tenants?

21   MS. WILLIAMS: Okay. So, the answers

22   are, "Yes" and "Yes." To take the first

23   part, there are measures being taken for

24   sound attenuation based on the seeker that

25   resulted from our study. There are a few

2   things that will happen: The windows will be

3   triple-glazed, and unlike many buildings

4   where you see there is a breathing on the

5   facade with PTAC Units that breathes through

6   the facade, we will not have those in this

7   building. As Emilio just presented, we will

8   have VRF heating and cooling, which condenses

9   to the roof. So, there will be no breathing

10   on the facade, which will, therefore, help

11   with the sound attenuation.

12   The second issue that you just raised

13   regarding the parking, because it is deeply

14   affordable between thirty percent and

15   eighty percent of AMI, there is no parking

16   requirement for the residential component.

17   But what we have done is allocated the

18   possibility for a maximum of forty-four units

19   based on the layouts. The grocery store

20   tenants do tend to require some parking. So,

21   we're waiting to determine if we have the

22   grocery store tenant, how many they require.

23   And then secondly, based on the input

24   from the community, even though we're not

25   required to have parking, the community, as

2   well as the people around those blocks, very

3   strongly, strongly encouraged us to include

4   some parking since there's no parking there.

5   So, the allocation between the residents and

6   the grocer will be determined at a later

7   date. But the maximum that we can provide is

8   forty-four.

9   MS. LAGO: Commissioner Cappelli.

10   MR. CAPPELLI: Do you have

11   accommodations for bicycle storage?

12   MS. WILLIAMS: Yes, we do. And I will

13   show that here (indicating). In the bottom

14   left quadrant, just a little bit above --

15   it's kind of faint, but just above the

16   detention tank, you will see that there is

17   bicycle storage. It is more generous than it

18   looks in the diagram. It provides for, I

19   believe, seventy-five percent of the units.

20   And as you will also see, there are three

21   elevators leading out, as well as a

22   staircase. We've done that for security

23   reasons so that you would have to enter a

24   security measure to get down to that space.

25   MS. LAGO: Commission Ortiz.

2   MS. ORTIZ: You mentioned 118 bicycle

3   spaces. I think that's great that you're

4   going above and beyond on that. One

5   question: If you envision the potential of

6   the underground parking, serving the

7   commercial tenant, will there be access from

8   the, you know, the first floor to the

9   basement without having to go out and around?

10   Will there be a connection in the stairway?

11   MR. PEREZ: Well, we assume that for

12   that reason we would need to implement, like,

13   access control measures under a different

14   access course to the building, always

15   compatible with the fire department and

16   building code (inaudible) rules. But that

17   could be like a measure of access control

18   that would be implemented at a later date.

19   MS. ORTIZ: So, yes, you would be --

20   MR. PEREZ: Yes, sorry.

21   MS. ORTIZ: Thank you. And just to

22   follow up on -- there's a mention of bike

23   infrastructure. I do see in one of the

24   renderings there, you know, a bike lock where

25   you can lock up your bike on the exterior. I

2   don't see that on the plans. Are you

3   anticipating that -- I think that would --

4   yeah, I do --

5   MS. WILLIAMS: Yes, we are.

6   MS. ORTIZ: -- think that the sidewalks

7   are quite narrow, actually.

8   MS. WILLIAMS: So, we do have in the

9   site plan -- in addition to the bike racks in

10   the cellar, there will also be bike racks

11   including those available to lock in front of

12   each of the four community facility spaces,

13   as well as the grocer. We attempted to show

14   one here so that you could see it. It is

15   shown there, but it was difficult to include

16   in the site plan for the presentation.

17   MS. ORTIZ: I understand. That's why

18   I'm asking the question. I think that's

19   great. I will say that I was recently at the

20   Target on the Lower East Side, the new

21   Target, and there's not a single bike rack in

22   front of the Target. And it's such a bike

23   friendly community. So, I'm really

24   appreciative of this. Thank you.

25   MS. WILLIAMS: We're putting forth a

2   big effort based on the community's input to

3   include the bike racks for everyone.

4   MS. LAGO: Other -- Commissioner Levin.

5   MS. LEVIN: I just have a background

6   question. I'd be curious to know a little

7   bit about the development team's experience

8   in building these kinds of projects and how

9   you got interested in this --

10   MS. WILLIAMS: Absolutely.

11   MS. LEVIN: -- particular project.

12   MS. WILLIAMS: Sure.

13   MS. LEVIN: Who are you? And what do

14   you do?

15   MS. WILLIAMS: Absolutely. I'm Dawanna

16   Williams of Dabar Development Partners. I've

17   been in business since 2003. Before starting

18   my own firm in 2003, fifteen years ago, I

19   practiced law as a commercial real estate

20   lawyer --

21   MS. LEVIN: I like a lawyer.

22   MS. WILLIAMS: -- (Laughter.) with a

23   very large firm, Sidley Austin, the same firm

24   as the Obamas. I started to practice law for

25   about ten years representing major developers

2   on major transactions. I was the lead

3   attorney on Time Warner Center and a bunch of

4   other major transactions around the City.

5   But I lived in this community, as well as

6   another community, Fort Greene in Bed-Stuy,

7   Fort Greene in Clinton Hill. And it started

8   developing in those communities, and I've

9   gotten to know the community very well. And

10   through the years of developing -- well, it

11   started out first as renovating properties

12   and then started building and doing new

13   construction projects. So, I've had new

14   construction projects in Harlem and in

15   Brooklyn, and this is our largest project to

16   date, but we are completing -- we're starting

17   construction on another project in Harlem on

18   125th Street, and we also are starting a

19   project in Baltimore, Maryland in the fall.

20   MS. LEVIN: Good.

21   MS. WILLIAMS: And my partner, Thomas

22   Campbell, who is not here, unfortunately.

23   He's on a flight from Japan and he sends his

24   regrets. He had a family emergency. But

25   Thomas is from Thorobird development --

2   Thorobird Companies, excuse me. And he is

3   developing three buildings currently in the

4   Bronx called The Grand.

5   MS. LEVIN: Thank you for that.

6   MS. LAGO: Questions?

7   MS. WILLIAMS: And we're both M/WBEs.

8   MS. LAGO: Commissioner Rampershad.

9   MR. RAMPERSHAD: Yes, I have a question

10   in regards to the loading berth. If you

11   could, just go to the ground floor plan for a

12   second. The questions I have is, is the

13   loading berth, with that number, 15,012

14   square feet, did you include the loading

15   berth as part of that square footage? And

16   will the loading berth be accessible to the

17   other tenants?

18   MR. PEREZ: No, it's exclusive for the

19   commercial use.

20   MR. RAMPERSHAD: Okay.

21   MS. LAGO: Other questions?

22   >>: (No response.)

23   MS. LAGO: Thank you to the applicant

24   team.

25   MS. WILLIAMS: Thank you very much.

2   MS. LAGO: Our next speaker is Cassie

3   Carrillo (phonetic).

4   MS. CARRILLO: Good morning, Chair Lago

5   and members of the commission. My name is

6   Cassie Carrillo, and I'm here today on behalf

7   of 32BJ to express our concerns about the

8   proposed development at 1921 Atlantic Avenue.

9   32BJ is the largest property service union in

10   the country. Our members clean and maintain

11   buildings like the one proposed. We believe

12   that new developments should provide

13   prevailing wage building service jobs in

14   order to build a more equitable economy in

15   New York City.

16   As previously stated, we fully support

17   the development of affordable housing.

18   Particularly development that is for

19   low-income seniors and formerly homeless

20   households. However, we believe that

21   affordable development should not create

22   low-road jobs, especially when the

23   development is financed by the City. Working

24   families in this district deserve jobs and

25   housing that allows them to live with dignity

2   and mobility. The developers for this

3   project, Dabar Development Partners and

4   Thorobird Companies have not committed to

5   prevailing wage jobs at this site. New

6   development, especially projects receiving

7   City resources, should not undercut the

8   standards that building service workers have

9   fought for citywide. We're calling on the

10   City and the developer to guarantee that

11   workers at this project are paid

12   family-sustaining wages and benefits.

13   Taxpayer dollars should not be used to create

14   low-road jobs.

15   For these reasons, we respectfully

16   request that you urge the developer to commit

17   to providing prevailing wage property service

18   jobs as part of your recommendation for this

19   project. Thank you.

20   MS. LAGO: Thank you.

21   Questions?

22   >>: (No response.)

23   MS. LAGO: Thanks. Those are all of

24   the speakers who have signed up for this

25   item. But if anyone else would like to

2   speak, please come forward.

3   >>: (No response.)

4   MS. LAGO: This public hearing is

5   closed.

6   MS. GRUEL: Borough of Queens:

7   Calendar Numbers 32 and 33. Calendar

8   Number 32, CD1C180530ZMQ; Calendar Number 33,

9   N180529ZRQ. A public hearing in the matter

10   of applications for a zoning map and zoning

11   text amendment concerning 47-15 34th Avenue

12   rezoning.

13   MS. LAGO: We will have a ten-minute

14   team presentation, and we will welcome back

15   Frank St. Jacques and he will be joined for

16   questions by David West and Jeffrey Ulrich.

17   MR. ST. JACQUES: Thank you, Madam

18   Chair and commissioners. Again, my name is

19   Frank St. Jacques from Akerman, LLP,

20   appearing on behalf of the applicant, Ashley

21   Young, LLC and John Young, LLC. As

22   mentioned, I am joined by David West and

23   Jeffrey Ulrich of Hill West Architects, who

24   will be available for questions regarding the

25   building design. The applicant is seeking a

2   zoning map amendment to change medium density

3   R5 and R6B and auto-oriented C8-1 zoning

4   districts to R7X and R6B districts with a

5   C2-4 overlay. A two-block front along 34th

6   Avenue as it intersects with Northern

7   Boulevard and Queens Community District 1.

8   The applicant is also seeking a zoning

9   text amendment to establish a Mandatory

10   Inclusionary Housing area with Option 2. The

11   rezoning area is shaded in -- sorry, we're

12   not up on the big screen. Is that a problem?

13   MS. LAGO: If you could stop the clock,

14   Madam.

15   MR. ST. JACQUES: There we are. Thank

16   you.

17   So, the rezoning area on this slide is

18   shaded in red. It's half the block front

19   between 46th and 47th Streets, and the full

20   block front between 47th and 48th Streets.

21   The rezoning areas within the transit zone is

22   located a block south of the 46th Street M

23   and R subway station at Broadway, and the

24   NYCHA Woodside Houses are just north of

25   Broadway, as shown in the right-hand corner

2   of the photo. The proposed rezoning map is

3   also shown here on the zoning map. It's

4   circled and shaded in red. This zoning map

5   also shows portions of Northern Boulevard

6   about ten blocks west of the rezoning area.

7   We're in MX district pairing M13 and R7X

8   districts as mapped in the 2008 Dutch Kills

9   rezoning. The intervening blocks along

10   Northern Boulevard are, generally, mapped

11   with M1 and C8 districts on the northern side

12   of Northern Boulevard.

13   The land use map shows the site's

14   location on 34th Avenue, which is a wide

15   street that is a local commercial corridor.

16   34th Avenue is zoned R6B with C1 and C2

17   overlays. The transitions to

18   light-industrial and automotive uses, moving

19   east to Northern Boulevard around the

20   rezoning area. To the north of the rezoning

21   area, there's a large mid-density R5 zoning

22   district, which is characterized by two and

23   three-story pre-war multifamily buildings.

24   Northern Boulevard is a very wide street.

25   It's also a major arterial road through

2   Queens, characterized by auto-oriented uses

3   and big-box retail buildings, as you can see,

4   on the area map here represented in red and

5   purple.

6   Northern Boulevard is primarily mapped

7   with C8 and M1 districts in this area. The

8   affected sites are shown on this tax map with

9   the rezoning areas outlined in red dots and

10   the development sites between 47th and 48th

11   Streets shaded red. The rezoning -- and I'll

12   speak about this in a moment -- also takes

13   the partial block front to the west of the

14   site. In this tax map, you can also see the

15   width of 34th Avenue and Northern Boulevard

16   as they intersect directly in front of the

17   development site.

18   The development site is on a,

19   approximately, 30,000-square-foot zoning lot.

20   The existing buildings at the site represent

21   the maximum development possible at the site

22   today with the C81 zoning district, which has

23   a maximum FAR of 1.0 for commercial and

24   industrial uses or 2.4 for permitted

25   community facility uses. It does not allow

2   residential use currently. As I mentioned,

3   the proposed rezoning would take in some

4   non-applicant-owned properties. We're

5   included in the rezoning area to avoid

6   leaving an isolated C81 zoning district

7   between the existing R6B mapped to the west

8   and the proposed R7X/C2-4 that would be

9   mapped on the block front to the east between

10   47th and 48th Streets.

11   This zoning change map illustrates how

12   the proposed zoning amendment would map with

13   the new R7X and the block front, again,

14   between 47th and 48th Streets where the

15   development site is located and pull the

16   existing R6B zoning district boundary east

17   from the mid-block between 46th and 47th to

18   47th Street. A C2-4 overlay would be mapped

19   to the depth of the development site at

20   150 feet. The proposed actions would

21   facilitate the development of a new

22   twelve-story mixed-use residential,

23   commercial and community facility building at

24   the development site.

25   The R7X zoning district is appropriate

2   at this site because it is located at the

3   intersection of two wide streets near public

4   transit on an underutilized C81 zone

5   property. The proposed rezoning would remove

6   outdated C81 zoning intended for auto-related

7   uses and would allow the development of new

8   housing with a requirement for permanently

9   income-restricted units under the MIH

10   program. Queens Community District 1 had a

11   very low 2.5 percent rental vacancy rate in

12   2016 and 40.5 percent where the households in

13   the district are rent-burdened.

14   The proposed development would have 201

15   units, 140 of which would be market rate with

16   61MIH units, again, permanently

17   income-restricted MIH units, and

18   seventy-seven parking spaces and a cellar

19   garage with some surface parking on the

20   ground floor. The commercial is contemplated

21   as locally oriented retail and service uses

22   or eating and drinking establishment uses.

23   The applicant is also seeking a preschool for

24   a portion of the community facility space and

25   is committed to providing space to a local

2   nonprofit urban upbound, which will provide

3   comprehensive employment and financial

4   services to the community.

5   The site plan here shows that the

6   building's height and mass are concentrated

7   at the southwest corner of the site along

8   34th Avenue and Northern Boulevard. The

9   building then steps down to four stories

10   starting approximately 40 feet from the

11   proposed zoning district boundary of the R5

12   district to the north. A required yard is

13   also provided along the district boundary.

14   It's approximately 14 feet. This will serve

15   as a driveway for the building and will be

16   screened with fencing and landscaping.

17   The first-floor plan shows that the

18   commercial space would have frontage on 34th

19   Avenue and would wrap the corners but not to

20   the full depth of the building. The

21   community facility space would be located on

22   47th Street and the residential entrance

23   would be located on 48th Street.

24   On the second-floor plan, you can see

25   that the service parking would be decked over

2   with a landscape decking that will cover the

3   entrance to the cellar parking garage and the

4   limited surface parking and loading areas on

5   the first floor. I'll just quickly run

6   through these sections. This east/west

7   section looking southward towards 34th Avenue

8   shows the setbacks along 48th Street on the

9   left of the slide and 47th Street on the

10   right. And this north/south section looking

11   west toward 47th Street shows the setbacks

12   along 34th Avenue to the left and how the

13   building steps down to four stories to the

14   right. It's where it's shaded here

15   (indicating).

16   The proposed unit distribution for the

17   project is 28 studios of fourteen percent; 99

18   one-bedrooms of fifty percent; 67 two

19   bedrooms of thirty-three percent, and six

20   three-bedroom units, that's about

21   three percent. The numbers in parenthesis

22   represent that there's an increase in the

23   number of -- by four, two bedroom and four,

24   three-bedroom units since the project was

25   initially filed. Under MIH Option 2, the

2   applicant is committed to provide

3   twenty percent of the thirty percent of

4   affordable units at sixty percent AMI

5   resulting in forty-one units at sixty percent

6   AMI and has not determined the final band.

7   We had initially proposed ten percent each at

8   sixty, eighty, and one hundred percent AMI.

9   And we'll note that the median household

10   income for Queens Community District 1 in

11   2016 was about -- was $61,590, which is

12   approximately sixty percent AMI for a family

13   of four.

14   That concludes my presentation, and

15   we're happy to answer any questions.

16   MS. LAGO: Commissioner De La Uz.

17   MS. DE LA UZ: I'll start where you

18   ended. So, obviously, with MIH Option 2 --

19   can you talk a little bit more about how the

20   applicant determined that Option 2 was the

21   preferred option versus Option 1. I know

22   that was a big part -- it seems to be a big

23   part of the community board's concerns in the

24   testimony that was heard when the (inaudible)

25   happened.

2   MR. ST. JACQUES: Understood. So, the

3   thinking here was that MIH Option 2 would

4   provide more affordable housing just in terms

5   of the number of units at thirty percent of

6   the residential floor area versus

7   twenty-five percent. We've heard that the

8   community board has asked for lower AMIs and

9   in response to that, the applicant, again, is

10   committed to bringing the AMIs closer to what

11   the average AMI for Option 1 is at,

12   sixty percent AMI. So, again, it's sort of a

13   modified Option 2, with more units at the

14   lower-income bands -- so, two at

15   sixty percent AMI rather than the spread from

16   sixty, eighty, and one hundred.

17   MS. DE LA UZ: And is that commitment

18   just upon rent-up or upon the life of the

19   project?

20   MR. ST. JACQUES: I believe that the

21   commitment, and I'll check back with the

22   applicant team on this, but my understanding

23   would be that the -- that commitment would

24   have to be for the life of the project

25   because these units would be permanently

2   affordable. They would have to be

3   permanently affordable at those --

4   MS. DE LA UZ: But it sounds like the

5   applicant is hoping to continue with

6   Option 2, but have a commitment to the

7   community. Basically, an agreement with the

8   community to do a modified, but have an

9   agreement towards Option 1. So, I guess I'm

10   trying to understand more about what that

11   commitment is and --

12   MR. ST. JACQUES: So, a restrictive

13   dec. would be required -- a restrictive

14   declaration would be required for the MIH

15   units in this project, setting forth exactly

16   the income bands and the number of units that

17   fall under each income band. So, I think

18   that the commitment would be memorialized

19   with that restricted accreditation with MIH

20   indicating the commitment to more of the

21   sixty percent AMI units.

22   MS. DE LA UZ: Okay. I guess we'll

23   talk more about it at follow up.

24   MR. ST. JACQUES: And I'm happy to take

25   this back to the applicant team, and if I can

2   provide more information to City Planning, I

3   will.

4   MS. LAGO: If you could submit that in

5   writing, it would be helpful.

6   MR. ST. JACQUES: Will do.

7   MS. LAGO: Other questions?

8   Commissioner Rampershad.

9   MR. RAMPERSHAD: Yes. Based on the

10   community board and the borough president's

11   concern with the height of the building, I

12   know you reduced it from fourteen to

13   twelve-story, has the applicant considered

14   reducing it further?

15   MR. ST. JACQUES: So, the -- as you

16   stated, the project was initially filed at

17   fourteen stories and has been reduced by two

18   stories. We are, again, we're seeking the

19   R7X, which has a maximum FAR of 6.0. The

20   intention was to preserve as much of the

21   housing and as much of the floor area as

22   possible while lowering the building within

23   the R7X envelope. So, we haven't looked at

24   that further. We have been able to, with

25   Hill West, redesign the building and reshape

2   it so that it maintains the same number of

3   units below twelve stories. There's simply

4   not a way to stretch the building and

5   maintain that floor area.

6   MS. LAGO: Vice Chair Knuckles.

7   MR. KNUCKLES: Could you go to the page

8   where the rendering is?

9   MR. ST. JACQUES: Sure.

10   MR. KNUCKLES: Could you just speak

11   about what you contemplate the materials

12   would be? Maybe the architect can speak to

13   that.

14   MR. ST. JACQUES: Absolutely. I think

15   either Jeffrey or David would be best suited.

16   MR. WEST: Yes, predominant material,

17   the facade would be brick. We've used

18   two-story openings to give the building a

19   nice scale and those probably would have a

20   metal slab cover and a window wall treatment

21   within them. So, where you see the double

22   height openings, that's metal covering the

23   slab, but the surrounding material is all

24   brick. And we have two colors of brick.

25   We've modulated the massing to step it down

2   on the side streets towards the lower-rise

3   mid-block areas and concentrate the weight

4   and the bulk of the building to the corner

5   facing Northern Boulevard.

6   MR. KNUCKLES: Does this represent the

7   reduction of two floors?

8   MR. WEST: Yes, it does.

9   MR. KNUCKLES: Thank you.

10   MS. LAGO: Commissioner Ortiz.

11   MS. ORTIZ: Hi. I'm quite familiar

12   with this intersection. I pass it very

13   frequently. I live nearby. And, you know, I

14   have to say that I'm really -- I think, you

15   know, I understand the community board's

16   concerns about height, but if density belongs

17   anywhere, I mean, this is a great place to

18   put it. Northern Boulevard is very, very

19   busy, you know, and sort of wanting of a

20   little more density. The proximity to the

21   subway, you know, it makes sense to put

22   density in proximity to the subway. And the

23   fact that it's relating to the commercial

24   activity along 34th Avenue, I think it's

25   really quite valuable, you know, as opposed

2   to relating across the street to big-box.

3   It's more of the 34th Avenue corridor than it

4   is even to Northern and sort of what's

5   happening across the street. And then, I

6   think the question about, you know, the

7   aesthetics and the materials are important

8   too because it's actually a prominent

9   location given, you know, the turn that

10   Northern takes right there. It's, you know,

11   very visible and in some ways it is a gateway

12   given how the streets are aligned at that

13   precise location.

14   So, I, you know, I would say that

15   generally I really do like what I see and the

16   concern about density is not one that I

17   share.

18   MR. ST. JACQUES: Thank you.

19   MS. LAGO: Commissioner Levin.

20   MS. LEVIN: I have a zoning question

21   and an architectural question, I guess. The

22   little portion that's not the development

23   site that's currently in the C81, it's

24   proposed to be rezoned to C6B with a C24

25   overlay. Will the overlay leave the current

 2   use at that site in compliance?

 3   MR. ST. JACQUES: So, the short answer

 4   is yes. The slightly longer answer is

 5   that -- were those uses to be nonconforming

 6   in the R6BC24, they'd be permitted to

 7   continue subject to the discontinuance

 8   provisions. My understanding is that at

 9   night I would need to just check the user

10   groups on their COs. But I believe both uses

11   would be conforming in the C24, but I can

12   confirm that.

13   MS. LEVIN: Okay. So, no change in

14   their legal status as a result?

15   MR. ST. JACQUES: Correct.

16   MS. LEVIN: Okay. And then, my

17   architectural question is about the

18   sustainability features that I hope are being

19   included in the building design.

20   MR. WEST: I will say that it's too

21   early in the design to have committed to a

22   specific level of sustainability

23   certification or anything like that. The

24   building, because of the timing, will be

25   designed at a minimum to the 2019 New

2   York City Energy Conservation Code, which is,

3   I have to say, a much more stringent code

4   than we've ever had previously. So, these

5   buildings that we're doing now, these market

6   rate buildings, are very sustainable in and

7   of themselves. Anything we do beyond that,

8   for example, green roof on the parking deck,

9   would likely be part of our design. We'll

10   only serve to enhance that.

11   MS. LEVIN: Okay. So, you're looking

12   at --

13   MR. WEST: Sure.

14   MS. LEVIN: -- more than might be

15   required?

16   MR. WEST: We need zoning in order to

17   get the ball rolling on the final development

18   program.

19   MS. LEVIN: Understood. Understood.

20   MS. LAGO: More questions?

21   >>: (No response.)

22   MS. LAGO: Thank you to the applicant

23   team.

24   MR. ST. JACQUES: Thank you.

25   MS. LAGO: We will now start with

2   speakers in opposition and then go to

3   speakers in support. Our first speaker is

4   Karen Armstrong, and she will be followed by

5   Dennis Holnagel.

6   MS. ARMSTRONG: Hi, thank you. My name

7   is Karen Armstrong. I'm a resident in the

8   neighborhood, very, very close to this

9   proposed development. I have lived there for

10   approximately twenty-seven years as a renter

11   and now as a homeowner. I also represent a

12   small organization within the community that

13   it foremade, but we came together to deal

14   with an MTA project earlier and we have some

15   very strong concerns about the size of the

16   building.

17   I'm going to read from the

18   environmental study, the ULURP, that was

19   submitted to the -- for the plan. It's their

20   Section G, page 147, which states that, "Land

21   uses are primarily residential, accounting

22   for eighty-two percent of total tax lots.

23   Residential uses are generally two or three

24   stories in height, have low lot coverage and

25   are set back from the street line with small

2   front yards. Many residential buildings

3   along 45th, 46th and 47th are semi-detached

4   one and two-family or multiple-family that

5   share common driveways." It also later

6   describes the neighborhood as, "residential

7   homes with enclosed garages and small

8   backyards."

9   So, I think our concern is then how

10   does a fourteen, now twelve-story building

11   fit into this neighborhood? The study also

12   concludes that there would be no significant

13   shadow or light loss on the public areas, but

14   no assessment of how this building would

15   impact the streets and private and

16   multiple-family homes in both east, west, as

17   well as north of the building. As designed,

18   this building will cast a huge shadow

19   relative to the existing housing stock. I

20   believe the complex is a very nice design,

21   quite elegant. I have said so to the

22   architect at the earlier meeting. It's

23   designed so a majority of the units stack

24   high along 44th Avenue, 34th Avenue, and that

25   is where the twelve-story peek is.

2   And then it has a step-down of

3   ten-story, six-story, and ultimately, as they

4   just said, and ultimately a four-story

5   setback. And that is, they said, "to better

6   fit into the abutting properties." But it is

7   also designed around a large open center

8   courtyard that sits over the underground

9   parking lot. It's designated as a landscaped

10 courtyard for the residents, and how nice for

11 them. But the developer could keep the same

12 number of rental units, I think 201, and move

13 units into the lower sections, maybe into

14 that open courtyard space, and any alteration

15 in the design of the building that could

16 retain the same amount of both market rate

17 and affordable housing units and lower the

18 total height of the building, would keep it

19 in character with the existing neighborhood.

20   I have been following this presentation

21 in the development, starting with the

22 introduction to Queens Community District 1,

23 and I very strongly agree with your opinion

24 that they vote a large majority against.

25 Thank you.

2   MS. LAGO: Thank you.

3   Questions for Ms. Armstrong?

4 Commissioner Ortiz.

5   MS. ORTIZ: Hi, how are you?

6   You mentioned the question about it

7 being out of character for the neighborhood.

8 One of the other issues is that it faces

9 Northern Boulevard, which is not residential

10 by any means. So, could you speak to your

11 sense of whether it is in character or how it

12 relates to the character of Northern

13 Boulevard?

14   MS. ARMSTRONG: Well, Northern

15 Boulevard is, in fact -- the building

16 actually, sits not on Northern Boulevard, it

17 sits facing Northern Boulevard. It actually

18 sits on 34th Avenue.

19   MS. ORTIZ: You're right.

20   MS. ARMSTRONG: 34th Avenue has been

21 called a wide avenue. It is, in fact, and I

22 measured it in traffic and out of traffic,

23 and I don't know what the exact measurements

24 are when you take it for a city architect,

25 but 34th Avenue is 22 feet wide and contains

2   a 5-foot wide bike lane. It's a very narrow

3   street and I live so close by. I see the

4   traffic coming and going in that

5   neighborhood. And 34th Avenue, 48th Street,

6   47th Street -- all those streets are very

7   narrow. I mean, I do agree that it's a very

8   wide thoroughfare, but it, in fact, really

9   backs itself into something that's quite

10   uniquely small. And the shadow from this

11   building is the consideration for how it

12   affects, say Northern Boulevard. And the box

13   stores across from it is one thing, but it is

14   surrounded, basically, surrounded three

15   quarters north, west and east by these very

16   small two and three story buildings.

17   So, notwithstanding, the busy Northern

18   Boulevard stretch and all the box stores

19   across from it, it really does sit right in

20   the heart of a very small residential

21   community.

22   MS. LAGO: Other questions?

23   >>: (No response.)

24   MS. LAGO: Thank you, Ms. Armstrong.

25   MS. ARMSTRONG: Thank you.

2   MS. LAGO: Our next speaker is Dennis

3   Holnagel who will be followed by Nadine

4   Kaston.

5   MR. HOLNAGEL: Hi, thank you. I'm a

6   homeowner on 46th Street, and I'm very

7   against this building and the zoning change.

8   And I agree with Karen that the streets are

9   very narrow, and I don't think it's a good

10   idea to put such a tall building on such

11   narrow streets. It will devastate our

12   neighborhood as far as street parking. Also,

13   of course, all the homeowners in the area,

14   we're going to be cast in the shadow, we're

15   going to lose our sun, and we're going to

16   have twelve stories, or fourteen, of people,

17   you know, looking down into our backyards and

18   into our homes. You know, my wife said she's

19   never going to open the blinds again.

20   The block that this building is

21   proposed on, it's entirely two or three

22   stories and then suddenly you're going to

23   have this twelve-story, you know, kind of

24   monstrosity in comparison to the block. And

25   I think that, you know, the zoning as it is

2   now, six floors, is the right zoning for this

3   area. This -- as Karen said, the building is

4   on 34th Avenue, it's not on Northern

5   Boulevard. And 34th Avenue from Northern

6   Boulevard all the way down to the East River,

7   there are no buildings higher than six

8   floors. And then suddenly -- and in the

9   radius -- I don't know, a mile and a half,

10   two miles, there are no buildings like this.

11   And then suddenly, you're going to have this

12   building sticking up. And I don't think it's

13   the right project for this neighborhood. I

14   know -- I understand that there are going to

15   be some big buildings coming for Northern

16   Boulevard, probably, but not, like, right on

17   top of, like, a neighborhood like this where

18   there are all these small private homes.

19   They're more on Northern Boulevard and more

20   of a business site or, you know, warehouse

21   type areas.

22   And that's it. That's it. I hope that

23   you will keep the zoning the way it is and at

24   least not go above six floors.

25   MS. LAGO: Thank you, Mr. Holnagel.

2   Questions?

3   >>: (No response.)

4   MS. LAGO: Thank you for your

5   testimony.

6   Our next speaker is Nadine Kaston, who

7   will be followed by Vinny Stellato.

8   MS. KASTON: Good morning. My name is

9   Nadine Kaston. I'm a homeowner about a half

10   a block away from the proposed rezoning and

11   building project. I am not in favor of these

12   changes. I feel that the proposed building

13   is massive in relation to the rest of the

14   neighborhood, and the buildings immediately

15   around the proposed site -- the buildings --

16   the tallest buildings around are six stories,

17   and I think that should be taken into account

18   when planning for changes like this. We're

19   very concerned about setting a precedent.

20   It's not on Northern Boulevard, it abuts

21   individual homes, which makes a very

22   different kind of project.

23   I'm also concerned with, obviously, the

24   number of empty lots that are on Northern

25   Boulevard further down. But this is --

2   again, this is not on that, this is on 34th

3   Avenue, which is a relatively narrow avenue

4   that has a bike lane included in it and

5   already has a lot of traffic issues. The

6   streets nearby have been -- the

7   directionality of those streets has been

8   changed already to alleviate the traffic

9   congestion that comes from the stores. And

10   having a building with more residents in it

11   will just increase traffic.

12   I'm also concerned about the impact on

13   the subway station. The subway doesn't

14   really run well. Very often, there are

15   issues on weekends where there have not been

16   a subway. There has not been a subway going

17   in either direction. So, having more people

18   using that station is not a good idea. I

19   also question the impact it will have on

20   other infrastructure like the sewer systems

21   and the electrical systems. Again, and I'm

22   not sure really that the housing that is

23   proposed, that is supposedly affordable, I'm

24   not sure that it really is affordable to the

25   people who currently live in the

2   neighborhood. I'm not sure that would be

3   accessible to them.

4   MS. LAGO: Thank you, Ms. Kaston.

5   MS. KASTON: Thank you.

6   MS. LAGO: Questions?

7   >>: (No response.)

8   MS. LAGO: Thank you. We'll now turn

9   to speakers in support, starting with Vinny

10   Stellato, who will be followed by

11   Reverend Gilbert Pickett.

12   MR. STELLATO: Good morning, Chair Lago

13   and members of the commission. My name is

14   Vinny Stellato. I'm a doorman at a

15   residential complex in Queens and have been a

16   member of 32BJ for about three years. I'm

17   here today on behalf of my union to express

18   our support for the 47-15 34th Avenue

19   rezoning. As you know, 32BJ represents more

20   than 80,000 property service workers in New

21   York City. We clean and maintain buildings

22   like this one proposed. We believe that

23   developers should commit to providing good

24   building service jobs in order to build a

25   more equitable economy in New York City. We

2   are pleased to inform you that Ashley Young,

3   LLC, the developers seeking this rezoning,

4   have committed to provide prevailing wage

5   jobs to building service workers once the

6   development is completed.

7   Most building service jobs are filled

8   by local members of the community and we

9   believe this development will bring economic

10   opportunities to the working families that

11   will allow them to live with dignity and

12   support their families. For these reasons,

13   we respectfully urge you to approve this

14   rezoning. Thank you very much.

15   MR. KNUCKLES: Thank you, sir.

16   Questions?

17   MR. STELLATO: Any questions, the union

18   will follow up.

19   MR. KNUCKLES: Thank you.

20   Reverend Gilbert Pickett, who will be

21   followed by Corwin Mason.

22   MR. PICKETT: Good morning.

23   MR. KNUCKLES: Good morning.

24   MR. PICKETT: I am Pastor Gilbert

25   Pickett, Sr., pastor to Mt. Horeb Baptist

2   Church in Corona, Queens and have been

3   pastoring there for the past

4   twenty-one years. And as a resident,

5   lifelong resident of Queens, I am in favor of

6   this project. The proposal will allow this

7   particular project, which, of course, has

8   been made mention of the fourteen-story

9   mixed-use, as far as this dwelling unit. And

10   what's key to me is the fact that I have

11   members of the Mt. Horeb Baptist Church who

12   live in Ravenswood, Astoria, Woodside, and

13   Long Island City, mainly Queens Bridge

14   Projects as well as, who definitely are

15   standing in need of affordable housing. And

16   I was so happy to hear that this unit will

17   provide affordable housing because even

18   though West Queens is very diverse, it is

19   becoming very unaffordable.

20   So, therefore, this project will

21   provide affordable housing. The mere fact

22   that it's off of 34th Avenue, one block off

23   Northern Boulevard, has accessibility to

24   public transportation as far as the bus

25   lines. And as we have heard, already this

2   morning, that also this developer has

3   committed to working with 32BJ, as far as

4   assuring jobs for those individuals who live

5   in this community. One major thing that

6   really sticks out is the fact that this

7   project is also opening up the doors to Urban

8   Upbound, which has been a proven community

9   asset to northwest Queens, as far as helping

10   those who are living below the poverty line,

11   as far as jobs, as far as scholarships, as

12   far as helping them with their taxes. And

13   being that this particular project will open

14   up the doors to this community organization,

15   which is needed and necessary, really is near

16   and dear to my heart and to those who are a

17   part of the Mt. Horeb Baptist Church. So, we

18   are definitely in favor of this project.

19   MR. KNUCKLES: Thank you, sir.

20   MR. PICKETT: Thank you.

21   MR. KNUCKLES: Questions for

22   Reverend Pickett?

23   Commissioner De La Uz.

24   MS. DE LA UZ: Reverend Pickett, thank

25   you for being here. And since you raised the

2   point about the affordable housing and the

3   necessity of it, I'm just wondering if you

4   had any comments about the level of

5   affordability. It seems that the developer

6   is indicating they're choosing mandatory

7   Option 2. But it would be on a voluntary

8   basis, making that more affordable to

9   sixty percent of the area median income,

10   which is more in keeping with the local

11   income levels.

12   Have you thought about -- I don't know

13   if you and your congregants have weighed

14   whether or not it would -- whether that's

15   your preferred approach or just choosing the

16   Mandatory Inclusionary Housing Option that

17   would absolutely require that over time.

18   MR. PICKETT: Definitely, you know, the

19   option as far as the demand for affordable

20   housing because when you look at Community

21   Board 3, you can't even buy a house for

22   almost -- less than a million dollars now.

23   And so, I understand the rents will be

24   somewhere between $1,000 to $1,500 based upon

25   studios, up to three bedrooms; that is

2   definitely, definitely affordable in

3   comparison to what's going on in that

4   community as of right now.

5   MS. DE LA UZ: Okay. Thank you.

6   MR. KNUCKLES: Other questions?

7   >>: (No response.)

8   MR. KNUCKLES: Thank you, sir.

9   MR. PICKETT: Thank you.

10   MR. KNUCKLES: Corwin Mason, who will

11   be followed by Bishop Sheldon Ferguson, I

12   believe it is.

13   MR. MASON: Good morning, Commissioner

14   Lago and all commissioners. I am the pastor

15   of the Community Church of Astoria. My name

16   is Reverend Corwin Mason. I'm here to

17   express my support to rezone two blocks from

18   34th Avenue between 46th Street and 48th

19   Street. The proposal will allow the

20   development of 47-15 34th Avenue with a much

21   needed new fourteen-story mixed-use building

22   with 201 dwelling units, ground floor

23   community facility, and retail space with

24   seventy-seven off-street parking spaces.

25   There will also be approximately sixty-one

2   permanent affordable housing units with a

3   fifty percent preference for residents in

4   Queens Community Board 1. The placement is

5   beneficial for residents because of its

6   location at the corner of two wide streets --

7   34th Avenue and Northern Boulevard. 47-15

8   34th Avenue is also near multiple public

9   transportation options, including the M and

10   the R subway, 46th Street and the Q66 and the

11   Q104 bus lines. The project will create new

12   affordable housing opportunities that are

13   greatly needed in our neighborhood.

14   I have quite a few members in my

15   congregation that live in the neighborhood in

16   Woodside and they definitely could benefit

17   from this new building. So, therefore, I

18   strongly support the proposed rezoning and

19   request that it be approved. Thank you.

20   MS. LAGO: Thank you for your

21   testimony.

22   Questions?

23   >>: (No response.)

24   MS. LAGO: Thanks.

25   Our next speaker is Bishop Sheldon

2   Ferguson, who will be followed by Ann Cotton

3   Morris.

4   MR. TAYLOR: Good morning, Madam Chair

5   and Board. I am Bishop Mitchell Taylor

6   reading a letter on behalf of Bishop Sheldon

7   Ferguson. "Dear Chairperson Lago, I'm

8   writing this letter on behalf of the Mt.

9   Olivet Gospel Church of Corona, Queens in

10   support of the above-referenced rezoning,

11   which will rezone two blocks from 34th Avenue

12   between 46th and 48th Street. I understand

13   the proposed development facilitated by this

14   rezoning will contain 201 dwelling units,

15   ground floor community facility, and retail.

16   The development will include approximately

17   sixty-one permanent affordable units with a

18   fifty percent preference for residents within

19   Queens Community Board 1. This rezoning will

20   also have seventy-seven off-street parking

21   spaces. The placement is advantageous for

22   residents because it is located at the corner

23   of two wide streets, 34th Avenue and Northern

24   Boulevard. It is also near multiple

25   transportation options. It will also provide

2   living wage, prevailing wage jobs for

3   building service workers. Our congregants

4   live, work, and shop in this very robust area

5   and we support this proposed rezoning and

6   will benefit from the affordable housing and

7   local jobs that will be provided by the

8   proposed development. We therefore support

9   the proposed rezoning and request that it be

10   approved. Respectfully, Bishop Sheldon

11   Ferguson."

12   MS. LAGO: Thank you.

13   Questions?

14   >>: (No response.)

15   MS. LAGO: Thanks.

16   Our next speaker is Ann Cotton Morris,

17   to be followed by Reverend Patrick Young.

18   MS. MORRIS: Good morning, Chairperson

19   Lago. My name is Ann Cotton Morris. I have

20   been living in the Woodside Houses for

21   sixty-nine years, one block from where this

22   is going to be taking place. I am the Tenant

23   Association President of Woodside Houses for

24   forty years, it will be forty years soon, and

25   the president of the chair of the council

2   president for NYCHA for ten years. I'm

3   writing to express my support of the proposal

4   to rezone -- I forgot my glasses -- to rezone

5   two blocks onto 34th Avenue between 46th

6   Street and 48th Street. The proposal will

7   allow the development of 47-15 34th Avenue

8   with a greatly needed fourteen-story

9   mixed-use building with 201 dwelling units,

10   ground floor, community facility, and retail,

11   with seventy-seven off-street parking spaces.

12   The development will also include

13   approximately sixty-one -- I left my glasses.

14   I'm so sorry -- permanently affordable

15   housing units under the Mandatory

16   Inclusionary Housing Program with a

17   fifty percent preference for residents within

18   Queens Community Board 1. Let me just say

19   this: I'm so in favor for this because like

20   I said, I've lived in Woodside Houses, which

21   is a NYCHA building, everybody knows what's

22   going on with NYCHA. I've always wanted to

23   move out, but I love that community, that

24   area so much that I always wanted something

25   there. I could never afford those homes.

2   So, when this came about, I said, "Maybe I

3   can do this because some of us in housing pay

4   more rent than they're asking for in these

5   luxury apartments." So, I said, "Well, why

6   can't I just move over down the street, stay

7   in the community I love and I will be happy?"

8   So, I really feel that this would be a

9   good thing for quite a few -- 'cause I talked

10   to some of my community residents and they

11   felt the same way I did. You know, they want

12   to move, but we love that area. We have

13   everything in that area. So, they felt that

14   this would be great for them to stay where

15   they live and get everything they needed, you

16   know, in a different environment. So, I love

17   this. I'm just so happy about this.

18   Hopefully it will happen and we'll be happy.

19   MS. LAGO: Ms. Cotton Morris, I

20   actually have reason to doubt your testimony

21   because I cannot believe that you're

22   sixty-nine years old.

23   (Laughter.)

24   MS. MORRIS: Yes, seventy in September.

25   MS. LAGO: Questions?

2   Commissioner Levin.

3   MS. LEVIN: I have a question for you.

4   Just looking here on Street View, I'm looking

5   at the Woodside Houses and I noticed that all

6   of your buildings are about six stories tall.

7   MS. MORRIS: Exactly. And I live on

8   the sixth floor, so this is fine with me.

9   MS. LEVIN: But think about it from the

10   prospective of some of the opponents we've

11   heard from, the folks who live on the streets

12   that will be right adjacent and those are

13   much smaller-scaled buildings. So, how do

14   you feel about the whole issue of the size of

15   this building, the fact that it will be twice

16   as tall as Woodside Houses.

17   MS. MORRIS: I guess I'm really

18   considering the need for more apartments and

19   you can't go this way (indicating) so you

20   kind of have to go up and we have to respect

21   that. I mean, I do feel for their gardens

22   that, you know, that will be -- the shade

23   will be on it, but, you know --

24   MS. LEVIN: Thank you.

25   MS. LAGO: Thank you, Ms. Cotton

2   Morris.

3   MS. MORRIS: Okay. Thank you.

4   MS. LAGO: Our next speaker will be

5   Reverend Patrick Young.

6   MR. YOUNG: Good morning, Chairperson

7   Lago and to all the wonderful board members.

8   I'm Reverend Patrick Young, pastor -- senior

9   pastor of First Baptist Church of

10   East Elmhurst. And my church is

11   approximately, about, fifteen minutes from

12   the proposed site. I want to let you know I

13   am very much in great support of this

14   wonderful rezoning of two blocks -- 34th

15   Avenue between 46th Street and 48th Street.

16   This building project will create wonderful

17   new affordable housing opportunities, which

18   are greatly needed in the neighborhood.

19   I have parishioners who live, and not

20   just live, in Ravenswood and some who live in

21   Astoria Houses. But I have members who live

22   in Woodside Houses and I have discussed the

23   matter with them and they were very much

24   supportive of and in need of and will be very

25   supportive behind this project, primarily

2   because they're dealing with issues where

3   sometimes they have no heat in their own

4   building. And so, they saw the opportunity

5   and see the opportunity for them to be able

6   to -- if they're going to pay their money,

7   they would love to pay the money in a

8   comfortable and supportive opportunity of

9   affordable housing, which will be provided by

10   this project.

11   Furthermore, I have members who work at

12   32BJ, and those parishioners would love to be

13   able to have prevailing wages and be able to

14   have a living wage, so they can provide for

15   their families. And this project will

16   promote that opportunity. Furthermore, I

17   support the opportunity where we're able to

18   have a nonprofit like Urban Upbound who will

19   be able to be a part of that, to be able to

20   let us have in-reach but also have out-reach

21   in the community and provide the necessary

22   services that are needed in our community.

23   Particularly, to help those who will be able

24   to get affordable housing by providing

25   financial services to help them to create an

2   opportunity. And so, in that vein, I want to

3   encouragingly support and favorably support

4   the proposed rezoning of this request, and

5   hopefully you approve it. Thank you.

6   MS. LAGO: Thank you.

7   Questions for the reverend?

8   >>: (No response.)

9   MS. LAGO: Thank you, Reverend Young.

10   MR. YOUNG: Thank you.

11   MS. LAGO: Those were all of the

12   speakers who are signed up, but if anyone

13   else would like to be heard on this topic,

14   please come forward.

15   MS. LEVIN: Madam Chair.

16   MS. LAGO: Yes?

17   MS. LEVIN: Could I just make a request

18   of the applicants? I know this is not for

19   them to respond to right now, but in

20   follow-up, I would be very interested in

21   seeing a rendering of what the northeastern

22   facade of this building will look like. It

23   will be -- as we've heard, looming over a

24   rather low-scale neighborhood immediately

25   adjacent. And I think it's important that we

2   give careful attention to what that backside

3   of the building looks like.

4   MS. LAGO: So, if they could request

5   and bring it to post-hearing follow-up,

6   please.

7   MS. LEVIN: Yes, please. Thank you.

8   MS. LAGO: I want to thank all the

9   members of the public who took time out from

10   their day to come and testify. We find it

11   incredibly helpful. So, thank you very much.

12   And with that, the public hearing is closed.

13   MS. GRUEL: Borough of Staten Island:

14   Calendar Numbers 34 through 39. Calendar

15   Number 34, CD1C190113ZMR; Calendar Number 35,

16   N190114ZRR; Calendar Number 36, N190114AZRR;

17   Calendar Number 37, C190115PPR; Calendar

18   Number 38, C190179HAR; Calendar Number 39,

19   N190179AHAR. A public hearing in the matter

20   of applications for zoning map and zoning

21   text amendment, UDAAP designation project

22   approval and disposition, city-owned property

23   concerning a special Bay Street Corridor

24   district.

25   Notice: A public hearing is being held

2   by the City Planning Commission in

3   conjunction with the above ULURP hearings to

4   receive comments related to a draft

5   environmental impact statement. This hearing

6   is being held pursuant to the State

7   Environmental Quality Review Act and City

8   Environmental Quality Review.

9   MS. LAGO: We will have presentations

10   by a number of city agencies that are

11   involved. I will note that we will turn to

12   speakers in opposition. I will note that all

13   speakers will be limited to three minutes.

14   So, we will start with Perris Straughter.

15   MS. LEVIN: Are the agencies

16   three minutes too?

17   MS. LAGO: The agencies are

18   three minutes also.

19   MR. STRAUGHTER: Thank you, Chair Lago

20   and the commissioners for hearing my

21   testimony. My name is Perris Straughter.

22   I'm the director of Queens and Staten Island

23   Planning at the Department of Housing

24   Preservation Development. I'm here

25   representing the agency on this application

2　　　concerning the site known as Jersey Street

3　　　Garage. HPD is applying for Urban

4　　　Development Action Area designation, project

5　　　approval and disposition approval for block

6　　　34, lot one, otherwise known as the Jersey

7　　　Street Garage.

8　　　　　　The site is currently used as the

9　　　sanitation garage by the Department of

10　　　Sanitation, but it will be available for

11　　　redevelopment in the near future. The

12　　　sanitation facility will be relocated by or

13　　　before 2023. The site was identified as an

14　　　opportunity to develop affordable housing as

15　　　part of the Bay Street Corridor neighborhood

16　　　plan, as well as HPD's draft Bay Street

17　　　Corridor housing plan. And my colleague will

18　　　be talking about the housing plan -- the

19　　　draft housing plan after. HPD filed an

20　　　application for redevelopment of the garage

21　　　to yield up to 108 affordable homes and

22　　　35,000 square feet of commercial and/or

23　　　community facility space on the site. At the

24　　　Community Board 1 hearing for the rezoning

25　　　and for this application, HPD have heard

2   clearly a desire for more affordability as

3   part of the overall plan. Particularly, a

4   desire for senior housing and deeper levels

5   of affordability. As such, HPD explored the

6   possibility of introducing senior housing

7   into this proposal, and based on that

8   submitted an amendment application for

9   development of the Jersey Street Garage that

10   could yield up to 223 affordable homes.

11   Including 90 affordable independent

12   residencies for seniors, otherwise known as

13   AIRS units and 14,700 square feet roughly of

14   commercial and/or community facility space.

15   Under the existing R5 zoning, an AIRS

16   building allows additional units because of

17   the AIRS bonus. Essentially, a higher floor

18   to area ratio is allowed as well as

19   additional building height. So, the proposed

20   building now being proposed are five stories

21   instead of four stories. HPD expects to

22   issue a request for proposals, RFP, for the

23   site following the approval of -- assuming

24   this gets approved by City Council, and prior

25   to --

2   MS. LAGO: Mr. Straughter, we are

3   holding people strictly to three minutes

4   because we have a large number of people

5   wishing to testify.

6   Commissioner Cappelli.

7   MR. CAPPELLI: Well, first of all, let

8   me just say, thank you to the City for

9   finally responding to the need to remove from

10   the community, the sanitation garage, which

11   has been a goal of Community Board 1 and

12   local councilmember since she was elected.

13   And this administration, after forty years of

14   pleas, finally came through. So, we

15   appreciate that.

16   The question I have for you, though, on

17   this particular site: Why the number of --

18   since senior citizens are -- the amount of

19   senior citizen housing is in such great

20   demand, particularly in Staten Island, why is

21   the ratio ninety senior apartments or so plus

22   a hundred and change of others? Why not

23   create a greater senior mix in this building?

24   MR. STRAUGHTER: Thank you for the

25   question. There's a limited amount of public

2   sites for affordable housing on the north

3   shore -- on the Island, generally. So, with

4   this site, we wanted to be flexible at this

5   stage in time, something that I wasn't able

6   to say. Sorry that my testimony wasn't timed

7   appropriately.

8   As part of the RFP process, before we

9   issue an RFP, we'll go out to the community

10   and have public meetings just for this site,

11   and this RFP, and we expect those meetings to

12   inform the affordability program, including

13   how much seniors versus other types of goals

14   for the site. But we wanted to make sure

15   we're flexible here, and making sure that the

16   site can meet the affordable needs,

17   affordable housing needs of a wide variety of

18   the community. So, we heard about senior

19   housing, but certainly, there is a demand for

20   family housing, family affordable housing.

21   MR. CAPPELLI: No question about it,

22   but it's not necessarily a population. You

23   have to be careful about mixed populations.

24   And this is a particularly sensitive site.

25   But you're saying that there is flexibility

2   as we go down the road looking at the ratios.

3   I'm happy to hear that --

4   MR. STRAUGHTER: Yes.

5   MR. CAPPELLI: Thank you.

6   MS. LAGO: Other questions?

7   Mr. Cerullo.

8   MR. CERULLO: Yes, thank you.

9   I just want to build off that for a

10   moment. So, how did this -- how did we get

11   from the first concept to this one to then

12   flexibility? What makes this the magic

13   number? What's the magic number in this

14   today? Or is there really not one?

15   MR. STRAUGHTER: Magic number in terms

16   of?

17   MR. CERULLO: Well, to say that we went

18   from one hundred names to two hundred

19   twenty-three, ninety of which -- it's sort of

20   specific. So, what was the -- how did we get

21   there --

22   MR. STRAUGHTER: Got it.

23   MR. CERULLO: -- but yet still say

24   there's flexibility? What would be the --

25   MR. STRAUGHTER: Sure. It's a great

2   question because it is a little mysterious.

3   MR. CERULLO: Yes.

4   MR. STRAUGHTER: So, this is all under

5   existing zoning. Under existing zoning

6   without it being an AIRS building or

7   buildings because we're projecting up to

8   three on the site, it would just be one

9   hundred eight units. But with the density,

10   the floor area ratio bonus, and with higher

11   height, it essentially doubles the amount of

12   units that we can get on the site, which is

13   pretty substantial. So, the way that works

14   is that at minimum, the increment of senior

15   units or AIRS units has to be equal to the

16   additional floor area that this development

17   would be using. So that ninety is derived

18   from that increment.

19   MR. CERULLO: So, it has to be equal or

20   no less than?

21   MR. STRAUGHTER: It has to be no less

22   than.

23   MR. CERULLO: So, it could be more --

24   MR. STRAUGHTER: It definitely could be

25   more.

2   MR. CERULLO: -- in the process as this

3   goes?

4   MR. STRAUGHTER: Hence the flexibility.

5   MR. CERULLO: Understood. It will be

6   interesting to see at the appropriate time,

7   the community's take on that.

8   MR. STRAUGHTER: Right.

9   MR. CERULLO: Because, given its

10   location and proximity to the bus lines, and

11   while we certainly -- I certainly can't

12   disagree that there's a need for family

13   housing as well, in the context of this

14   entire program, there's lots of other types

15   of housings that could be available to

16   families and individuals. Senior housing

17   specifically would obviously be something

18   that might be desirable. But, again, that

19   will be something that the community will

20   participate in, which is good. So, thank

21   you.

22   MS. LAGO: Commissioner De La Uz.

23   MS. DE LA UZ: Thanks for being here.

24   I guess similarly, during review session on

25   Monday, you know, we heard a couple of

2   different points about mapping all four MIH

3   options. I guess, is HPD going into the

4   community conversations that are planned

5   specifically for this site? I'm thinking

6   about -- I mean, I know limiting the MIH

7   options on a city owned-site isn't as

8   relevant. But, I guess, in the feedback that

9   you've heard thus far in this process, have

10   particular AMI levels, eliminating some, you

11   know, come about as part of the conversation

12   or not so much?

13   MR. STRAUGHTER: No. Well, first of

14   all, just to clarify, MIH just will not apply

15   to this site because it's not being rezoned.

16   However, you know, obviously, it's a hundred

17   percent affordable development. It will be

18   per regulatory agreement. In terms of what

19   we heard so far, it's an array of things.

20   We've heard everything from, of course,

21   senior housing has been mentioned, deeper

22   affordability, there's been an interest in

23   homeownership. The good thing about where

24   this proposal is now is that it allows us the

25   flexibility to kind of figure out, as part of

2   that public process to come, what our

3   priorities for this site will be.

4   MS. DE LA UZ: Okay. Got you.

5   MS. LAGO: Commissioner Cappelli.

6   MR. CAPPELLI: What's the anticipated

7   sanitation departure?

8   MR. STRAUGHTER: 2023.

9   MR. CAPPELLI: 2023?

10   MR. STRAUGHTER: By or before 2023,

11   yes.

12   MR. CAPPELLI: Okay. Thank you.

13   MS. LAGO: Other questions?

14   >>: (No response.)

15   MS. LAGO: Thank you.

16   MR. STRAUGHTER: Thanks.

17   MS. LAGO: Our next speaker is Michael

18   Sandler.

19   MR. SANDLER: Good morning, Chair Lago

20   and members of the City Planning Commission.

21   I'm Michael Sandler, Director of Neighborhood

22   Planning at the Department of Housing

23   Preservation and Development. I'm here today

24   in support of the Bay Street Corridor

25   neighborhood plan. The Bay Street rezoning

2   will help to revitalize this corridor and

3   address the serious gap in the housing market

4   in this neighborhood of multifamily and

5   affordable housing. Over half of Staten

6   Island's North Shore households are

7   low-income, and nearly a quarter of

8   households are extremely low-income, earning

9    $26,000 a year or less. While the

10   North Shore has a higher proportion of

11   homeowners than renters, compared to New

12   York City, overall, the North Shore has more

13   renters compared to the rest of Staten

14   Island.

15   The vast majority of these renters live

16   in small, unregulated one to four-family

17   homes, which make up ninety percent of the

18   housing stock in this neighborhood. Renters

19   in this neighborhood describe months-long

20   searches to find available apartments and

21   there's a lack of quality options at

22   affordable prices. The rezoning proposal

23   before you today is crucial to help address

24   the limited rental opportunities by

25   developing a new market rate and permanently

2   affordable apartments in the transit-rich

3   section of Staten Island.

4   Under Housing New York, the City has

5   made historic strides in building new

6   affordable homes for low, moderate, and

7   middle income New Yorkers. But the

8   North Shore has seen very little affordable

9   housing created in recent years. Other than

10   nearly 40,000 new affordable apartments

11   constructed across the City since the start

12   of the Mayor's housing plan, less than

13   one percent has been built on Staten Island.

14   A big reason for this is low density zoning

15   that makes affordable new construction nearly

16   impossible. Alongside the proposed rezoning,

17   HPD created the draft base recorder housing

18   plan that provides a set of strategies to

19   ensure that existing residents are protected

20   from displacement and have the critical

21   resources they need.

22   You may already be familiar with the

23   approach from past rezoning testimonies. So,

24   I want to highlight just a few of the ways,

25   in this neighborhood, that we're working to

2   preserve existing affordable housing and

3   create new affordable housing on the

4   preservation side. For low-income

5   homeowners, to help low-income homeowners

6   make critical repairs and stay in their

7   homes, last year, we announced the creation

8   of Homefix, which is a new program that pairs

9   financial counseling with financial

10   assistance and helps homeowners in small

11   properties find home repairs in neighborhoods

12   like the North Shore, helping small property

13   owners provide signature benefits to renters

14   as well who are likely to be living in a

15   second unit of an owner-occupied home.

16   HPD offers other financial and tax

17   incentives to renovate and repair existing

18   buildings in exchange for preserving

19   affordability for existing tenants. We're

20   conducting more proactive and strategic

21   outreach to property owners than ever before

22   to let them know about these programs. As of

23   late last year, HPD's reached out to 136

24   property owners representing a total of 3,745

25   homes in the North Shore, including those

2   with expiring tax benefits. HPD's

3   neighborhood education and outreach unit will

4   also be hosting a tenant, homeowner, and

5   landlord resource fair at the Staten Island

6   Museum auditorium on March 27th. In

7   addition, we're implementing the new

8   certification of No Harassment Pilot Program

9   in the North Shore.

10   MS. LAGO: Thank you, Mr. Sandler.

11   MR. SANDLER: I'm happy to take any

12   questions.

13   MS. LAGO: Commissioner De La Uz.

14   MS. DE LA UZ: Mike, I think you're

15   certainly outlining the dramatic need that

16   exists and the fact that there's been really

17   a lack of opportunity to create much-needed

18   new housing, including affordable housing in

19   Staten Island. And so, the programs that HPD

20   has rolled out, I'm wondering -- I guess

21   I'll -- you're the better person, I think, to

22   ask the question that I started to ask of

23   Perris. You know, right now the community

24   board has outlined all four MIH options.

25   We've, thus far, in any city sponsored

2   rezoning, we haven't mapped all four options

3   and I'm just wondering, based on your

4   knowledge of what the needs are and what the

5   data shows, which MIH option best matches

6   what the need is?

7   MR. SANDLER: Yes. So, during the

8   public planning process, thus far, I think

9   we've heard a pretty wide range of what folks

10   want. I imagine that today in the testimony

11   that we'll hear, you'll hear folks advocating

12   for Option 3, advocating for Option 4 as

13   well. We've mapped all four options as the

14   most prudent choice to allow this public

15   process to inform the ultimate decision of

16   which option applies. And then I'll just say

17   further that, you know, zoning has a very

18   long timeframe, and so the housing market

19   that might exist here today in terms of sort

20   of what could be built in the market now may

21   not be the case in ten/twenty years. And so,

22   it's important to map an option that matches

23   the desires of the community and what's best

24   for the City as a whole.

25   MS. DE LA UZ: I get that, but I mean,

2   you started your piece about outlining what

3   the AMI levels were and what some of the

4   biggest gaps -- I mean, what is HPD's data

5   showing in terms of where the biggest gap is?

6   Not, maybe, just in this community board, but

7   in Staten Island as a whole. As my

8   colleagues have pointed out, the entire

9   island seems to be looking at this process as

10   an opportunity, potentially, to move closer

11   to transit options.

12   MR. SANDLER: I would say that

13   there's -- as I outlined in my testimony,

14   there's a gap in general for rental housing,

15   period. I could follow up with the

16   commission with more detailed data.

17   MS. DE LA UZ: That would be helpful,

18   thanks.

19   MS. LAGO: Commissioner Cappelli.

20   MR. CAPPELLI: As I look around the

21   room, I see that there's some former

22   community board members or present community

23   board members and I will tell you that this

24   discussion started forty years ago. And,

25   again, I thank the administration for

2   finally -- this administration, having gone

3   through a number of mayors, to finally

4   address the administration, the need for

5   housing, particularly in the few areas of

6   Staten Island that are transit-friendly.

7   There aren't too many of them. And so, this

8   is arguably the best transit-accessible area

9   of Staten Island. So, this is at least, from

10   a location prospective, smart planning. So,

11   thank you for that. Are you here to also

12   address the commercial piece of this?

13   MR. SANDLER: I am not.

14   MR. CAPPELLI: Okay. And who is going

15   to be doing that?

16   MR. SANDLER: I believe that the

17   Economic Development Commission or

18   Corporation, EDC and SBS will be here to

19   speak to commercial.

20   MR. CAPPELLI: All right. Because I

21   have more concerns with the commercial piece

22   than I do with the units. I do know that the

23   borough president and Councilmember Rose have

24   both been very involved, and I have been

25   following their discussions. Thank you.

2   MS. LAGO: Commissioner Cerullo.

3   MR. CERULLO: Michael, thank you. Just

4   a couple of things. First, I want to just

5   acknowledge your explanation about how or

6   perhaps what the goals were in the

7   administration's presentation of the options

8   as being all four of them, and how the

9   discussion that continues with the community

10   could help inform where this all ends up,

11   and, of course, with the elected officials.

12   One of the things -- kind of shifting for a

13   second to the report, the HPD report. You

14   were referencing things that came out of that

15   report and I know your time sort of was cut

16   off.

17   I want to understand because I --

18   obviously, I read it and some of those things

19   were familiar from other neighborhood

20   rezonings. And I don't mean this to sound

21   perhaps the way it will sound, but they're

22   very thematic. The ideas and the programs

23   were expressed in sort of goals and themes

24   and what they do, definitions. Please help

25   me understand how they're executed. And I

2   know you just mentioned just before you were

3   cut off about a resource fair, so that may be

4   part of the answer. But how do these

5   programs actually get into the community?

6   How do they get accessed by the community?

7   How is the community educated about what

8   their rights may be or what their options may

9   be? Because the report, it's great -- has

10   great stuff in it, but if it isn't actually

11   applied and those who those programs are

12   supposed to serve don't get them, then we're

13   not succeeding. So, maybe you could share a

14   little bit about how that works because

15   that's not clear in the report itself.

16   MR. SANDLER: Are you speaking

17   specifically about some of the sort of tenant

18   protection, tenant sort of resident facing?

19   MR. CERULLO: Correct. How does the

20   business community -- how do the tenants know

21   what their rights are with respect to direct

22   or indirect displacement? What do -- how do

23   the businesses get that information? There

24   were talks about tax incentives for

25   businesses, there's also -- so, yes, all of

2   those things. How does the City get to the

3   community? Obviously, I'm sure the electives

4   in the community board know, but they won't

5   be any help if we don't understand the effort

6   and how we can better educate the community

7   how to access it.

8   MR. SANDLER: So, I'll start on the

9   tenants' side. The City's tenant support

10   unit has actually been conducting

11   door-to-door outreach in this neighborhood

12   for the past few years. They've knocked on

13   12,000 doors in the North Shore of Staten

14   Island and assisted around 1,300 tenants

15   through that work. And the way that works is

16   that they literally go door-to-door and they

17   speak to tenants about what their needs are

18   and what's happening in their home and help

19   direct them to the appropriate city services,

20   whether that is help getting repairs done,

21   help with homelessness prevention or other

22   services.

23   In addition, HPD mentioned a tenant

24   resource fair. We've held a number of these

25   over the past few years. We have one coming

2   up later. For those, we often do robocalls

3   and mailings and typically work with the

4   local councilmember and local nonprofits to

5   get the word out. On the owner side, it can

6   be a little more difficult to reach owners,

7   especially in a sort of neighborhood like

8   this with many small owners. We have a new

9   program rolling out called Homefix, which

10   will be directly benefiting homeowners. And

11   so, we'll be doing really targeted outreach

12   probably through mailers working with the

13   Department of Finance to reach homeowners in

14   neighborhoods that have the greatest needs,

15   in which we imagine that this neighborhood

16   will be one of those neighborhoods we'll do

17   targeted outreach.

18   And then building owners that have

19   existing affordability agreements, those are

20   building owners that have existing

21   relationships with the City as a result of

22   those affordability agreements. And so, they

23   have -- you know, they're in regular contact

24   with the City and the City is reaching out

25   directly to those owners.

2   MR. CERULLO: Okay. And how does

3   the -- on sort of the business services side,

4   with respect to the HPD pieces --

5   MR. SANDLER: Yes.

6   MR. CERULLO: -- get connected? Are

7   you working, obviously, with SBS?

8   MR. SANDLER: Yes. So, SBS has

9   actually done a significant amount of work in

10   this neighborhood. And I think they'll be

11   here today to speak about that. They have

12   sort of a Commercial District Needs

13   Assessment and they have local partners in

14   the neighborhood. And any owner that we're

15   working with for a new construction building

16   along the Corridor, we'll be referring them

17   directly to either SBS or their neighborhood

18   partners and sharing the results of their

19   district needs assessment with those owners.

20   MR. CERULLO: So, I --

21   MS. LAGO: We do have a representative

22   from SBS coming up.

23   MR. CERULLO: Great. Great.

24   So, on the outreach, the portion of the

25   outreach, do you have a community-based

2   contact list? Is it developed in

3   consultation with the councilmember or the

4   borough president or the community board who

5   would know the organizations, perhaps even

6   individuals, who they may have interacted

7   with? Is that how -- are you working from

8   something that if you shared it with the

9   community they could say, "You're missing

10   some people," or "This information is no

11   longer current"?

12   MR. SANDLER: Yeah, we work with the

13   local councilmember and the community board

14   and then there are also a number of, a few

15   contractors, you know, having more

16   organizations that have contracts with HPD

17   for these types of services. And so, we

18   reach out to anyone that we also have a

19   contract with.

20   MR. CERULLO: Okay. One final one and

21   I'll turn it over. I apologize for taking

22   the time. Because the planning for this is

23   basically in an area where there aren't any

24   residents, the residents we're talking about,

25   and, in fact, some of the businesses, some,

2 are not in the rezoning area, they are around

3 the rezoning area. How do you create the

4 geography for who you're reaching out to? It

5 can't just be what's inside, so --

6   MR. SANDLER: Yeah.

7   MR. CERULLO: -- how far do you go when

8 you say you're doing robocalls, you're

9 knocking on doors, you're, you know, mailing

10 things to people?

11   MR. SANDLER: It certainly depends on

12 what the thing is they were doing the mailing

13 about. But you might have noticed in my

14 testimony I cited statistics relevant to

15 Community District 1. And in general, for a

16 proposal like this, HPD is looking at the

17 entire community district.

18   MR. CERULLO: Okay. Thank you.

19   MS. LAGO: Commissioner Cappelli.

20   MR. CAPPELLI: I mean, I think you just

21 answered my question, but you kept referring

22 to the "neighborhood." By the

23 "neighborhood," you mean Community Board 1?

24   MR. SANDLER: Well, I do mean Community

25 Board 1, and I think also, you know, we heard

2   a lot from residents of the surrounding,

3   immediately surrounding communities, about a

4   lack of rental options in the neighborhood.

5   And so, I think those cases, I was referring

6   to the immediately surrounding neighborhoods.

7   MR. CAPPELLI: Immediately surrounding

8   to the proposed, the changes here?

9   MR. SANDLER: Yes.

10   MR. CAPPELLI: Okay. Thank you.

11   MS. LAGO: Other questions?

12   Commissioner Levin.

13   MS. LEVIN: Hi, Michael. It's nice to

14   see you in your -- well, it's not such a new

15   role anymore. We used to get to see each

16   other more frequently. Anyway, I hope things

17   are going well. I have a question about how

18   the MIH program is going to work in this

19   rezoning area. As is noted in the EIS,

20   there's not now enough residential demand in

21   the area to support new development without a

22   subsidy. How is HPD looking at this

23   rezoning? Are you thinking of committing

24   additional resources to encourage the

25   development of housing using the MIH program?

2   MR. SANDLER: No, we're not planning on

3   subsidizing MIH levels of affordability. HPD

4   will subsidize a hundred percent affordable

5   development. So, if developers have a site

6   that they would like to develop and they

7   don't believe that the market rate or market

8   rate plus MIH is enough, they could come to

9   HPD for development of a hundred percent

10   affordable development under, you know, our

11   current programs and our policies.

12   MS. LEVIN: Are you expecting to have

13   to deploy that --

14   MR. SANDLER: You know, I think HP --

15   MS. LEVIN: -- prospect here in -- I

16   mean, is this part of the package that HPD is

17   committing to this neighborhood?

18   MR. SANDLER: Yeah. I mean, HPD is

19   expecting to develop some of a hundred

20   percent affordable housing in this

21   neighborhood. There has been a few owners

22   who we've spoken to over the years. There

23   are no specific plans that are likely to be

24   built in the next few months, but we do

25   expect that we will be subsidizing a hundred

2   percent affordable development in this

3   community.

4   MS. LEVIN: Okay. Thank you.

5   MS. LAGO: Other questions?

6   >>: (No response.)

7   MS. LAGO: Thank you, Mr. Sandler.

8   MR. SANDLER: Thank you.

9   MS. LAGO: Our next speaker is Cecilia

10   Kushner, who will be followed by Tom Cocola.

11   MS. KUSHNER: Good morning, Chair Lago

12   and commissioners. My name is Cecilia

13   Kushner. I'm a Senior Vice President of the

14   Economic Development Corporation, and I'm

15   here to testify in favor of the Bay Street

16   rezoning.

17   EDC is committed to growing good jobs

18   for New Yorkers in the five boroughs and has

19   for several years been engaged in a number of

20   projects towards this goal in the

21   transit-accessible mixed-use North Shore.

22   EDC (inaudible) Staten Island storefront, for

23   example, assisted in development of active

24   uses in vacant building, such as the Flagship

25   Brewery, close to the Bay Street rezoning.

2   More recently, just last month, we

3   approved the Build NYC $132 million package.

4   It's a dollar bond package for a major

5   renovation at the Richmond University Medical

6   Center. So, as part of the Bay Street

7   rezoning proposal that's in front of you,

8   we'll also look forward to working on the

9   reactivation of 55 Stuy Place for job

10   generating uses to further support the modest

11   but growing segment of the North Shore office

12   market. EDC has also been engaged for a long

13   time in the North Shore in developing new

14   waterfront parks and open space. The new

15   open space with greater proximity to Bay

16   Street is the New Stapleton Waterfront.

17   One-third of this former naval home port will

18   become public open space and esplanade with

19   active recreation amenities, such as

20   basketball, volleyball, picnic area, and dog

21   run.

22   EDC is managing the design and

23   construction of water and sewer

24   infrastructure on these very large sites, as

25   well as the 1.5-mile of public waterfront

2   open space. The first phase of Urby on the

3   site is now open, and EDC is beginning to

4   plan for future phases of the development.

5   First to the north closer to the Bay Street

6   rezoning and then to the south. The Bay

7   Street application and the zoning changes

8   proposed will allow the northern face to both

9   deliver better design by allowing for more

10   heights and a more varied form across the

11   entire development, as well as to allow for a

12   future school to allow future needs generated

13   by the plan.

14   Finally, I just want to close on

15   transportation because it's an important area

16   of topic in this neighborhood and one where

17   EDC has been pretty active in the previous

18   years. We're very proud to have announced,

19   just a few months ago, our new in New

20   York City ferry routes, which will deliver

21   two million annual riders from St. George to

22   Battery Park City in just eighteen minutes

23   and Midtown West with an additional

24   seventeen minutes. So, connecting the

25   North Shore residents to broad-based

2   employment in Manhattan in a very significant

3   way. And we also look forward to repair and

4   activate the Tompkinsville Esplanade just

5   north of the New Stapleton Waterfront to

6   facilitate a bike and pedestrian pathway

7   directly to the St. George Transportation

8   Hub.

9   So, overall, we've been doing a lot of

10   work in this area, and we're really excited

11   by the Bay Street rezoning because we think

12   it actually is going to put all the pieces of

13   the puzzle together for the first time.

14   That's it.

15   MS. LAGO: Thank you. Questions?

16   Commissioner Cappelli.

17   MR. CAPPELLI: Yes, thank you --

18   MS. KUSHNER: Thank you.

19   MR. CAPPELLI: -- for your remarks.

20   I'm a little concerned about the level of

21   commercial that's being proposed here. From

22   my understanding, Staten Island has a pretty

23   high vacancy rate with commercial properties.

24   Is there something that you can say to

25   reassure me and the commission here that --

2   not that there's anything wrong with it,

3   because I love a good manicure myself or

4   pedicure, but we're not going to end up with

5   a whole bunch of shops to -- essentially,

6   nail salons on this corridor. I mean, it's

7   not the kind of commercial development I

8   think that the community is interested in.

9   So?

10   MS. KUSHNER: Sure. I think what we've

11   been -- on private property, this is a harder

12   thing for the City to control. I think,

13   like, the few things that are going on in --

14   first thing, the rezoning is allowing second

15   floor commercial offices. So, to allow for

16   broader diversity of commercial uses beyond

17   retail, that would need to be on the ground

18   floor. So, we think that's important. I

19   think the way EDC has been successful in

20   ensuring that there's, like, a broader

21   diversity of commercial use, including office

22   and including uses that are in kind of the

23   new industry that are showing kind of

24   progress and a lot of job creation in New

25   York City, just as tech, for example, is by

2   using our assets, our tax incentives to be

3   able to be more surgical and more kind of

4   clear about the outcomes. That's why we're

5   excited by 55 Stuy because we think it is --

6   because of its location, has a great

7   opportunity if it's reactivated as an asset

8   or through a development entity to really be

9   kind of a small, but meaningful, anchor of

10   commercial use in the North Shore.

11   MR. CAPPELLI: One of the things that

12   you might want to consider in terms of

13   spurring development of office industry there

14   is running a fast ferry from Stapleton to

15   Brooklyn, okay? That would really open up

16   possibilities for somebody to come in.

17   You've got a great potential job hub there in

18   that case.

19   MS. KUSHNER: Thank you for it. Thank

20   you for this.

21   MS. LAGO: Commissioner Cerullo.

22   MR. CERULLO: Cecilia, nice to see you

23   and thank you. I want to just acknowledge

24   the Stuyvesant Place, the fact that you're

25   looking at that again about reactivating the

2   former idea, which is terrific. And I also

3   want to acknowledge the addition of Staten

4   Island to the Five Borough Ferry System, the

5   name of it makes a lot more sense now. And I

6   also want to put in a plug for the thought

7   process about how we can connect this part of

8   Staten Island to Brooklyn. I think that

9   based on the type of housing that is being

10   developed and that there is a lot of

11   potential synergy for opportunity to connect

12   us to other neighborhoods in the City beyond

13   those in Lower Manhattan. And so, again, a

14   plug for that.

15   Let me ask you something, because the

16   waterfront -- the public space related pieces

17   of this are really very critical, you know.

18   It's hard to imagine if you were describing

19   to someone that you're talking about one of

20   the, you know, greatest waterfronts in the

21   world with views that are beyond anything

22   that most people could ever imagine, that

23   there really is no place for anybody to go to

24   enjoy them. And obviously, one of the

25   benefits of this plan is to create an

2   accessible waterfront. So, there are lots of

3   pieces of this puzzle, right?

4   MS. KUSHNER: Uh-huh.

5   MR. CERULLO: What private developers

6   will be expected to do in potential

7   development and what the City is already

8   doing. Can you thread this and talk about

9   timing and how we envision or how the City

10   envisions and how the community can start to

11   think about seeing the waterfront connect

12   from sort of the southern most portion of

13   this, perhaps even to Edgewater all the way

14   to the North Shore Promenade, and taking into

15   account that Miller's Launch is sort of in

16   the middle, and what does that do to the

17   connectivity? Can you share that with us

18   because I think there's lots of different

19   pieces of this puzzle, but we really need to

20   start to think about this in a cohesive

21   manner and how does it work? What's already

22   covered, and what is the timeline for it?

23   MS. KUSHNER: Sure. Sure. I think

24   you're totally right and I think what we're

25   seeing is like a complete transformation of a

2   waterfront that was mainly occupied by

3   maritime uses and a lot of military uses of

4   the home base and to a waterfront that is

5   actually meant to serve the neighborhood and

6   also bring you from point A to point B and,

7   like, facilitate pedestrian accessibility to

8   St. George in a way that is very difficult

9   today. I mean, the two biggest pieces that

10   are ongoing right now and I think will be

11   transformational. But as you mentioned,

12   there are a lot of like subprojects that are

13   part of it and it will take time for them to

14   unfold. The biggest one is the New Stapleton

15   Waterfront. I mean, this is a project that

16   is funded. It is close to $200 million. It

17   is a significant amount of money that the

18   City is putting towards --

19   MR. CAPPELLI: I'm sorry. How much

20   money was that?

21   MS. KUSHNER: 200. A brand new kind of

22   like world class, really, waterfront

23   esplanade that will be right at the front or

24   the back of Bay Street, depending on how you

25   think the neighborhood is turning toward the

2   waterfront or turning toward Staten Island.

3   MR. CERULLO: Sure.

4   MS. KUSHNER: So, I think that will be

5   transformational. EDC is in design. We have

6   PDC approval. We received the community

7   board's approval. So, we'll be moving

8   towards construction in the next year. So,

9   we're really excited about that and we think

10   it will be transformative. You're right,

11   Miller's Launch is there. There's a lot --

12   like, this is the one thing that needs to

13   move in order for, like, that completion to

14   be going on. But there's a lot that can be

15   achieved while Miller's Launch relocation is

16   being kind of defined.

17   The second one is the Tompkinsville

18   Esplanade. Where here the City is funded to

19   really do major repair and restoration

20   post-Sandy. The Esplanade has suffered

21   tremendously and we've received federal

22   funding. And so, EDC is moving forward with

23   design to try to understand, like, how much

24   can really be done with the federal funding

25   that we've been given. And our goal, through

2   this design work, is really to try to

3   maximize how much kind of pedestrian and bike

4   connectivity we can afford as part of the

5   restoration and repair project.

6   But once you have the New Stapleton

7   Waterfront being built and Tompkinsville

8   Esplanade being fixed, you really, all of a

9   sudden, have two miles of waterfront, where

10   today, no one can actually use. Not only be

11   able to enjoy them and look at the view and

12   just like being in the harbor, but also being

13   able to like walk to St. George.

14   MR. CERULLO: Agreed. And I appreciate

15   that and that's very helpful in terms of the

16   timing. You know, the rezoning -- we can't

17   separate all the different projects here,

18   particularly even on the housing side, the

19   mixed-use side, even though there's a huge

20   portion of unbuilt projects in the special

21   Stapleton Waterfront District and -- can you

22   sort of update us on where those phases are?

23   MS. KUSHNER: Uh-huh.

24   MR. CERULLO: Because while this is the

25   Bay Street Corridor and will potentially

2   generate new development along the Corridor,

3   the Front Street portion of this, which is

4   also at this moment in time, not built, all

5   of this together has a huge impact. And

6   collectively as we're talking about six or

7   7,000 new people to the neighborhood which

8   then helps to raise all the issues about

9   infrastructure, which has been a critical

10   piece of both the communities, certainly the

11   borough presidents, I'm sure the

12   councilwoman's concern.

13   So, where are we on the Front Street

14   projects, which are in your jurisdiction, so

15   that we can be approaching all of this from

16   sort of the total impact, not just, you know,

17   one application versus something that was

18   approved --

19   MS. KUSHNER: Yeah, sure.

20   MR. CERULLO: -- long before?

21   MS. KUSHNER: And I think it was part

22   of our collective thinking with City Planning

23   where, like, the northern sites of New

24   Stapleton and indeed part of the Bay Street

25   rezoning. So, we try to be responsive to a

2   lot of the community comments we received

3   over the year, as it relates to Urby, that,

4   like, people felt like the building form was

5   not really appropriate and kind of a missed

6   opportunity considering that you're on this

7   grand waterfront. So, the application in

8   front of you, actually allows us to have a

9   more varied form and more height, so we can

10   be a better kind of transition point, if you

11   will, between the Bay Street rezoning and the

12   waterfront and then the Urby to the south.

13   So, certainly because of its critical

14   location at the linchpin of all of this

15   project, we're looking at the northern sites

16   as sites that would go first for

17   redevelopment, the next phase of the New

18   Stapleton Waterfront.

19   The Urby project is moving forward.

20   They've built their first building and it's

21   almost entirely occupied. They have to begin

22   the construction of their second building by

23   November. So, we want to see some, like,

24   meaningful progress on that piece before

25   completely beginning to go on the northern

2   piece. But we expect to be able to move

3   forward with that in not such a long time.

4   MR. CERULLO: And so, let me ask then,

5   the -- and again thank you for that.

6   MS. KUSHNER: Yeah.

7   MR. CERULLO: Let me ask the, I guess

8   the most relevant follow up question to this,

9   which is: What is the -- if there is a

10   concern, what analysis has been done on the

11   sort of infrastructure? And I'm asking you,

12   there may be a more relevant agency to ask,

13   but perhaps you know, with respect to sewer

14   water. Then we'll get into any of the other

15   issues, which I know will be clearly out of

16   EDC's jurisdiction. But where are we on that

17   in this area given what's planned already and

18   what may come down the pike in the

19   possibility of additional development as a

20   result of this application?

21   MS. KUSHNER: Yeah, sure. So, the only

22   thing I can talk about is the amount of

23   infrastructure work we're doing on New

24   Stapleton, part of the $200 million kind of

25   esplanade is a significant amount of, like,

2   new water/sewer to both, like, provide the

3   level of infrastructure that's necessary for

4   the amount of density we're envisioning in

5   the New Stapleton Waterfront. But my

6   understanding -- and I'm not an engineer.

7   So, I don't want to say something that would

8   be completely outside of like -- what DEP

9   would say is that these infrastructures will

10   also be serving the neighborhood behind to

11   some capacity.

12   MR. CERULLO: Okay.

13   MS. KUSHNER: At what capacity, I

14   cannot tell you.

15   MR. CERULLO: Understood. And I'm

16   assuming -- I don't know if DEP is here --

17   MS. LAGO: No.

18   MR. CERULLO: Okay. So, we'll follow

19   up on those questions.

20   MS. LAGO: Yes, Commissioner Cappelli.

21   MR. CAPPELLI: Just slightly out of

22   this area, your last project is almost

23   getting ready to open down in St. George, the

24   Empire. Has there been any attempt to

25   relocate the 120th Precinct to clear up the

```
 2    crazy traffic situation that's going to occur

 3    there?

 4              MS. KUSHNER:  I don't have an answer to

 5    that question, but I can bring it back and

 6    make sure --

 7              MR. CAPPELLI:  Okay.  I mean, just

 8    drive down that street, you know, and that's

 9    an issue.  I mean, they were -- years ago,

10    were talking about moving it to Stapleton.

11    But, you know, something needs to be done.

12    You can't -- it goes down on one lane on

13    Richmond Terrace.  It's a very dangerous

14    situation.

15              MS. KUSHNER:  Okay.  I'll bring it back

16    and we'll try to answer.

17              MR. CAPPELLI:  Thank you.

18              MS. KUSHNER:  Thank you.

19              MS. LAGO:  Commissioner Ortiz.

20              MS. ORTIZ:  Hi, good morning.

21              MS. KUSHNER:  Good morning.

22              MS. ORTIZ:  I want to say that I share

23    Commissioner Cappelli's concerns about the

24    projections here.  And if I could just, you

25    know, tease out a little bit about what we
```

2   heard from the EIS. You know, the width

3   action scenario has a net increase of 275,000

4   square feet of commercial space of which

5   218,000 would be office and 36,000 retail.

6   That's all well and good, but what we're

7   looking at really is a gross -- I want to --

8   the gross. You know, under a width action

9   scenario, the gross new square footage that

10   we're looking at is 618,000 square feet of

11   new space of which the projections, and we

12   know these are just projections, 230,000

13   would be retail and 316,000 would be office.

14   So, my question is, you know, you spoke

15   to the growing North Shore office market, you

16   know, it seems that you -- I know these are

17   all assumptions that are made. But, you

18   know, over 300 square feet of office could

19   potentially be filled by this demand from the

20   North Shore office. But what about this over

21   200,000 square feet of new retail, do retail

22   demands and retail trends indicate that there

23   would be support for that much retail?

24   MS. KUSHNER: I think I'm going to pass

25   that question to SBS, who will be, I think, a

 2   better agency to answer a kind of retail

 3   capacity and retail market question than me.

 4   MS. LAGO: I may have someone from SBS

 5   upcoming.

 6   More questions for Ms. Kushner?

 7   Commissioner Levin.

 8   MS. LEVIN: This may not be for you,

 9   but streetscape improvements, is that your

10   turf or someone else can talk about --

11   MS. KUSHNER: That's DOT.

12   MS. LEVIN: That's DOT. Are they here?

13   MS. LAGO: Yes, they'll be testifying

14   as well.

15   MS. LEVIN: Okay. Thank you.

16   MS. LAGO: Yes, Commissioner Cerullo.

17   MR. CERULLO: Can I just ask Cecilia if

18   it would be possible to submit to us the

19   timeline on the waterfront, the park in the

20   Esplanade, where those things are?

21   MS. KUSHNER: Sure.

22   MR. CERULLO: Thank you.

23   MS. KUSHNER: Happy to do that.

24   MS. LAGO: Other questions?

25   >>: (No response.)

2   MS. LAGO: Thank you, Ms. Kushner.

3   MS. KUSHNER: Thank you.

4   MS. LAGO: Our next speaker is Tom

5   Cocola, who will be followed by Andrew

6   Marcus.

7   MR. COCOLA: Hi, thank you.   Good

8   morning.   I'm Tom Cocola.   I'm the Staten

9   Island Borough Commissioner for the New

10   York City, aforementioned New York City

11   Department of Transportation.   And on behalf

12   of Polly Trottenberg, I'd like to thank you

13   for letting us discuss the rezoning plan.

14   As you're aware, the Bay Street

15   Corridor is a vital component of the

16   North Shore and part of our continuing

17   efforts to enhance safety and quality of

18   life.   Thankfully, this rezoning plan will

19   revitalize the area and bring new business

20   jobs and promote economic growth.   But here

21   at DOT, we're prioritizing safety and we

22   pride ourselves in transporting thousands of

23   New Yorkers around the five boroughs.

24   As part of our ongoing effort to

25   transform the Bay Street area into a holistic

 2   transportation environment, we are

 3   implementing new pedestrian and cyclist

 4   improvements. Recently, we installed bike

 5   lanes along St. Paul's Avenue and Van Duzer

 6   Street. And we'll be implementing more bike

 7   lanes for more connectivity throughout the

 8   North Shore. Over the years, cycling has

 9   spiked in New York City. It is important

10   that we provide Staten Islanders with a

11   variety of transportation options.

12   The Dockless Program that we launched

13   in July, within the first six months,

14   documented over 54,000 trips in the pilot

15   area. And our street embassadors conducted

16   meetings with nearly a hundred Staten

17   Islanders to discuss this program.

18   In addition, these surveys found that

19   seventy-seven percent of the Islanders think

20   it's a great addition to the transportation

21   plan. With such positive feedback and based

22   on ridership data, we have decided to extend

23   our pilot program an additional ninety days

24   to further evaluate it. The success of the

25   Dockless Pilot Program is in response to this

2   borough, and we encourage the residents to

3   reach out and share their thoughts.

4   Increasing the liveability of New Yorkers is

5   one of our top concerns. We're reviewing the

6   design of the Stapleton Waterfront for

7   transportation improvements as we speak, and

8   we will come back to the community with our

9   revised plans.

10   Bay Street is an important gateway and

11   we want to ensure that the residents and

12   visitors will have a safe and seemless

13   commute to this corridor. Since we're

14   pressed for time, I'm just going to state

15   that Bay Street is vital to the connected

16   neighborhoods of St. George, Tompkinsville,

17   Stapleton and leading to a direct pathway to

18   our iconic Staten Island Ferry. The rezoning

19   plan will convert this area into a thriving,

20   vibrant, walkable, bikeable corridor, and we

21   are happy to be a part of this process. Our

22   ears are open to the community and we're

23   thinking of ways to help New Yorkers get to

24   their destinations in safe and efficient

25   manners.

2   I want to thank Community Board 1

3   Borough President Oddo, Councilmember Rose

4   and local stakeholders for their input and

5   their persistent work. And now I look

6   forward to your questions. Thank you.

7   MS. LAGO: Commissioner Cappelli.

8   MR. CAPPELLI: Welcome, Commissioner --

9   MR. COCOLA: Thank you.

10   MR. CAPPELLI: -- how are you?

11   MR. COCOLA: Good.

12   MR. CAPPELLI: Good to see you again.

13   MR. COCOLA: Thank you.

14   MR. CAPPELLI: You mentioned ferries,

15   let me just say that for four years, from

16   Mayor Beame through Mayor Bloomberg --

17   MR. COCOLA: Right.

18   MR. CAPPELLI: -- we fought for and

19   begged for increased service on the ferries

20   at night, okay? One of the big reasons that

21   we finally got the real estate market moving

22   and development on the North Shore is because

23   we now have a better transportation system at

24   night so that people can not have to wait an

25   hour in the middle of the night for the next

2   boat. So, thank you to the De Blasio

3   administration --

4   MR. COCOLA: I agree.

5   MR. CAPPELLI: -- and Polly

6   Trottenberg, my old friend from my days over

7   at the MTA. Thank you for that and thank you

8   for the speed bumps to make my street safer.

9   I don't have little kids anymore, but there

10   are a whole generation of them.

11   MR. COCOLA: Thank you.

12   MR. CAPPELLI: On the transportation

13   front, I've mentioned it to one of your

14   predecessors, a fast ferry from Stapleton to

15   Brooklyn, okay? It would be a big, big boon

16   to the development here and into ensuring

17   that restaurants and other things have, you

18   know -- my favorite restaurants are along Bay

19   Street.

20   MR. COCOLA: Okay.

21   MR. CAPPELLI: But if more were to come

22   in, then there'd be an additional market

23   where you wouldn't necessarily have to bring

24   cars and the people could come over by boat

25   and vice-versa. We would have the ability to

2   be able to travel on public transit. So,

3   please bring that back to --

4   MR. COCOLA: I will.

5   MR. CAPPELLI: -- Polly.

6   MR. COCOLA: Thank you. Yep.

7   MR. CAPPELLI: Thank you.

8   MS. LAGO: Commissioner Cerullo.

9   MR. CERULLO: Hi, Tom.

10   MR. COCOLA: Hello.

11   MR. CERULLO: Good to see you.

12   MR. COCOLA: Nice to see you,

13   Commissioner.

14   MR. CERULLO: So, obviously, when

15   people think about development, there's a

16   variety of issues. I think the one that

17   resonates most with most communities, but

18   certainly Staten Island, is traffic, right?

19   MR. COCOLA: Right.

20   MR. CERULLO: So, you're up there and

21   this is one of the more critical issues and I

22   would call it "challenges" that we're facing

23   with respect to how this all plays out. So,

24   let me just sort of categorize questions that

25   I have in terms of sort of the roads, the

2   traffic pattern, circulation issues, you

3   know, reading the DEIS.

4   MR. COCOLA: Right.

5   MR. CERULLO: But let's put a practical

6   spin on what's happening.

7   MR. COCOLA: Okay.

8   MR. CERULLO: What is DOT thinking

9   about in terms of what it will do, not what

10   it can do, but what it will do to deal with

11   the increase in density, which regardless of

12   whatever the parking requirements are, there

13   will be people who are coming with their

14   cars, if not that they're living there,

15   they're coming through the neighborhood. We

16   want this neighborhood to be a neighborhood

17   that is enjoyed, not only by the neighborhood

18   itself, but by other communities in the City

19   that will help the public space be used

20   better. It will help the businesses thrive,

21   and it will bring neighbors together and, of

22   course, people who come from off the island.

23   And given the other developments that are

24   taking place, unrelated to this

25   application --

2   MR. COCOLA: Right.

3   MR. CERULLO: -- lots of reasons why

4   our streets will be called upon for and

5   burdened, what's happening?

6   MR. COCOLA: Yeah, that's a great

7   question. There's a bunch of things

8   happening. We're going to be embarking on

9   some capital improvement projects. For

10   example, we reconfigured Bay Street and

11   Victory Boulevard, and we didn't do it as a

12   capital project. We initially did it with

13   line painting and we improved that

14   intersection immensely to offer a left turn

15   to the ferry to provide relief for the people

16   who are waiting for that left turn to go to

17   the ferry in the morning. So, we have a few

18   capital projects underway. But with traffic

19   signal timing, that's sort of, like, a big

20   key. And we're going to have the capability

21   to optimize the timing in accordance to the

22   way the developments go.

23   So, as an example, you know, there was

24   a lot of concern about traffic back in the

25   day when we thought there was going to be a

2   wheel. And one of the things that we tried

3   to do at DOT was adhere to the concept of

4   DEIS for the Wheel and the outlet center and

5   we brought everybody together. And our main

6   role with that was to resynchronize the

7   traffic given that there would be different

8   traffic, you know, coming out of the Wheel

9   and the outlet center. So, the actual

10   traffic lights themselves, you know, is

11   something that we'll be constantly looking

12   at, not only on weekdays but also say on

13   Saturdays because, you know, an outlet center

14   can be a Saturday dynamic. You know, we're

15   going to tap into some help from the New

16   York City Police Department for traffic

17   agents in accordance with our EIS and also

18   our traffic improvement study that we did

19   subsequent to the EIS for the Wheel and the

20   outlet center.

21   The actual streetscape, we're looking

22   at making some improvements at the various

23   Staten Island rapid transit stations, make

24   them more amenable and aesthetically pleasing

25   and accessible, meaning Stapleton and

2   Tompkinsville. And then we're working with

3   EDC as we said -- as they said, with Front

4   Street. We're trying to develop a very

5   comprehensive Front Street with protected

6   bike lanes, but also for, you know -- we have

7   to keep in mind our emergency vehicles and

8   their ability to, you know, move through

9   Front Street. And we're also taking a look

10   at Bay Street as well.

11   MR. CERULLO: What about smart

12   signalization, Tom? I mean, I know that our

13   former borough president was a huge fan of

14   that.

15   MR. COCOLA: Yeah.

16   MR. CERULLO: What, if anything, is

17   happening in that area? And is that a

18   potential component to helping to move

19   traffic in the most rational way when it

20   works?

21   MR. COCOLA: Yeah. Well, we had our

22   first smart light at the College of Staten

23   Island. And in part, because the College of

24   Staten Island has this, you know, interesting

25   traffic pattern in the sense that it's the

2   morning and the sort of afternoon rush when

3   the kids are getting in and out. And we

4   used, frankly, like a first version of smart

5   light technology. You may remember, it

6   almost looked like a Broadway light --

7   MR. CERULLO: Yes.

8   MR. COCOLA: -- flashing down. And now

9   we're able to use, you know, cables and --

10   for example, we've done a bunch of left turns

11   on Staten Island using what we called a

12   "hockey puck" and we're getting fame for

13   that. So, you know, these traffic lights are

14   state-of-the-art new and they are able -- it

15   is able, from us, to synchronize. So, one of

16   the things that we're interested in, like we

17   said, is, you know, where is our traffic

18   going to be? Where is it going to come from?

19   And, for example, I do think that Saturdays

20   in St. George are not going to be the same.

21   I think if, indeed, these projects fly, then

22   we're going to see the kind of traffic input

23   in Staten Island on Saturday that we haven't

24   seen. You know, sometimes you can roll a

25   bowling ball down there at 11 o'clock in the

2   morning. And we also have to keep an eye on

3   the ferry traffic too. Because some of these

4   projects could be designed in a way and

5   promoted in a way that they would draw the

6   off-island Staten Islander who may take the

7   ferry to, you know, to go in. I mean, I do

8   remember the Wheel was always promoting

9   itself by saying, "We hope all of our

10   customers come through the big orange boat."

11   So, we have a few things that we have

12   to keep an eye on. But technology, as far as

13   traffic signals, are so much better now. You

14   know, I'm old enough to remember when there

15   were light bulbs instead of LED lights. And

16   when they would break, you know, we'd have to

17   go fix them. And we synchronize them and if

18   they got out of sync, they would be

19   completely messed up and it would totally

20   mess up corridors. But our technology, thank

21   God, has gotten a lot better.

22   MR. CERULLO: So, with respect to that,

23   because the timing of signalization and sort

24   of what smart signalization does, it's all --

25   they're a little different.

2   MR. COCOLA: A little, yeah.

3   MR. CERULLO: I mean, there's a similar

4   impact in a way.

5   MR. COCOLA: Right.

6   MR. CERULLO: But someone -- you know,

7   timing is about still sitting. If you're

8   sitting and if there's no one else anywhere

9   else, you're still sitting.

10   MR. COCOLA: That's right.

11   MR. CERULLO: The smart camera

12   technology will enable you to go --

13   MR. COCOLA: Right.

14   MR. CERULLO: -- if it knows there

15   isn't anybody else sitting waiting to do

16   anything else either.

17   MR. COCOLA: Right.

18   MR. CERULLO: So, I do think it's an

19   important technology to be looking at. And I

20   would encourage the City to look at this.

21   Since we're starting particularly along Front

22   Street and along the Bay Street Corridor, we

23   have an opportunity to be ahead of the curve

24   on this --

25   MR. COCOLA: Right.

2   MR. CERULLO: -- and to perhaps grow

3   the technology as the community grows and not

4   do it after we have, you know, a crisis of

5   traffic, which, of course, people are fearful

6   of, and rightfully so. So, I say that

7   because I think it's important, but are you

8   working off data now? Do you know how many

9   vehicles are on -- what's the busier street?

10   Is it Front Street, Bay Street?

11   MR. COCOLA: Sure, yeah. That's a

12   great question. And one of the challenges is

13   that, for example, the initial -- when we

14   worked with the Wheel, the initial EIS

15   incorporated the Wheel in the outlet center

16   and both of them have sort of like unique

17   timing and unique peak hours and things of

18   that nature. So, we had to incorporate the

19   various timings in accordance to both

20   projects. And now that the one project is

21   sort of dropped out, we have to sort of

22   rethink where exactly it's going to go. And

23   I'd be less than candid if I didn't tell you

24   that I had no idea how the Wheel was going to

25   ultimately turn out, to be frank. You know,

2   some people thought we were going to have

3   backups to New Jersey. Some people thought

4   it was going to be a bomb. Some people

5   thought, you know, cars wouldn't go but the

6   boats would take people, et cetera, et

7   cetera.

8   There were figures that were drawn out

9   by, you know, the EIS, you know, projections

10   and things of that nature. But until you

11   have the boots on the ground, you really

12   don't know what exactly you're going to get,

13   you know, and that's something that we have

14   to keep in mind. And one other thing that I

15   would say is, smart lights are great, but we

16   obviously have to keep in mind pedestrian

17   protection, you know, in places like Richmond

18   Terrace and Bay Street, all along Front

19   Street, all along Victory Boulevard. I mean,

20   Commissioner Cappelli has been very gracious

21   in his comments. The Mayor has given us 24/7

22   ferry service with St. George, but Vision

23   Zero is something also that's very much on

24   our template. And, in fact, last year was

25   the first year in the history of a borough

2   that we had less than ten fatals. There were

3   seven, seven too many than I wanted. And we

4   went a record of consecutive days without a

5   vehicular, you know, fatality. So, we've got

6   a lot of balls in the air. I'm not going to

7   tell you that everything is going to be

8   perfect and everything is going to be fine.

9   But I'd like to think that between PD and us,

10   we'll be able to the make the adjustments

11   that are necessary.

12   MR. CERULLO: Thank you, Tom.

13   MR. COCOLA: Yep.

14   MS. LAGO: Cappelli.

15   MR. CAPPELLI: Yeah, I would just hope

16   that -- just following up on something that

17   you said, that although the Wheel may not

18   take place, it's more than likely something

19   else is going to occur there.

20   MR. COCOLA: That's right.

21   MR. CAPPELLI: You have the, you

22   know -- the outlets are likely to be a

23   significant draw, which is going to lead to

24   other things wanting to locate in that side

25   as well. So, we want not to be, you know,

2   downplaying, you know. We want to be

3   planning for the worst case scenario as

4   opposed to taking the Wheel off the table, so

5   to speak. And in terms of Vision Zero --

6   I'll just say to you again. In terms of --

7   yes, it did. It's remarkable how much it has

8   achieved.

9   MR. COCOLA: Thank you.

10   MR. CAPPELLI: But Richmond Terrace,

11   right across from the outlets, you got all of

12   these police cars parked on the street, okay,

13   in a very dangerous situation, it's dangerous

14   for pedestrians. It's dangerous for drivers.

15   MR. COCOLA: Yes.

16   MR. CAPPELLI: You guys are going to

17   have to deal with that at some point.

18   MR. COCOLA: Yeah, thank you.

19   MR. CAPPELLI: Thank you.

20   MS. LAGO: Commissioner Cerullo.

21   MR. CERULLO: Oh, I can come back? I

22   didn't want to take -- if anybody else wanted

23   to ask questions (laughter).

24   MS. LEVIN: I was going to go.

25   MR. CERULLO: Anna, okay. I'll make

 2   this quick. I'm sorry.

 3   Has the Department considered any

 4   changes in the traffic patterns in this area?

 5   Is there any consideration? I'm not

 6   suggesting you should, I'm just wondering if

 7   you have. 'Cause there were ideas several

 8   years ago --

 9   MR. COCOLA: Oh, yes.

10   MR. CERULLO: -- about doing different

11   things and I just wonder, is that in your

12   toolbox? Is it not --

13   MR. COCOLA: Yes.

14   MR. CERULLO: Is it off the table, you

15   know?

16   MR. COCOLA: Yeah, that's a great

17   question.

18   MR. CERULLO: So, basically, I'm just

19   trying to figure out if there are ideas --

20   MR. COCOLA: Right.

21   MR. CERULLO: -- that involve traffic

22   patterns --

23   MR. COCOLA: Right.

24   MR. CERULLO: -- what would they be so

25   we can comment on them and we can participate

2   in those discussions. If there are issues

3   about street wide -- are there areas that DOT

4   believes streets could be widened, you know,

5   before something sitting on it? Just

6   wondering where --

7   MR. COCOLA: Right. Well, just to

8   answer the first part first and the second

9   part second, we strive to widen streets

10   whenever possible through the Boulders

11   Pavement Program. So, for example, at Bay

12   and Canal, we were able to create a nice

13   widening for that --

14   MR. CERULLO: The rail.

15   MR. COCOLA: -- you know, the area

16   that --

17   MR. CERULLO: The rail.

18   MR. COCOLA: Yeah, that Don Capoccia

19   built.

20   MR. CERULLO: The rail.

21   MR. COCOLA: Yeah. And so, therefore,

22   coming down Bay Street in the morning, the

23   buses veer right into the stop, and vehicles

24   were able to go ferry bound. So, any chance

25   that we get to do that, we try to do it.

2   Because, as you know, from your distinguished

3   career in the council on down, you know, many

4   of our streets aren't built to their fully

5   mapped width and, you know, that's a

6   challenge from us. So, be it Bay Street or

7   other parts of the borough, when we get a

8   chance to widen, you know, we will definitely

9   widen.

10   Now, there are some ideas that have

11   been proposed both by the current borough

12   president, the former borough president. One

13   involves the pairing of streets one way. And

14   at this point, we haven't really committed to

15   that just yet. But it is in our toolbox.

16   And if need be, we definitely would consider

17   it.

18   MR. CERULLO: Okay. I mean, it's

19   helpful to know because, obviously, that

20   creates a whole different discussion on

21   impacts --

22   MR. COCOLA: Yes.

23   MR. CERULLO: I just -- the other thing

24   I can think of and I -- again, this is sort

25   of in your purview. And I wonder what kind

2   of interagency discussions take place on

3   this. But even today, rush hour in the

4   morning, rush hour in the evening.

5   MR. COCOLA: Right.

6   MR. CERULLO: I'll stick to the work

7   week, although we live in this

8   seven-day-a-week work environment. There are

9   activities that take place on our roads

10   that -- particularly on Bay Street. Front is

11   wider. There's really nothing there. Most

12   people right now are using it as sort of a

13   throughway to be able to avoid Bay.

14   MR. COCOLA: Absolutely.

15   MR. CERULLO: But the -- has there ever

16   been discussions about -- because of your

17   jurisdiction at DOT and talking to agencies

18   like sanitation and talking to the Department

19   of Education about its school bus pickup

20   locations, that there are alternatives

21   proposed to how these things, which are

22   critical to the quality of life in the

23   neighborhood, can be shifted or -- school,

24   obviously, is a time-related issue. But, you

25   know, whether or not 7:15 in the morning

2   along Bay Street is when garbage actually

3   needs to be picked up --

4   MR. COCOLA: Right.

5   MR. CERULLO: -- which on a one lane

6   road means when the sanitation truck stops.

7   And I love our employees, who are our

8   strongest, but does that actually need to

9   have to happen during rush hour. And I know

10   there are lots of issues about maneuvering

11   timeframes, but those discussions really do

12   need to be a part of the growing community.

13   Because there will be even more waste and

14   there will be new businesses and they will

15   have commercial carting occurring where we

16   don't have. And that there will be a hundred

17   reasons that we need to be thinking about how

18   not to exacerbate a problem already in very

19   narrow roads.

20   MR. COCOLA: Right.

21   MR. CERULLO: 'Cause we're not

22   generally building new ones, we're working

23   with what we have.

24   MR. COCOLA: Amen.

25   MR. CERULLO: But I just think it

2   should be something that DOT takes the lead

3   on, if it hasn't already. Because it could

4   be -- we need to deal with the problem we

5   have today without new development, never

6   mind what we can envision occurring in the

7   future. Because that's as much of a traffic

8   pattern as new people coming to the

9   neighborhood.

10   MR. COCOLA: Amen. I totally agree

11   with you.

12   (Laughter.)

13   MR. COCOLA: I haven't completely

14   talked with sanitation, per se, yet.

15   MR. CERULLO: And I picked one, I'm not

16   on sanitation but --

17   MR. COCOLA: I understand. And I will

18   say that, you know, for example, like on

19   Hylan Boulevard, you know, the 6:00 to 10:00,

20   4:00 to 7:00 hours are sacred particularly

21   because you have a bus lane, you know, so

22   people know that they shouldn't be there from

23   6:00 to 10:00. We do make every effort to

24   adhere to the morning rush. There have been

25   times where I have caught other agencies

2   working on Bay Street at 7 a.m. and, you

3   know, giving them a phone call. And, in

4   candor, there are times that I've seen

5   contractors for our agency out there at the

6   wrong hours and we stay on them too. So, we

7   do have a compliance unit, HIQA, and they're

8   very good. And they try to adhere to keeping

9   the rush hour sacred.

10   MR. CERULLO: Okay. Thank you.

11   MS. LAGO: Thank you for your patience,

12   Commissioner Levin.

13   MR. CERULLO: Sorry.

14   MS. LEVIN: Yeah, I want to get out of

15   cars and onto two feet here. You referred

16   glancingly to capital projects that might be

17   in the works here. And I note that our

18   briefing materials for this project show a

19   nice streetscape with a planted median and a

20   bunch of street trees on Bay Street. What

21   kind of capital improvements are you

22   thinking? What kind of streetscape

23   improvement plan is in the works for this

24   rezoning?

25   MR. COCOLA: Well, that's part of it,

2   you know. And part of it too is, we found a

3   lot of success in the agency in doing

4   bump-outs in medians, which we're able to

5   cement and protect the pedestrians, you know,

6   if they can't make it all the way across or

7   whatever. So, it's both aesthetically

8   pleasing and it's also safe for us. So, for

9   example, on Bay Street and Richmond Terrace,

10   we segregated the bike lane, you know,

11   through cement, so that the bicyclists will

12   have their own protected bike lane. And

13   initiatives like that, we definitely want to

14   do throughout these corridors. Because, like

15   I said, I mean, I know that there's that sort

16   of dual issue of mobility and safety, but,

17   obviously, we'd rather side on safety.

18   So, for example, with Victory and Bay,

19   right now, we do like the way that it's been

20   processing, you know, with the implementation

21   of the left turn bay. But we can extend and

22   make a better bus lane for the good people

23   who go from Bay Street up to Victory

24   Boulevard through our capital projects.

25   MS. LEVIN: Okay. So, there's no

2   streetscape improvement plan specifically

3   targeted to the rezoning area, you know, to

4   complement the changes that were -- the land

5   use changes that were --

6   MR. COCOLA: I mean, eventually,

7   there -- yeah, like, for example, on Front

8   Street, right, you know, there'll be a

9   protected bike lane, there'll be, you know,

10   beautification and streetscape throughout.

11   So, I mean EDC is more taking the lead on

12   that than us, but we heartily endorse what

13   they're doing.

14   MS. LEVIN: Okay. Good. It just seems

15   that, you know, as more people come to live

16   in this neighborhood, this is a prime bike

17   commuting neighborhood and it really is not

18   going to be that challenging for people to

19   move around the neighborhood by bike rather

20   than by car.

21   MR. COCOLA: Right.

22   MS. LEVIN: And so, I think this really

23   looks like an area where redoubled attention

24   to bike infrastructure could be a big

25   improvement.

2   MR. COCOLA: I mean, just for the

3   record, the catchment area that we used was

4   the North Shore. We launched the program at

5   Snug Harbor Cultural Center. So, now, you

6   know, you'll see a lot of green and orange

7   bikes that are being utilized throughout that

8   catchment area, and it's really refreshing to

9   see it.

10   MS. LEVIN: Well, and even then,

11   privately owned bikes, people will be able to

12   live in this neighborhood, keep their own

13   bike and get to and from the ferry or

14   wherever else they need to go with a bike.

15   MR. COCOLA: Agreed.

16   MS. LEVIN: We need to make it easier

17   for them to do that.

18   MR. COCOLA: Thank you.

19   MS. LAGO: Commissioner Cerullo.

20   MR. CERULLO: Just, I'm thinking of,

21   you know, when I think of DOT and streetscape

22   improvements in East Midtown, I'm, you know,

23   thinking of public space opportunities also.

24   MR. COCOLA: Yeah.

25   MR. CERULLO: And I just -- and it

2   makes me think of two things, which are

3   somewhat related, but they may be

4   inconsistent in certain places. One, are

5   there any mapped but unbuilt streets or

6   unmapped city-owned -- unmapped unbuilt

7   city-owned streets that the City has

8   jurisdiction over that may be analyzed to

9   whether or not there is -- they provide

10   relief if they are built and if they can't be

11   built, are there opportunities for more

12   inland public space for people to enjoy

13   because of whatever the physical condition of

14   that area is that couldn't possibly -- I

15   mean, I know we have lots of, sort of streets

16   that don't go through the inland, you know,

17   streets that -- you know, a couple of them go

18   through.

19   MR. COCOLA: Right.

20   MR. CERULLO: And then some of them

21   just crash to the MTA.

22   MR. COCOLA: Right.

23   MR. CERULLO: So, have we looked at any

24   of those things as opportunities for either

25   increasing the traffic opportunities whether

2   for bikes or for vehicles --

3   MR. COCOLA: Right.

4   MR. CERULLO: -- or, is there

5   opportunities for the City on city-owned

6   space that could be creating opportunities

7   for people to sit and enjoy the neighborhood

8   and their community, not just on the

9   waterfront, but more inland as we move in?

10   MR. COCOLA: Sure, we can look into

11   that. As you know, we have all kinds of

12   complications out in Staten Island in terms

13   of -- we have streets that are built that

14   aren't mapped. We have streets that are

15   mapped that aren't built.

16   MR. CERULLO: Right, that's what I was

17   trying to --

18   MR. COCOLA: You know, et cetera, et

19   cetera. And during this process, I know the

20   borough president is encouraging us to do an

21   inventory on all that, and we should.

22   MR. CERULLO: And I was going to ask

23   you if you had one, if not, if it would be

24   encouraged. So, at least I'm on message.

25   Okay. Good. Thank you.

2   MS. LAGO: Other questions?

3   You're finally off the hot seat,

4   Mr. Cocola.

5   MR. COCOLA: Oh, thank you. But I must

6   tell you, everybody loves DOT and Staten

7   Island, honest to God.

8   (Laugher.)

9   MS. LAGO: Our next speaker will be

10   Michael Blaise Backer.

11   MR. BACKER: Good morning, Chair Lago

12   and members of the City Planning Commission.

13   My name is Michael Blaise Backer, and I'm the

14   Deputy Commissioner for Neighborhood

15   Development at the Department of Small

16   Business Services. And I'm here to testify

17   in support of this rezoning.

18   At SBS, we aim to unlock economic

19   potential by connecting New Yorkers to

20   quality jobs, building stronger businesses

21   and fostering thriving neighborhoods. SBS

22   has been working closely with our partner

23   agencies, community-based organizations,

24   businesses, and residents to implement new

25   investments for small businesses and job

2   seekers along Bay Street with the goal of

3   increasing economic activity and supporting

4   long-standing businesses. Through our

5   Neighborhood 360 program, which we initiated

6   in 2015, SBS is investing in the community

7   and working with local partners to identify,

8   develop and launch commercial revitalization

9   projects.

10   SBS first partnered with the Staten

11   Island Chamber of Commerce to conduct a

12   Commercial District Needs Assessment off the

13   Bay Street Corridor to analyze the local

14   commercial district and identify

15   opportunities for investment along the

16   Corridor. In 2017, SBS awarded 1.54 million

17   in competitive Neighborhood 360 grant funding

18   to the Staten Island Chamber of Commerce, to

19   the Staten Island Arts and The 100 Gates

20   Project to address the CDNA's key findings

21   over a three and a half-year span. Since the

22   grant's inception, we've been proud to

23   support programming that includes holiday

24   lights, beautification projects, district

25   marketing, storefront improvements and

2   supplemental sidewalk cleaning services that

3   benefits small businesses from St. George to

4   Stapleton.

5   In addition, our funding has supported

6   an impactful array of community events, such

7   as the Courtyard Friday Summer Concert Series

8   at Borough Hall, the Sonic Gates audio

9   sculpture installations and the Cinema

10   Connects Film Series, which saw more than 900

11   attendees at their first event, a thirtieth

12   anniversary screening of Working Girl at the

13   historic St. George Theater. Working with

14   local stakeholders through community outreach

15   in a commercial district working group

16   convened by Councilmember Rose and Borough

17   President Oddo, the Neighborhood 360

18   investment aims to strengthen Bay Street's

19   existing small businesses and ensure the

20   corridor is vibrant and welcoming for

21   residents and visitors alike.

22   Beyond Neighborhood 360, SBS has

23   significant assets on Staten Island's

24   North Shore. SBS operates one of our seven

25   New York City Business Solution Centers just

2   outside the Bay Street Corridor, 120

3   Stuyvesant Place. At the center, Staten

4   Island small businesses can access free

5   business services, such as business education

6   courses, financing assistance, help

7   navigating government, minority and

8   women-owned business enterprise certification

9   and legal assistance. These free services

10   include our commercial lease assistance

11   program, which allows small business owners

12   to obtain free legal assistance regarding new

13   leases, lease renewals, and back rent

14   negotiations, landlord harassment, and other

15   issues, such as lack of repairs and breach of

16   contract issues.

17   SBS also operates one of our eighteen

18   Workforce 1 Career Centers on the

19   North Shore. The center, also located at 120

20   Stuyvesant Place, connects job seekers to

21   employment and training opportunities and

22   offers businesses cost-saving recruitment

23   services. We look forward to continuing the

24   work with the community, leverage the

25   resources of the North Shore Center, make

2   Staten Island residents with quality

3   employment and training opportunities. SBS

4   also recently launched our mobile outreach

5   unit vehicle, which in addition to our

6   Chamber On-the-Go and compliance advisor

7   teams, as another way we're able to bring our

8   services directly to business owners and job

9   seekers in their neighborhood.

10   We want to ensure that the services are

11   reaching all New Yorkers. And today, in

12   fact, our team is holding a small business

13   fair at the St. George library.

14   (Bell rings.)

15   MR. KNUCKLES: Thank you, Mr. Backer.

16   MR. BACKER: Thank you, happy to take

17   any questions.

18   MR. KNUCKLES: Questions?

19   Chill for a moment, Staten Island.

20   (Laughter.)

21   MR. KNUCKLES: Commissioner Ortiz.

22   MS. ORTIZ: Hi.

23   MR. BACKER: Hi.

24   MS. ORTIZ: Good to see you.

25   MR. BACKER: Likewise.

2   MS. ORTIZ: Thank you for the work that

3   you do. And the projects, I think, that the

4   work you mentioned is really -- responds to

5   some degree to the borough president's

6   feedback on the request for services that,

7   you know, address small business needs. And,

8   of course, the CDNA, you know, mentioned the

9   desire for marketing support and financing

10   among the businesses. So, I think that's

11   useful. The question I posed earlier,

12   frankly, I don't think it's appropriate for

13   SBS. It's really a question about the

14   overall zoning framework. And, you know,

15   I've expressed some concern, and other

16   commissioners have as well, about the amount

17   of projected new development on the

18   commercial side, both office and retail, that

19   we will -- that could be seen under the width

20   action scenario.

21   You know, the CDNA indicates a

22   twenty-one percent vacancy rate. I've done

23   other research that shows that, you know,

24   Staten Island is over retail. And so, you

25   know, I -- the last EIS that I looked at, the

2   gross new square footage was about $600,000.

3   This is 600,000 square feet of which 230 was

4   local retail and 316 was office. So, from

5   your prospective -- I guess, the question for

6   you is, what do you see -- I mean, is that --

7   what's the demand there? You guys work every

8   day with these businesses. You saw the

9   vacancy rate. You know, what happens when

10   you add an additional 230 square feet of

11   retail to a corridor that already seems over

12   supplied?

13   MR. BACKER: Sure. Well, I'm happy to

14   offer, at least, prospective on that. I

15   think it's a good question, and certainly I

16   understand where you're coming from. I mean,

17   I've seen sort of -- I'm not sure if we have

18   the numbers exactly right. I've seen about

19   183,000 additional and commercial, meaning so

20   that the ground floor as well as potential

21   office. So, I think --

22   MS. ORTIZ: That's the net.

23   MR. BACKER: The net.

24   MS. ORTIZ: I think that's the net.

25   I'm talking about the gross.

2   MR. BACKER: Okay. So, in addition --

3   well, so, I think -- so, speaking to the

4   vacancy piece, initially. I think it's true

5   that the CDNA data collected in late '15,

6   early 2016, showed about a twenty-one percent

7   vacancy rate. So, I think -- a couple of

8   things I think the CDNA also showed is about

9   a $300 million in linkage in the area. So, I

10   think we think that, you know -- so, there's

11   essentially, residents leaving the community

12   to buy some of the goods and services that

13   they need.

14   So, I think we think that there is a

15   demand for a lot of services, you know --

16   supermarkets, specialty food items, more, you

17   know, restaurants, clothing -- a number of

18   things that came up, both in the quantitative

19   data as well as in qualitative surveys,

20   conducted by the Staten Island Chamber that

21   showed that there probably was sufficient

22   demand to at least bring some new retail to

23   the community, local serving retail.

24   Second, I would say the Staten Island

25   Chamber also did a storefront study of actual

2   physical conditions. They found, I think,

3   about forty-five percent of the storefronts

4   to be in poor condition and about

5   twenty-four percent to be in average

6   condition. So, we feel like there's -- the

7   possibility at least, that there was also a

8   bit of a mismatch between what the

9   availability is in the buildings currently

10   there and the storefronts that are currently

11   there and some of the commercial, you know,

12   new businesses that might be willing or

13   interested to locate in the area.

14   And, I think -- finally, I think my

15   understanding of the designing framework is

16   that there is a considerable amount of

17   flexibility built into it. So, it does not,

18   you know, require retail. It requires active

19   use, but it does allow for community

20   facilities and nonprofit spaces, which I

21   don't think we've seen in all of the

22   rezonings, but I think that's an important

23   piece given sort of the need we've, you know,

24   what we've heard about childcare facilities,

25   universal pre-K -- that kind of thing, and

2   allowing for that.

3   And I think the final thing I would say

4   is just, you know, from the prospective that

5   we, you know, the study essentially that was

6   done, looking from St. George all the way to

7   Stapleton, was really seeing the need and

8   hearing from people about the need to ties

9   with a commercial district and these three

10   towns together and where possible, you know,

11   having more continuous active ground floor

12   uses along that entire corridor and really

13   being able to pull people from, you know,

14   from the ferry terminal from the future

15   outlet ball to the other commercial districts

16   on the Corridor.

17   So, I think -- I mean, I understand

18   your concern, but I think we feel like there

19   is probably sufficient demand to fill that

20   new space.

21   MS. ORTIZ: I mean, I will say that,

22   you know, on the linkage question you

23   referred to about $300 million in linkage,

24   you know, this is obviously very in the

25   weeds, but many of the categories in which

2   there's linkage are not necessarily locally

3   serving. I think the second largest category

4   is department stores, for instance.

5   MR. BACKER: Right.

6   MS. ORTIZ: So, you know, I think we

7   just have to be very careful about just

8   throwing out, you know, linkage and saying

9   that we can support that. I don't

10   necessarily think that -- I think it's a good

11   answer. I don't necessarily think it

12   mitigates completely the concerns about

13   what's going to happen when we, you know, add

14   this much new retail. But thank you for

15   that.

16   MR. BACKER: Yeah, and I understand.

17   That's a good point. I think, certainly,

18   certain categories of the linkage are not

19   what will be located in that specific --

20   along the Corridor precisely, but I do think

21   we've seen -- and, as you know, some of the

22   work that was done in Stapleton around

23   storefront improvements, specifically, around

24   where there was a high number of vacancies,

25   we have seen new businesses start to open and

 2   fill those vacancies and some restaurants and

 3   an antique store and other things. So, I

 4   mean, our hope is that really as more

 5   residents come and as sort of spaces get

 6   improved and new spaces come online, that

 7   we'll really attract more entrepreneurs and

 8   more small businesses to open up.

 9   MS. ORTIZ: Is there any analysis

10   that's done to support that prospective, you

11   know, the new residents will, you know, how

12   much spending is anticipated by new

13   residents? How much that adds to demand and,

14   you know, is that part of this process?

15   MR. BACKER: It is not part of our

16   process. It's not something we have

17   expertise to do. It's a good question --

18   something I think, we as a city, should

19   continue to look at and work with HPD and us

20   and EDC to come up with some methodology to

21   do that.

22   MS. ORTIZ: Thank you.

23   MR. KNUCKLES: Just to follow up on

24   that. That $300 million linkage factors in

25   the Empire Outlets?

2   MR. BACKER: Well, no, it does not.

3   Because it's taking into account sort of the

4   geography we studied and what is currently

5   happening. So, essentially, shopping in

6   stores that are currently online. So, no, it

7   does not. But in theory, certainly, the

8   clothing, the demand, yes. I mean,

9   obviously, I think the Empire Outlet is

10   certainly a regional draw, not necessarily

11   just for local shoppers. But I think it

12   certainly would -- I would assume, meet some

13   of that linkage.

14   MR. KNUCKLES: Mitigate, right.

15   Okay. Commissioners Cappelli and

16   Cerullo.

17   MR. CAPPELLI: Thank you for joining

18   us.

19   MR. BACKER: Sure.

20   MR. CAPPELLI: What is the vacancy rate

21   just in this commercial area that we're

22   looking at right now?

23   MR. BACKER: So, I can't tell you right

24   now. But, again, the data that was collected

25   by Staten Island Chamber of which was

2   collected, I believe, November 2015 to about

3   February of 2016 was twenty-one percent,

4   which I can't say -- it's larger than the

5   rezoning study area. So, just to be clear,

6   the Commercial District Needs Assessment, we

7   started this work back in 2015, incorporated

8   St. George, Tompkinsville, and Stapleton --

9   the entire current commercial corridor. So,

10   it's a bit larger.

11   MR. CAPPELLI: Can you provide to us

12   during our review process here, the vacancy

13   rate for this district?

14   MR. BACKER: So, when you say, "the

15   district," just the specific area that's to

16   be rezoned?

17   MR. CAPPELLI: From, basically, where

18   Fred lives to -- from Canal Street up to Bay

19   Street Landing.

20   MR. BACKER: So, just so you're aware.

21   I mean, this is something that we essentially

22   paid the Staten Island Chamber to do field

23   work to conduct this -- to get this

24   information. So, this is how we put

25   resources toward conducting the Commercial

2   District Needs Assessment. The City does not

3   have, you know, vacancy data offhand or

4   readily available --

5   MR. CAPPELLI: Or you can drive down

6   the street and take a look.

7   MR. BACKER: I guess -- so, we would

8   have to -- we can look at the sort of data

9   and essentially what we had before and ask

10   them to potentially go back and update it and

11   look at, perhaps, a more targeted area. But

12   I think we did it in the CDNA breakdown, sort

13   of St. George, Tompkinsville, and Stapleton,

14   and I think certainly saw the larger -- the

15   higher vacancy was in St. George and

16   Stapleton. So, that's something we can speak

17   with the chamber -- I don't want to speak on

18   behalf of them because they are our local

19   partner there. We don't really have a field

20   team at SBS that does this kind of work, but

21   we rely on them and we fund them to do this

22   kind of thing. So, we would certainly be

23   willing to speak to them.

24   MR. CAPPELLI: And do we know how the

25   stores are doing at Urby?

2   MR. BACKER: I do not have that

3   information, no.

4   AUDIENCE MEMBER: We know.

5   MR. CAPPELLI: Because, you know,

6   there's at least, you know --

7   MS. DE LA UZ: 35,000 square feet.

8   MR. CAPPELLI: How much is it, 25,000?

9   MS. DE LA UZ: Thirty-five.

10   MR. CAPPELLI: 35,000, okay.

11   MR. BACKER: Of open stores, is the

12   question, I'm sorry?

13   MS. DE LA UZ: No, total square footage

14   at Urby, currently.

15   MR. CAPPELLI: But I've heard,

16   anecdotally, you know, some problems that

17   exist and I'm just wondering what -- I'm sure

18   one of our speakers will address that, but

19   just, you know, what the reality is, at

20   least, from the City's prospective? And are

21   there any plans that -- any new programs that

22   will be created to assist in the commercial

23   development of this area?

24   MR. BACKER: At this point -- I mean,

25   I'd certainly be happy to -- I saw the

2   borough president's comments and certainly

3   continue a dialogue with him to see what new

4   programs might be needed. But certainly, a

5   lot of the programs or ideas they decided on

6   are things that the administration has

7   started just in the last few years. And, of

8   course, we do, you know, through the Business

9   Solution Center and other resources, we're

10   able to connect businesses to incentives or

11   financing or things that the City doesn't

12   offer itself. So, I'd be happy to hear more,

13   if there's anything that we do not currently

14   provide that we can create, it's certainly

15   worth the conversation.

16   MR. CAPPELLI: Please, because we've

17   waited a long time to do this and I think the

18   community would really like to see that it

19   gets done right. Thank you.

20   MR. BACKER: Sure. You're welcome.

21   MR. CERULLO: Hi, Blaise.

22   MR. BACKER: Hi, Fred.

23   MR. CERULLO: I see your downtown

24   Staten Island button on.

25   MR. BACKER: That's right.

2   MR. CERULLO: I had to acknowledge

3   that.

4   Let me, for a minute, in contrast to

5   the issue of new businesses, let's talk about

6   SBS's role in how we deal with the existing

7   businesses that are in this neighborhood and

8   a sort of similar question that I asked HPD

9   when it came to potential direct or indirect

10   displacement for tenants and homeowners, how

11   we deal -- or what the City's plans are to

12   deal with potential direct or indirect

13   displacement for businesses. As we know,

14   while there may be, and that's a fact,

15   vacancies along the Corridor now, there are

16   some very brave and committed business people

17   who have called this area home for a long

18   time and held on through difficult times.

19   Others have taken a risk earlier than the

20   population is really there to support to try

21   to make a new business work in this

22   neighborhood. And many of us from the

23   neighborhood go to those restaurants and go

24   into those stores. Obviously, the concern is

25   what happens as the development occurs? And

2   on the business side, the market does its

3   thing, what kinds of programs does SBS have

4   in place that it will be sort of executing in

5   the neighborhood? And how does that

6   information get to our existing businesses

7   through what we expect to be this ongoing

8   process?

9   MR. BACKER: Sure. So, a couple of

10   things I touched on in the testimony and I

11   can get a little -- do a little deeper dive

12   into it. Like, for example, the Commercial

13   Lease Assistance Program is something that

14   just started within the last year, maybe a

15   little longer. There's a couple of options

16   there. Essentially, there's sort of

17   trainings that anyone can attend just on the

18   basics of sort of best practices and things

19   to be aware of around signing a new lease or

20   negotiating a lease. But there's also

21   one-on-one assistance. So, free assistance,

22   legal advice to help a business owner who is

23   having either challenges with their landlord

24   or perhaps they know their lease is coming up

25   for renewal and they want to be proactive

2   since you're providing the sort of assistance

3   they need to kind of, you know, level the

4   playing field so that the business can --

5   that wants to stay, that wants to remain in

6   their current space to, you know, to

7   essentially help them negotiate.

8   Should that business prefer to

9   relocate, perhaps, in the district, you know,

10   that's, again, they can provide assistance in

11   helping to come up with a lease that is fair

12   and helpful for the small business owner.

13   Again, there's a lot of things -- if a

14   business is looking to expand or make

15   improvements, again, we can -- we help

16   businesses to grow. We have a whole range of

17   both training programs available for business

18   owners as well as access to financing, if

19   they're looking to expand. But I think the

20   key thing you touched on as, in my

21   experience, is sort of that outreach piece or

22   connecting the dots. There's a lot of free

23   programs the City offers. And so, you know,

24   the division my team runs, they're sort of

25   the neighborhood development aspect of it and

2   really relying on local partners to get the

3   word out has really been an essential part of

4   our strategy. So, not only do we have the

5   things we are doing via sort of the mobile

6   unit where we're out in the field into the

7   Business Solution Center, but also, we have a

8   Chamber On-the-Go program, which is citywide,

9   but with its contract with the local partner.

10   With The Chamber of Commerce, essentially,

11   does the door-to-door outreach to ensure the

12   businesses are aware of and can tap into the

13   services sort of essentially doing, like, a

14   one-on-one kind on triage opportunity to find

15   out on what's going on, what they might need,

16   so that we can then follow up.

17   And then with the local partner, or in

18   this case, through Neighborhood 360 with both

19   Staten Island Chamber and Staten Island Arts,

20   you know, there it's almost -- it's even a

21   deeper sort of relationship building, really,

22   you know, doing merchant organizing,

23   becoming, you know, intimately familiar with

24   the business owners, with the property

25   owners, knowing when leases might be coming

2   due, being able to help a business relocate

3   should they need to, and really playing a

4   role there to help connect the dots. So,

5   they're either tapping into my team or any

6   other team at SBS, but also, you know,

7   leveraging their own programs and a lot of

8   the outside fundraising they might do to

9   offer sort of small business assistance.

10   MR. CERULLO: So, is this -- and I know

11   part of this answer. This kind of program or

12   these programs are sort of ongoing. Do you

13   see sort of an added effort based on the

14   potential for what this all means to be out

15   in the street more? And this question I'll

16   pose both for existing businesses and

17   potential new ones because I'm interested in

18   knowing about what types of -- what types of

19   support services for business workforce

20   development -- particularly, we have a

21   community here, if there's going to be at

22   whatever level commercial, an office,

23   certainly at the retail level. We have an

24   entire community of young people and old

25   people and everyone in the middle who could

2   have access to jobs here. And what kind of

3   training does the City do to help people be

4   able to make themselves marketable in what

5   might be a very new world in terms of job

6   opportunities in this spine and in this

7   surrounding area? And, you know, what

8   efforts in terms of finding or matching

9   through, you know, M/WBE programs so that we

10   ensure that there's diversity in the

11   businesses that are existing there. What can

12   you tell us about how the City is -- what

13   role the City will be playing? I'm assuming

14   it's through SBS. Knowing your portfolio,

15   how does it manifest itself in the

16   neighborhood?

17   MR. BACKER: Sure. Well, I would start

18   by saying there's always opportunity to kind

19   of fine-tune a program and learn more about

20   what a specific community needs. I would say

21   a lot of the examples I cited earlier and a

22   lot of the programs, quite frankly, we have

23   launched in the last two or three years, you

24   know, not to say anticipation of this

25   rezoning, but certainly we knew like rapid

2   changes happening, a lot of investment was

3   happening. And we have been listening to

4   other communities and to this community

5   already to ensure some of these programs and

6   outreach tools, you know, were already in

7   place.

8   So, I would just say in some

9   neighborhoods we have been, I think, a little

10   more reactive to what we were hearing through

11   this process. I think, in this case, our

12   investment got in a couple of years ago and

13   we have been starting a deep, you know, deep

14   and really frequent work with our local

15   partners there. So, that being said, should

16   we hear more feedback from them and from

17   others that the program needs to be tweaked

18   or there's a certain layer of, you know,

19   variation or added level of touch needed, I

20   think that's the conversation we certainly

21   can have.

22   On the workforce piece, really, our

23   workforce model currently, you know, focuses

24   very highly on, you know, living wage jobs

25   and ensuring that New Yorkers are equipped

2   with the skills they need for jobs that are

3   actually available. So, in the model we

4   employ in this administration, it really is

5   looking at what industries are growing and so

6   whether it's tech or healthcare, retail,

7   industrial, transportation -- some of the

8   sectors where there has been -- there's a

9   clear growth in employment opportunities and

10   where we have heard from employers that there

11   are specific skills that, you know, that

12   employees need to get those jobs, that is

13   very -- that is exactly where SBS plays that

14   role through our Workforce 1 centers to

15   ensure that New Yorkers can get free training

16   and they're also then helping employers to

17   located those employees to help save the

18   business cost.

19   MR. KNUCKLES: Okay. Any other

20   questions for Deputy Commission Backer?

21   Commissioner Ortiz.

22   MS. ORTIZ: Hi. You know, under the

23   proposal, breweries will be allowed under

24   limited circumstances. And as I understand

25   it, it's mostly to support the expansion of

2   one brewery. You know, what's sort of your

3   policy thoughts on potentially expanding uses

4   like breweries, which historically has not

5   been allowed on commercial corridors because

6   it's technically a manufacturing or

7   industrial use? You know, and is that

8   appropriate or increasingly appropriate on

9   streets like this?

10   MR. BACKER: I was expecting that one.

11   I mean, I think that's a difficult thing to

12   say. I don't think I -- I can't personally

13   say my team has put -- had done any research

14   on that fact or sort of on the implications.

15   I certainly think if you look at sort of

16   macro trends and not necessarily in New York

17   as much as in certainly other cities are

18   comparable neighborhoods. I think the sort

19   of mixed manufacturing retail uses in a

20   single business is something you see more of.

21   You know, you're seeing it in a number of

22   places where there is sort of a manufacturing

23   component that people can come in and

24   experience it.

25   So, you know, brew pubs are not

2   something new. I know that I -- and I think

3   in this case that the business seems to be

4   doing quite well. I think it's something I

5   would, you know, be -- I'm encouraged to see

6   that businesses like that are doing well and

7   that there's a market for it. So, I think

8   it's something we should certainly be open

9   to.

10   MS. ORTIZ: Okay. Thank you.

11   MR. CAPPELLI: Just following up with

12   what Commissioner Ortiz said. You know that

13   the Stapleton site, the inland Stapleton site

14   was a brewery at one time. It was a Piels

15   brewery way back in my early youth.

16   MR. BACKER: Sorry we lost it.

17   MR. CERULLO: He lost his youth too.

18   So, it's all gone.

19   (Laughter.)

20   MR. KNUCKLES: Any other questions for

21   Mr. Backer?

22   >>: (No response.)

23   MR. KNUCKLES: Run while you can.

24   MR. BACKER: Thank you.

25   MR. KNUCKLES: We'll now turn to those

 2   in opposition. We'll have speakers, starting

 3   with Kelly Vilar, who will be followed by

 4   Susan Master, who will be followed by

 5   Nicholas Antonelli.

 6   MS. VILAR: I have copies of my

 7   testimony. Would you like --

 8   MR. KNUCKLES: And you can leave it

 9   with the secretary. Thank you.

10   MS. VILAR: Hi, good afternoon. My

11   name is Kelly Vilar. I represent the Let's

12   Rebuild Cromwell Community Coalition, which

13   has convened and discussed the Bay Street

14   Corridor rezoning with hundreds of

15   individuals and many community and church

16   groups throughout the North Shore since 2016.

17   And we want to share with you our most urgent

18   recommendations based on those discussions as

19   they're important to the ULURP process. You

20   know, Staten Island has had some -- I just

21   want to say this upfront, that Staten Island

22   has had some big development failures over

23   the years. You've had the Homeport, you had

24   the NASCAR recommendation, and now you have

25   the Wheel.

2   So, we want to -- you know, one of the

3   problems that we see is that -- as the

4   commissioners here have mentioned, is that

5   we're going forward without a real plan. If

6   we are to rezone, it has to be worth it to

7   the community that exists here now and be

8   able to accommodate future residents and

9   businesses. I think your question about

10   vacancies is really important and I think

11   that needs to be highlighted. We believe

12   that this rezoning, unlike any other in the

13   City, is set to deliver in one fell swoop,

14   one of the most valuable waterfront

15   communities to private development in the

16   history of New York City development. That

17   being said, the exchange of community

18   benefits, including that of affordable

19   housing, needs to be produced of equal

20   caliber. If we're giving up billions in

21   waterfront value and value capture, then we

22   should be getting billions in investment and

23   value capture.

24   So, in summary, I'll tell you some of

25   our recommendations. Number one, deepest

2   affordability to match the neighborhood

3   demographics of the Bay Street Corridor area.

4   Take a look at Jersey Street on one end and

5   Park Hill at the other end and that needs to

6   be included in this. Because that's where

7   there's the largest need and it's not being

8   addressed. It's almost like you're zoning in

9   on something and we really need to look at

10   the affordability needs and look at the

11   specific Bay Street Corridor area. No

12   private development. This has very -- no

13   private development on city-owned properties

14   and reserve those properties for projects

15   that provide public good. There's very

16   little public property as part of this, and

17   we're giving it up. You know, Staten Island

18   as a borough is a borough of parks, but this

19   particular area of Staten Island is starving

20   for parks.

21   Create a plan for new economic

22   industry. Go forward towards a plan that has

23   a -- that's going to build an industry, not

24   just open a store for people to come and

25   shop. That's not who we are. Create a plan

2   for economic industry. We recommend

3   something called MERC. It's a Maritime

4   Education Recreation Cultural Corridor. It's

5   a proposal we've put out, every single

6   elected official. And all the City heads

7   have heard about this proposal. We've

8   written quite a few people about it. And the

9   reason that we recommend this corridor, this

10   Maritime Education --

11   (Bell rings.)

12   MR. KNUCKLES: Just finish your

13   sentence, Ms. Vilar.

14   MS. VILAR: The reason that we

15   recommend this Maritime Education and

16   Recreation Corridor is because Staten Island

17   is primed for the pump. You know, there

18   is -- we could be the Silicon Valley of

19   maritime education. We have all the elements

20   to make that happen, and we would produce

21   jobs that are long-term career-building jobs.

22   The average captain makes two, $300,000 a

23   year. The people who work on the ships and

24   who manage the ships make great careers. And

25   SUNY maritime is -- you know, just recently

2   came out with an article that said students

3   who graduate from SUNY maritime could make --

4   they'd make more money on average than the

5   average yearly coming out of Yale or Harvard.

6   MR. KNUCKLES: Thank you, Ms. Vilar.

7   Thank you.

8   MS. LAGO: Questions for Ms. Vilar?

9   Commissioner Cappelli.

10   MR. CAPPELLI: What do you have to say

11   about Cromwell Center?

12   MS. VILAR: Cromwell -- I think, first

13   of all, Cromwell is -- the City is overdue on

14   rebuilding Cromwell. It is a straight up

15   responsibility of the City of New York to

16   provide that. It is not a benefit. It is a

17   responsibility and it should not be seen as a

18   benefit as part of this rezoning.

19   (Applause.)

20   MS. LAGO: Commissioner De La Uz.

21   MS. DE LA UZ: Ms. Vilar, you mentioned

22   that you had most urgent recommendations,

23   were there two or three more that you didn't

24   quite get to?

25   MS. VILAR: Build a state-of-the-art

2   public aquatic center in the footprint of the

3   former Wheel and connect it to this MERC.

4   Investments in existing and new schools,

5   existing and new schools in the Bay Street

6   Corridor area, and substantial investments in

7   transportations through and around the

8   North Shore to include many options for

9   travel and wayfinding.

10   MS. DE LA UZ: Okay. Thank you very

11   much.

12   MS. LAGO: Other questions?

13   >>: (No response.)

14   MS. LAGO: Thank you, Ms. Vilar.

15   Our next speaker is Susan Master, who

16   will be followed by Nicholas Antonelli.

17   MS. MASTER: Kelly could have had my

18   time.

19   I'm a resident next door neighbor of

20   this development plan, and I live on the

21   first and second floors of Bay Street

22   Landing. My first and second floors were

23   harpooned by Harborwood, through walls and

24   windows. So, this is the physical effect of

25   living on Bay Street. And on Front Street,

2   there was a ship -- I have a large steel

3   photograph of a ship that landed on Front

4   Street, which I didn't carry because it's

5   framed on steel. But this is what it looks

6   like, you know, the high watermarks on a ship

7   with 11 feet, 4 feet. This was beached on

8   Front Street. People came to look at it.

9   The people in the planning board when I

10   showed this at Community Board 1, their

11   mouths dropped open. This is what can hit

12   that -- those new buildings.

13   If we had unpaved surface --

14   paved/unpaved surfaces, they would be able to

15   absorb and mitigate some of the floodwaters

16   coming in. And there will be floodwaters

17   coming in. Sandy is not a hundred-year storm

18   anymore, as we have been told by everyone but

19   our president. Tax revenues that this

20   development is going to benefit, the City of

21   New York, many Staten Islanders may agree

22   that tax revenues that come into the City of

23   New York are not likely to land on Staten

24   Island. So, what we're giving up, it won't

25   benefit us so much as other places.

2   And our youth just really do not need

3   visual corridors to peer at our waterfront.

4   We could use an unpaved surface where kids

5   could set up a pickup game because teamwork

6   is the most important thing that a young kid

7   can learn. We've missed out if the spade

8   went in to build Cromwell today, ten years

9   worth of kids would not have had that

10   development, have not had that ability to

11   join a team to join a pickup team. So, this

12   is what the City has not delivered to us and

13   to our children.

14   Kelly could have had some more of my

15   time.

16   (Laughter.)

17   MS. LAGO: That's very gracious of you.

18   Questions for Ms. Master?

19   >>: (No response.)

20   MS. LAGO: Our next speaker is Nicholas

21   Antonelli, who will be followed by Ivan

22   Garcia.

23   MR. ANTONELLI: Good afternoon,

24   commissioners. Okay. Good morning, Chair

25   Lago and members of the commission. My name

2   is Nicholas Antonelli. I am a cleaner at the

3   DOE. I have been a member of 32BJ for about

4   thirteen years, and I have lived in Staten

5   Island for thirty-two years. I'm here today

6   on behalf of my union, to especially 3,500

7   members, who live and work in Staten Island

8   to speak about what proposal Bay Street

9   rezoning means for buildings and service

10   workers.

11   Like many of you, we believe Staten

12   Island residents need meaningful economic

13   opportunities in this -- we support key of

14   elements into rezoning plans that will be

15   good building service jobs (sic). We are

16   pleased that the City has made a commitment

17   and ensures a prevailing wage in part of the

18   project where it is sub-utilizing the

19   residential developments, including the more

20   than six hundred units proposal. Stapleton

21   praises free sites providing good permanent

22   jobs that allow workers, families to live in

23   dignity is essential to a responsible

24   development. We are glad that the City and

25   EDC are setting strong standings.

2   However, we think that more needs to be

3   done to make sure that the Bay Street

4   rezoning brings in economic opportunity to

5   Staten Island before its approval. Private

6   property owners and developers in rezoning

7   areas stand to reap sufficient benefits from

8   the proposal plans, which will change many

9   lots for manufacturing to residential and

10   commercial use and allow for large new

11   buildings that could -- that millions of

12   dollars could profit. This rezoning is

13   current, without form, guarantees of what

14   will be financed and built at private sites

15   and no firm guarantees from developers that

16   building service workers will earn prevailing

17   wage.

18   We are calling on players like BFC who

19   has (inaudible) property to rezoning areas

20   follow the leads of the City and make earlier

21   credible comments in providing good

22   industrial standard wages for building

23   service workers. We think it's important to

24   be able to confidence that rezoning (sic) --

25   (Bell rings.)

2   MR. ANTONELLI: -- is creating good

3   jobs no matter (inaudible) get built.

4   MS. LAGO: Thank you, Mr. Antonelli.

5   MR. ANTONELLI: Thank you.

6   MS. LAGO: Questions?

7   >>:   (No response.)

8   MS. LAGO: Okay, thank you.

9   MR. ANTONELLI: Thank you.

10   MS. LAGO: Our next speaker is Ivan

11   Garcia to be followed by Saúl López.

12   MR. GARCIA: Good morning, Chair Lago,

13   commissioners -- oh, it's good afternoon now.

14   My name is Ivan Garcia and I'm the

15   neighborhood coordinator for Make the Road

16   New York and a member of the Housing Dignity

17   Coalition on Staten Island. I have been

18   doing outreach and informing tenants about

19   this rezoning for over a year. I've

20   presented at different clubs, organizations

21   and churches throughout Staten Island. At

22   every presentation, after every presentation,

23   every tenant in the room is upset that this

24   is the proposal that the City has presented.

25   The DIS claims that over 1,700 people will be

2   indirectly displaced, and they have said that

3   this is -- they have claimed that this is on

4   a worst-case scenario. The sad reality is

5   that this is already happening. There are

6   tenants who have given up and believe this

7   rezoning is a done deal and the City will do

8   whatever they want. They're looking to move

9   out of state or risk being homeless. The

10   displacement of these tenants is not a matter

11   of whether it will happen, it is a matter of

12   when it will happen.

13   Forty-three percent of the district

14   makes less than $50,000 a year. Of those

15   forty-three percent, seventy-five are either

16   rent-burdened or severely rent-burdened.

17   This means they're paying more than

18   thirty percent of their income on rent and

19   are possibly one rent increase away from

20   being homeless or displaced. It also does

21   not help that eighty-five percent of the

22   housing stock in the North Shore is private.

23   None of these tenants are protected by any

24   laws. They do not have the right to a lease

25   renewal and their rent increase does not have

2   to follow the RGB. According to New

3   York City's Human Resource Administration

4   report on universal access to legal services,

5   sixty-seven percent of tenants face an

6   eviction who received legal services on

7   Staten Island were allowed to stay in their

8   home. Although this may sound great, it is a

9   very low number compared to Manhattan, which

10   had the success rate of ninety-three percent,

11   the Bronx, ninety and Brooklyn at

12   eighty-three percent.

13   The report states this may be because

14   Staten Island has a higher volume of

15   owner-occupied and single or two-family

16   properties in Staten Island. Even with an

17   attorney, thirty-three percent of tenants in

18   housing court were evicted from their home

19   last year. A rezoning would only speed up

20   the displacement of tenants who have no

21   protections. A rezoning should protect

22   existing tenants who call Staten Island home

23   and should build affordable housing for any

24   new tenants who wants to move to Staten

25   Island. The Housing Dignity Coalition has

2   created a path to get a responsible rezoning

3   and have spoken to the City numerous times on

4   how to get there. A responsible rezoning

5   that is truly affordable and is as close to a

6   50/50 deal as possible.

7   We feel that we have been ignored and

8   our recommendations were not taken into

9   consideration. Therefore, we are here

10   against the rezoning. Thank you.

11   MS. LAGO: Thank you. Questions?

12   Commissioner De La Uz.

13   MS. DE LA UZ: On the 50/50 proposal,

14   you're talking about fifty percent

15   affordable, fifty percent market rate? I

16   just wanted to clarify that that's the point.

17   MR. GARCIA: Yes, that is correct.

18   MS. DE LA UZ: Okay. Thank you.

19   MR. GARCIA: Thank you.

20   MS. LAGO: Thank you, Mr. Garcia.

21   MR. GARCIA: Thank you.

22   MS. LAGO: Our next speaker is Saul

23   Lopez who will be followed by Michael

24   Arvanites.

25   MR. LOPEZ: Buenas tardes a todos. Mi

2   nombre es Saúl López.

3   (Testimony was given in Spanish

4   and then interpreted.)

5   MS. LAGO: And we will keep with our

6   practice that we will add an additional

7   two minutes if at any point that you would

8   want to translate. Thank you.

9   THE INTERPRETER: Great. And we're

10   going to do the translation --

11   MS. LAGO: Yes, thank you.

12   THE INTERPRETER: -- it shouldn't take

13   that long. My name is Saúl López. I am with

14   Make the Road New York. I came to this

15   organization ten years ago as a community

16   organizer in Staten Island. The job has

17   given me the opportunity to hear a wide range

18   of issues that the community encounters. One

19   of the most common problems is affordable

20   housing. The majority of immigrant families

21   have to rent from a private home where they

22   pay north of $2,000 a month on rent. They

23   all need two jobs in order to pay for the

24   apartment. On top of that, the landlord

25   often makes them pay for heat, hot water and

2   their own repairs. There's also no law in

3   place to regulate the rents in these private

4   homes. Tenants are being asked to move out

5   if they cannot pay the rent. The tenants

6   have to decide if they want to pay the high

7   rent or find another place to live. If they

8   move, they will have to find a new job that

9   is closer to home and closer to their kids'

10   schools, and this may become difficult. I

11   urge the City Planning Commission to not

12   support this rezoning without putting

13   protections in place for current residents.

14   This rezoning is not the solution.

15   MS. LAGO: ¿Preguntas para senor Lopez?

16   >>: (No response.)

17   MS. LAGO: Muchas gracias.

18   We will now turn to speakers in

19   support, starting with Michael Arvanites and

20   who will be followed by Fiona Akins.

21   MR. ARVANITES: Good afternoon.

22   Michael Arvanites, close enough.

23   MS. LAGO: Sorry about that.

24   MR. ARVANITES: That's all right.

25   MS. LAGO: Reading handwriting is one

2   of the most challenging facets of sitting in

3   this chair.

4   MR. ARVANITES: It's Greek. You're

5   closer than most people.

6   The bedtime story that every Staten

7   Island kid, and I'm sure Commissioner Cerullo

8   and Cappelli will tell you the same thing,

9   has heard about the Renaissance of the

10   North Shore and reclaiming our waterfront.

11   The Bay Street Corridor for the most part,

12   with the exception of, as mentioned, Miller's

13   Launch and Sandy Hook Pilots is no longer a

14   working waterfront; we'd like to reclaim

15   that. And I've been told my whole life, I'm

16   forty-two years old now, that that's

17   happening at any moment. I'd like to --

18   we've done that piecemeal since then when I

19   was working for Congress -- Councilman

20   McMahon. At the time I was on the Growth

21   Management Task Force. We converted the navy

22   Homeport into the current Urby and that

23   facility -- and that's been piecemeal. We

24   did the rail, which was the affordable

25   housing complex that is similar to the

2   proposal for the -- that the rezoning will

3   actually issue. It's a 20/80 mix that has --

4   it's a ten-story building. This will be

5   similar to a lot of what is going to be going

6   into the rezoning as proposed. That was on

7   there when I worked for Speaker Quinn and

8   finally when I was working for Senator

9   Savino. It sounds like I can't hold down a

10   job, but this is over twenty years.

11   We did the Bayley Seton redevelopment,

12   230 Broad Street, which was fifty-five senior

13   housing, which the commissioner referred to

14   earlier, and funded some of the esplanades

15   that were mentioned in earlier testimony.

16   I'm here wearing two hats -- first, as a

17   native Staten Islander and also Staten

18   Island's CUNY representative on the Board of

19   Trustees. We don't have -- we now have dorms

20   at the College of Staten Island, which is

21   something that we're doing at CUNY, looking

22   for all CUNY dorms. So, my roommate could go

23   to John Jay and I could go to Baruch, but

24   you'll be living in a CUNY dorm, as opposed

25   to a College of Staten Island dorm or a

2   Hunter dorm or something along those lines.

3   This rezoning will allow for student

4   housing along the Bay Street Corridor. We've

5   recently, on June 30th of 2018, we became a

6   college town again as the St. George campus

7   of the College of Staten Island reopened next

8   door to what used to be Staten Island

9   Community College. 5,000 students now attend

10   there. This would be down the block from

11   them. They'd be able to work there. If you

12   go to the College of Staten Island, there's a

13   free shuttle from this area to the College of

14   Staten Island campus, the main campus. And,

15   of course, there's the free ferry to the rest

16   of this city where thousands of Staten

17   Islanders go to John Jay, Baruch, and Medgar

18   Evers, and Brooklyn College. So, this would

19   be an opportunity for student housing,

20   something that would bring economic viability

21   and vitality to the area. That's why I'm

22   supporting the current rezoning.

23   There was community input, unlike some

24   other projects that have recently been

25   introduced, like the homeless shelter at 44

2   Victory. So, I'd like to just tell you that

3   bedtime story that I was told forty years ago

4   and hope that it becomes a reality, and that

5   this is the mechanism that the rezoning does

6   for the Bay Street Corridor. Thank you.

7   MS. LAGO: Thank you.

8   Questions for Mr. Arvanites?

9   Commissioner Cappelli.

10   MR. CAPPELLI: Not necessarily a

11   question. Just back in the day, it was

12   actually Richmond College in St. George --

13   MR. ARVANITES: And I went to SUNY.

14   (Laughter.)

15   MS. LAGO: And since you mentioned that

16   Arvanites is a Greek name, I'll say,

17   efcharistó.

18   MR. ARVANITES: Parakaló.

19   MS. LAGO: Our next speaker will be

20   Fiona Akins, who will be followed by James

21   Prendamano.

22   MS. AKINS: Good afternoon, Chair Lago

23   and members of the City Planning Commission.

24   Thank you for having me here today. My name

25   is Fiona Akins, and I'm the Deputy Director

2   of Planning and Neighborhood Development at

3   the New York City Department of Parks and

4   Recreation. And I'm here to speak on the

5   proposed rezoning of the Bay Street Corridor.

6   New York City Parks recognizes the importance

7   of our parks and open spaces and improving

8   the quality of life for residents surrounding

9   the Bay Street Corridor and in supporting the

10   goals for mixed income and affordable housing

11   advanced by Mayor De Blasio's housing plan.

12   Since 2015, Parks has been working with our

13   partner city agencies and with local

14   stakeholders to better understand this

15   community's open space priorities and

16   opportunities. We participated in the

17   Department of City Planning's community

18   engagement process and have benefited from

19   the input and feedback that community members

20   have shared, including the many concerns and

21   thoughtful ideas that were raised at local

22   advisory committee meetings.

23   The Parks Department continues to work

24   with city partners and local community groups

25   and with the councilmembers' office to

2   explore further opportunities for open space

3   improvements on the North Shore. We've been

4   working closely with EDC for several years on

5   the design and build-out of what will be

6   almost twelve acres of new public waterfront

7   park space in the new Stapleton Waterfront.

8   This ongoing development has already

9   delivered four and a half acres of new public

10   waterfront parkland, and we're excited to see

11   new open space coming online expanding the

12   open space in this neighborhood and adding to

13   the continuous waterfront access along this

14   important shoreline.

15   At Tompkinsville Park, we're working

16   closely with our sister agencies to improve

17   safety and open up site lines and expand the

18   programmable space within the park. And

19   we're now working to restore this historic

20   fountain, and we expect to complete this work

21   later this year. Similarly, we're examining

22   ways to improve safety and to provide a

23   positive park presence at the nearby Tappen

24   Park. And we continue to explore

25   opportunities for replacing the indoor

2   recreation that was lost when the Cromwell

3   Rec Center collapsed. The Parks Department

4   is committed to improving Bay Street

5   Corridor's public realm and in delivering

6   improvements that reflects the community's

7   vision. We'll continue to work closely with

8   our city agency partners, with local

9   residents, and with park advocates to

10   identify opportunities to improve existing

11   parks and create new open spaces that

12   accommodate the growing Bay Street Corridor

13   and broader North Shore community.

14   Thank you for the opportunity to speak

15   before you here today and I'm happy to answer

16   any questions.

17   MS. LAGO: Questions for Ms. Akins?

18   Commissioner Cerullo.

19   MR. CERULLO: Yeah, I'm so glad you're

20   here. Let me ask the most obvious question

21   and that's -- and I'm not connecting it to

22   the rezoning, but I think it's very important

23   for us to understand, and the community to

24   understand, where is Cromwell? What is

25   happening, please?

2   MS. AKINS: Now, we acknowledge that

3   the loss of Cromwell continues to be a very

4   significant community priority here and the

5   conversations at the City level are ongoing.

6   As, I think, many of you know, the Parks

7   Department released a feasibility study where

8   we explored options, geographic options for

9   accommodating that lost recreation space and

10   we identified Lyons Pool, our existing rec

11   center at Lyons Pool, as the preferred site

12   for accommodating that lost facility. In

13   terms of finalizing and progressing

14   conversations about the program and the cost

15   to deliver that, those conversations are

16   ongoing at the City level.

17   MR. CERULLO: Is there a timeframe for

18   any of this?

19   MS. AKINS: Certainly. This has been a

20   priority for the Parks Department and for the

21   mayor's office for some time, as I know

22   you're well aware. The mayor has been vocal

23   about his intention to address the

24   replacement of Cromwell through the rezoning.

25   Obviously, we've been hearing about the

2   community's priorities for replacing that

3   irrespective of Bay Street. But the mayor

4   has vocalized his intention to address it

5   through the rezoning discussions.

6   MR. CERULLO: Okay. Well, I can't

7   debate you on what the mayor's goal is here.

8   But I do know, and I know one of our speakers

9   said it very well, that this is certainly a

10   community need that needs to be dealt with

11   aside from the rezoning and not connected at

12   all. If it happens time-wise to be happening

13   at the same time, that's fine, but this is

14   definitely, as you indicated, a huge loss for

15   the community. It is now five years, which,

16   you know, predates even this application by

17   years. And so, this really is an issue that

18   we're going to need -- which, again, it comes

19   up in the context of this because there's an

20   opportunity to discuss this. But I do

21   believe that it's safe to say, on behalf of

22   the community and certainly the borough

23   president, that this will be a continuing

24   conversation with a strong demand to see this

25   happen as soon as possible.

2   AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (Applause) thank

3   you.

4   MS. AKINS: Yeah.

5   MS. LAGO: Commissioner Cappelli.

6   MR. CAPPELLI: I wasn't sure what a

7   Lyons Pool -- when you said that you've

8   "identified the Lyons Pool," which is

9   Tompkinsville Pool, correct?

10   MS. AKINS: The Lyons Pool Rec

11   Center --

12   AUDIENCE MEMBER: It's not a rec

13   center. It's a pool.

14   MR. CAPPELLI: It's an outdoor pool?

15   MS. AKINS: That's correct.

16   MR. CAPPELLI: So, what is the

17   contemplated conversion or addition?

18   MS. AKINS: The Parks Department

19   completed a councilmember-funded feasibility

20   study that looked at various sites and

21   identified Lyons as a preferred site. The

22   actual program for what the facilities, what

23   the amenities, what the square footprint

24   would be, are still being developed. It was

25   identified that the community's priorities

2   for lost recreational amenities that they've

3   been requesting with the failure of Cromwell

4   would be able to be accommodated at this

5   site. So, the feasibility study looked at a

6   generalized option of facilities -- or sorry,

7   of amenities that could be accommodated. But

8   in terms of developing refined programming

9   space, those are still being developed.

10   MS. LAGO: Other questions?

11   Commissioner Cerullo.

12   MR. CERULLO: I appreciate the update

13   and the work that the agency is doing on the

14   waterfront parks. I'm just wondering whether

15   part of this application or just in

16   general -- is the agency looking at any other

17   potential park sites, whether large or small,

18   you know, for children or -- just wondering

19   what might be going on. And I guess I'll

20   just add this, because I think it's related,

21   that perhaps you could share if whether or

22   not there's a formula-based -- some formula

23   that helps to direct the agency and whether

24   or not the community has sufficient open

25   space? I know there is some, but I'm

2   perhaps -- I don't know the formula off the

3   top of my head, but given the growth -- and

4   this is even recognizing what you are doing

5   already and what's in the planning stages --

6   how we will fair and how the community will

7   fair with respect to potential new

8   population. And even with this new open

9   space, whether or not we will still be, you

10   know, at a deficit in open public space in

11   the area.

12   MS. AKINS: The Parks Department does,

13   and the City seeker process does identify

14   what we call an open space ratio in terms of

15   sort of identifying that formula. So, it's a

16   really helpful metric to understand what

17   cities across the neighborhood, how well

18   they're fairing in terms of provisions of the

19   open space. And indeed, there is sort of

20   opportunities to improve access to open space

21   in this neighborhood. We've been working

22   with the councilmember's office with

23   community groups, with city agencies to think

24   about opportunities for improvements to our

25   existing open spaces in this area. We've had

2   discussions with those various groups at

3   Tompkinsville, looking to make improvements

4   to that site, which are currently underway.

5   And we aim to reopen Tompkinsville with some

6   of those improvements later this year in the

7   spring.

8   At Tappen, we've been exploring

9   opportunities to activate that space to

10   improve the sort of invitingness of that

11   park, taking a look at the historic village

12   hall that's there. We released an RFP to

13   explore the feasibility of getting a

14   concession into that building and our -- in

15   discussions with respondents and with our

16   city family, other agencies to consider

17   opportunities for restoring that building,

18   which is quite dilapidated at the moment.

19   MR. CERULLO: What is the timeframe on

20   that?

21   MS. AKINS: We released the RFP last

22   year, in 2018, and we're actually in very

23   active conversations to better understand the

24   cost implications for a city investment

25   versus the potential for private investment

2   through a concessionaire to bring that

3   building up to an acceptable standard. So, I

4   would describe those conversations as

5   underway right now.

6   MR. CERULLO: Okay. Well, I'm sure

7   there's many examples where either of those

8   options could be available. Is there an

9   outside window in terms of where the agency

10   would want to be with this? So, that we can

11   have a sense of what we think -- I mean, the

12   RFP was issued a year ago. And I understand

13   they're in discussions, but is there an

14   outside window of when decisions would be

15   made?

16   MS. AKINS: I hesitate to put a

17   timeline on it because I know conversations

18   are ongoing. But I do know that our

19   conversations with the concessionaire, I

20   think, have been sort of well-established and

21   we're now moving on to understand, as an

22   agency, what the capital implications would

23   be for any required repair to the building

24   itself. So, that involves sort of making an

25   assessment of what structural repair might be

2   needed. And I'm sorry that I'm not able to

3   give a timeline right now. I could certainly

4   follow up with you.

5   MR. CERULLO: Please, that would be

6   helpful. Thank you.

7   MS. LAGO: Commissioner Ortiz.

8   MS. ORTIZ: Just quickly. You

9   referenced the ratio of open space, could you

10   tell us what that is and how that compares to

11   citywide --

12   MS. AKINS: Yes. Just bear with me.

13   So, as acknowledged in the DEIS, the existing

14   open space ratio is, I believe, 1.3 acres in

15   the study area for the Bay Street Corridor --

16   MS. ORTIZ: 1.3 per -- what's the --

17   MS. AKINS: I'm sorry. 1.3 acres of

18   open space per 1,000 residents, which is the

19   standard metric that the City uses to assess

20   access to open space. And it is acknowledged

21   that the proposal would have an impact on

22   that ratio and decreasing it by approximately

23   five percent to 1.22 acres, as is outlined.

24   Because of an acknowledgment of that impact,

25   we've been working, as I described, to

2   identify what improvements we might be able

3   to make, as well as acknowledging the

4   significant new park space that will be

5   coming online through projects underway by

6   EDC and other partners.

7   MS. ORTIZ: So, what you're referencing

8   should increase the ratio?

9   MS. AKINS: So, the environmental

10   report acknowledges a decrease of

11   five percent in accounting for the new -- I

12   believe it's just with the northern phase of

13   Stapleton. I'm actually sort of not

14   confident that I'm remembering the details

15   perfectly. I apologize. But the

16   environmental report does conclude

17   acknowledging that there will be an impact,

18   an adverse impact on open space. So, with

19   that understanding, our agency has been

20   working to consider how we can mitigate for

21   that impact on open space.

22   MS. ORTIZ: Which are not included in

23   those figures though?

24   MS. AKINS: The mitigation would be in

25   response to those figures, that's correct.

 2   MS. ORTIZ: Exactly. And just where

 3   does that rank? I know you guys do rankings

 4   by neighborhood. Is there some sense of by

 5   borough --

 6   MS. AKINS: That is a great question.

 7   MS. ORTIZ: -- by city --

 8   MS. AKINS: I apologize. I don't know.

 9   It, you know, it does fall below the sort of

10   ideal standard that the City seeks to achieve

11   in every neighborhood. I can --

12   MS. ORTIZ: What is that?

13   MS. AKINS: Which is?

14   MS. ORTIZ: That ideal standard.

15   MS. AKINS: The ideal standard is

16   2.5 acres per thousand residents.

17   MS. ORTIZ: Got it. Okay, that's

18   helpful. Thank you.

19   MS. AKINS: That's the metric

20   established in the DEIS.

21   MS. ORTIZ: Okay. Thank you.

22   MS. LAGO: Commissioner Levin.

23   MS. LEVIN: You know, I guess, I would

24   just observe, Ms. Akins, you're being very

25   careful not to make any commitments that you

2   can't deliver on, but we have a neighborhood

3   that needs some commitments. And this

4   commission needs a commitment to the open

5   space mitigations that are required. The EIS

6   doesn't just acknowledge -- the EIS requires

7   us to address a reported deficit in open

8   space. And so, we have to get that figured

9   out before we vote on this. It's not

10   something that gets pushed down the road.

11   It, of course, has to be worked out with the

12   community. It's for the community to

13   articulate where the priorities are. But we

14   need something concrete here.

15   MS. AKINS: Yeah, acknowledged --

16   MS. LEVIN: Or we will by the time we

17   get to a vote. I hope that's in the works

18   and on your timetable.

19   MS. AKINS: Thank you for that. And we

20   acknowledge that priority for the commission

21   and for the community.

22   MS. LAGO: I'll also note that this is

23   also a hearing on the DEIS and that the

24   record is going to remain open for additional

25   written comments between the DEIS and the

2   FEI -- the final environmental impact

3   statement.

4   Other questions for Ms. Akins?

5   >>: (No response.)

6   MS. LAGO: Thank you.

7   Our next speaker is James Prendamano,

8   who will be followed by Rose Uscianowski.

9   MR. PRENDAMANO: Thank you, Madam Chair

10   and commissioners. My name is James

11   Prendamano. Our company, Casandra

12   Properties, is a proud city and state

13   certified WBE that works throughout the

14   borough. We have dedicated a good bit of our

15   focus in the past on the North Shore. Over

16   the last decade, we've worked on many

17   projects of note in St. George and Stapleton.

18   Selling Staten Island, however, and in

19   particular, the North Shore hasn't come

20   without its challenges. That being said, I'm

21   extremely proud that we have played a key

22   role in some of the success stories in the

23   district. Projects like The View, The

24   Accolade, The Point, Downtown Plaza, Urby,

25   and Empire Outlets. I've personally

2   negotiated leases in the district, from as

3   small as 500 square-foot offices all the way

4   up to every lease at Empire Outlets,

5   including some retail giants like Nordstrom

6   Rack and Nike.

7   Not only do I work in the district, I'm

8   also a lifelong resident of the North Shore,

9   born and raised on Pelton. I moved one block

10   to Davis and back to Pelton where I currently

11   reside with my family. Development, when

12   done in an appropriate fashion, is not taboo.

13   All of the retail and larger scale commercial

14   work is a value to the community. But at the

15   end of the day, nobody looks out for its

16   neighborhood like its residents. The

17   proposed action will have a tremendous

18   positive long-term impact on the community.

19   One thing we have not been able to achieve in

20   spite of the work down there, in large part,

21   because of the current prohibitive zoning and

22   all the M zone property that's currently on

23   the district is any semblance of residential

24   critical mass. This proposed action

25   addresses that issues directly.

2   As, and aside, as we talk about

3   responsible development, you know, that

4   should also apply here. That doesn't mean I

5   have any opposition to the density or the

6   height. If anything, I think this actually

7   may have fallen short of that. I think that

8   we could have taken on more density and more

9   height in these locations. But I think we

10   have to keep a close eye on the income

11   bandwidths within the affordable portions of

12   the proposal. True affordable housing should

13   offer much more than merely a roof over your

14   head. There has to be a socioeconomic

15   crossover. It must be a place where folks

16   from all walks of life have the chance to

17   live, work, and play in circles they normally

18   do not have contact with. I would caution

19   that when the income bands are determined

20   that we don't allow monolithic blocks with

21   one particular income band. That applies to

22   the lowest income levels and the highest

23   income levels.

24   In closing, I believe this is an

25   important action and it will continue to

2   foster the community growth in a positive

3   way, and I hope you vote in favor.

4   MS. LAGO: Questions for

5   Mr. Prendamano?

6   Commissioner Cerullo.

7   MR. CERULLO: James, how are you?

8   MR. PRENDAMANO: Good. Thank you,

9   Commissioner.

10   MR. CERULLO: Let me ask you a question

11   just based on your experience. And I'm

12   assuming you heard some of the discussions

13   that we had with some of the agencies. And

14   as you know too, the borough president's

15   primary concern about infrastructure and the

16   ability for this part of the island to

17   support it without some major capital

18   investment. What is your take on it with

19   having been involved in the development of

20   this area, knowing what is out there now,

21   what do you think the biggest challenge is

22   that really needs to be addressed for this to

23   succeed the way it is intended to succeed?

24   MR. PRENDAMANO: So, from a public

25   transportation prospective, this district by

2   far, in a way is the most served district. I

3   believe the ferry terminal now we're holding

4   like 2,300 public transportation

5   opportunities per day. I think that

6   improving some of the existing public

7   transportation, some of the train stops,

8   would be a big help. But I think that the

9   largest commodity that we have for

10   transportation, as far as I'm concerned, is

11   the water. It never has to be paved. It

12   never has to be plowed, you know, it's free.

13   And we've got a successful network now of

14   ferryboats that connect all of the boroughs.

15   We recently got access to Manhattan, which

16   was a tremendous win for Staten Island. But

17   I think adding an additional dock in

18   Stapleton on a pier, by the way, that already

19   exists, would be a huge boom for the

20   neighborhood. Certainly, it's the path of

21   least resistance. It's immediate access and

22   it wouldn't be all that expensive.

23   MS. LAGO: Other questions --

24   MR. CERULLO: I certainly agree with

25   you on that, but I --

2   MR. PRENDAMANO: Me too.

3   MR. CERULLO: I will say that -- and

4   I'm sure if anybody from the MTA is here, but

5   I think that because of this Staten Island

6   railway, I think anybody on Staten Island who

7   is familiar with the train stops as great as

8   our particular system of rail transit is, and

9   it is used and very much appreciated and,

10   obviously, this is going to be the lifeblood

11   for this neighborhood, that we need to figure

12   out how we get the MTA to the table on this.

13   Because this is not a DOT issue. It's an --

14   because the improvements that are necessary

15   for the system to really work in a respectful

16   way for the people on it, the train itself

17   may be fine, but no one wants to get off on

18   the stations that we consider being the key

19   stations that support this potential new

20   neighborhood. I mean, it's an embarrassment

21   and it is really unacceptable. So, I think

22   at some point we need to figure out how we

23   get the MTA involved in this too. Because

24   those improvements are going to have to be

25   done by them or in some agreement with them.

2   But it won't work 'cause we can build the

3   most beautiful homes for people at every

4   possible income band, but when they get off

5   the train at the stop, they'll be afraid to

6   get to their house. So, it's not okay.

7   MR. PRENDAMANO: To build more

8   transit-based development, you have to have

9   more transit.

10   MR. CERULLO: Correct.

11   MR. PRENDAMANO: Right.

12   MR. CERULLO: So, thank you, James.

13   MR. PRENDAMANO: Thank you,

14   Commissioner.

15   MS. LAGO: Commissioner Ortiz.

16   If you wouldn't mind waiting another

17   moment.

18   MR. CERULLO: James?

19   MS. LAGO: We have a question from

20   Commissioner Ortiz.

21   MR. PRENDAMANO: I'm sorry.

22   MS. ORTIZ: Since you are clearly

23   knowledgeable about the subject, we've

24   discussed at this hearing the high vacancy

25   rate, which is twenty-one percent of just

2   storefronts, not by square footage. The City

3   does the best it can. And there were some

4   discussions about the Urby space, which is

5   35,000 square feet, which is off of Bay

6   Street. Do you have any insight into, you

7   know, what's happening with Urby, you know,

8   some of the space that's off the street? And

9   then with respect to Bay Street, what's the

10   potential of that to accommodate all of the

11   new commercial development? What do you

12   think?

13   MR. PRENDAMANO: So, part of the issue

14   on the Corridor now is that there is no

15   continuous streetscape, right? You have a

16   building and then you've got -- you know, I

17   mentioned four or five buildings that we were

18   involved in, there's not many more than that

19   in the last fifty years that have been built.

20   So, you've got these massive breaks and

21   without having that continuous street front,

22   it becomes difficult for retail to survive

23   and certainly without having the residents,

24   it becomes -- that's why I had mentioned that

25   perhaps more density -- you know, this is New

2   York City waterfront. That will work, but

3   the way it's set up now with these M zone

4   properties, we have these oasises of no

5   residents at all (sic), it becomes very

6   difficult for retail to work.

7   As for Urby, there's some restaurants

8   in there that are doing something that we

9   haven't seen in thirty, forty years in Staten

10   Island, which is bringing people from the

11   South Shore to the North Shore on a regular

12   basis. You know, certainly there are

13   iterations and you go through a learning

14   curve particularly because there has not been

15   the continuity from the waterfront where we

16   did the 800 units up to the Bay Street

17   Corridor -- Prospect and all of those

18   connector streets -- have not taken off the

19   way we had hoped. Again, because of --

20   zoning is one issue, the fairytale of the

21   Renaissance on the North Shore. A lot of

22   those parcels have been owned by the same

23   people for a very long time. They've kind of

24   weathered the storm already and without an

25   inducement, without a shot in the arm,

2   they're not likely to sell. We're starting

3   to see a turnover now as in time we've

4   established more and more comps that's

5   starting to happen.

6   I don't have any trepidation with the

7   added retail. A little bit of concern with

8   the amount of office that's added.

9   Historically, Staten Island, we're very

10   difficult to get to. You know, it's very

11   expensive to get to us. If we add the

12   infrastructure improvements and we're able to

13   provide connectivity to the other boroughs, I

14   think it's a breeze. But without that, the

15   office vacancy rate, I think, covers quite a

16   bit above twenty-one percent. Because of

17   that, it's difficult for a large industry or

18   a large company to locate here because it's

19   so expensive to get their employees on and

20   off the borough.

21   MS. ORTIZ: So, in your opinion, is the

22   new development absolutely necessary to

23   support the additional retail --

24   MR. PRENDAMANO: Yes.

25   MS. ORTIZ: -- that's being proposed?

2   MR. PRENDAMANO: Yes.

3   MS. ORTIZ: Thank you.

4   MS. LAGO: Other questions?

5   >>: (No response.)

6   MS. LAGO: Thank you.

7   MR. PRENDAMANO: Thank you.

8   MS. LAGO: Our next speaker is Rose

9   Uscianowski, who will be followed by Terrell

10   Estesen.

11   MS. USCIANOWSKI: Hello, my name is

12   Rose Uscianowski. I am a Staten Island

13   organizer with transportation alteratives,

14   and also a member of the Van Duzer Street

15   Civic Association. However, I'm just

16   speaking as a Stapleton resident. And I want

17   to clarify my support by saying that I

18   support the idea of rezoning Bay Street

19   Corridor, not necessarily the plan, as it

20   currently exists. So, either way, living off

21   the Bay Street Corridor, I've discovered

22   three different Stapletons. There's a

23   Stapleton of art, creativity, creation,

24   entrepreneurialism, and vibrance. The

25   Stapleton of gated and remote luxury

2   apartments. And right in the middle, there's

3   a Stapleton that's defined by empty

4   storefronts, half-rented office spaces,

5   dilapidated warehouses, uninviting strip

6   malls, and underutilized public space.

7   My neighborhood is a tension between

8   old and new divided by empty potential. For

9   all its obscurities, I somehow adore

10   Stapleton. I long to see its potentials

11   reached. Implemented thought for you, the

12   Bay Street Corridor rezoning is a rare

13   opportunity to bring life into the heart of

14   the community I love and connect with this

15   current Stapleton that Bay Street straddles,

16   it's a chance to add points making a street

17   that neither feels like nor reflects the

18   neighborhood it serves and open up a

19   waterfront that's brimming with unlocked

20   potential and underappreciated beauty. But

21   the devil is in the details and the details

22   don't hold water. The draft environmental

23   impact statement assumes no significant

24   adverse impacts on residential or commercial

25   displacement or on healthcare facilities. As

2   a rent-burdened millennial who is at risk of

3   losing half of her local grocery store

4   options and relies on a single clinic for all

5   her healthcare needs already, I find that

6   difficult to trust.

7   I'm scared, quite frankly, that I'll be

8   priced out of my home. On the other hand,

9   the impact statement assumes significant

10   impact on transportation but limits

11   mitigation plans to the resignalling of some

12   traffic lights, a few new buses, lane

13   re-striping and sidewalk widening that the

14   same statement even admits, won't be

15   adequate. When's the last time you simply

16   tried catching any bus from anywhere on the

17   Corridor during morning rush hour? It's not

18   easy. These mitigation plans are better

19   suited to meet in current conditions than

20   conditions --

21   (Bell rings.)

22   MS. USCIANOWSKI: -- that will exist

23   6,000 plus new residents in the future.

24   MS. LAGO: Thanks --

25   MS. USCIANOWSKI: And if not

2   (inaudible) --

3   MS. LAGO: -- Ms. Uscianowski.

4   MS. USCIANOWSKI: -- then where is the

5   improvements?

6   MS. LAGO: Questions?

7   >>:   (No response.)

8   MS. LAGO: Thank you.

9   Our next speaker is Terrell Estesen,

10   who will be followed by José Lopez.

11   MR. ESTESEN: Good afternoon,

12   commissioners. My name is Terrell Estesen.

13   I work with New York City Department of

14   Environmental Protection. I'm the director

15   of Wastewater Review and Special Projects.

16   I'm here with Michael DeLoach, our

17   Deputy Commissioner for Public Affairs, but

18   he had to step out and take a call. I don't

19   have anything prepared. I'm primarily here

20   to answer questions. But I want to say that

21   DEP has been talking with City Planning. We

22   see this rezoning as an opportunity to invest

23   in the area. We're working on a drainage

24   plan in developing initial investments for

25   the area. The area is very near the

interceptor serving Port Richmond Wastewater

Treatment Plant and our Hannah Street Pumping

Station, which is being -- going to be

upgraded in the near future. Just to bring

it up to a good state of repair.

So, we don't have details to discuss,

but we want to be available to answer

questions, if you have any.

MS. LAGO: Questions?

Commissioner Cerullo.

MR. CERULLO: So, first of all, thank

you for being here, Terrell.

MR. ESTESEN: Sure.

MR. CERULLO: Probably, next to DOT,

you're the agency that -- although your

issues aren't as obvious to the eye, but they

are obvious to the quality of life of the

people who will live and work and do business

here. So, I'm glad you're here. Let me ask

you this: What is the department's sense of

the kind of work that needs to be done today

to support the kind of development that is

being proposed? And when I say that --

because I don't want to get trapped in -- and

2   I don't want any of us to be trapped in the

3   fact that this is this proposal, but where

4   this proposal is running alongside another

5   development plan that's drawing off the same

6   system.

7   So, we have the Front Street

8   development, we'll call it. And we have the

9   Bay Street Corridor development, which, of

10   course, has a piece on Canal and Van Duzer.

11   So, the conversation from your -- that I'm

12   asking you about, I need you to be broad so

13   that we're talking about not just one piece,

14   but what's happening to the community with

15   respect to the infrastructure in water and

16   sewer? And what kind of investment does the

17   agency see needed? And is that commitment

18   there? And how long will it take to ensure

19   that we can build what we're providing the

20   opportunity to build?

21   MR. ESTESEN: Those are good questions.

22   We're still developing what the projects to

23   serve this area would be in terms of

24   answering what are we going to do today to

25   serve the projects that will be build up.

2   We'll have to be doing something as the work

3   is build-out over the time horizon. So,

4   we're developing a drainage plan, it takes

5   the Front Street and Stapleton projects into

6   consideration and it goes back up the

7   drainage area. Based on that, we don't see

8   immediate needs. So, we would be putting in

9   some type of flow monitoring and, of course,

10   monitoring the development.

11   The initial projects we would develop,

12   we don't have the projects developed yet, but

13   we would develop the projects to serve the

14   greatest, the Bay Street area, the Canal

15   Street area. We're looking at a drainage

16   plan that would take into consideration what

17   we call, "separating out the sewers," so to

18   lead the storm water to the waterfront and

19   take the sanitary to the treatment plant.

20   But we would develop a capital plan to focus

21   on the area that's going to get the most

22   investment. But we would confine that with

23   monitoring so we can make adjustments to make

24   sure that when work gets underway, which can

25   be a multi-year process, that it would be

2   serving the first flush of development.

3   MR. CERULLO: Okay. Let me ask sort of

4   the -- start at the beginning. When the

5   neighborhood was developed and in its

6   existing zoning it's for manufacturing. Is

7   the infrastructure from DEP's point of view,

8   is that a different infrastructure? So, when

9   this neighborhood was manufacturing in

10   industrial, the system that was constructed,

11   is it different than the system that would be

12   needed to house six thousand new residents in

13   ten and twelve-story buildings? So, I'm just

14   trying to -- I know you said you see no

15   immediate needs. So, I'm --

16   MR. ESTESEN: Yes.

17   MR. CERULLO: -- just going back to the

18   beginning. Which is --

19   MR. ESTESEN: Right.

20   MR. CERULLO: What is there now? Is it

21   a system that you can just build? If it was

22   one building with, you know, ten units, could

23   that be connected to the existing system on

24   its face? Or was the system built to support

25   manufacturing and industrial uses not capable

2   of really servicing residential and

3   commercial mixed-uses?

4   MR. ESTESEN: Understood, and good

5   question. It's a combined system. That

6   means that it would, you know, it's a pipe

7   underground that would take the storm and the

8   sanitary flow, whether it's manufacturing use

9   or residential use. So, some of the area

10   that's going to be rezoned is residential,

11   presently. And the combined system, it's got

12   pros and cons. One of the cons is, it's

13   combined, which means in wet weather

14   conditions, it results in combines or

15   overflow.

16   However, it's got ample capacity for

17   dry weather flow and, therefore, is a little

18   bit more responsive to growth because the

19   sewers are sized to handle both the dry

20   weather flow and the wet weather flow to get

21   it to the regulator. The drainage plan that

22   we're looking at developing, again, we're

23   looking at separating out the system that

24   would be sized for the maximum proposed

25   growth. But in terms of whether today's

2   sewers would serve residential as opposed to

3   manufacturing, the combined system would work

4   for either. It's the sizing, it's the amount

5   of, you know, square footage. That's what

6   the drainage plan is going to look at and

7   what the investments would --

8   MR. CERULLO: Are there any

9   deficiencies now in the system?

10   MR. ESTESEN: For today's zoning?

11   MR. CERULLO: Yes.

12   MR. ESTESEN: It's built to -- it's an

13   old system, like, a lot of the City. So, if

14   we were to build it -- forget the rezoning,

15   if we're just to build it today, we'd

16   probably update it to, like, a more current

17   design standard. But in terms of

18   deficiencies in the system, not that we're

19   aware of. It's a build-out system and

20   it's -- yeah. It's a combined area. I don't

21   know. So, it's today's five-year standard

22   that we design to, but no deficiencies that

23   we're aware of.

24   MR. CERULLO: And I'm sure the

25   community board would know the answer to this

2   question instantly and so would residents of

3   the neighborhood. But are there any streets

4   or areas in this district, in this zoning

5   application area or in the special Stapleton

6   district that is not served by sewers now

7   where there's requests for capital for sewer

8   projects now?

9   MR. ESTESEN: Not that I'm aware of.

10   MR. CERULLO: Okay. I see the

11   community board nodding. So, perhaps they --

12   AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yeah, we have a

13   problem with the storm --

14   MS. LAGO: Actually, if you -- please

15   feel free to sign up to testify on this --

16   MR. CERULLO: I'm sure she has.

17   MS. LAGO: Great. All right.

18   MR. CERULLO: Okay. Well, I will say

19   this, and this goes to sort of the testimony

20   of DOT and it goes to the testimony of Parks

21   that we really need to know what the plan --

22   I mean, every agency we need to know from,

23   but the infrastructure related questions that

24   DEP has jurisdiction over, and the

25   infrastructure related questions that DOT has

2   jurisdiction over, and the idea of dealing

3   with deficiencies in open space, we need

4   answers to those questions at some point.

5   So, while there are studies and there's

6   reviews going on, at some point, you know, we

7   have a limited amount of time that we can sit

8   to wait to vote. The clock is ticking. And

9   so, that really needs to be done and I will

10   say that a million times over, if it's

11   necessary. But we really need those answers.

12   Because this can't proceed if there isn't

13   answers as to how the system will support the

14   development. You know, it looks great. This

15   is all underground, so people don't think

16   about it. But when they're in their homes,

17   their lives will never be the same. So, we

18   need to fix it in advance and we need to know

19   what the plan is to see if it's sufficient to

20   us. Thank you.

21   MS. LAGO: Other questions?

22   Commissioner Levin.

23   MS. LEVIN: Following up on that. How

24   often are there storm sewer overflow events

25   in this area? Do you keep track of that?

2   MR. ESTESEN: We do keep track of it.

3   The citywide average is about a hundred per

4   year. I don't know this area, whether it

5   differs. We have what are called, "early

6   tipper outfalls" and we have different tiers

7   for those that have higher volumes.

8   MS. LEVIN: Okay.

9   MR. ESTESEN: This area doesn't have

10   any of the, I guess, biggest offenders, early

11   tippers. So, that would make me guess it's

12   also in that area of about a hundred times a

13   year; any appreciable rainfall, basically.

14   MS. LEVIN: Okay. But you don't bring

15   particular information about this area?

16   MR. ESTESEN: We don't meter the

17   outfalls. So, we model it, but we don't

18   have -- there's 495 outfalls. We don't have

19   information for every one. But we've modeled

20   to know where the biggest ones that would tip

21   first are.

22   MS. LAGO: Other questions?

23   Commissioner Cerullo.

24   MR. CERULLO: Just one follow up. You

25   mentioned that there is an upgrade occurring

2   at the Hannah Street station?

3   MR. ESTESEN: Yes.

4   MR. CERULLO: What is the upgrade and

5   what is it for?

6   MR. ESTESEN: It's an old station. The

7   upgrade is going to make it modern. It's

8   going to make it resilient. It's in the

9   floodplain. So, we're going to be elevating

10   the equipment for that and flood plan. It

11   can continue to operate -- it's going to have

12   basically the same operating capacity. It's

13   got plenty of operating capacity combined

14   with some 40 million --

15   MR. CERULLO: So, this isn't about

16   capacity. It's just about upgrade and

17   sustainability.

18   MR. ESTESEN: Maintaining that ample

19   capacity in a more redundant way. We'd have,

20   like, extra pumps that we can work on stuff

21   and keep operations going.

22   MR. CERULLO: And you don't foresee a

23   problem with the new development impacting --

24   I'm sure it will draw the capacity --

25   MR. ESTESEN: Neither the pump station

2   nor the interceptors look like they would be

3   affected by this. As big as it is, those are

4   already big structures.

5   MR. CERULLO: Okay. Thank you.

6   MS. LAGO: Other questions?

7   >>: (No response.)

8   MS. LAGO: Thank you, Mr. Estesen.

9   MR. ESTESEN: Thank you.

10   MS. LAGO: We'll now turn to speakers

11   in opposition beginning with José Lopez to be

12   followed by Chris Walters.

13   MR. LOPEZ: Great. Thank you for

14   having me. José Lopez, organizing director,

15   Make the Road New York and we're a member of

16   the Housing Dignity Coalition. Since I only

17   have three minutes, I just wanted to give you

18   six reasons why you should oppose and vote no

19   on the North Shore rezoning. One, MIH New

20   York City is flawed. On Bay Street, we're

21   projecting the fourteen-block stretch of

22   manufacturing land would be converted to

23   residential use. This means that the owner

24   of a one-story factory today could be allowed

25   to build a fourteen-story condo, leading to

2   significant profit gains for that owner in

3   exchange for little affordability for the

4   community.

5   And you think about it in the context

6   of an R6 site that already exists. The

7   developer moving from R6 to R6A must set

8   aside a minimum of twenty percent of units.

9   A developer moving from N11 to R6A must set

10   aside the same minimum, twenty percent. That

11   doesn't make sense to me. Two, as stated

12   earlier by Commissioner De La Uz, we have

13   never seen MIH Options 1 through 4 mapped on

14   a rezoning application. Why have we mapped

15   all four options in a community where

16   forty-three percent of the families earn

17   below $50,000 and seventy-five percent of

18   those families are already rent-burdened.

19   This signals to us that the only plan here is

20   to successfully displace the neediest

21   families.

22   Three, in response to Commissioner

23   Cerullo questioning HPD on tenant

24   protections. I ask you to remember this:

25   Over eighty percent of the housing stocks

2   surrounding Bay Street is unregulated. This

3   means those renters have zero protection.

4   There is no guaranteed right to a lease

5   renewal. There is nothing HPD and the City

6   can do about that. It is up to the state.

7   It is a state function to protect unregulated

8   tenants and give them protection. This

9   means, per the EIS, that those 1,700

10   vulnerable tenants that were cited would

11   become even more vulnerable and will likely

12   be displaced if the application moves

13   forward.

14   Four, Site 3, Block 4A8 Lot 9 on Bay

15   Street, cites 204 total affordable units with

16   a private owner. We have asked repeatedly to

17   see the contract that guarantees a hundred

18   percent affordability on that site and we

19   have yet to see that contract. We should not

20   inflate affordability numbers on an

21   application when those units are not yet

22   guaranteed.

23   Five, as the City Planning Commission,

24   you should not vote on an application that I

25   believe is incomplete. This application

2   touts new affordable housing, but it fails to

3   tell the community what the depth of

4   affordability looks like. Affordable to me

5   is completely different than what affordable

6   to you may be. Why should you be called to

7   vote on an application that does not define

8   affordability? And finally, this feels like

9   another City Planning hostage situation. For

10   years, advocates of the North Shore have

11   called for real investments --

12   (Bell rings.)

13   MS. LAGO: Questions for Mr. Lopez?

14   Commissioner Cappelli.

15   MR. CAPPELLI: You used "advocates have

16   called for --" what was it that you were

17   saying?

18   MR. LOPEZ: So, advocates have called

19   for real investments -- if I can finish my

20   sentence.

21   MR. CAPPELLI: Uh-huh.

22   MR. LOPEZ: -- in the community and

23   were largely ignored. I think, earlier,

24   Kelly spoke to some of that. This plan takes

25   precious city-owned land, hangs it over the

2   head of Staten Island residents and tells

3   them, "You can only get good stuff on this

4   publicly-owned land if you allow us to ram

5   through this Bay Street rezoning

6   application."

7   MR. CAPPELLI: Thank you.

8   MR. LOPEZ: And I think this is a false

9   dichotomy. You can deliver the goods for

10   Staten Island without a Bay Street rezoning.

11   MR. CAPPELLI: Thank you.

12   MS. LAGO: Yes, Commissioner De La Uz.

13   MS. DE LA UZ: José, with regard to the

14   very real point that you raised about the

15   eighty percent of the renters that don't

16   enjoy any rent protections, besides a

17   solution from Albany, does the coalition have

18   any recommendations? I mean, I know we had

19   an HPD representative talk about the legal

20   services and there was somebody else with

21   Make the Road that talked about, you know,

22   sixty-three percent of the folks in Staten

23   Island receiving legal services. I know one

24   of the issues that's come up lately with the

25   Tenant Right to Counsel legislation is that

 2   we're actually seeing longer wait times to

 3   actually access attorneys at this point. So,

 4   I'm wondering if there's a concrete

 5   recommendation that you all have specific to

 6   that initial risk here and then also with

 7   regard to MIH options?

 8   MR. LOPEZ: I think the only

 9   recommendation is, do not certify this

10   application. Do not vote yes on this

11   application and let's wait until we have a

12   state that takes seriously the protection of

13   tenants. Because, again, the City can do

14   nothing here. You can tell a tenant that is

15   unregulated today that you're going to give

16   them protection or that they're going to have

17   access to an HPD program or access to a

18   lawyer in housing court, but if they don't

19   have guaranteed access to a lease renewal and

20   there is not a cap on the amount of rent that

21   a landlord can charge that tenant, what they

22   will simply do is lift the rent, bring them

23   to court on a non-pay and eventually push

24   them out. The only thing we can do when we

25   provide legal services at our organization is

2   try to buy time for tenants. We will never

3   be successfully able to keep unregulated

4   tenants in their units because there's no

5   protection for them.

6   So, let's pass a state law, which

7   already is introduced by Senator Julia

8   Salazar and Assemblymember, Pamela Hunter.

9   When we pass state law, let's come back to

10   the conversations of rezonings in New

11   York City neighborhoods, so that those who

12   are vulnerable today won't continue to be

13   vulnerable.

14   MS. LAGO: Other questions?

15   MS. DE LA UZ: I absolutely hear you.

16   Did you want to weigh in on the MIH options?

17   MR. LOPEZ: Yes. So, I think, again,

18   the communities in which we represent have

19   been asking for if we're going to apply MIH

20   options. The two deepest options --

21   forty percent and sixty percent and we'd like

22   to see those mapped. But, again, we are in

23   opposition because what we have been asking

24   for steadily is a 50/50 deal. My testimony,

25   which I edited based on what I heard today,

2   the original testimony is in this folder,

3   which talks to you all about how we get to

4   50/50 if we do more on the Stapleton

5   Waterfront site. And so, what we think are

6   the solutions, exist in this blue folder.

7   MS. LAGO: Thank you. And you'll leave

8   that with Madam Secretary. Thank you.

9   Other questions?

10   >>: (No response.)

11   MS. LAGO: Thank you, Mr. Lopez.

12   MR. LOPEZ: Thank you.

13   MS. LAGO: Our next speaker will be

14   Chris Walters, followed by Deacon Bernice

15   Alleyne.

16   MR. WALTERS: Good afternoon, and thank

17   you for the opportunity to testify. My name

18   is Chris Walters, and I'm the Rezoning

19   Technical Assistance Coordinator with the

20   Association for Neighborhood and Housing

21   Development, ANHD. ANHD is a coalition of

22   community groups across the City working to

23   build community power to win affordable

24   housing and thriving equitable neighborhoods

25   for all New Yorkers. In my testimony today,

2   I want to echo the vital concerns raised by

3   community members, asking who this rezoning

4   will actually serve and how to fix it. A

5   concern that is borne out by looking at the

6   numbers.

7   The DEIS identifies an at-risk

8   population of over 1,700 tenants who are

9   vulnerable to the increase in rents the

10   rezoning could bring. But the EIS errs in

11   assuming that the projected affordable

12   housing this rezoning may provide will be

13   enough to offset that displacement risk.

14   First and foremost, this assumption is wrong

15   because it has been noted that DCP is

16   currently proposing to map all four MIH

17   options as part of this rezoning, including

18   Option 2 and the workforce housing option,

19   which together will serve families making an

20   average of eighty to one hundred

21   fifteen percent AMI or $75,000 to over

22     $100,000 a year for a family of three. Yet,

23   currently, fifty-eight percent of households

24   on the North Shore earn less than $75,000.

25   These numbers are even starker when you

2   consider race.

3   Two-thirds of households of color on

4   the North Shore earn less than $75,000.

5   These are the same households facing the

6   highest rent burdens in the district.

7   Seventy percent of families earning less than

8          $75,000 are rent-burdened as opposed to just

9   three percent of families earning more. Once

10   an MIH option is mapped, it's the developers

11   discretion as to which option to choose.

12   Mapping Option 2 and the workforce option,

13   even if other options are mapped, means

14   there's no guarantee that almost any housing

15   below eighty percent AMI would be built;

16   putting both the affordable and unregulated

17   units out of reach for over half the

18   district, including those families with the

19   greatest need.

20   There are several steps that must be

21   taken to remedy these problems. First, is to

22   ensure that only the deepest affordability

23   options for MIH, Option 1 and the deep

24   affordability option are mapped as part of

25   this rezoning. I would note that the A Techs

2   Application, The Tech Memo for the A Techs

3   Application seems to indicate that the deep

4   affordability option is not being proposed

5   based on info in Appendix A. I would request

6   this be clarified and corrected if that's not

7   the case.

8   Second, is to ensure that public land

9   is used for maximum public good. We commend

10   the City for using the AIRS program to

11   increase the amount of affordable housing on

12   Jersey Street. But more must be done

13   elsewhere to achieve the deepest and broadest

14   affordability possible. If the Jersey

15   Street, Central Street and most importantly

16   Stapleton Phase 3 sites were all developed as

17   one hundred percent affordable, it could mean

18   over 900 units of affordable housing for the

19   North Shore on top of MIH. Taken together,

20   these changes could help create a rezoning

21   that would ensure fifty percent of new units

22   are affordable, as José and others have

23   touched upon, at levels that serve those

24   households most in need. The City must not

25   pass up this opportunity. We urge the CPC to

 2   heed the voices of the community and make

 3   this a rezoning that works for everyone,

 4   including those most in need.

 5   (Bell rings.)

 6   MS. LAGO: Great timing, Mr. Walters.

 7   Questions?

 8   >>: (No response.)

 9   MS. LAGO: Thank you.

10   MR. WALTERS: Thank you.

11   MS. LAGO: Our next speaker is Deacon

12   Bernice Alleyne, and she will be followed by

13   Reverend Janet Jones.

14   MS. ALLEYNE: Good afternoon.

15   >>: (No response.)

16   MS. ALLEYNE: Good afternoon.

17   (Chorus) Good afternoon.

18   MS. ALLEYNE: I was eating.

19   My name is Bernice Alleyne. I'm a

20   deacon at St. Philips Baptist Church in

21   Staten Island, and I have served on the

22   Housing Dignity Coalition board. I became a

23   part of the coalition for the simple reason,

24   to have a seat at the table to bring back the

25   issues that affect the community and my

2   congregation. What is affecting the

3   community is housing affordability, as well

4   as housing that is dignified, as our name

5   states. Our concerns pour over to the Bay

6   Street Corridor that we believe will displace

7   tenants. And as you will hear today,

8   religious institutions that will hurt our

9   community because the congregations will have

10   to leave, not only because the church can't

11   stay, but the rents in that location will be

12   too high.

13   Recently, I received two phone calls

14   from members to assist them in finding

15   apartments -- two different parishioners, one

16   who must move and called the church seeking

17   someone to rent an apartment with her because

18   the studio was not affordable. So, she

19   decided to at least go for a two-bedroom

20   although she would no longer live on her own,

21   at least she will get more space for her

22   money. The other congregant is looking for a

23   roommate because of the sale of her house,

24   she doesn't want to give up her asset from

25   the sale of the house to rent an apartment

2   that is now two times more than her mortgage

3   was. They both are looking for affordability

4   and dignified residence, neither wanting to

5   leave their familiar surroundings.

6   The rezoning does not give us dignified

7   housing and we must, therefore, ask for the

8   City Planning Commission to reject the plan.

9   Thank you for listening and also for hearing

10   the cries and the concerns of the community

11   organizations who have come before you on

12   this very day. Thank you.

13   MS. LAGO: Thank you, Deacon Alleyne.

14   Questions?

15   >>: (No response.)

16   MS. LAGO: Our next speaker is

17   Reverend Janet Jones, who will be followed by

18   Priscilla Briggs.

19   MS. JONES: I'm Reverend Janet Jones.

20   I am one of the founding members of the

21   Housing Dignity Coalition that came into --

22   that was founded in 2004 to advocate for

23   housing affordability on Staten Island in the

24   wake of Hurricane Sandy. I have served as

25   the pastor of the Rossville AME Zion Church

2   for the last fifteen and a half years. I'm

3   also a past president of the Staten Island

4   Council of Churches and currently serve as

5   their co-chair of social witness and

6   interfaith committee. And I'm also a member

7   of the Staten Island Inter-Religious

8   Leadership.

9   Most of the congregants of the

10   Rossville church live on the North Shore;

11   many are homeowners, some are renters. In my

12   years on Staten Island, I've seen North Shore

13   residents with housing issues. Young adults

14   I know have moved out of state. I've seen it

15   and I see multiple families and multiple

16   generations living in housing that was built

17   for one family. And I've seen a young

18   working mother forced -- with a child, forced

19   into a shelter because she could no longer

20   afford the rent on her apartment. And she's

21   not alone on the North Shore. There are many

22   renters who are just one rent increase away

23   from homelessness. Based on the City's own

24   data, based on housing dignity research, our

25   conversations with elected officials and

2   efforts in the community over the last

3   four years, we have determined that we cannot

4   support a rezoning plan that puts millions of

5   dollars in the pockets of developers and

6   provides little benefit for the North Shore

7   community. (Applause.)

8   The Housing Dignity Coalition demands a

9   development plan that provides local jobs and

10   job training and employment. Meaning,

11   fifty percent of all new jobs created be set

12   aside for Staten Islanders. We demand equity

13   in housing. That is, housing that supports

14   all families, including extremely low-income

15   families. We cannot support the rezoning

16   plan as it is written today. My faith

17   commands me to name injustice and to seek

18   justice in all facets of life. When the City

19   puts forth a rezoning plan that increases the

20   vulnerability of current renters and the

21   1,753 that the City projects will face or

22   could face displacement, when the City puts

23   forth a plan that ignores fifty percent of

24   the North Shore families, particularly the

25   ones that earn less than $75,000 per year.

2   When the City ignores the

3   forty-three percent --

4   (Bell rings.)

5   MS. LAGO: Thank you, Reverend Jones.

6   MS. JONES: Okay.

7   MS. LAGO: Commissioner Cappelli. I

8   think I anticipate what you're going to say.

9   MR. CAPPELLI: Reverend, excuse --

10   MS. LAGO: Reverend?

11   MS. JONES: I'm sorry.

12   MS. LAGO: Thank you.

13   MR. CAPPELLI: What happens when the

14   City ignores --

15   MS. JONES: I beg your pardon?

16   MS. LAGO: You might have to finish

17   your thought.

18   MR. CAPPELLI: Your last thought.

19   MS. JONES: Oh, oh, oh, oh. I thought

20   it was a quick three minutes.

21   When the City ignores forty percent of

22   the North Shore families that earn less than

23     $50,000 a year, you've heard these numbers,

24   seventy-five percent of whom are already

25   rent-burdened, that's injustice. And so, we

2   reject MIH Options 2 and 4, and urge this

3   commission to endorse -- not to endorse the

4   plan as it is written. Do not endorse a plan

5   that does not do justice for the Staten

6   Island residents.

7   (Applause.)

8   MS. LAGO: You may have thought that it

9   was a quick three minutes, but it was a

10   compelling three minutes, Reverend. So,

11   thank you. (Applause.)

12   MS. JONES: Okay.

13   MS. LAGO: Our next speaker is

14   Priscilla Briggs, who will be followed by

15   Leticia Remauro.

16   MS. BRIGGS: My name is Priscilla

17   Briggs. I'm a lifelong North Shore Staten

18   Island resident. I raised three daughters,

19   two nieces and a nephew. I'm just here to

20   say that there's not enough affordable

21   apartments for families who earn less than

22   $31,000 a year. My home is overcrowded

23   because two adult parents -- two of my adult

24   parents -- two of my adult children who are

25   parents work every day but can't afford to

2   provide for their children and apartments.

3   I am with the Housing Dignity

4   Coalition, and I oppose this rezoning plan

5   because it forgets about the

6   forty-three percent of North Shore families

7   whose income is less than $50,000 a year.

8   Thank you.

9   (Applause.)

10   MS. LAGO: Thank you, Ms. Briggs.

11   Questions?

12   >>: (No response.)

13   MS. LAGO: Thank you.

14   We will now turn to speakers in

15   support, starting with Leticia Remauro.

16   MS. REMAURO: Thank you, Chairwoman

17   Lago. Thank you, commission. My name is

18   Leticia Remauro. I am the former Chair of

19   Community Board 1 in Staten Island. I am

20   currently serving as secretary to the Staten

21   Island Downtown Alliance. In my career, I

22   spent twelve years as a vice president at the

23   Battery Park City Authority developing that

24   very well-integrated community. And I just

25   want to go over a couple of problems that

2   we've been facing. I've been around for

3   about thirty years on the North Shore. I

4   live there. And I work there. And I

5   volunteer there.

6   And here are the problems that I have

7   heard over and over and over again. "We

8   don't have enough apartments. We are chasing

9   young people and seniors off of the

10   North Shore because we don't have apartment

11   buildings like we do in Manhattan and

12   Brooklyn and Queens. We don't have enough

13   shopping in the North Shore. We don't have

14   enough parks and open space in the

15   North Shore." Over the years while I was

16   Chair of the community board, we addressed

17   many of these issues. One of the things that

18   we did was we created Greenway Trail, which

19   the City is now fulfilling part of that with

20   the Urby structure, the Urby park, and the

21   parks that Councilmember Debi Rose has given

22   us with Heritage Park, Van Name and Van Pelt

23   Avenue parks. So, we started to address

24   these things. But one of the things that we

25   can't address, until now, was density in the

2   area. We needed more people. If we had more

3   people, we'd have more shopping. This has

4   been an ongoing saga for us. And I just want

5   to tell you why we at the Downtown Alliance

6   support this rezoning and ask you to too.

7   I think there's been a little bit of

8   misinformation out there. There are 1,700

9   people right now who are living without

10   protections in their apartment. They live

11   underneath the poverty line, but they're not

12   protected by any program right now. If we

13   pass this rezoning, we will create at least

14   2,700 new affordable apartments, and that's

15   why we would like to see MIH Number 2.

16   Because what will happen with that, with the

17   HPD plan, as we have seen with the Rail,

18   which was my first Chair I ever chaired a

19   meeting, was to pass the Rail, which is a

20   mixed-use, one hundred percent affordable

21   apartment -- what we saw was that people who

22   had Section 8 vouchers, people who were

23   paying a higher market rate of different

24   income levels all living together in a

25   building that before was a parking lot. So,

2   it wasn't serving the community. And now,

3   the people, the tenants in this very

4   beautiful building, they walk the streets.

5   They shop at the local stores. They see

6   their kids are in school. And guess what has

7   happened? The crime that we used to see on a

8   regular basis on the streets, it has

9   subsided. Why? Because when the Rail

10   opened, it brought density. There are

11   sixty-five apartments there. It has promise

12   of more apartments in the area. In essence,

13   what I'm saying, before my time runs out, is

14   please understand, nobody is throwing people

15   out.

16   (Bell rings.)

17   MS. LAGO: Thank you, Ms. Remauro.

18   Questions?

19   MR. CERULLO: Leticia, thank you.

20   MS. LAGO: Our next speaker is Kevin

21   Fullington, who will be followed by Michael

22   DeLoach.

23   MR. FULLINGTON: Thank you for all

24   sticking around, much appreciated. Good

25   afternoon. My name is Kevin Fullington. I

2   am general counsel for BFC Partners. BFC

3   Partners is the developer of the Empire

4   Outlets shopping mall and multiple other

5   developments on the North Shore Staten

6   Island. It's probably the biggest single

7   investor in the history of the North Shore.

8   So, we're committed to, and invested

9   significantly in the success of the area.

10   And we're here today to testify in support of

11   the application.

12   We, right now, own property 475 Bay

13   Street, which is at the southern end of the

14   rezoning area. Right now, it is a

15   53,000-square-foot underutilized parking lot.

16   It's underutilized, and that's probably a

17   good thing, because that means there's a

18   significant use of public transportation in

19   the area. If this rezoning goes through, we

20   would build, on this site, 200 units of

21   affordable housing and probably about a

22   10,000-square-foot retail use and a couple of

23   thousand square feet of community space. But

24   to Commissioner Cappelli's point, this is

25   really a once in a generation opportunity to

2   rezone this area that people have been

3   waiting for, for a long time. And we think

4   it's missed opportunity to not look at

5   increased density and lower parking

6   requirements.

7   For example, on the northern end of

8   this rezoning area, the Department is

9   proposing a lot that would be rezoned to a

10   4.6 FAR. If our spot on the southern end was

11   similarly mapped to a 4.6 FAR instead of 200

12   units of affordable housing, we would do

13   closer to 300 units of affordable housing,

14   not 275. And if you reduce the parking

15   requirements, instead of a 10,000-square-foot

16   retail use, which is more of a smaller retail

17   you're seeing commonly on the North Shore, we

18   might be able to attract a bigger national

19   retailer, no disrespect to Western Beef, but

20   we might be able to attract a significantly

21   higher quality supermarket that we think

22   would be vital to the neighborhood. So,

23   while we support this application, we would

24   suggest that you think about increased

25   density and lower parking restrictions along

2   the whole corridor. Thank you.

3   MS. LAGO: Questions for

4   Mr. Fullington?

5   Commissioner De La Uz.

6   MS. DE LA UZ: Thanks for being here.

7   So, I take it that when one of the HPD

8   staffers was speaking -- I don't know if you

9   were here at the very beginning -- about in

10   discussions with developers about potential

11   hundred percent affordable housing, I guess

12   yours was one of those sites.

13   MR. FULLINGTON: Yes, (inaudible)

14   initial conversations of that.

15   MS. DE LA UZ: Do you anticipate -- do

16   you know yet what source of financing --

17   which of the HPD term sheets are you thinking

18   of using?

19   MR. FULLINGTON: So, again, I'm the

20   lawyer, not the business person. So, don't

21   hold me to this. But my view, I think it's

22   unlikely we would just do a typical MIH

23   development. It's almost certain we would go

24   to HPD. And I'm not sure exactly which

25   program we would use, but one that seems to

2   me would be reasonably likely would be the

3   Mix-N-Match program, which would be

4   fifty percent of the units would be at under

5   sixty percent of AMI, fifty percent would be

6   up to one hundred thirty percent of AMI. So,

7   if we did this increased density zoning that

8   we're suggesting, we would commit to a

9   hundred percent affordable project, 275

10   units, that would be a mixed-income project

11   across all income bands.

12   MS. DE LA UZ: And if you were to be

13   granted the increased FAR to go up to an

14   increased number of units, would you also be

15   willing to increase the number of units at

16   the deepest affordability levels, in

17   particular, below fifty percent of AMI?

18   MR. FULLINGTON: Absolutely. And we

19   are in conversations with the local

20   councilmembers, with City Planning staff and

21   preliminary conversations with HPD. But yes,

22   we're open to a range -- we think it's

23   important to provide a range at the lower and

24   the upper end. But, certainly, we're

25   flexible on either of those to reflect what's

2   important to the community and its

3   representatives.

4   MS. DE LA UZ: Are you planning to

5   submit your testimony in writing as well?

6   MR. FULLINGTON: I didn't have anything

7   in writing.

8   MS. DE LA UZ: Okay. Because I think

9   it would be helpful to have as part of our

10   post-hearing follow up in writing.

11   MR. FULLINGTON: Okay. Absolutely.

12   MS. DE LA UZ: Thank you.

13   MS. LAGO: Other questions?

14   >>: (No response.)

15   MS. LAGO: Thank you, Mr. Fullington.

16   MR. FULLINGTON: Okay. Thank you all.

17   MS. LAGO: Our next speaker is Michael

18   DeLoach, to be followed by Debra Barone. It

19   looks as if Mr. DeLoach may have left after

20   his colleague testified. So, we will go to

21   Debra Barone, to be followed by Taneequa

22   Briggs.

23   MS. BARONE: Good afternoon. I'm Debra

24   Santulli-Barone. I'm a resident and a

25   homeowner in Staten Island. I'm here with

 2   the Housing Dignity Coalition to stand in

 3   opposition to the Bay Street Corridor

 4   rezoning, as it is currently written. I have

 5   two well-educated sons that work. And at 28,

 6   one of them wanted to move out and couldn't

 7   afford to move out. So, he was compelled to

 8   move in with his girlfriend who couldn't

 9   afford to live alone either. My

10   twenty-four-year-old son is a struggling

11   musician, and he'll be living with me for a

12   while. I feel my kids will never own a house

13   until I die, and then they'll get my house at

14   that point.

15   I have a cousin who is thirty-five and

16   he's still living with his parents; I wonder

17   when that's going to end. I have a friend

18   whose daughter hasn't moved out and she's

19   thirty-eight. I know an elderly person who

20   didn't have a pension whose Social Security

21   is quite low, and when the rent went up, she

22   had to move in with her son. You know, talk

23   about dignity on top of everything else.

24   It's kind of sad. I have friends that are on

25   the North Shore and they're finding it hard.

2   Now, these are the people on the North Shore

3   that have really held up the whole community.

4   They're the ones that go shopping and are

5   keeping the stores open, and now they feel

6   that they're pushed away. It's really sad at

7   this point.

8   I know a wife who is in an unhealthy

9   marriage, can't even leave her husband at

10   this point because she can't afford the rent

11   anywhere else. So, I ask and I urge you to

12   take another look at this rezoning plan and

13   present one with deep affordability that will

14   better address the needs of all Staten

15   Islanders and to help everyone on the island.

16   Because we were here first before all these

17   big companies came in and want to make

18   everything beautiful, and it's all about

19   money, I understand, but what about the

20   people that were there from the beginning?

21   Shame on everybody. Thank you.

22   MS. LAGO: Thank you.

23   Questions for Ms. Barone?

24   >>: (No response.)

25   MS. LAGO: Thank you for your

2   testimony.

3   Our next speaker is Taneequa Briggs,

4   who will be followed by Reverend Dr. Kathlyn

5   Barrett-Layne.

6   MS. BRIGGS: Hello. My name is

7   Taneequa Briggs. I'm here because I have

8   moved from my mother's house, that's

9   Priscilla. And, unfortunately, I was put in

10   a domestic violence situation, which led me

11   into a shelter. And even though I was

12   granted with a voucher, I still couldn't

13   afford an apartment anywhere for me and my

14   two sons. So, I definitely oppose the

15   rezoning. And although I know it's a lot of

16   jobs that's going to be created, I'm going to

17   have to be working about two or three of them

18   to support my family and pay for the

19   apartment. And that's going to leave my mom

20   to raise my sons. So, I would appreciate it

21   if it was -- if I could oppose, maybe see if

22   it could be looked over again to support

23   people who really need it. With really,

24   like, real affordable housing and maybe

25   stabilized rent, so maybe I can get on my

2   feet.   And that's it.

3   (Applause.)

4   MS. LAGO: I want to thank you,

5   Ms. Briggs.   And I should also have said that

6   to Ms. Barone for bringing your personal

7   stories.   Very brave of you and very

8   impactful.   Thank you.

9   MS. BRIGGS: You're welcome.

10   (Applause.)

11   MS. LAGO: Our next speaker is

12   Reverend Dr. Kathlyn Barrett-Layne, who will

13   be followed by Deborah Poleshuck.

14   MS. BARRETT-LAYNE: Good afternoon.   I

15   am the current president of the Staten Island

16   Council of Churches and part of the Housing

17   Dignity Coalition.   Thank you for hearing me

18   this afternoon.   I have been a resident of

19   the upper New Brighton area, Silver Lake area

20   since 1995.   I've raised my two daughters,

21   who both earned their graduate degrees.   And

22   I worked and am presently retired.   And I am

23   a homeowner.   My eldest daughter left New

24   York City to go to school and she can't

25   return right now.   It's just not affordable

2   for her. But she is doing quite well, her

3   and her husband and their three children.

4   However, my youngest daughter, who took ill,

5   is still presently living with me and right

6   now, is on a fixed income. She is in a

7   situation where she will probably, as

8   Ms. Barone said, be with me and will inherit

9   my home.

10   So, my position to the North Shore

11   rezoning is coming about as a result, not

12   only of my personal experiences, but also

13   because as a pastor of a congregation in

14   Staten Island, I've seen the devastation of

15   not having affordable housing. And there

16   was, particularly the extortion of

17   individuals on Staten Island following Sandy,

18   how rents because they were not stabilized,

19   individuals took advantage of those who

20   needed housing. And because of that, I'm

21   terribly opposed to anything that is not

22   going to take into consideration

23   affordability.

24   One story, and I will close with this

25   story of one of my parishioners who was

2   forced to live inside of our church building

3   for a couple of years working -- was able to

4   work, but that work was not something that

5   would afford a really decent housing. He

6   did, however, find a room where he was able

7   to rent. And that room, he is now paying for

8   that room at $800 per month. When you think

9   about affordability, you must think about the

10   fact that there are individuals who do work

11   every day but do not have the luxury of

12   affording what some may consider

13   affordability.

14   Thank you for hearing me this day.

15   MS. LAGO: Thank you, Reverend Doctor.

16   Questions?

17   >>: (No response.)

18   MS. LAGO: Our next speaker is Deborah

19   Poleshuck, who will be followed by Betty

20   Tucker.

21   MS. POLESHUCK: Hi. My name is Deborah

22   Poleshuck, and I've lived on the North Shore

23   of Staten Island for forty years. I've been

24   a teacher on the North Shore of Staten Island

25   for thirty-four years. Presently, four

2   generations of my family are living on Staten

3   Island. And as a result of my past and

4   present experiences, I care deeply about the

5   community my grandsons will inherit. I have

6   felt privileged to live and work on the

7   North Shore of Staten Island because it

8   defied the stereotypes of Staten Island that

9   the rest of the world believes is true.

10   To me, it has been a small town in a

11   larger metropolitan community that enables

12   people of different classes, colors, and

13   nationalities to interact and find a home.

14   The recent example of the community's

15   opposition to Amazon in Staten Island City

16   reflects the increased skepticism of New

17   Yorkers to giving huge monetary abatements

18   and incentives to the business community and

19   receiving unfair returns. The Bay Street

20   Corridor comprises one of the last

21   opportunities for developers to exploit the

22   New York City waterfront. So far,

23   development of this waterfront has been a

24   detriment to Staten Islanders. The building

25   of the mall has negatively affected the

2   movement of public buses down Richmond

3   Terrace and delayed commuters.

4   The developers appear to have no

5   concern about how their projects will affect

6   other Staten Islanders because their concept

7   is that by using public and private money,

8   they will create a bubble environment with

9   schools, transportations, public places and

10   shopping dedicated to their housing projects.

11   On Staten Island, we need a plan that will

12   greatly improve public transportation, which

13   despite what the guy from the MTA said, is a

14   disaster. It should decrease class size in

15   public schools and preserve our public spaces

16   for the enjoyment of all North Shore

17   residents. Part of the proposal is to rezone

18   the R3X district west of Bay Street. This is

19   a low-density residential district. 1,700

20   tenants living in these one and two-family

21   homes have no legal protections, as was said

22   before. Fifty-eight percent of tenants in

23   the North Shore are paying thirty percent or

24   more of their income toward rent. Tenants

25   must not be forced out of their homes and

2   into the streets.

3   Option 4, which our borough president,

4   Mr. Oddo supports, a two-bedroom apartment

5   with a rental of $2,759 per month would be

6   impossible for these tenants to pay.

7   Allowing the destruction of current

8   affordable housing should not be part of any

9   plan. People on the North Shore want to keep

10   and build affordable housing. I hope new

11   people bring their vitality and concerns to

12   enrich the community.

13   (Bell rings.)

14   MS. LAGO: Thank you, Ms. Poleshuck.

15   MS. POLESHUCK: You're welcome.

16   MS. LAGO: Questions?

17   (Applause.)

18   MS. LAGO: Our next speaker will be

19   Betty Tucker, who will be followed by Dahlia

20   Simpson.

21   MS. TUCKER: Good afternoon, Chair Lago

22   and commissioners. My name is Betty Tucker.

23   I am a deacon at First Central Baptist Church

24   in Stapleton in landlord -- I mean in Staten

25   Island. I have lived on the North Shore for

2   over forty years. I am a senior, and I'm

3   living on a reduced income. Because of my

4   age and my difficulty climbing stairs, I can

5   no longer live in my home. As I find myself

6   looking for an apartment, I continually find

7   that the rents are too high for my limited

8   income. I thought I would be able to find an

9   apartment specifically for senior citizens,

10   but there is just not enough senior residence

11   in Staten Island or for Staten Islanders.

12   Some senior buildings that are built, only

13   offer fifty percent of the apartments to

14   Staten Island seniors limiting the

15   availability even more.

16   My family, friends, and my church are

17   all here on Staten Island. It scares me that

18   I may be forced to move far from my support

19   group. Nowhere in this rezoning is there any

20   plan to accommodate the growing need for

21   apartments for seniors. We have worked so

22   many years and should not have to have these

23   types of stumbling blocks, we're just trying

24   to live out the remainder of our lives. I

25   feel that we've been forgotten in this whole

2   rezoning process. My question is, how can we

3   let any rezoning happen that totally ignores

4   the need of affordable housing, not only for

5   senior citizens, but for all families with

6   limited income living on the North Shore of

7   Staten Island?

8   I urge the City Planning Commission to

9   reject this rezoning due to the fact that it

10   does not offer enough affordable housing and

11   deeply affordable housing for anyone. Thank

12   you.

13   MR. KNUCKLES: Thank you, Ms. Tucker.

14   Questions?

15   >>: (No response.)

16   MR. KNUCKLES: Thank you for your

17   testimony.

18   MS. TUCKER: Thank you.

19   MR. KNUCKLES: Dahlia Simpson? Dahlia

20   Simpson?

21   MS. SIMPSON: Good afternoon, Chair

22   Lago and commissioners. Hello. My name is

23   Dahlia Simpson. I live on Bay Street in the

24   Stapleton neighborhood on Staten Island. I

25   live with my daughter and son. I work as a

2   home healthcare aide for a not-for-profit

3   organization on Staten Island. I've been

4   looking for an apartment for over a year

5   because my living conditions are terrible.

6   My search has been very difficult because my

7   salary does not match the increase in rents

8   in my neighborhood.

9   My current apartment is infested with

10 rodents causing a serious health problem for

11 my children, especially my three-year-old

12 son. I have visited the emergency room and

13 urgent care several times for asthma-like

14 symptoms that my son has been experiencing.

15 Although this apartment is inhabitable, I am

16 forced to live there because I can't afford

17 to live anywhere else. I have made every

18 reasonable attempt to deal with this on our

19 own, and I don't think I'll be ever able to

20 move if this rezoning is allowed to pass.

21 Families like mine will have no hope.

22 Therefore, I'm not in favor of the rezoning

23 as it stands now.

24   MR. KNUCKLES: Thank you, Ms. Simpson.

25 Questions?

2   >>: (No response.)

3   MR. KNUCKLES: Thank you for coming.

4   MS. SIMPSON: You're welcome.

5   MR. KNUCKLES: Deacon Mary Bourne.

6   MS. BOURNE: Good afternoon.

7   MR. KNUCKLES: Good afternoon.

8   MS. BOURNE: Good afternoon, everyone.

9   My name is Deacon Mary Bourne. I'm a deacon

10   at First Central Baptist Church and also a

11   member of the Housing Dignity Coalition.

12   While I personally have a lot to say against

13   this rezoning as it is, I was compelled to

14   read a letter that one of my members of my

15   church wrote. And it just -- it's just so

16   heartbreaking. She said, she writes, "I am a

17   Section 8 --" and she wanted me to read this

18   because she couldn't make the meeting. She

19   really wanted to make the meeting. "I am a

20   Section 8 tenant, residing on Targee Street.

21   I have three daughters, one son, and a

22   two-year-old grandson. I am struggling with

23   harassment from my landlord who does not want

24   to fix the problems in my home. I have also

25   struggled with too many rent increases in one

2   year's time. I went to Section 8 to express

3   my situation concerning the rent increases,

4   the non-fixing of violations, and the verbal

5   abuse of my landlord. I have been told to

6   move. But how can I afford to move with the

7   high rents? The places that I can afford

8   present the same conditions that I'm

9   experiencing now, some even worse. However,

10   because of the constant rent increases and

11   repairs that come out of my pockets, it's

12   very difficult to make ends meet. My

13   utilities are high. I pay for heat and hot

14   water. And my apartment hasn't been painted

15   in eight years. My landlord wants me to sign

16   papers stating that he's completed repairs

17   and I refuse. If I refuse, he threatens me

18   with eviction. I've called 311 with several

19   complaints, which has just caused him to be

20   more abusive. I need access to affordable

21   housing that gives me and my children a life

22   without so many issues and harassments. To

23   put it simply, a new home where my family and

24   I can live in peace and be proud. Please

25   help me and people like me. Don't throw us

2   away and forget about us."

3   I'm sorry. So, this is something that

4   I hear all the time in my church. And it's

5   just so unfair. That's why -- not only as a

6   deacon of a congregation but as a member of

7   the Housing Dignity Coalition, I cannot

8   approve this rezoning as it stands. Thank

9   you.

10   MR. KNUCKLES: Thank you, Deacon

11   Bourne.

12   Questions? Any questions?

13   >>: (No response.)

14   MR. KNUCKLES: Thank you.

15   Pastor Faith.

16   MS. LAGO: I might note that if either

17   of the prior two speakers who spoke about

18   challenges with their particular units would

19   want to come over to these gentlemen who are

20   seated over here, we would be glad if you

21   would like us to refer to HPD.

22   MR. TOGBA: Good afternoon. My name is

23   Reverend Faith Togba, senior pastor of Bethel

24   Worship Center, an interdenominational and

25   multicultural church on 402 Bay Street,

2   Staten Island, for seventeen years. Every

3   day in church, I have members come forward to

4   share their struggle with rising rents for

5   decades. The gap between higher housing

6   costs and low-wage has grown surely and

7   unfortunately causing crisis in most of the

8   homes of the members that I pastor.

9   Homeless -- I'm sorry. Homeless data that I

10   have, 88 -- I mean 89,000 people are homeless

11   today statewide. In November of 2019, the

12   Department of City Planning certified a plan

13   to rezone a fourteen-block stretch of

14   manufacturing land on Bay Street. The plan

15   would allow developers to convert that

16   manufacturing site into residential towers

17   that expands six to fourteen stories.

18   While some are making the case of

19   economical development on the North Shore, we

20   think it is important to make the case for

21   equitable economical development on the Bay

22   Street plan that moves and supports all

23   families, including extreme low-income

24   families, such as seniors. Our children are

25   graduating from colleges and cannot afford to

2   move out. I currently have children that

3   have graduated from college and cannot afford

4   to rent apartments and they have to live with

5   me. I urge this group not to support any

6   rezoning that would not take into

7   consideration deeper affordable homes for all

8   families, especially families on the

9   North Shore. And to add, most of the members

10 are home attendants that work on the South

11 Shore, but when they come back on the

12 North Shore, cannot afford homes. Please

13 consider them. I'm a picture of them. Thank

14 you.

15   MS. LAGO: Thank you, Pastor Togba.

16   Questions?

17   >>: (No response.)

18   MS. LAGO: Our next speaker will be

19 Victor Benadava, to be followed by Stephen

20 Albonesi.

21   MR. BENADAVA: Good afternoon,

22 commissioners. My name is Victor Benadava.

23 I'm a teacher. I've lived in St. George for

24 the last eighteen years, today at Victory

25 Boulevard and Montgomery. In the morning, I

2   run past what was a wonderful park, but now

3   it's a ferris wheel, an ugly unfinished

4   (inaudible) parking. I usually (inaudible)

5   transportation we have, shop around in the

6   Western Beef. I go to Jimmy Tompkinsville at

7   the Lyons Pool. We lost Cromwell and we're

8   still waiting for a new center. I enjoy

9   Stapleton and its mix of antiques,

10 restaurants and great melting pot of

11 immigrants community -- Liberian,

12 West Indian, Albanians, Sri Lankans,

13 Mexicans, to name a few, and I'm concerned.

14 I love my neighbors, my neighborhood. And I

15 repeat, I'm concerned that the affordable

16 housing unit proposed in the Bay Street

17 Corridor will require families to earn over

18 75,000 dollars a year. There are no units

19 proposed for people of really low-income.

20 For a teacher aide, the nursing assistant,

21 (inaudible), the woman who works two jobs,

22 two low-paying jobs to support her children,

23 the retiree, the young person who works for

24 their first job, the (inaudible) there is no

25 room for any of them in the Bay Street

2   Corridor project.

3   This is not who we are in the

4   North Shore of Staten Island. Forty-three

5   percent of the North Shore tenants make less

6   than $50,000 a year. Rents are high enough

7   as it is, and they spend more than half of

8   their income in rent. This Bay Street

9   Corridor project will serve the residents of

10   the Bay Street Corridor community. People

11   are desperate for truly affordable housing.

12   Please, do not leave us out of this plan.

13   Someday, you could be one of us. Thank you.

14   MS. LAGO: Thank you, Mr. Benadava.

15   Our next speaker is Stephen Albonesi, who

16   will be followed by Denise Harris.

17   MR. ALBONESI: Good afternoon. My name

18   is Stephen Albonesi. I'm here representing

19   the Municipal Art Society of New York. MAS

20   believes the Bay Street Corridor rezoning

21   poses several opportunities and many

22   challenges for the North Shore. On the one

23   hand, it has the potential to foster a more

24   vibrant downtown environment and add new

25   affordable housing units. However, we cannot

2   support the proposal until several critical

3   deficiencies are addressed. As discussed in

4   the full version of our testimony, we believe

5   that a shortage of public school seats, open

6   space resources, and traffic infrastructure

7   improvements could undermine the goals of the

8   rezoning. We also have concerns about the

9   lack of flood resiliency measures in the

10   current plan.

11   The rezoning would greatly exacerbate

12   the lack of school seats at elementary

13   schools, which we're at one hundred

14   nineteen percent capacity within the study

15   area. The rezoning would introduce an

16   additional 766 elementary school students to

17   the study area, bringing the deficit to over

18   4,000 seats in the utilization rate to one

19   hundred thirty-eight percent by 2030. It is

20   of the utmost importance that the City

21   guarantees enough public school seats are

22   available to support the new growth. The

23   project area is also grossly underserved by

24   open space. Yet, according to the DEIS,

25   under the rezoning, passive and active open

2   space within the half mile study area is

3   expected to decrease further to

4   fifty-one percent below the City line average

5   and nineteen percent below DCP

6   recommendations. MAS urges the creation of

7   additional open space to help fill this

8   critical gap.

9   Regarding transportation, significant

10   adverse impacts will occur during various

11   peak-hour evaluation time to thirty-one

12   intersections in the project area, twenty-two

13   of which would remain unmitigated. We urge

14   the City to perform a comprehensive traffic

15   study and develop a transportation mitigation

16   plan that addresses worsening congestion. In

17   almost thirty-eight percent of the rezoning

18   area, including 2012 projected development

19   sites is within the 2015, 100-year flood

20   zone. By 2050, seventy-six percent of

21   residential construction expected under the

22   rezoning would occur within the 100-year

23   flood zone, a fifty-five percent increase.

24   We implore the City to create a regulatory

25   framework for new housing construction and

flood prone rezoning areas.

In conclusion, taken together, these issues reflect a need for transparency and comprehensive planning. Currently, the rezoning proposal lacks both. Our support for the project is contingent on all impact calculation methodologies being disclosed and critical infrastructure deficiencies being addressed in the FEIS. Thank you very much.

MS. LAGO: Thank you, Mr. Albonesi.

Questions?

Yes, Commissioner Cerullo.

MR. CERULLO: It's more of a comment than a question. I just want to thank you for raising the school seat issue. I know the Department of Education was not here, unless they're here --

MS. LAGO: No.

MR. CERULLO: -- at the end. But there were a series of questions I would have posed had they been here. But I just want to say first, I think there are some questions that we will need answers to from DOE and SCA. So, I just want to say, I appreciate that you

2   raised that issue.

3   MR. ALBONESI: Thank you.

4   MS. LAGO: I also wanted to note that

5   the City is now -- has already had a scoping

6   hearing and is preparing the environmental

7   analysis for a citywide water flood text

8   zoning that will be pathbreaking in preparing

9   the City using the zoning tools we have to

10   address the challenges of climate change and

11   resiliency.

12   MR. ALBONESI: Great.

13   MS. LAGO: So, thank you.

14   MR. ALBONESI: Thank you, very much.

15   MS. LAGO: Our next speaker will be

16   Denise Harris, to be followed by Theo Dorian.

17   Okay. Ms. Harris is not here. So, we would

18   welcome Theo Dorian, to be followed by Phil

19   Marius.

20   MR. DORIAN: Good afternoon, Chair Lago

21   and commissioners -- Commissioner Cerullo and

22   Commissioner Cappelli, especially. I'm Theo

23   Dorian. I'm the president of the St. George

24   Civic Association, at whose recent meeting we

25   discussed this issue, and over 150 people in

2   attendance voted unanimously to oppose the

3   district. The Van Duzer Civic Association,

4   who is our next one up as we go along the

5   Corridor that's planned, well over 100 people

6   were in attendance at their meeting, all of

7   whom opposed this plan. The presidents of

8   those associations, as well as the other

9   civic associations along the North Shore,

10   every single one of them is in opposition to

11   this plan, and every single one of them, as

12   far as I know, unanimously opposes it.

13   For many, many reasons, pretty much all

14   that we have heard about the housing question

15   and there's no minimizing that. That is

16   probably the most important issue facing us.

17   But there are quite a few other concerns that

18   we presented. And I'm on the advisory

19   committee for this plan. In other words,

20   City Planning has been inviting me to beseech

21   my community to all turn out for all the

22   planning sessions, which we have done. We've

23   given up many, many, many nights and days of

24   our time. And the presidents of the other

25   associations, who I can name. I'll give

2   their names later, but I don't want to use up

3   my time, have asked me to speak on their

4   behalf as well.

5   The many, many problems with this plan

6   have been enumerated by all of us. We made

7   so many suggestions and we were shocked when

8   the plan came from the City Planning

9   Department and we saw that none of them,

10   literally none of them, had found a place in

11   the document. Those included: Overcrowded

12   schools, overcrowded roads, the traffic is

13   unspeakable at the moment and the mall has

14   yet to open. The public access to the

15   waterfront. And this is probably the most

16   important thing, we would not hear of this

17   being spoken about, DUMBO, Brooklyn Bridge

18   Park or the entire west coast of Manhattan

19   where I used to live near.

20   What they did there was brilliant. By

21   opening up the waterfront to public access

22   rather than to a string of gated residential

23   communities. What they did was allow the

24   people who already live there, and we've

25   heard on their behalf many times, to have

2   access to their waterfront. The result in

3   skateboards and strollers and tourists that

4   have flocked to that area, have uplifted

5   those areas to a great extent and provided

6   recreational space that's desperately needed

7   and park space that's desperately needed by

8   the people who already live there, who are

9   now in danger of being thrown out.

10   There's no public hospital in the area.

11   Staten Island is the size of Pittsburgh or

12   New Orleans, half a million people have only

13   two hospitals, no public hospital and those

14   two hospitals have been rated D minus and F.

15   We have half a million people there and we

16   have only one food store that serves the

17   North Shore, and that -- within this

18   corridor, and somebody said that it could

19   attract more food stores if we build the

20   corridor. Well, let's put the horse before

21   the cart. What they propose to do is to

22   remove the only one that we have, Western

23   Beef, a store that provides affordable food

24   to the low-income people who live in the

25   area. So, it is such an -- I'm giving up yet

2   one more day because I have that luxury, my

3   fellow --

4   (Bell rings.)

5   MR. DORIAN: -- colleagues don't.

6   MS. LAGO: And we very much

7   appreciate -- and I would say both you,

8   Mr. Dorian, and all the people who have come

9   and given up this time.

10   Questions for Mr. Dorian?

11   Yes, Vice Chair Knuckles.

12   MR. KNUCKLES: Thank you for your

13   testimony.

14   MR. DORIAN: Thank you.

15   MR. KNUCKLES: Based on what you said,

16   could I summarize your comments by saying

17   they seem to focus on infrastructure, the

18   lack of infrastructure that could accommodate

19   the proposed development here.

20   MR. DORIAN: Right.

21   MR. KNUCKLES: Assuming that's

22   accurate, my question would be, how do you

23   feel about the other areas that have been

24   critiqued around affordability, et cetera?

25   MR. DORIAN: How do I feel about the

2   other areas, meaning?

3   MR. KNUCKLES: That have been

4   critiqued --

5   MR. DORIAN: Oh, the other categories

6   you mean?

7   MR. KNUCKLES: Yes.

8   MR. DORIAN: Oh, I agree wholeheartedly

9   with all of the housing advocates, which is

10   mainly what we've heard from today. Their

11   point is an extremely well-made one. We've

12   been talking about potential residents in the

13   area and what their affordability structure

14   should be for them, but we're not talking

15   enough about the people who live there

16   already who are predominantly -- you've heard

17   the demographic that they represent --

18   minorities, low-income people who have been

19   displaced by this kind of zoning. And

20   they're all opposed to it, but you should

21   know that people from all strata are opposed

22   to this.

23   And also, if I may mention, although it

24   may not be in direct answer to your question,

25   but Commissioner Cerullo and others have

2 spoken of the additional ferry service that

3 has accrued to so much improvements in our

4 quality of life. Well, that -- indeed, Mayor

5 De Blasio does, agreed, deserve some credit

6 for that. But our Borough President, Oddo,

7 deserves even more credit for that. But with

8 no modesty, may I say that that plan came out

9 of St. George Civic Association, that we

10 proposed it, I personally cowrote it with

11 council -- then Councilman McMahon. And over

12 years and years, it was vetoed by the mayor,

13 Bloomberg, and it has finally come to

14 fruition by an excellent partnership between

15 our mayor and our borough president.

16   I want to take nothing away from that.

17 But I do want to stress that these things

18 come out of the residents and the Civic

19 Associations represented those residents.

20 And the reason that our community board voted

21 thirty-five to one to oppose this plan, the

22 reasons were many, many. I threw out a list

23 of them, by no means complete. You have it

24 before you and you can look at it yourselves.

25 But the community board opposed this nearly

2   unanimously, but for one vote, even in spite

3   of the support of our councilmember and it's

4   now, I understand, opposed by our borough

5   president. Because there are so, so many

6   reasons that this is harmful. And I ask you

7   to please look over what the community board

8   has submitted to you for conditions. Because

9   the City Planning Commission did not include

10   anything that we gave up all of our days and

11   nights -- and I can name the authorities that

12   we have from our neighborhood who gave up

13   their time to make all of these suggestions,

14   and now I very much appreciate that you've

15   let me use a moment of this time to say it.

16   Because -- I'm talking fast, but in a

17   couple of minutes to represent the many

18   things that we spent three and a half years

19   going over, only to see none of them included

20   in this plan, is really quite upsetting. And

21   it shows the distinct -- most of my

22   colleagues would not come today because they

23   said, "City Planning Commission is going to

24   rubber stamp this. They've ignored

25   everything that we have said. They have not

2   included any of it." And here we have -- and

3   here I am trying to give you a three-minute

4   summation of the things that we've included.

5   Nowhere would this be done, would land be

6   turned over to developers. And the way that

7   Midtown Towers do when they want to build up

8   higher than the air rights and they need to

9   buy variants, what they do is they are

10   required by you to provide public plazas or

11   something. This should be public space and

12   the waterfront of Staten Island, it is

13   magnificent. I'm sure most of you have been

14   out there. It is spectacular. It is our

15   only stretch of views like this that we have

16   left. We've given up a lot of them for the

17   projects that we're getting in St. George,

18   and we don't think that this land should be

19   taken away from the people. This plan is so

20   utterly flawed --

21   MR. KNUCKLES: Mr. Dorian.

22   MR. DORIAN: -- in so many ways.

23   MR. KNUCKLES: Thank you.

24   MR. DORIAN: Thank you.

25   MS. LAGO: Commissioner Levin.

2   MS. LEVIN: I'd like to ask you about

3   the waterfront. We heard from EDC about

4   their $20 million commitment to building out

5   the waterfront. That's going to be publicly

6   accessible, no?

7   MR. DORIAN: No.

8   MS. LEVIN: No?

9   MR. DORIAN: No. What they're

10   proposing, there's no mandate for making

11   public -- first of all, I question that

12   figure, but there's no mandate for making any

13   of it accessible. As a matter of fact, the

14   only parcel the City owns is proposed to be

15   turned over as well to private development.

16   So, unless that is stipulated that a certain

17   amount of public access has to be given, what

18   the community feels -- and I want to

19   reiterate this. Unanimously at every one of

20   the Civic Association meetings and

21   thirty-five to one at our community board,

22   every single testimony was against this plan.

23   And one of the largest reasons, possibly the

24   biggest, is that it does not provide for

25   public access to the waterfront. And this

2   would never have been done in the other

3   boroughs.

4   MS. LAGO: We will have a post-hearing

5   follow-up. I can assure the commissioner

6   that this is publicly accessible --

7   MS. LEVIN: I believe this access is

8   being provided a somewhat different mechanism

9   than we may have seen in other waterfront

10 areas. But I'm not voting for this if

11 there's not public access.

12   MR. DORIAN: It's not in the plan. And

13 if it is, I overlooked it. So, please point

14 it out to me if it's in there.

15   MS. LAGO: We will clearly address --

16   MR. DORIAN: But even twenty percent is

17 nothing. They've got a hundred percent in

18 Brooklyn and along the whole west side of

19 Manhattan. And that is --

20   MS. LAGO: Thank you, Mr. Dorian.

21   MR. DORIAN: And that's for the benefit

22 of those who live there.

23   MS. LAGO: Commissioner Ortiz, did you

24 have a question as well?

25   (Applause.)

2   MS. LAGO: Great. Thank you.

3   Our next speaker is Phil Marius, who

4   will be followed by Steven Joseph.

5   Is Mr. Marius here?

6   AUDIENCE MEMBER: He left.

7   MS. LAGO: Okay. And then Steven

8   Joseph? Okay those are --

9   MR. JOSEPH: I thought somebody was

10   coming up.

11   MS. LAGO: The floor is yours.

12   MR. JOSEPH: My name is Steve Joseph.

13   I had the Lyons Pool Lap Swimmers Group.

14   There were several errors in the

15   environmental impact study of the Bay Street

16   Corridor. Tall buildings will impact users

17   of the pool and make the pool not usable on

18   some days. The report incorrectly states the

19   pool is open from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Lyons

20   Pool is actually open from 7 a.m. to

21   8:30 p.m. or dusk. This is important because

22   the sun heats the pool. Less sun, due to the

23   pool being in a shadow for an additional hour

24   to hour and a half a day, will make it

25   cooler. I can list a half a dozen other

2   programs offered before and after general

3   swim if there's time at the end of this.

4   As an example, on July 11, 2016 at

5   7:30 a.m., the pool was 72 degrees during the

6   lap swimming program. Cloudy cool weather,

7   which included rain on July 8th and 9th, had

8   a lot to do with low temperature. The pool

9   was tolerable on Friday, July 8th for the

10   morning lap swim. If 72 degrees sounds warm,

11   you need to know your body loses heat twenty

12   times faster in water than it does in air.

13   Indoor pools are typically held at

14   79 degrees, which is considered good for

15   competition to 82 degrees.

16   Lyons Pool is located at the edge of

17   New York Harbor. So, often wind, speed

18   there -- sorry, I lost my place.

19   Temperatures will affect users of the pool.

20   If it is a cool day and the pool is in a

21   shadow with just a little wind, bathers will

22   find the pool too cold to use. Buildings

23   casting shadows on public amenities that

24   Staten Islanders have enjoyed for generations

25   will make it unusable even when the sun is on

2   it if the water temperature is too cold.

3   The report incorrectly states the pool

4   is open from Memorial Day to Labor Day. It

5   is open from the last few days of June to the

6   weekend after Labor Day. From the report

7   itself it says, "Although active recreation

8   air --" this is the shadow section chapter 6,

9   page 1. "Although the active recreation

10   areas of Lyons Pool, the entire property and

11   Lyons Pool main pool would receive sizable

12   incremental shadow coverage during the summer

13   analysis days. The pool would continue to

14   receive direct sunlight through the late

15   morning and early afternoon when utilization

16   would be the highest. With the proposed

17   population increase, there will be more

18   people using the pool for both sessions."

19   (Bell rings.)

20   MS. LAGO: Thank you, Mr. Joseph.

21   You're giving me a flashback. Years

22   ago, I was a New Hampshire lap swimmer, and

23   they kept the indoor pool at 68 degrees.

24   Boy, it was rough.

25   Questions?

2   Yes, Commissioner De La Uz.

3   MS. DE LA UZ: Mr. Joseph, were you

4   here when the woman from the Parks Department

5   spoke about --

6   MR. JOSEPH: Yes.

7   MS. DE LA UZ: So, can you provide any

8   more details about the current status of

9   conversations between your organization and

10   the New York City Parks Department?

11   MR. JOSEPH: We haven't had any talks

12   with them about the shadows. Actually, in

13   the report, it states that Parks' officials

14   says that the shadows will not impact the

15   pool temperature. As a swimmer there for

16   more than thirty years, I swim thirty miles a

17   summer there, I can tell you that when we

18   have a few rainy days, it gets cold. And

19   within an hour and a half of less sunlight

20   per day, the pool will be colder. And there

21   are people using the pool during the day, you

22   know, in the afternoon. That's when the

23   shadow will fall. People will be getting out

24   of the water with the wind blowing and no sun

25   on them and even sitting on the deck. Oh,

2   and I should say that New York City Parks

3   does not allow people to bring sweatshirts

4   into the pool. You can only bring a white

5   T-shirt.

6   MS. DE LA UZ: Thank you.

7   MS. LAGO: Commissioner Levin.

8   MS. LEVIN: I was hoping you were going

9   to speak up. Because I read your testimony

10   at the scoping session for the EIS and you

11   clued me into this important issue. And, you

12   know, I think the pool is a significant

13   public resource that we have to be very

14   careful about. And I would be curious to

15   know -- I think it's the taller buildings

16   that are proposed at the northern end of the

17   rezoning that would cast a shadow on the

18   pool. So, I would be curious to know what

19   size building could be built without casting

20   a shadow. If we can get that information as

21   part of the follow-up.

22   MS. LAGO: Will do. And we'll also

23   mention how many units, housing units would

24   be in the buildings and both ways --

25   MR. JOSEPH: Commissioner Levin, I'm

2   not even clear from reading this report that

3   they took into account that the pool is about

4   two stories lower than Bay Street. So, if

5   the buildings were built to -- I forgot what

6   it is -- fifteen or sixteen stories, whether

7   they'd actually be more like eighteen

8   stories.

9   MS. LEVIN: Okay. Well, so that is

10   doublechecking the shadow analysis, it would

11   be important to get the level of the pool and

12   the level of the development correct.

13   MS. LAGO: Yes, gladly.

14   Other questions?

15   >>: (No response.)

16   MS. LAGO: Thank you.

17   Now, Mr. Joseph is the last person who

18   had signed up to speak on this topic. But if

19   there's anyone else who would like to speak,

20   please come forward.

21   >>: (No response.)

22   MS. LAGO: Okay. I will note that the

23   record is going to remain open through the

24   11th of March of this year, and we'll be

25   receiving written comments on the draft

2   environmental impact statement. And with

3   that, the public hearing on this matter is

4   closed.

5   Madam Secretary, any other business?

6   MS. GRUEL: No, Madam Chair.

7   MS. LAGO: Okay. So, the public

8   meeting is over. And, again, thank you to

9   all who came and testified.

10   (TIME ESTIMATED: 7:05 p.m.)

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25

2   C E R T I F I C A T E

3

4   STATE OF NEW YORK)

5   :SS

6   COUNTY OF QUEENS)

7

8   I, Sabrina Brown Stewart, a shorthand

9   reporter within and for the State of New York, do

10   hereby certify that the within is a true and

11   accurate transcript of the statement taken on

12   February 27, 2019.

13   I further certify that I am not related to

14   any of the parties to this action by blood or by

15   marriage, and that I am in no way interested in the

16   outcome of this matter.

17   IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my

18   hand this 27th day of February, 2019.

19

20

21   *Sabrina Brown-Stewart*
                      Sabrina Brown Stewart

22

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$26000 109:9

$2759 292:5

$276000 19:13

$300 179:9
181:23 183:24

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258:17 273:23
275:7 302:6 (5)

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$75000 265:21,24
266:4,8 272:25 (5)

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32bj 31:12 55:7,9
83:16,19 86:3
96:12 207:3 (8)

34th 57:11 58:5
59:14,16 60:15
63:8,18 64:7,12
70:24 71:3 75:24
77:18,20,25 78:5
80:4,5 82:2 83:18
85:22 88:18,20
89:7,8 90:11,23
92:5,7 95:14 (30)

44th 75:24

45th 75:3

46th 58:19,22
61:17 75:3 79:6
88:18 89:10 90:12
92:5 95:15 (10)

47th 58:19,20
60:10
61:10,14,17,18
63:22 64:9,11
75:3 78:6 (12)

48th 58:20 60:10
61:10,14 63:23
64:8 78:5 88:18
90:12 92:6 95:15
(11)

4a8 259:14

53000squarefoot
279:15

5foot 78:2

61000squarefoot
14:20

61mih 62:16

7000squarefoot
26:7

75foot 17:18

8th 318:7,9

9th 318:7

>> 4:24 5:12,14

30:24 32:14,20
35:5,12 38:7,13
54:22 56:22 57:3
73:21 78:23 81:3
83:7 88:7 89:23
91:14 97:8 108:14
125:6 142:25
198:22 204:13
206:19 209:7
214:16 233:5
243:5 246:7 257:7
264:10 268:8,15
270:15 275:12
283:14 285:24
289:17 294:15
296:2 298:13
300:17 322:15,21
(47)

abatements
290:17

ability 147:25
152:8 206:10
236:16 (4)

able 7:25 33:10
44:8 68:24 96:5,1
3,13,17,19,19,23
103:5 130:3
135:11,13 138:2
148:2 153:9,14,15
158:10 161:12,24
163:13 167:4
169:11 176:7
181:13 188:10
193:2 194:4 200:8
205:14 208:24
217:11 225:4
229:2 230:2
234:19 242:12
263:3 280:18,20
289:3,6 293:8
295:19 (47)

about 10:22
17:12 20:12
22:10,11 26:20
27:23 30:8 31:9
37:11 47:3,4
52:7,25 55:7 59:6
60:12 64:20
65:11,19 67:10,23

69:11 70:16
71:6,16 72:17
74:15 77:6
81:9,19 82:12
83:16 87:2,4,12
93:2,17 94:6,9,14
95:11 100:18
103:18,21,23
107:2,6,11,23
111:22 114:2
116:5
117:3,7,14,17,24
118:17 120:11
121:24 122:13
123:3,17 128:20
130:4,25 131:7,19
132:8,11,20 134:9
136:6,8 138:22
140:10,23,25
141:20 142:10
148:15 149:9
150:24 152:11
155:7 160:10
161:3 163:16,19
164:10,17
177:13,16
178:2,18,25
179:6,8 180:3,4,24
181:8,23 182:7,12
185:2 189:5
193:18 194:12,19
200:9 202:7,8
203:11 207:3,8
209:18 212:14
214:23 215:9
222:14,23,25
226:24 235:2
236:15 239:23
240:4 248:12,13
254:16
255:3,12,15
256:15,16 258:5
259:6
261:14,19,21
264:3 275:5 276:3
279:21 280:24
281:9,10 284:23
285:18,19 286:17
288:11 289:9,9
290:4 291:5
298:2,17 303:8
307:14 308:17
310:23,25

311:12,15 315:2,3 320:5,8,12 321:14 322:3 (174)

above 17:18 21:17 23:6 42:14 46:3 49:14,15 50:4 80:24 99:3 242:16 (11)

abovereferenced 90:10

absolutely 26:17 28:20 52:10,15 69:14 87:17 163:14 242:22 263:15 282:18 283:11 (11)

absorb 205:15

abstain 11:4

abuse 297:5

abusive 297:20

abuts 81:20

abutting 76:6

acceptable 228:3

access 31:17 43:25 44:9,11 50:7,13,14,17 118:7 175:4 191:18 194:2 211:4 220:13 226:20 229:20 237:15,21 262:3,17,17,19 297:20 308:14,21 309:2 315:17,25 316:7,11 (30)

accessed 43:7 117:6

accessibility 85:23 133:7

accessible 54:16 83:3 132:2 151:25 315:6,13 316:6 (7)

accessory 23:10

accolade 233:24

accommodate 200:8 221:12 240:10 293:20 310:18 (5)

accommodated 225:4,7

accommodating 222:9,12

accommodations 49:11

accordance 41:23 150:21 151:17 156:19 (4)

according 44:16 211:2 303:24

account 81:17 132:15 184:3 322:3 (4)

accounting 74:21 230:11

accreditation 67:19

accrued 312:3

accurate 310:22 324:11

achieve 231:10 234:19 267:13

achieved 134:15 159:8

acknowledge 116:5 130:23 131:3 189:2 222:2

232:6,20 (7)

acknowledged 229:13,20 232:15

acknowledges 230:10

acknowledging 230:3,17

acknowledgment 229:24

acquisition 33:2 35:18 37:22

acres 220:6,9 229:14,17,23 231:16 (6)

across 39:15 47:7 71:2,5 78:13,19 110:11 127:10 159:11 167:6 226:17 264:22 282:11 (13)

acs 34:6

acs's 33:8 35:25 36:3

act 99:7

action 100:4 141:3,8 177:20 234:17,24 235:25 324:14 (8)

actions 13:17 15:11 16:3 40:24 61:20 (5)

activate 17:15 25:17 26:8,18 41:5 43:17 128:4 227:9 (8)

activating 47:5

active 125:23 126:19 127:17

180:18 181:11 227:23 303:25 319:7,9 (9)

activities 163:9

activity 26:21 70:24 173:3

actual 151:9,21 179:25 224:22 (4)

actually 8:2 21:11 23:24 24:13,20,23 25:7,13 51:7 71:8 77:16,17 93:20 117:5,10 118:10 120:9 128:12 133:5 135:10 137:8 164:2,8 196:3 216:3 218:12 227:22 230:13 235:6 253:14 262:2,3 265:4 317:20 320:12 322:7 (36)

add 178:10 182:13 213:6 225:20 242:11 244:16 300:9 302:24 (8)

added 193:13 195:19 242:7,8 (4)

adding 220:12 237:17

addition 3:12 21:9 51:9 112:7 118:23 131:3 144:18,20 174:5 176:5 179:2 224:17 (12)

additional 16:10,12 18:16 101:16,19 105:16 123:24 127:23 138:19 144:23 147:22 178:10,19

213:6 232:24 237:17 242:23 303:16 304:7 312:2 317:23 (21)

address 33:11 109:3,23 115:4,12 173:20 177:7 187:18 222:23 223:4 232:7 276:23,25 285:14 306:10 316:15 (16)

addressed 201:8 236:22 276:16 303:3 305:10 (5)

addresses 234:25 304:16

addressing 43:18

adds 183:13

adequate 28:23 43:19 245:15

adhere 151:3 165:24 166:8

adjacent 20:24 94:12 97:25

adjustments 158:10 249:23

administration 102:13 114:25 115:2,4 147:3 188:6 196:4 211:3 (8)

administration's 116:7

admits 245:14

adopted 5:15 6:23 8:22 9:25 11:12 12:15 (6)

adoption 5:6

11:17

adore 244:9

adult
274:23,23,24

adults 271:13

advance 254:18

advanced 219:11

advantage
288:19

advantageous
90:21

adverse 230:18
244:24 304:10

advice 190:22

advisor 176:6

advisory 219:22
307:18

advocate 270:22

advocates 221:9
260:10,15,18
311:9 (5)

advocating
113:11,12

aerial 33:16
36:18

aesthetically
151:24 167:7

aesthetics 71:7

affairs 246:17

affect 268:25
291:5 318:19

affected 60:8
257:3 290:25

affecting 269:2

affects 78:12

afford 92:25
135:4 271:20
274:25 284:7,9
285:10 286:13
289:5 295:16
297:6,7 299:25
300:3,12 (15)

affordability
13:20 41:25 42:6
87:5 101:2,5
103:12 107:22
111:19 119:19,22
124:3 201:2,10
258:3 259:18,20
260:4,8 266:22,24
267:4,14 269:3
270:3,23 282:16
285:13 288:23
289:9,13 310:24
311:13 (33)

affordable 16:8
31:21,22,25 39:20
40:25 41:3 48:14
55:17,21 65:4
66:4 67:2,3 76:17
82:23,24
85:15,17,21
87:2,8,19 88:2
89:2,12 90:17
91:6 92:14 95:17
96:9,24 100:14,21
101:10,11
103:2,16,17,20
107:17 109:5,22
110:2,6,8,10,15
111:2,3 112:18
124:4,10,20 125:2
200:18 211:23
212:5,15 213:19
215:24 219:10
235:11,12 259:15
260:2,4,5 264:23
265:11 266:16
267:11,17,18,22
269:18 274:20
277:14,20 279:21
280:12,13 281:11

282:9 286:24
287:25 288:15
292:8,10
294:4,10,11
297:20 300:7
301:15 302:11,25
309:23 (98)

affording 289:12

aforementioned
143:10

afraid 239:5

after 100:19
102:13 156:4
209:22 283:19
318:2 319:6 (7)

afternoon 153:2
199:10 206:23
209:13 214:21
218:22 246:11
264:16
268:14,16,17
278:25 283:23
287:14,18 292:21
294:21 296:6,7,8
298:22 300:21
302:17 306:20
319:15 320:22
(26)

again 15:24,25
19:2,8 24:25
25:25 30:2
36:17,19 38:10
57:18 61:13 62:16
66:9,12 68:18
79:19 82:2,21
106:18 114:25
130:25 131:13
138:5 146:12
159:6 162:24
184:24
191:10,13,15
217:6 223:18
241:19 251:22
262:13 263:17,22
276:7 281:19
286:22 323:8 (42)

against 76:24
79:7 212:10
296:12 315:22 (5)

age 293:4

agencies
99:10,15,17
163:17 165:25
172:23 219:13
220:16 226:23
227:16 236:13
(11)

agency 99:25
138:12 142:2
166:5 167:3 221:8
225:13,16,23
228:9,22 230:19
247:16 248:17
253:22 (15)

agents 151:17

ago 52:18 114:24
127:19 140:9
160:8 195:12
213:15 218:3
228:12 319:22
(10)

agree 76:23 78:7
79:8 147:4 165:10
205:21 237:24
311:8 (8)

agreed 135:14
169:15 312:5

agreement 67:7,9
107:18 238:25 (4)

agreements
119:19,22

ahead 155:23

aide 295:2
301:20

aim 172:18 227:5

aims 174:18

air 158:6 314:8
318:12 319:8 (4)

airs 101:13,15,17
105:6,15 267:10
(6)

akerman 13:13
57:19

akins 214:20
218:20,22,25
221:17 222:2,19
224:4,10,15,18
226:12 227:21
228:16 229:12,17
230:9,24 231:6,8,1
3,15,19,24
232:15,19 233:4
(27)

albanians 301:12

albany 261:17

albonesi 300:20
302:15,17,18
305:11
306:3,12,14 (8)

alfred 2:7

aligned 71:12

alike 174:21

allen 2:6

alleviate 82:8

alleyne 264:15 26
8:12,14,16,18,19
270:13 (7)

alliance 275:21
277:5

allocated 23:12
41:14 42:16 48:17
(4)

allocation 43:2
49:5

allow 60:25 62:7 84:11 85:6 88:19 92:7 113:14 127:8,11,12 129:15 180:19 207:22 208:10 217:3 235:20 261:4 299:15 308:23 321:3 (20)

allowed 101:18 196:23 197:5 211:7 257:24 295:20 (6)

allowing 127:9 129:14 181:2 292:7 (4)

allows 32:4 55:25 101:16 107:24 137:8 175:11 (6)

almost 87:22 137:21 139:22 153:6 192:20 201:8 220:6 266:14 281:23 304:17 (10)

alone 271:21 284:9

along 14:13,14 21:5 26:21 58:5 59:9 63:7,13 64:8,12 70:24 75:3,24 120:16 136:2 144:5 147:18 155:21,22 157:18,19 164:2 173:2,15 181:12 182:20 189:15 217:2,4 220:13 280:25 307:4,9 316:18 (34)

alongside 110:16 248:4

already 46:13 82:5,8 85:25 110:22 132:7,21

138:17 164:18 165:3 178:11 195:5,6 210:5 220:8 226:5 237:18 241:24 245:5 257:4 258:6,18 263:7 273:24 306:5 308:24 309:8 311:16 (28)

also 14:16 15:9,17 17:19,21 21:4 22:9 24:2 25:2,6 26:4 27:8 29:23 42:23 43:4 44:20 49:20 51:10 53:18 58:8 59:3,5,25 60:12,14 62:23 63:13 74:11 75:5,11 76:7 79:12 81:23 82:12,19 86:2,7 88:25 89:8 90:20,24,25 92:12 96:20 99:18 112:4 115:11 117:25 121:14,18 122:25 126:8,12 128:3 131:2,6 133:6 135:12 136:4 139:10 151:12,17 152:6,9 154:2 157:23 167:8 169:23 175:17,19 176:4 179:8,25 180:7 190:20 192:7 193:6 196:16 210:20 214:2 216:17 232:22,23 234:8 235:4 243:14 255:12 262:6 270:9 271:3,6 282:14 287:5 288:12 296:10,24 303:8,23 306:4 311:23 321:22 (101)

alteration 76:14

alteratives

243:13

alternatives 163:20

although 28:8 158:17 163:7 211:8 247:16 269:20 286:15 295:15 311:23 319:7,9 (11)

always 35:10 50:14 92:22,24 154:8 194:18 (6)

alyson 33:4,7 35:21,24 (4)

am 13:15 33:24 39:8 57:22 81:11 84:24 85:5 88:14 90:5 91:22 95:13 115:13 166:2 207:2 213:13 243:12 270:20 275:3,18,19 279:2 287:15,22,22 292:23 293:2 295:15 296:16,19,22 314:3 317:19,20 318:5 324:13,15 (36)

amazon 290:15

ame 270:25

amen 164:24 165:10

amenable 151:24

amendment 7:5 8:25 15:12,18 38:24 39:25 40:2,2 57:11 58:2,9 61:12 98:21 101:8 (14)

amendments 5:23 10:6 13:5

38:24 (4)

amenities 126:19 224:23 225:2,7 318:23 (5)

amenity 47:10

ami 30:8 41:21 42:2,3 47:16 48:15 65:4,6,8,12 66:11,12,15 67:21 107:10 114:3 265:21 266:15 282:5,6,17 (21)

ami's 19:23

amis 19:20 66:8,10

among 19:17 42:18,19 177:10 (4)

amount 76:16 102:18,25 105:11 120:9 133:17 138:22,25 139:4 177:16 180:16 242:8 252:4 254:7 262:20 267:11 315:17 (17)

ample 251:16 256:18

analysis 138:10 183:9 306:7 319:13 322:10 (5)

analyze 173:13

analyzed 170:8

anchor 130:9

andor 47:18 100:22 101:14

andrew 143:5

anecdotally

187:16

anhd 264:21,21

ann 90:2 91:16,19

anna 2:10 159:25

anniversary 174:12

announced 111:7 127:18

annual 127:21

another 35:20 53:6,17 176:7 214:7 239:16 248:4 260:9 285:12 (9)

answer 13:10 20:7 21:23 22:20 33:11 65:15 72:3,4 117:4 140:4,16 142:2 161:8 182:11 193:11 221:15 246:20 247:8 252:25 311:24 (20)

answered 30:10 122:21

answering 248:24

answers 47:21 254:4,11,13 305:24 (5)

anticipate 42:13 47:20 273:8 281:15 (4)

anticipated 108:6 183:12

anticipating 51:3

133:24 140:5,15
145:8 148:3
150:24 159:21
175:13 185:7
186:10 198:15
218:11 234:10
249:6 250:17
263:9 268:24
300:11 (23)

backer
172:10,11,13
176:15,16,23,25
178:13,23 179:2
182:5,16 183:15
184:2,19,23
185:14,20 186:7
187:2,11,24
188:20,22,25
190:9 194:17
196:20 197:10
198:16,21,24 (32)

background 52:5

backs 78:9

backside 98:2

backups 157:3

backyards 75:8
79:17

balance 23:11

ball 73:17 153:25
181:15

balls 158:6

baltimore 53:19

bancroft 40:9
43:24

band 65:6 67:17
235:21 239:4 (4)

bands 66:14
67:16 235:19
282:11 (4)

bandwidths
235:11

baptist 84:25
85:11 86:17 95:9
268:20 292:23
296:10 (7)

barone
283:18,21,23
285:23 287:6
288:8 (6)

barrettlayne
286:5 287:12,14

baruch 216:23
217:17

base 17:18 21:8
110:17 133:4 (4)

based 20:5 47:24
48:19,23 52:2
68:9 87:24 101:7
113:3 131:9
144:21 193:13
199:18 236:11
249:7 263:25
267:5 271:23,24
310:15 (20)

basement 50:9

basically 67:7
78:14 121:23
160:18 185:17
255:13 256:12 (7)

basics 190:18

basis 87:8 241:12
278:8

basketball
126:20

bathers 318:21

battery 127:22
275:23

bay 1:4 98:23

100:15,16
108:24,25
125:15,25
126:6,15 127:5,6
128:11 133:24
135:25 136:24
137:11 143:14,25
145:10,15 147:18
150:10 152:10
155:22 156:10
157:18 161:11,22
162:6 163:10,13
164:2 166:2,20
167:9,18,21,23
173:2,13 174:18
175:2 185:18
199:13 201:3,11
204:5,21,25 207:8
208:3 215:11
217:4 218:6
219:5,9 221:4,12
223:3 229:15
240:5,9 241:16
243:18,21
244:12,15 248:9
249:14 257:20
259:2,14 261:5,10
269:5 279:12
284:3 290:19
291:18 294:23
298:25 299:14,21
301:16,25
302:8,10,20
317:15 322:4 (91)

bayley 216:11

beached 205:7

beame 146:16

bear 229:12

beautification
168:10 173:24

beautiful 239:3
278:4 285:18

beauty 244:20

became 217:5
268:22

because 23:9
28:17 37:16
47:4,9 48:13 62:2
66:25 71:8 72:24
85:17 87:20 89:5
90:22 92:19
93:3,21 96:2
101:16 102:4
105:2,7 106:9
107:15 115:20
116:17 117:9,14
121:22 127:15
128:11 129:3
130:5,6 131:15
132:18 135:24
137:13 146:22
151:13 152:23
154:3,23 156:7
162:2,19 163:16
164:13 165:3,7,21
167:14 170:13
184:3 186:18
187:5 188:16
193:17 197:5
201:6 202:16
205:4 206:5
211:13 223:19
225:20 228:17
229:24 234:21
238:5,13,14,23
241:14,19
242:16,18 247:25
251:18 254:12
262:13 263:4,23
265:15
269:9,10,17,23
271:19 274:23
275:5 276:10
277:16 278:9
279:17 283:8
285:10,16 286:7
288:13,18,20
290:7 291:6 293:3
295:5,6,16 296:18
297:10 310:2
313:5,8,16,22
317:21 321:9
(117)

become 126:18
214:10 259:11

becomes 218:4

240:22,24 241:5
(4)

becoming 85:19
192:23

bedroom 42:3
64:23

bedrooms
19:11,14 42:4
64:19 87:25 (5)

bedstuy 53:6

bedtime 215:6
218:3

beef 280:19
301:6 309:23

before 20:3 52:17
100:13 103:8
108:10 109:23
111:21 117:2
136:20 137:24
161:5 186:9 208:5
221:15 232:9
270:11 277:25
278:13 285:16
291:22 309:20
312:24 318:2 (23)

beg 273:15

begged 146:19

begin 137:21

beginning 127:3
137:25 250:4,18
257:11 281:9
285:20 (7)

behalf 13:14 31:8
55:6 57:20 83:17
90:6,8 143:11
186:18 207:6
223:21 308:4,25
(13)

behind 95:25
139:10

being 21:10 24:7 34:11 36:3,14,14 44:16 47:14,20,23 72:18 77:7 86:13,25 98:25 99:6 101:20 105:6 106:23 107:15 116:8 128:21 131:9 134:16 135:7,8,12,12 169:7 181:13 193:2 195:15 200:17 201:7 210:9,20 214:4 224:24 225:9 231:24 233:20 238:18 242:25 247:4,13,24 267:4 281:6 305:8,9 308:17 309:9 316:8 317:23 (54)

believe 31:22 45:24 46:5 49:19 55:11,20 66:20 72:10 75:20 83:22 84:9 88:12 93:21 115:16 124:7 185:2 200:11 207:11 210:6 223:21 229:14 230:12 235:24 237:3 259:25 269:6 303:4 316:7 (28)

believes 31:12 161:4 290:9 302:20 (4)

bell 176:14 202:11 208:25 245:21 260:12 268:5 273:4 278:16 292:13 310:4 319:19 (11)

belongs 70:16

below 42:8 69:3 86:10 231:9 258:17 266:15 282:17 304:4,5 (9)

belowgrade 41:17

benadava 300:19,21,22 302:14 (4)

beneficial 89:5

benefit 89:16 91:6 203:16,18 205:20,25 272:6 316:21 (8)

benefited 219:18

benefiting 119:10

benefits 56:12 111:13 112:2 131:25 174:3 200:18 208:7 (7)

bernice 264:14 268:12,19

berth 54:10,13,15,16 (4)

beseech 307:20

besides 261:16

best 69:15 113:5,23 115:8 190:18 240:3 (6)

bethel 298:23

better 32:9 76:5 112:21 118:6 127:9 137:10 142:2 146:23 149:20 154:13,21 167:22 219:14 227:23 245:18 285:14 (16)

betty 289:19 292:19,22

between 18:5 40:8 48:14 49:5

58:19,20 60:10 61:7,9,14,17 87:24 88:18 90:12 92:5 95:15 137:11 158:9 180:8 232:25 244:7 299:5 312:14 320:9 (24)

beyond 50:4 73:7 129:16 131:12,21 174:22 (6)

bfc 208:18 279:2,2

bicycle 43:5 49:11,17 50:2 (4)

bicyclists 167:11

big 52:2 58:12 65:22,22 80:15 110:14 146:20 147:15,15 150:19 154:10 168:24 199:22 237:8 257:3,4 285:17 (17)

bigbox 60:3 71:2

bigger 280:18

biggest 114:4,5 133:9,14 236:21 255:10,20 279:6 315:24 (9)

bike 44:4 50:22,24,25 51:9,10,21,22 52:3 78:2 82:4 128:6 135:3 144:4,6 152:6 167:10,12 168:9,16,19,24 169:13,14 (24)

bikeable 145:20

bikes 169:7,11 171:2

billboard 28:13

billboards 28:19

billions 200:20,22

bishop 88:11 89:25 90:5,6 91:10 (5)

bit 20:12 22:4 49:14 52:7 65:19 117:14 140:25 180:8 185:10 233:14 242:7,16 251:18 277:7 (14)

blaise 172:10,13 188:21

blasio 147:2 312:5

blasio's 219:11

blight 41:6

blinds 79:19

block 21:2 58:18,20,22 60:13 61:9,13 79:20,24 81:10 85:22 91:21 100:5 217:10 234:9 259:14 (16)

blocks 23:21 40:12 49:2 59:6,9 88:17 90:11 92:5 95:14 235:20 293:23 (11)

blondell 5:23

blood 324:14

bloomberg 146:16 312:13

blowing 320:24

blue 264:6

board 19:24 27:2 30:15 45:3,5 66:8 68:10 87:21 89:4 90:5,19 92:18 95:7 100:24 102:11 112:24 114:6,22,23 118:4 121:4,13 122:23,25 146:2 205:9,10 216:18 252:25 253:11 268:22 275:19 276:16 312:20,25 313:7 315:21 (37)

board's 65:23 70:15 134:7

boat 147:2,24 154:10

boats 157:6

body 318:11

bomb 157:4

bond 126:4

bonus 101:17 105:10

boom 237:19

boon 147:15

boots 157:11

born 234:9

borne 265:5

borough 5:18 6:24 8:23 10:2 11:13 12:16,20,24 19:25 27:21 28:17 29:15 32:23 35:15 38:16 45:4 57:6 68:10 98:13 115:23 121:4 131:4 136:11 143:9 145:2 146:3 152:13 157:25

162:7,11,12
171:20 174:8,16
177:5 188:2
201:18,18 223:22
231:5 233:14
236:14 242:20
292:3 312:6,15
313:4 (47)

boroughs 125:18
143:23 237:14
242:13 316:3 (5)

both 14:25 16:23
20:3 22:23 40:5
54:7 72:10 75:16
76:16 115:24
127:8 136:10
139:2 156:16,19
162:11 167:7
177:18 179:18
191:17 192:18
193:16 251:19
266:16 270:3
287:21 305:6
310:7 319:18
321:24 (30)

bottom 42:10
43:4 49:13

boulders 161:10

boulevard
13:6,25
14:2,11,13,22,24
15:14 21:4 58:7
59:5,10,12,19,24
60:6,15 63:8
70:5,18
77:9,13,15,16,17
78:12,18
80:5,6,16,19
81:20,25 85:23
89:7 90:24 150:11
157:19 165:19
167:24 300:25
(41)

bound 161:24

boundary 18:5
61:16 63:11,13 (4)

bounded 14:2

bourne
296:5,6,8,9 298:11
(5)

bowling 153:25

box 78:12,18

boy 319:24

brand 133:21

brave 189:16
287:7

breach 175:15

break 17:2
154:16

breakdown
30:9,9 186:12

breaks 240:20

breathes 48:5

breathing 48:4,9

breeze 242:14

brew 197:25

breweries 196:23
197:4

brewery 125:25
197:2 198:14,15
(4)

brick 16:23
17:21 69:17,24,24
(5)

bridge 85:13
308:17

briefing 166:18

briggs 270:18
274:14,16,17

275:10 283:22
286:3,6,7 287:5,9
(11)

brighton 287:19

brilliant 308:20

brimming 244:19

bring 47:10 84:9
98:5 133:6
140:5,15 143:19
147:23 148:3
149:21 176:7
179:22 217:20
228:2 244:13
247:5 255:14
262:22 265:10
268:24 292:11
321:3,4 (23)

bringing 66:10
241:10 287:6
303:17 (4)

brings 208:4

broad 216:12
248:12

broadbased
127:25

broader
129:16,20 221:13

broadest 267:13

broadway 1:8
3:7 5:9 58:23,25
153:6 (6)

broken 22:5

bronx 5:18 12:25
13:24 19:25 32:8
54:4 211:11 (7)

brooklyn 6:24
8:23 10:2 32:23
33:15 35:15
36:4,17 38:16

42:20 53:15
130:15 131:8
147:15 211:11
217:18 276:12
308:17 316:18
(19)

brought 151:5
278:10

brown 324:8

bruckner 13:6,25
14:2,6,11,13,22,24
15:14 17:8 21:3
22:2 28:18 29:3
31:11,19 (16)

bubble 291:8

buenas 212:25

build 39:13 41:2
55:14 83:24 104:9
126:3 201:23
203:25 206:8
211:23 239:2,7
248:19,20,25
250:21 252:14,15
257:25 264:23
279:20 292:10
309:19 314:7 (24)

building 15:3
16:17,20
17:3,6,8,17,21,23
18:21,22,25
19:7,18 20:25
22:22 28:4,7 32:5
34:14,24,25 36:9
37:14 39:12,19
41:13 42:9 43:9
44:9,16 48:7
50:14,16 52:8
53:12 55:13 56:8
57:25 61:23
63:9,15,20 64:13
68:11,22,25
69:4,18 70:4
72:19,24 74:16
75:10,14,17,18
76:15,18 77:15
78:11 79:7,10,20

80:3,12 81:11,12
82:10 83:24
84:5,7 88:21
89:17 91:3
92:9,21 94:15
95:16 96:4 97:22
98:3 101:16,19,20
102:23 105:6
110:5 119:18,20
120:15 125:24
137:4,20,22
164:22 172:20
192:21 207:15
208:16,22 216:4
227:14,17
228:3,23 240:16
250:22 277:25
278:4 289:2
290:24 315:4
321:19 (114)

building's 63:6

buildings
16:4,16,23 18:2
48:3 54:3 55:11
59:23 60:3,20
73:5,6 75:2 78:16
80:7,10,15
81:14,15,16 83:21
94:6,13 105:7
111:18 180:9
205:12 207:9
208:11 240:17
250:13 276:11
293:12 317:16
318:22 321:15,24
322:5 (38)

buildout 220:5
249:3 252:19

built 110:13
113:20 124:24
135:7 136:4
137:20 161:19
162:4 170:10,11
171:13,15 180:17
208:14 209:3
240:19 250:24
252:12 266:15
271:16 293:12
321:19 322:5 (23)

140:7,17 146:7,8,10,12,14,18 147:5,12,21 148:5,7 157:20 158:14,15,21 159:10,16,19 184:15,17,20 185:11,17 186:5,24 187:5,8,10,15 188:16 198:11 203:9,10 215:8 218:9,10 224:5,6,14,16 260:14,15,21 261:7,11 273:7,9,13,18 306:22 (100)

cappelli's 140:23 279:24

captain 202:22

capture 200:21,23

car 40:19 168:20

card 3:12

care 25:4 34:10 36:11,13 290:4 295:13 (6)

career 162:3 175:18 275:21

careerbuilding 202:21

careers 202:24

careful 98:2 103:23 182:7 231:25 321:14 (5)

carrillo 55:3,4,6

carry 30:14 205:4

cars 147:24

149:14 157:5 159:12 166:15 (5)

cart 309:21

carting 164:15

casandra 233:11

case 113:21 130:18 159:3 192:18 195:11 198:3 267:7 299:18,20 (9)

cases 24:10,12 123:5

cassie 55:2,6

casso 33:4,10 34:25

cast 75:18 79:14 321:17

casting 318:23 321:19

castle 14:14 21:5 26:22 27:4,8 (5)

catching 245:16

catchment 169:3,8

categories 181:25 182:18 311:5

categorize 148:24

category 182:3

catering 9:2

caught 165:25

caused 297:19

causing 295:10 299:7

caution 235:18

cb3 45:2

cd1c180530zmq 57:8

cd1c190113zmr 98:15

cd1n190083zrk 7:2

cd3c190160hak 38:18

cd3n190066rcr 11:14

cd5c190182pqk 35:16

cd6c180294zmk 10:3

cd9 30:19

cd9c190102zmx 13:2

cdna 177:8,21 179:5,8 186:12 (5)

cdna's 173:20

cecilia 125:9,12 130:22 142:17 (4)

cell 3:10

cellar 18:9,12,13 22:23 42:25 51:10 62:18 64:3 (8)

cement 167:5,11

center 15:15 22:2 24:22 34:2,8 36:5 53:3 76:7 126:6 151:4,9,13,20 156:15 169:5 175:3,19,25 188:9 192:7 203:11

204:2 221:3 222:11 224:11,13 298:24 301:8 (28)

centerbased 36:10

centers 174:25 175:18 196:14

central 267:15 292:23 296:10

certain 170:4 182:18 195:18 281:23 315:16 (5)

certainly 25:19 27:6 28:12 103:19 106:11,11 112:15 122:11 136:10 137:13 148:18 178:15 182:17 184:7,10,12 186:14,22 187:25 188:2,4,14 193:23 194:25 195:20 197:15,17 198:8 222:19 223:9,22 229:3 237:20,24 240:23 241:12 282:24 (37)

certification 11:16 72:23 112:8 175:8 (4)

certified 233:13 299:12

certify 262:9 324:10,13

cerullo 2:7 3:23,24 6:8,9 7:15,16 9:10,11 10:15,16 11:24,25 104:7,8,17,23 105:3,19,23 106:2,5,9 116:2,3 117:19 120:2,6,20,23 121:20 122:7,18

130:21,22 132:5 134:3 135:14,24 136:20 138:4,7 139:12,15,18 142:16,17,22 148:8,9,11,14,20 149:5,8 150:3 152:11,16 153:7 154:22 155:3,6,11,14,18 156:2 158:12 159:20,21,25 160:10,14,18,21,24 161:14,17,20 162:18,23 163:6,15 164:5,21,25 165:15 166:10,13 169:19,20,25 170:20,23 171:4,16,22 184:16 188:21,23 189:2 193:10 198:17 215:7 221:18,19 222:17 223:6 225:11,12 227:19 228:6 229:5 236:6,7,10 237:24 238:3 239:10,12,18 247:11,12,15 250:3,17,20 252:8,11,24 253:10,16,18 255:23,24 256:4,15,22 257:5 258:23 278:19 305:13,14,20 306:21 311:25 (145)

cetera 157:6,7 171:18,19 310:24 (5)

chair 2:4 3:17 6:2 7:9 9:4 10:9 11:18 13:11 30:11 31:6 33:6 43:13 45:11 55:4 57:18 69:6 83:12 90:4 91:25 97:15 99:19 108:19 125:11

172:11 206:24 209:12 215:3 218:22 233:9 275:18 276:16 277:18 292:21 294:21 306:20 310:11 323:6 (37)

chaired 277:18

chairman 2:5 3:19 6:4 7:11 9:6 10:11 11:20 (7)

chairperson 90:7 91:18 95:6

chairwoman 275:16

challenge 30:21 162:6 236:21

challenges 148:22 156:12 190:23 233:20 298:18 302:22 306:10 (7)

challenging 168:18 215:2

chamber 173:11,18 176:6 179:20,25 184:25 185:22 186:17 192:8,10,19 (11)

chance 8:4 11:2 161:24 162:8 235:16 244:16 (6)

change 15:12,20,21 58:2 61:11 72:13 79:7 102:22 208:8 306:10 (10)

changed 82:8

changes 20:4 81:12,18 123:8 127:7 160:4

168:4,5 195:2 267:20 (10)

chapter 319:8

character 76:19 77:7,11,12 (4)

characterized 59:22 60:2

charge 262:21

chasing 276:8

chatterton 14:4,22,25 16:17 (4)

check 66:21 72:9

chief 33:8 35:24

child 33:9 35:25 271:18

childcare 34:4 36:6 180:24

children 34:14 36:23 37:4 206:13 225:18 274:24 275:2 288:3 295:11 297:21 299:24 300:2 301:22 (13)

chill 176:19

choice 113:14

choose 266:11

choosing 87:6,15

chorus 4:24 5:12 268:17

chris 257:12 264:14,18

christine 35:21

church 85:2,11 86:17 88:15 90:9 95:9,10 199:15 268:20 269:10,16 270:25 271:10 289:2 292:23 293:16 296:10,15 298:4,25 299:3 (21)

churches 209:21 271:4 287:16

cinema 174:9

circled 59:4

circles 235:17

circulation 149:2

circumstances 196:24

cited 122:14 194:21 259:10

cites 259:15

cities 197:17 226:17

citizen 102:19

citizens 102:18 293:9 294:5

city 1:3,3 3:2,5,6 5:8,22 38:23 39:9,13,15 45:6 53:4 55:15,23 56:7,10 68:2 73:2 77:24 83:21,25 85:13 99:2,7,10 101:24 102:8 107:7 108:20 109:12 110:4,11 112:25 113:24 118:2,19 119:21,24,24 127:20,22 129:12,25 131:12 132:7,9 133:18

134:18 136:22 143:10,10 144:9 149:18 151:16 155:20 170:7 171:5 172:12 174:25 183:18 186:2 188:11 191:23 194:3,12,13 200:13,16 202:6 203:13,15 205:20,22 206:12 207:16,24 208:20 209:24 210:7 212:3 214:11 217:16 218:23 219:3,6,13,17,24 221:8 222:5,16 226:13,23 227:16,24 229:19 231:7,10 233:12 240:2 241:2 246:13,21 252:13 257:20 259:5,23 260:9 262:13 263:11 264:22 267:10,24 270:8 272:18,21,22 273:2,14,21 275:23 276:19 282:20 287:24 290:15,22 294:8 299:12 303:20 304:4,14,24 306:5,9 307:20 308:8 313:9,23 315:14 320:10 321:2 (142)

city's 118:9 187:20 189:11 211:3 271:23 (5)

cityowned 39:25 98:22 170:6,7 171:5 201:13 260:25 (7)

citywide 56:9 192:8 229:11 255:3 306:7 (5)

civic 243:15

306:24 307:3,9 312:9,18 315:20 (7)

claimed 210:3

claims 209:25

clarified 267:6

clarify 107:14 212:16 243:17

class 133:22 291:14

classes 290:12

classroom 33:23

classrooms 36:25 37:2

clean 55:10 83:21

cleaner 207:2

cleaning 174:2

clear 43:25 44:9 117:15 130:4 139:25 185:5 196:9 322:2 (8)

clearly 3:15 44:13 101:2 138:15 239:22 316:15 (6)

client 20:16

climate 306:10

climbing 293:4

clinic 245:4

clinton 53:7

clock 58:13 254:8

close 15:10 26:11 27:7 74:8 78:3

125:25 127:14
133:16 212:5
214:22 235:10
288:24 (12)

closed 32:22
35:14 38:15 57:5
98:12 323:4 (6)

closely 20:3
172:22 220:4,16
221:7 (5)

closer 66:10
114:10 127:5
214:9,9 215:5
280:13 (7)

closing 235:24

clothing 179:17
184:8

cloudy 318:6

clubs 209:20

clued 321:11

coalition 199:12
209:17 211:25
257:16 261:17
264:21 268:22,23
270:21 272:8
275:4 284:2
287:17 296:11
298:7 (15)

coast 308:18

cochair 271:5

cocola 125:10
143:5,7,8
146:9,11,13,17
147:4,11,20
148:4,6,10,12,19
149:4,7 150:2,6
152:15,21 153:8 1
55:2,5,10,13,17,25
156:11 158:13,20
159:9,15,18
160:9,13,16,20,23

161:7,15,18,21
162:22 163:5,14
164:4,20,24
165:10,13,17
166:25 168:6,21
169:2,15,18,24
170:19,22
171:3,10,18
172:4,5 (67)

code 50:16 73:2,3

cohesive 132:20

cold 318:22
319:2 320:18

colder 320:20

collapsed 221:3

colleague 100:17
283:20

colleagues 114:8
310:5 313:22

collected 179:5
184:24 185:2

collective 136:22

collectively 136:6

college 152:22,23
216:20,25
217:6,7,9,12,13,18
218:12 300:3 (12)

colleges 299:25

color 266:3

colors 17:21
69:24 290:12

column 42:5

combined
251:5,11,13
252:3,20 256:13
(6)

combines 251:14

come 20:21 32:19
35:10 38:12 57:2
97:14 98:10
107:11 108:2
124:8 130:16
138:18 145:8
147:21,24 149:22
153:18 154:10
159:21 168:15
183:5,6,20 191:11
197:23 201:24
205:22 233:19
261:24 263:9
270:11 297:11
298:19 299:3
300:11 310:8
312:13,18 313:22
322:20 (40)

comes 82:9
223:18

comfortable 96:8

coming 78:4
80:15 118:25
120:22 149:13,15
151:8 161:22
165:8 178:16
190:24 192:25
203:5 205:16,17
220:11 230:5
288:11 296:3
317:10 (20)

commands
272:17

commend 267:9

comment 160:25
305:14

comments 8:15
45:7 87:4 99:4
137:2 157:21
188:2 208:21
232:25 310:16
322:25 (11)

commerce

173:11,18 192:10

commercial
14:12 15:23 16:2
17:7,12 20:12 21:
3,5,9,17,18,20,20,
24 22:10,12,24
23:4,7,13 24:6,15
25:3,16 39:21
41:14 42:12 43:22
46:12 47:18 50:7
52:19 54:19 59:15
60:23 61:23 62:20
63:18 70:23
100:22 101:14
115:12,19,21
120:12 128:21,23
129:7,15,16,21
130:10 141:4
164:15
173:8,12,14
174:15 175:10
177:18 178:19
180:11 181:9,15
184:21 185:6,9,25
187:22 190:12
193:22 197:5
208:10 234:13
240:11 244:24
251:3 (77)

commission
3:3,5,6 5:8 6:8
8:16 23:18,24
31:7 49:25 55:5
83:13 99:2 108:20
114:16 115:17
128:25 172:12
196:20 206:25
214:11 218:23
232:4,20 259:23
270:8 274:3
275:17 294:8
313:9,23 (31)

commissioner 2:
7,8,9,10,11,12,13
3:21,23,25
4:3,5,7,9,11,13,15
6:6,10,12,14,16,18
,20
7:13,15,17,19,21
8:14,17,19 9:8,10,

12,14,16,18,20,22
10:13,15,17,19,21
11:5,7,9,22,24
12:2,4,6,8,10,12
20:10 22:8 27:20
30:4 34:21 37:10
46:11,25 49:9
52:4 54:8 65:16
68:8 70:10 71:19
77:4 86:23 88:13
94:2 102:6 106:22
108:5 112:13
114:19 116:2
122:19 123:12
128:16 130:21
139:20 140:19,23
142:7,16 143:9
146:7,8 148:8,13
157:20 159:20
166:12 169:19
172:14 176:21
196:21 198:12
203:9,20 212:12
215:7 216:13
218:9 221:18
224:5 225:11
229:7 231:22
236:6,9
239:14,15,20
246:17 247:11
254:22 255:23
258:12,22 260:14
261:12 273:7
279:24 281:5
305:13 306:21,22
311:25 314:25
316:5,23 320:2
321:7,25 (140)

commissioners
13:12 20:9 33:7
39:8 43:14 57:18
88:14 99:20
125:12 177:16
184:15 200:4
206:24 209:13
233:10 246:12
292:22 294:22
300:22 306:21
(20)

commit 31:19
32:10 56:16 83:23

282:8 (5)

commitment
66:17,21,23
67:6,11,18,20
207:16 232:4
248:17 315:4 (11)

commitments
231:25 232:3

committed 56:4
62:25 65:2 66:10
72:21 84:4 86:3
125:17 162:14
189:16 221:4
279:8 (12)

committee 45:3,5
219:22 271:6
307:19 (5)

committing
123:23 124:17

commodity 237:9

common 75:5
213:19

commonly
280:17

commons 5:23

communities
44:18 53:8 123:3
136:10 148:17
149:18 195:4
200:15 263:18
308:23 (10)

community
13:24 19:24 24:13
25:2 26:9 27:2
30:14,14,19
32:2,3,7 39:21
41:16 42:16,25
46:4 47:10,18
48:24,25 51:12,23
53:5,6,9 58:7
60:25 61:23
62:10,24 63:4,21

65:10,23 66:8
67:7,8 68:10
70:15 74:12 76:22
78:21 84:8
86:5,8,14 87:20
88:4,15,23 89:4
90:15,19
92:10,18,23
93:7,10 96:21,22
100:23,24 101:14
102:10,11
103:9,18 106:19
107:4 112:23
113:23
114:6,22,22 116:9
117:5,6,7,20
118:3,4,6
121:4,9,13
122:15,17,23,24
125:3 129:8
132:10 134:6
137:2 145:8,22
146:2 156:3
164:12 171:8
173:6 174:6,14
175:24 179:11,23
180:19 188:18
193:21,24 194:20
195:4 199:12,15
200:7,17 205:10
213:15,18
217:9,23
219:17,19,24
221:13,23 222:4
223:10,15,22
225:24 226:6,23
232:12,12,21
234:14,18 236:2
244:14 248:14
252:25 253:11
258:4,15 260:3,22
264:22,23 265:3
268:2,25 269:3,9
270:10 272:2,7
275:19,24 276:16
278:2 279:23
283:2 285:3
290:5,11,18
292:12 301:11
302:10 307:21
312:20,25 313:7
315:18,21 (177)

community's
52:2 106:7 219:15
221:6 223:2
224:25 290:14 (7)

communitybased
120:25 172:23

commute 145:13

commuters 291:3

commuting
168:17

companies 39:17
54:2 56:4 285:17
(4)

company 233:11
242:18

comparable
197:18

compared
109:11,13 211:9

compares 229:10

comparison
79:24 88:3

compatible 50:15

compelled 284:7
296:13

compelling
274:10

competition
318:15

competitive
173:17

complaints
297:19

complement
168:4

complete 132:25
220:20 312:23

completed 84:6
224:19 297:16

completely
137:25 139:8
154:19 165:13
182:12 260:5 (6)

completing 53:16

completion
134:13

complex 75:20
83:15 215:25

compliance 72:2
166:7 176:6

complications
171:12

component 27:13
30:13 45:23 48:16
143:15 152:18
197:23 (7)

comprehensive
63:3 152:5 304:14
305:5 (4)

comprised 39:16

comprises 290:20

comps 242:4

concentrate 70:3

concentrated
63:6

concept 104:11
151:3 291:6

concern 22:18
26:20 28:16 68:11
71:16 75:9 136:12
138:10 150:24
177:15 181:18

189:24 236:15
242:7 265:5 291:5
(16)

concerned 7:22
81:19,23 82:12
128:20 237:10
301:13,15 (8)

concerning 5:23
7:6 9:2 10:6 11:16
12:16,17,21 13:5
33:2 35:18 39:2
57:11 98:23 100:2
297:3 (16)

concerns 22:10
27:22 31:9 43:18
55:7 65:23 70:16
74:15 115:21
140:23 145:5
182:12 219:20
265:2 269:5
270:10 292:11
303:8 307:17 (19)

concert 174:7

concession
227:14

concessionaire
228:2,19

conclude 230:16

concludes 20:6
65:14 75:12

conclusion 305:3

concourse 3:7
5:9

concrete 232:14
262:4

concur 8:15

condenses 48:8

condition 170:13
180:4,6

conditions 180:2 245:19,20 251:14 295:5 297:8 313:8 (7)

condo 257:25

conduct 173:11 185:23

conducted 144:15 179:20

conducting 111:20 118:10 185:25

confidence 208:24

confident 27:14 230:14

confine 249:22

confirm 72:12

conforming 72:11

congestion 82:9 304:16

congregant 269:22

congregants 87:13 91:3 271:9

congregation 89:15 269:2 288:13 298:6 (4)

congregations 269:9

congress 215:19

conjunction 99:3

connect 131:7,11 132:11 188:10 193:4 204:3

237:14 244:14 (8)

connected 120:6 145:15 223:11 250:23 (4)

connecting 44:10 127:24 172:19 191:22 221:21 (5)

connection 50:10

connectivity 44:5 132:17 135:4 144:7 242:13 (5)

connector 241:18

connects 174:10 175:20

cons 251:12,12

consecutive 158:4

conservation 73:2

consider 11:2 130:12 162:16 227:16 230:20 238:18 266:2 289:12 300:13 (9)

considerable 180:16

consideration 78:11 160:5 212:9 249:6,16 288:22 300:7 (7)

considerations 29:4

considered 24:13,25 68:13 160:3 318:14 (5)

considering 47:16 94:18 137:6

consists 23:25 40:5 41:12

constant 297:10

constantly 151:11

constructed 110:11 250:10

construction 53:13,14,17 110:15 120:15 126:23 134:8 137:22 304:21,25 (10)

consultation 121:3

contact 119:23 121:2 235:18

contain 16:6 90:14

contains 77:25

contemplate 69:11

contemplated 21:24 22:15 23:3 62:20 224:17 (5)

context 106:13 223:19 258:5

contingent 305:7

continually 293:6

continue 36:8 67:5 72:7 183:19 188:3 220:24 221:7 235:25 256:11 263:12 319:13 (11)

continued 33:25 36:3

continues 116:9 219:23 222:3

continuing 143:16 175:23 223:23

continuity 241:15

continuous 43:22 181:11 220:13 240:15,21 (5)

contract 34:15 37:5 121:19 175:16 192:9 259:17,19 (7)

contracted 34:6 36:10

contractor 36:20

contractors 121:15 166:5

contracts 121:16

contrast 189:4

control 50:13,17 129:12

convened 174:16 199:13

conversation 107:11 188:15 195:20 223:24 248:11 (5)

conversations 107:4 222:5,14,15 227:23 228:4,17,19 263:10 271:25 281:14 282:19,21 320:9 (14)

conversion 224:17

convert 145:19 299:15

converted 215:21 257:22

cool 318:6,20

cooler 317:25

cooling 48:8

coordinator 209:15 264:19

copies 199:6

corner 14:20 58:25 63:7 70:4 89:6 90:22 (6)

corners 63:19

corona 85:2 90:9

corporation 115:18 125:14

correct 72:15 117:19 212:17 224:9,15 230:25 239:10 322:12 (8)

corrected 267:6

corridor 1:4 22:13 59:15 71:3 98:23 100:15,17 108:24 109:2 120:16 129:6 135:25 136:2 143:15 145:13,20 155:22 173:13,16 174:20 175:2 178:11 181:12,16 182:20 185:9 189:15 199:14 201:3,11 202:4,9,16 204:6 215:11 217:4 218:6 219:5,9 221:12 229:15 240:14 241:17

243:19,21 244:12
245:17 248:9
269:6 281:2 284:3
290:20 301:17
302:2,9,10,20
307:5 309:18,20
317:16 (61)

corridor's 221:5

corridors 154:20
167:14 197:5
206:3 (4)

cortÉs 39:7

cortés 39:4,8

corwin 84:21
88:10,16

cos 72:10

cost 196:18
222:14 227:24

costs 299:6

costsaving
175:22

cotton 90:2
91:16,19 93:19
94:25 (5)

could 20:11
23:12 24:4
33:15,20 34:14
50:17 51:14 54:11
58:13 68:4
69:7,10 76:11,15
77:10 89:16 92:25
97:17 98:4 101:10
105:23,24 106:15
113:20 114:15
116:10 117:13
121:9 124:8
131:22 140:24
141:18 147:24
154:4 161:4 165:3
168:24 171:6
177:19 193:25
202:18 203:3

204:17 206:4,5,14
208:11,12
216:22,23
225:7,21 228:8
229:3,9 235:8
250:22 257:24
265:10 267:17,20
271:19 272:22
286:21,22 302:13
303:7 309:18
310:16,18 321:19
(72)

couldn't 170:14
284:6,8 286:12
296:18 (5)

council 45:6
91:25 101:24
162:3 271:4
287:16 312:11 (7)

councilman
215:19 312:11

councilmember
27:2 102:12
115:23 119:4
121:3,13 146:3
174:16 276:21
313:3 (10)

councilmember's
226:22

councilmemberfu
nded 224:19

councilmembers
282:20

councilmembers'
219:25

councilwoman's
136:12

counsel 261:25
279:2

counseling 111:9

country 55:10

county 324:6

couple 106:25
116:4 170:17
179:7 190:9,15
195:12 275:25
279:22 289:3
313:17 (11)

course 24:24,25
27:12,14 50:14
79:13 85:7 107:20
116:11 149:22
156:5 177:8 188:8
217:15 232:11
248:10 249:9 (17)

courses 175:6

court 11:16
211:18 262:18,23
(4)

courtesy 3:8

courtyard
76:8,10,14 174:7
(4)

cousin 284:15

cover 30:2 64:2
69:20

coverage 37:17
74:24 319:12

covered 132:22

covering 69:22

covers 242:15

cowrote 312:10

cpc 267:25

crash 170:21

crazy 140:2

create 16:25
55:21 56:13 89:11

95:16 96:25
102:23 111:3
112:17 122:3
131:25 161:12
188:14 201:21,25
221:11 267:20
277:13 291:8
304:24 (20)

created 110:9,17
187:22 212:2
272:11 276:18
286:16 (7)

creates 24:10
27:9 32:6 47:7
162:20 (5)

creating 25:15
31:13,14 171:6
209:2 (5)

creation 8:6
111:7 129:24
243:23 304:6 (5)

creativity 243:23

credible 208:21

credit 312:5,7

cries 270:10

crime 278:7

crisis 156:4 299:7

critical 110:20
111:6 131:17
136:9 137:13
148:21 163:22
234:24 303:2
304:8 305:9 (11)

critiqued 310:24
311:4

cromwell 199:12
203:11,12,13,14
206:8 221:2,24
222:3,24 225:3
301:7 (12)

cross 22:2

crossover 235:15

crown 33:14
36:18,21

crucial 109:23

cultural 169:5
202:4

cuny
216:18,21,22,24
(4)

curious 52:6
321:14,18

current 15:13
71:25 121:11
124:11 162:11
185:9 191:6
208:13 214:13
215:22 217:22
234:21 244:15
245:19 252:16
272:20 287:15
292:7 295:9
303:10 320:8 (21)

currently 23:21
24:20 34:5 38:2
41:5 54:3 61:2
71:23 82:25 100:8
180:9,10 184:4,6
187:14 188:13
195:23 227:4
234:10,22 243:20
265:16,23 271:4
275:20 284:4
300:2 305:5 (28)

curve 155:23
241:14

customers 43:25
44:6 154:10

cut 116:15 117:3

cv12c180171zmk
8:24

cycling 144:8

cyclist 144:3

d'amore 13:9,16

dabar 39:16 41:8
52:16 56:3 (4)

dahlia 292:19
294:19,19,23 (4)

danger 309:9

dangerous
140:13
159:13,13,14 (4)

data 113:5
114:4,16 144:22
156:8 179:5,19
184:24 186:3,8
271:24 299:9 (12)

date 49:7 50:18
53:16

daughter 284:18
287:23 288:4
294:25 (4)

daughters 274:18
287:20 296:21

david 57:16,22
69:15

davis 234:10

dawanna 39:4
41:7 52:15

day 98:10 150:25
178:8 218:11
234:15 237:5
270:12 274:25
289:11,14 299:3
310:2 317:24
318:20 319:4,4,6
320:20,21 324:18
(20)

daycare 24:19,22

26:2 34:2 36:5 (5)

days 144:23
147:6 158:4
307:23 313:10
317:18 319:5,13
320:18 (9)

dcas 33:10

dcp 265:15 304:5

de 2:8 3:25 4:2
6:10,11 7:17,18
9:12,13 10:17,18
12:2,3 30:4,5
46:25 47:2
65:16,17 66:17
67:4,22 86:23,24
88:5 106:22,23
108:4 112:13,14
113:25 114:17
147:2 187:7,9,13
203:20,21 204:10
212:12,13,18
219:11 258:12
261:12,13 263:15
281:5,6,15 282:12
283:4,8,12 312:5
320:2,3,7 321:6
(59)

deacon 264:14
268:11,20 270:13
292:23 296:5,9,9
298:6,10 (10)

dead 47:7

deal 74:13
149:10 159:17
165:4 189:6,11,12
210:7 212:6
263:24 295:18
(11)

dealing 96:2
254:2

dealt 223:10

dear 86:16 90:7

debate 223:7

debi 276:21

deborah 287:13
289:18,21

debra
283:18,21,23

dec 67:13

decade 233:16

decades 299:5

decent 289:5

decide 214:6

decided 144:22
188:5 269:19

decision 113:15

decisions 228:14

deck 73:8 320:25

decked 18:18
63:25

decking 18:7
64:2

declaration
67:14

decrease 230:10
291:14 304:3

decreasing
229:22

dedicated 43:9
233:14 291:10

deep 41:24
195:13,13 266:23
267:3 285:13 (6)

deeper 101:4
107:21 190:11

192:21 300:7 (5)

deepest 200:25
263:20 266:22
267:13 282:16 (5)

deeply 48:13
290:4 294:11

deficiencies
252:9,18,22 254:3
303:3 305:9 (6)

deficit 226:10
232:7 303:17

defied 290:8

define 260:7

defined 40:15
134:16 244:3

definitely 30:6
85:14 86:18 87:18
88:2,2 89:16
105:24 162:8,16
167:13 223:14
286:14 (13)

definitions
116:24

degree 177:5

degrees 287:21
318:5,10,14,15
319:23 (6)

deis 149:3 151:4
229:13 231:20
232:23,25 265:7
303:24 (8)

delayed 291:3

deliver 127:9,20
200:13 222:15
232:2 261:9 (6)

delivered 206:12
220:9

delivering 221:5

deloach 246:16
278:22 283:18,19
(4)

demand 27:10
87:19 102:20
103:19 123:20
141:19 178:7
179:15,22 181:19
183:13 184:8
223:24 272:12
(14)

demands 141:22
272:8

demographic
311:17

demographics
201:3

denise 302:16
306:16

dennis 74:5 79:2

density 58:2
70:16,20,22 71:16
105:9 110:14
139:4 149:11
235:5,8 240:25
276:25 278:10
280:5,25 282:7
(17)

dep 139:8,16
246:21 253:24 (4)

dep's 250:7

department 1:3
25:8 39:9 50:15
99:23 100:9
108:22 119:13
143:11 151:16
160:3 163:18
172:15 182:4
219:3,17,23 221:3
222:7,20 224:18
226:12 246:13

280:8 299:12 305:17 308:9 320:4,10 (29)

department's 247:21

departure 108:7

depending 133:24

depends 122:11

deploy 124:13

depth 15:15 61:19 63:20 260:3 (4)

deputy 172:14 196:20 218:25 246:17 (4)

derived 105:17

describe 109:19 228:4

described 229:25

describes 75:6

describing 131:18

desert 46:23

deserve 32:3 55:24 312:5

deserves 32:8 312:7

design 13:20 43:12,17 57:25 72:19,21 73:9 75:20 76:15 126:22 127:9 134:5,23 135:2 145:6 220:5 252:17,22 (18)

designated 39:12,16 76:9

designation 29:11 38:22 39:23 98:21 100:4 (5)

designed 34:3 36:5 44:16 72:25 75:17,23 76:7 154:4 (8)

designing 180:15

desirable 106:18

desire 101:2,4 177:9

desires 113:23

desperate 302:11

desperately 309:6,7

despite 291:13

destinations 145:24

destruction 292:7

detailed 30:8 114:16

details 29:23 41:9 43:12 230:14 244:21,21 247:7 320:8 (8)

detect 44:23

detention 49:16

determine 48:21

determined 46:16 49:6 65:6,20 235:19 272:3 (6)

detriment 290:24

devastate 79:11

devastation 288:14

develop 40:24 100:14 124:6,19 152:4 173:8 249:11,13,20 304:15 (10)

developed 25:2 121:2 131:10 224:24 225:9 249:12 250:5 267:16 (8)

developer 31:18 32:10 56:10,16 76:11 86:2 87:5 258:7,9 279:3 (10)

developers 31:24 52:25 56:2 83:23 84:3 124:5 132:5 208:6,15 266:10 272:5 281:10 290:21 291:4 299:15 314:6 (16)

developing 21:14,15 23:21 53:8,10 54:3 109:25 126:13 225:8 246:24 248:22 249:4 251:22 275:23 (14)

development 13:14,23 14:8,15 16:4,5,6,15 23:20 31:10,21 39:10,11,14,17 40:4,6,9 41:8 44:7,10 52:7,16 53:25 55:8,17,18,21,23 56:3,6 60:10,17,18,21 61:15,19,21,24

62:7,14 71:22 73:17 74:9 76:21 84:6,9 88:20 90:13,16 91:8 92:7,12 99:24 100:4 101:9 105:16 107:17 108:23 115:17 123:21,25 124:5,9,10 125:2,14,23 127:4,11 129:7 130:8,13 132:7 136:2 138:19 146:22 147:16 148:15 165:5 172:15 177:17 187:23 189:25 191:25 193:20 199:22 200:15,16 201:12,13 204:20 205:20 206:10 207:24 219:2 220:8 234:11 235:3 236:19 239:8 240:11 242:22 247:23 248:5,8,9 249:10 250:2 254:14 256:23 264:21 272:9 281:23 290:23 299:19,21 304:18 310:19 315:15 322:12 (121)

developments 26:15 55:12 149:23 150:22 207:19 279:5 (6)

devices 3:11

devil 244:21

diagram 42:10,15 46:2 49:18 (4)

dialogue 188:3

dichotomy 261:9

didn't 150:11 156:23 159:22 203:23 205:4 283:6 284:20 (7)

die 284:13

different 17:21 18:21 22:6 24:10,24 25:4 50:13 81:22 93:16 107:2 132:18 135:17 151:7 154:25 160:10 162:20 209:20 243:22 250:8,11 255:6 260:5 269:15 277:23 290:12 316:8 (26)

differs 255:5

difficult 51:15 119:6 133:8 189:18 197:11 214:10 240:22 241:6 242:10,17 245:6 295:6 297:12 (13)

difficulty 293:4

dignified 269:4 270:4,6

dignity 32:4 55:25 84:11 207:23 209:16 211:25 257:16 268:22 270:21 271:24 272:8 275:3 284:2,23 287:17 296:11 298:7 (17)

dilapidated 227:18 244:5

direct 117:21 118:19 145:17 189:9,12 225:23 311:24 319:14 (8)

direction 82:17

directionality 82:7

directly 20:23 60:16 119:10,25 120:17 128:7 176:8 234:25 (8)

director 99:22 108:21 218:25 246:14 257:14 (5)

dis 209:25

disagree 106:12

disaster 291:14

disclosed 305:8

discontinuance 72:7

discovered 243:21

discretion 266:11

discretionary 14:18

discuss 17:5 143:13 144:17 223:20 247:7 (5)

discussed 95:22 199:13 239:24 303:3 306:25 (5)

discussion 114:24 116:9 162:20

discussions 26:25 115:25 161:2 163:2,16 164:11 199:18 223:5 227:2,15 228:13 236:12 240:4 281:10 (14)

displace 258:20 269:6

displaced 210:2,20 259:12 311:19 (4)

displacement 110:20 117:22 189:10,13 210:10 211:20 244:25 265:13 272:22 (9)

disposition 38:23 39:24 98:22 100:5 (4)

disrespect 280:19

distance 26:13

distinct 22:13 44:12 313:21

distinguished 162:2

distraction 28:3

distribution 18:25 19:6 42:5 64:16 (4)

district 13:25 14:10,16 15:13 18:5,6 24:15 55:24 58:7 59:7,22 60:22 61:6,16,25 62:10,13 63:11,12,13 65:10 76:22 98:24 120:12,19 122:15,17 135:21 173:12,14,24 174:15 181:9 185:6,13,15 186:2 191:9 210:13 233:23 234:2,7,23 236:25 237:2 253:4,6 266:6,18 291:18,19 307:3 (52)

districts 8:8 58:4,4 59:8,11 60:7 181:15 (7)

dive 190:11

diverse 85:18

diversity 129:16,21 194:10

divided 42:18 244:8

division 33:8 35:25 191:24

dock 237:17

dockless 144:12,25

doctor 289:15

document 308:11

documented 144:14

doe 207:3 305:24

does 29:18 37:16 60:25 70:6,8 75:10 78:19 117:19 118:2 120:2 132:16,21 154:24 164:8 180:17,19 184:2,7 186:2,20 190:2,3,5 192:11 194:3,15 210:20,25 218:5 226:12,13 230:16 231:3,9 240:3 248:16 260:7 261:17 270:6 274:5 294:10 295:7 296:23 312:5 315:24 318:12 321:3 (47)

doesn't 82:13 188:11 232:6 235:4 255:9

258:11 269:24 (7)

dog 126:20

doing 26:23 53:12 73:5 115:15 119:11 122:8,12 128:9 132:8 138:23 160:10 167:3 168:13 186:25 192:5,13,22 198:4,6 209:18 216:21 225:13 226:4 241:8 249:2 288:2 (26)

dollar 126:4

dollars 56:13 87:22 208:12 272:5 301:18 (5)

domestic 286:10

don 161:18

done 48:17 49:22 118:20 120:9 134:24 138:10 140:11 153:10 177:22 181:6 182:22 183:10 188:19 197:13 208:3 210:7 215:18 234:12 238:25 247:22 254:9 267:12 307:22 314:5 316:2 (25)

door 17:4 19:8 30:13 204:19 217:8 (5)

doorman 83:14

doors 86:7,14 118:13 122:9 (4)

doortodoor 118:11,16 192:11

dorian 306:16,18,20,23 3 10:5,8,10,14,20,25 311:5,8 314:21,22,24 315:7,9 316:12,16,20,21 (21)

dorm 216:24,25 217:2

dorms 216:19,22

dot 142:11,12 143:21 149:8 151:3 161:3 163:17 165:2 169:21 172:6 238:13 247:15 253:20,25 (14)

dots 60:9 191:22 193:4

double 69:21

doublechecking 322:10

doubles 105:11

doubt 93:20

douek 4:3,4

down 16:21 17:19 49:24 63:9 64:13 69:25 79:17 80:6 81:25 93:6 104:2 138:18 139:23 140:8,12 153:8,25 161:22 162:3 186:5 216:9 217:10 232:10 234:20 291:2 (25)

downplaying 159:2

downtown 188:23 233:24 275:21 277:5

302:24 (5)

dozen 317:25

dr 286:4 287:12

draft 99:4
100:16,19 110:17
244:22 322:25 (6)

drainage 246:23
249:4,7,15 251:21
252:6 (6)

dramatic 112:15

draw 154:5
158:23 184:10
256:24 (4)

drawing 248:5

drawn 157:8

drinking 62:22

drive 26:14 140:8
186:5

drivers 28:2
159:14

driveway 63:15

driveways 75:5

driving 27:4

dropped 156:21
205:11

dry 251:17,19

dual 167:16

due 193:2 294:9
317:22

dumbo 308:17

during 3:9 20:4
106:24 113:7
164:9 171:19

185:12 245:17
304:10 318:5
319:12 320:21
(12)

dusk 317:21

dutch 59:8

duzer 144:5
243:14 248:10
307:3 (4)

dwelling 85:9
88:22 90:14 92:9
(4)

dynamic 151:14

each 51:12 65:7
67:17 123:15 (4)

eaddy 4:5,6

earlier 74:14
75:22 177:11
189:19 194:21
208:20 216:14,15
258:12 260:23
(10)

early 72:21 179:6
198:15 255:5,10
319:15 (6)

earlylearn 34:7
36:10

earn 34:8 36:11
208:16 258:16
265:24 266:4
272:25 273:22
274:21 301:17
(10)

earned 287:21

earning 109:8
266:7,9

ears 145:22

easier 169:16

east 14:3,14
51:20 59:19
61:9,16 75:16
78:15 80:6 95:10
169:22 (11)

eastwest 64:6

easy 245:18

eating 62:22
268:18

echo 265:2

economic 84:9
115:17 125:14
143:20 172:18
173:3 201:21
202:2 207:12
208:4 217:20 (11)

economical
299:19,21

economy 31:14
55:14 83:25

edc 42:14 46:21
115:18 125:17,22
126:12,22
127:3,17 129:19
134:5,22 152:3
168:11 183:20
207:25 220:4
230:6 315:3 (19)

edc's 138:16

edesignation
29:8,23

edge 16:22 17:20
18:4 318:16 (4)

edgewater
132:13

edited 263:25

educate 118:6

educated 117:7

education 25:8
112:3 163:19
175:5
202:4,10,15,19
305:17 (9)

educational 25:6
42:24

efcharistó 218:17

effect 204:24

efficient 44:20
145:24

effort 52:2 118:5
143:24 165:23
193:13 (5)

efforts 143:17
194:8 272:2

eight 26:2 105:9
297:15

eighteen 127:22
175:17 300:24
322:7 (4)

eighty 42:2 48:15
65:8 66:16 258:25
261:15 265:20
266:15 (8)

eightyfive 210:21

eightythree
211:12

eightytwo 74:22

eis 123:19 141:2
151:17,19 156:14
157:9 177:25
232:5,6 259:9
265:10 321:10
(12)

either 22:25
69:15 82:17
120:17 155:16
170:24 190:23

193:5 210:15
228:7 243:20
252:4 282:25
284:9 298:16 (15)

elaborate
20:16,22

elderly 284:19

eldest 287:23

elected 41:18,22
102:12 116:11
202:6 271:25 (6)

electives 118:3

electrical 82:21

electronic 3:11

elegant 75:21

element 31:13

elementary
303:12,16

elements 44:21
202:19 207:14

elevating 256:9

elevators 43:8
49:21

eliminated 28:8

eliminating
107:10

ella 41:23

elmhurst 95:10

else 35:8 38:11
56:25 97:13
142:10
155:8,9,15,16
158:19 159:22
169:14 261:20
284:23 285:11

295:17 322:19 (17)

elsewhere 267:13

embarking 150:8

embarrassment 238:20

embassadors 144:15

emergency 53:24 152:7 295:12

emerging 8:7

emilio 39:4 43:11,14 48:7 (4)

emilio's 47:4

emmanual 13:9,16,18

empire 139:24 183:25 184:9 233:25 234:4 279:3 (6)

employ 196:4

employees 164:7 196:12,17 242:19 (4)

employers 196:10,16

employment 63:3 128:2 175:21 176:3 196:9 272:10 (6)

empty 81:24 244:3,8

enable 155:12

enables 290:11

enclosed 75:7

encounters 213:18

encourage 123:24 145:2 155:20

encouraged 49:3 171:24 198:5

encouraging 171:20

encouragingly 97:3

end 129:4 201:4,5 234:15 279:13 280:7,10 282:24 284:17 305:20 318:3 321:16 (12)

ended 65:18

endorse 168:12 274:3,3,4 (4)

ends 116:10 297:12

endurance 33:21

energy 44:19 73:2

engaged 125:19 126:12

engagement 219:18

engineer 139:6

enhance 17:16 73:10 143:17

enjoy 131:24 135:11 170:12 171:7 261:16 301:8 (6)

enjoyed 149:17

318:24

enjoyment 291:16

enough 27:8,9 123:20 124:8 154:14 214:22 265:13 274:20 276:8,12,14 293:10 294:10 302:6 303:21 311:15 (16)

enrich 292:12

enrollment 34:17 37:7

ensure 110:19 145:11 174:19 176:10 192:11 194:10 195:5 196:15 248:18 266:22 267:8,21 (12)

ensures 207:17

ensuring 129:20 147:16 195:25

enter 49:23

entered 37:23

enterprise 44:17 175:8

entire 30:18 34:24,25 106:14 114:8 122:17 127:11 181:12 185:9 193:24 308:18 319:10 (12)

entirely 79:21 137:21

entity 130:8

entrance 44:13

63:22 64:3

entrepreneurialis m 243:24

entrepreneurs 183:7

entry 43:23

enumerated 308:6

envelope 68:23

environment 93:16 144:2 163:8 291:8 302:24 (5)

environmental 74:18 99:5,7,8 230:9,16 233:2 244:22 246:14 306:6 317:15 323:2 (12)

envision 50:5 132:9 165:6

envisioning 139:4

envisions 132:10

equal 105:15,19 200:19

equate 31:23

equipment 256:10

equipped 195:25

equitable 55:14 83:25 264:24 299:21 (4)

equity 272:12

errors 317:14

errs 265:10

es 213:2

especially 8:3 47:6,16 55:22 56:6 119:7 207:6 295:11 300:8 306:22 (10)

esplanade 126:18 128:4 133:23 134:18,20 135:8 138:25 142:20 (8)

esplanades 216:14

esq 2:5,6

essence 278:12

essential 192:3 207:23

essentially 101:17 105:11 129:5 179:11 181:5 184:5 185:21 186:9 190:16 191:7 192:10,13 (12)

establish 15:18 58:9

established 231:20 242:4

establishment 62:22

estate 52:19 146:21

estesen 243:10 246:9,11,12 247:14 248:21 250:16,19 251:4 252:10,12 253:9 255:2,9,16 256:3,6,18,25 257:8,9 (21)

estimated 323:10

et 157:6,6 171:18,18 310:24 (5)

evaluate 144:24

evaluation 304:11

even 25:10 48:24 71:4 85:17 87:21 121:5 132:13 135:18,19 163:3 164:13 169:10 192:20 211:16 223:16 226:4,8 245:14 259:11 265:25 266:13 285:9 286:11 293:15 297:9 312:7 313:2 316:16 318:25 320:25 322:2 (31)

evening 163:4

event 174:11

events 174:6 254:24

eventually 168:6 262:23

ever 73:4 111:21 131:22 163:15 277:18 295:19 (6)

evers 217:18

every 165:23 178:7 202:5 209:22,22,23 215:6 231:11 234:4 239:3 253:22 255:19 274:25 289:11 295:17 299:2 307:10,11 315:19,22 (20)

everybody 92:21 151:5 172:6

285:21 (4)

everyone 52:3 193:25 205:18 268:3 285:15 296:8 (6)

everything 93:13,15 107:20 158:7,8 284:23 285:18 313:25 (8)

evicted 211:18

eviction 211:6 297:18

exacerbate 164:18 303:11

exact 77:23

exactly 26:3 47:11 67:15 94:7 156:22 157:12 178:18 196:13 231:2 281:24 (10)

examining 220:21

example 24:16 25:21,24,25 26:6,10 28:19 73:8 125:23 129:25 150:10,23 153:10,19 156:13 161:11 165:18 167:9,18 168:7 190:12 280:7 290:14 318:4 (24)

examples 194:21 228:7

excellent 312:14

exception 215:12

exchange 111:18 200:17 258:3

excited 19:17

128:10 130:5 134:9 220:10 (5)

exclusive 54:18

exclusively 46:6,17

excuse 16:8 54:2 273:9

executed 116:25

executing 190:4

exist 113:19 187:17 245:22 264:6 (4)

existing 14:11 18:6 21:3,4,8,20 22:12 44:4 60:20 61:7,16 75:19 76:19 101:15 105:5,5 110:19 111:2,17,19 119:19,20 174:19 189:6 190:6 193:16 194:11 204:4,5 211:22 221:10 222:10 226:25 229:13 237:6 250:6,23 (37)

exists 112:16 200:7 237:19 243:20 258:6 (5)

expand 191:14,19 220:17

expanding 197:3 220:11

expands 299:17

expansion 196:25

expect 25:11,23 103:11 124:25 138:2 190:7 220:20 (7)

expected 25:11 132:6 304:3,21 (4)

expecting 124:12,19 197:10

expects 101:21

expensive 237:22 242:11,19

experience 17:17 23:15 26:14,24 39:14 52:7 191:21 197:24 236:11 (9)

experiences 288:12 290:4

experiencing 295:14 297:9

experimental 7:25

expertise 183:17

expiring 112:2

explanation 116:5

exploit 290:21

explore 220:2,24 227:13

explored 101:5 222:8

exploring 227:8

express 55:7 83:17 88:17 92:3 297:2 (5)

expressed 116:23 177:15

expressway 14:6 22:3 28:18 29:3,6 (5)

expected 25:11 132:6 304:3,21 (4)

extend 144:22 167:21

extensive 26:25 37:17 45:4

extent 309:5

exterior 29:19 33:19 36:19 43:20 50:25 (5)

extortion 288:16

extra 256:20

extreme 299:23

extremely 27:14 109:8 233:21 272:14 311:11 (5)

eye 154:2,12 235:10 247:17 (4)

eyes 43:19

facade 48:5,6,10 69:17 97:22 (5)

facades 16:24

face 127:8 211:5 250:24 272:21,22 (5)

faces 40:7 77:8

facets 215:2 272:18

facilitate 16:3,15 39:22 61:21 128:6 133:7 (6)

facilitated 90:13

facilitates 44:14

facilitating 44:2

facilities 36:25 40:18 180:20,24

224:22 225:6 244:25 (7)

facility 24:13 25:2 26:2 39:21 41:16 42:16 46:4,9 47:18 51:12 60:25 61:23 62:24 63:21 88:23 90:15 92:10 100:12,23 101:14 215:23 222:12 (22)

facing 70:5 77:17 117:18 148:22 266:5 276:2 307:16 (7)

fact 70:23 77:15,21 78:8 85:10,21 86:6 94:15 112:16 121:25 130:24 157:24 176:12 189:14 197:14 248:3 289:10 294:9 315:13 (19)

factors 183:24

factory 257:24

fails 260:2

failure 225:3

failures 199:22

faint 49:15

fair 112:5 117:3 118:24 176:13 191:11 226:6,7 (7)

fairing 226:18

fairytale 241:20

faith 272:16 298:15,23

fall 53:19 67:17

231:9 320:23 (4)

fallen 235:7

false 261:8

fame 153:12

familiar 70:11 110:22 116:19 192:23 238:7 270:5 (6)

families 19:22 31:14 32:3,8 34:7 36:11 55:24 84:10,12 96:15 106:16 207:22 213:20 258:16,18,21 265:19 266:7,9,18 271:15 272:14,15,24 273:22 274:21 275:6 294:5 295:21 299:23,24 300:8,8 301:17 (34)

family 33:9 36:2 53:24 65:12 103:20,20 106:12 227:16 234:11 265:22 271:17 286:18 290:2 293:16 297:23 (15)

familysustaining 31:16 56:12

fan 152:13

far 23:14 27:8 60:23 68:19 79:12 85:9,24 86:3,9,11,11,12 87:19 107:9,19 112:25 113:8 122:7 154:12 237:2,10 280:10,11 282:13 290:22 293:18

307:12 (27)

farming 42:23

farms 42:22

fashion 21:16 234:12

fast 130:14 147:14 313:16

faster 318:12

fatality 158:5

fatals 158:2

favor 4:23 5:11 33:25 36:3 81:11 85:5 86:18 92:19 125:15 236:3 295:22 (11)

favorable 5:24 6:22 7:7 8:21 9:3,24 10:7 11:11 (8)

favorably 97:3

favorite 147:18

fearful 156:5

feasibility 222:7 224:19 225:5 227:13 (4)

features 72:18

february 1:10 3:8 4:20,21 185:3 324:12,18 (7)

federal 34:9 36:12 134:21,24 (4)

feedback 45:5 107:8 144:21 177:6 195:16 219:19 (6)

feel 21:7 81:12 93:8 94:14,21 180:6 181:18 212:7 253:15 284:12 285:5 293:25 310:23,25 (14)

feels 244:17 260:8 315:18

feet 14:5,21,23 15:16 16:19,21,21 17:11,12,17,19 22:12 24:3 25:22 26:3 41:14,16 42:11,17 46:19 54:14 61:20 63:10,14 77:25 100:22 101:13 141:4,10,18,21 166:15 178:3,10 187:7 205:7,7 240:5 279:23 287:2 (40)

fei 233:2

feis 305:10

felipe 39:3,8

fell 200:13

fellow 310:3

felt 93:11,13 137:4 290:6 (4)

fencing 63:16

ferguson 88:11 90:2,7 91:11 (4)

ferries 146:14,19

ferris 301:3

ferry 127:20 130:14 131:4 145:18 147:14 150:15,17 154:3,7 157:22 161:24

169:13 181:14 217:15 237:3 312:2 (16)

ferryboats 237:14

few 18:19 47:25 89:14 93:9 110:24 115:5 118:12,25 121:14 124:21,24 127:19 129:13 150:17 154:11 188:7 202:8 245:12 301:13 307:17 319:5 320:18 (22)

field 185:22 186:19 191:4 192:6 (4)

fifteen 16:13 19:14 52:18 95:11 265:21 271:2 322:6 (7)

fifty 30:20 64:18 89:3 90:18 92:17 212:14,15 240:19 267:21 272:11,23 282:4,5,17 293:13 (15)

fiftyeight 265:23 291:22

fiftyfive 216:12 304:23

fiftyone 304:4

figure 107:25 160:19 238:11,22 315:12 (5)

figured 232:8

figures 157:8 230:23,25

filed 64:25 68:16 100:19

fill 3:11 181:19 183:2 304:7 (4)

filled 32:6 84:7 141:19

film 174:10

final 65:6 73:17 121:20 181:3 233:2 (5)

finalizing 222:13

finally 18:23 44:15 102:9,14 115:2,3 127:14 146:21 172:3 180:14 216:8 260:8 312:13 (13)

finance 119:13

financed 17:3,23 55:23 208:14 (4)

financial 63:3 96:25 111:9,9,16 (5)

financing 27:11 175:6 177:9 188:11 191:18 281:16 (6)

find 98:10 109:20 111:11 192:14 214:7,8 245:5 289:6 290:13 293:5,6,8 318:22 (13)

finding 194:8 269:14 284:25

findings 173:20

fine 94:8 158:8 223:13 238:17 (4)

finetune 194:19

finish 202:12

260:19 273:16

fiona 214:20 218:20,25

fire 50:15

firm 52:18,23,23 208:15 (4)

firms 39:15

first 4:18 22:21 47:22 50:8 53:11 64:5 74:3 95:9 102:7 104:11 107:13 116:4 127:2,5 128:13 129:14 137:16,20 144:13 152:22 153:4 157:25 161:8,8 173:10 174:11 203:12 204:21,22 216:16 247:12 250:2 255:21 265:14 266:21 277:18 285:16 292:23 296:10 301:24 305:23 315:11 (42)

firstfloor 63:17

fit 75:11 76:6

five 16:21 17:19 26:7 101:20 125:18 131:4 143:23 223:15 229:23 230:11 240:17 259:23 (12)

fiveyear 38:4 252:21

fix 154:17 254:18 265:4 296:24 (4)

fixed 135:8 288:6

fixtures 44:22

flagship 125:24

flashback 319:21

flashing 153:8

flawed 257:20 314:20

flexibility 22:24 23:9 103:25 104:12,24 106:4 107:25 180:17 (8)

flexible 103:4,15 282:25

flight 53:23

flocked 309:4

flood 256:10 303:9 304:19,23 305:2 306:7 (6)

floodplain 256:9

floodwaters 205:15,16

floor 16:20 17:11,12,13,13,14 18:9,15,17 20:14 21:16 24:4 25:16 41:15,20 42:9,25 50:8 54:11 62:20 64:5 66:6 68:21 69:5 88:22 90:15 92:10 94:8 101:17 105:10,16 129:15,18 178:20 181:11 317:11 (36)

floors 18:10 70:7 80:2,8,24 204:21,22 (7)

flow 44:18 249:9 251:8,17,20,20 (6)

flush 250:2

fly 153:21

focus 233:15 249:20 310:17

focuses 195:23

folder 264:2,6

folks 94:11 113:9,11 235:15 261:22 (5)

follow 50:22 67:23 84:18 114:15 138:8 139:18 183:23 192:16 208:20 211:2 229:4 255:24 283:10 (13)

followed 74:4 79:3 81:7 83:10 84:21 88:11 90:2 91:17 125:10 143:5 199:3,4 204:16 206:21 209:11 212:23 214:20 218:20 233:8 243:9 246:10 257:12 264:14 268:12 270:17 274:14 278:21 283:18,21 286:4 287:13 289:19 292:19 300:19 302:16 306:16,18 317:4 (38)

following 18:8 28:25 76:20 101:23 115:25 158:16 198:11 254:23 288:17 (9)

followup 29:22 30:2 97:20 98:5 316:5 321:21 (6)

food 46:23 179:16

309:16,19,23 (5)

foot 25:20 26:4

footage 46:18 54:15 141:9 178:2 187:13 240:2 252:5 (7)

footprint 204:2 224:23

force 215:21

forced 271:18,18 289:2 291:25 293:18 295:16 (6)

foremade 74:13

foremost 265:14

foresee 256:22

forget 252:14 298:2

forgets 275:5

forgot 92:4 322:5

forgotten 293:25

form 127:10 137:4,9 208:13 (4)

former 114:21 126:17 131:2 152:13 162:12 204:3 275:18 (7)

formerly 19:22 45:15 46:7 55:19 (4)

formula 225:22 226:2,15

formulabased 225:22

forprofit 31:24

fort 53:6,7

forth 51:25 67:15 272:19,23 (4)

forty 91:24,24 102:13 114:24 218:3 241:9 263:21 273:21 289:23 293:2 (10)

fortyfive 180:3

fortyfour 48:18 49:8

fortyone 65:5

fortythree 210:13,15 258:16 273:3 275:6 302:4 (6)

fortytwo 215:16

forward 32:19 35:11 38:12 57:2 97:14 126:8 128:3 134:22 137:19 138:3 146:6 175:23 200:5 201:22 259:13 299:3 322:20 (17)

foster 236:2 302:23

fostering 172:21

fought 56:9 146:18

found 144:18 167:2 180:2 308:10 (4)

founded 270:22

founding 270:20

fountain 220:20

four 42:16 51:12

63:9 64:13,23,23 65:13 101:21 107:2 112:24 113:2,13 116:8 146:15 220:9 240:17 258:15 259:14 265:16 272:3 289:25 (21)

fourfamily 109:16

fourstory 76:4

fourteen 64:17 68:12,17 75:10 79:16 299:17 (6)

fourteenblock 257:21 299:13

fourteenstory 39:19 85:8 88:21 92:8 257:25 (5)

fouryearolds 34:16

framed 205:5

framework 177:14 180:15 304:25

frank 13:8,12 23:20 57:15,19 156:25 (6)

frankly 25:10 28:21 153:4 177:12 194:22 245:7 (6)

fred 185:18 188:22

free 175:4,9,12 190:21 191:22 196:15 207:21 217:13,15 237:12 253:15 (11)

frequent 195:14

frequently 70:13 123:16

fresh 14:17 26:5 42:13 46:19 (4)

friday 174:7 318:9

friend 147:6 284:17

friendly 51:23

friends 36:20 284:24 293:16

front 28:6 51:11,22 58:5,18,20 60:13,16 61:9,13 75:2 126:7 133:23 136:3,13 137:8 147:13 152:3,5,9 155:21 156:10 157:18 163:10 168:7 204:25 205:3,8 240:21 248:7 249:5 (31)

frontage 14:22,23 43:21 63:18 (4)

frontages 17:9

fruition 312:14

fulfilling 276:19

full 45:2 58:19 63:20 303:4 (4)

fullington 278:21,23,25 281:4,13,19 282:18 283:6,11,15,16 (11)

fully 31:20 55:16 162:4

fulton 44:12

function 259:7

fund 186:21

funded 133:16 134:18 216:14

funding 134:22,24 173:17 174:5 (4)

fundraising 193:8

furniture 36:24

further 21:2 40:25 68:14,24 81:25 113:17 126:10 144:24 220:2 304:3 324:13 (11)

furthermore 41:4 96:11,16

future 100:11 127:4,12,12 165:7 181:14 200:8 245:23 247:5 (9)

g 74:20

gains 258:2

gallery 42:21

game 206:5

gap 109:3 114:5,14 299:5 304:8 (5)

gaps 114:4

garage 18:14 62:19 64:3 100:3,7,9,20 101:9 102:10 (9)

garages 75:7

garbage 164:2

garcia 206:22 209:11,12,14 212:17,19,20,21 (8)

gardens 94:21

gated 243:25 308:22

gates 173:19 174:8

gateway 71:11 145:10

gave 313:10,12

geared 27:25

general 114:14 122:15 225:16 279:2 318:2 (5)

generalized 225:6

generally 14:10 59:10 71:15 74:23 103:3 164:22 (6)

generate 136:2

generated 127:12

generating 126:10

generation 147:10 279:25

generations 271:16 290:2 318:24

generous 49:17

gentlemen 298:19

geographic 222:8

geography 122:4
184:4

george 127:21
128:7 133:8
135:13 139:23
145:16 153:20
157:22 174:3,13
176:13 181:6
185:8 186:13,15
217:6 218:12
233:17 300:23
306:23 312:9
314:17 (22)

get 8:4 24:22
49:24 73:17 93:15
96:24 104:10,20
105:12 113:25
117:5,6,12,23
118:2 119:5 120:6
123:15 138:14
145:23 157:12
161:25 162:7
166:14 169:13
183:5 185:23
190:6,11 192:2
196:12,15 203:24
209:3 212:2,4
232:8,17
238:12,17,23
239:4,6
242:10,11,19
247:25 249:21
251:20 261:3
264:3 269:21
284:13 286:25
321:20 322:11
(56)

gets 101:24
188:19 232:10
249:24 320:18 (5)

getting 28:16
118:20 139:23
153:3,12 200:22
227:13 314:17
320:23 (9)

gf55 43:11,15

giants 234:5

gilbert 83:11
84:20,24

girl 174:12

girlfriend 284:8

give 22:24 24:16
29:4 31:16 69:18
98:2 229:3 257:17
259:8 262:15
269:24 270:6
307:25 314:3 (14)

given 47:13
71:9,12 106:9
134:25 138:17
149:23 151:7
157:21 180:23
210:6 213:3,17
226:3 276:21
307:23 310:9
314:16 315:17
(19)

gives 297:21

giving 166:3
200:20 201:17
205:24 290:17
309:25 319:21 (7)

glad 207:24
221:19 247:20
298:20 (4)

gladly 322:13

glancingly
166:16

glasses 92:4,13

glazed 17:15
29:14,17

glazing 29:19

go 33:12 37:2
50:9 54:11 69:7
74:2 80:24
94:19,20 103:9
104:2 118:16

122:7 131:23
137:16,25
150:16,22
154:7,17 155:12
156:22 157:5
159:24 161:24
167:23 169:14
170:16,17 186:10
189:23,23 201:22
216:22,23
217:12,17 241:13
269:19 275:25
281:23 282:13
283:20 285:4
287:24 301:6
307:4 (47)

goal 102:11
125:20 134:25
173:2 223:7 (5)

goals 103:13
116:6,23 219:10
303:7 (5)

god 154:21 172:7

goes 106:3
140:12 249:6
253:19,20 279:19
(6)

going 8:2 11:3
20:17,22 22:18
29:4,13 37:15,23
50:4 74:17 78:4
79:14,15,15,19,22
80:11,14 82:16
88:3 91:22 92:22
96:6 107:3 115:14
123:17,18 128:12
129:4,13 134:14
140:2 141:24
145:14
150:8,20,25
151:15
153:18,18,20,22
156:22,24
157:2,4,12
158:6,7,8,19,23
159:16,24 168:18
171:22 182:13
192:15 193:21

200:5 201:23
205:20 213:10
216:5,5 223:18
225:19 232:24
238:10,24 247:4
248:24 249:21
250:17 251:10
252:6 254:6
256:7,8,9,11,21
262:15,16 263:19
273:8 284:17
286:16,16,19
288:22 313:19,23
315:5 321:8
322:23 (97)

gone 115:2
198:18

good 3:4 13:11
23:17 28:25
31:6,15,19 32:11
33:6 36:21 39:7
43:13 53:20 55:4
79:9 81:8 82:18
83:12,23 84:22,23
88:13 90:4 91:18
93:9 95:6 106:20
107:23 108:19
125:11,17 129:3
140:20,21 141:6
143:7 146:11,12
148:11 166:8
167:22 168:14
171:25 172:11
176:24 178:15
182:10,17 183:17
199:10 201:15
206:23,24
207:15,21 208:21
209:2,12,13
214:21 218:22
233:14 236:8
246:11 247:6
248:21 251:4
261:3 264:16
267:9
268:14,16,17
278:24 279:17
283:23 287:14
292:21 294:21
296:6,7,8 298:22
300:21 302:17

306:20 318:14
(87)

goods 179:12
261:9

gospel 90:9

got 8:3 52:9
104:22 108:4
130:17 146:21
154:18 158:5
159:11 195:12
231:17 237:13,15
240:16,20
251:11,16 256:13
316:17 (19)

gotten 53:9
154:21

govern 28:10

government
175:7

gracias 214:17

gracious 157:20
206:17

grade 18:7 22:23

graduate 203:3
287:21

graduated 300:3

graduating
299:25

grand 54:4 137:7

grandson 296:22

grandsons 290:5

grant 7:5 11:15
33:4,6,7
35:7,21,23,24
173:17 (10)

grant's 173:22

granted 282:13 286:12

great 33:20 35:7 47:10 50:3 51:19 70:17 93:14 95:13 102:19 104:25 117:9,10 120:23,23 130:6,17 144:20 150:6 156:12 157:15 160:16 202:24 211:8 213:9 231:6 238:7 253:17 254:14 257:13 268:6 301:10 306:12 309:5 317:2 (34)

greater 25:10 102:23 126:15

greatest 119:14 131:20 249:14 266:19 (4)

greatly 89:13 92:8 95:18 291:12 303:11 (5)

greek 215:4 218:16

green 8:10 30:5 42:15 44:18,21 46:3 73:8 169:6 (8)

greene 53:6,7

greenway 276:18

grocer 26:5 49:6 51:13

grocers 46:16

grocery 42:13 48:19,22 245:3 (4)

gross 41:19 141:7,8,9 178:2,25 (6)

grossly 303:23

ground 17:13,13,14 20:14 21:16 24:3 25:16 41:15 42:9 54:11 62:20 88:22 90:15 92:10 129:17 157:11 178:20 181:11 (18)

group 13:15 23:20 46:5 174:15 293:19 300:5 317:13 (7)

groups 72:10 199:16 219:24 226:23 227:2 264:22 (6)

grow 156:2 191:16

growing 125:17 126:11 141:15 164:12 196:5 221:12 293:20 (7)

grown 299:6

grows 156:3

growth 143:20 196:9 215:20 226:3 236:2 251:18,25 303:22 (8)

gruel 2:14 3:4,19,21,23,25 4: 3,5,7,9,11,13,15,1 7 5:4,16 6:4,6,8,10 ,12,14,16,18,20,22 7:11,13,15,17,19,2 1 8:14,17,19,21 9: 6,8,10,12,14,16,18 ,20,22,24 10:11,13 ,15,17,19,21 11:5, 7,9,11,20,22,24 12 :2,4,6,8,10,12,14 32:23 35:15 38:16 57:6 98:13 323:6

(72)

guarantee 56:10 266:14

guaranteed 259:4,22 262:19

guarantees 208:13,15 259:17 303:21 (4)

guess 47:12 67:9,22 71:21 94:17 106:24 107:3,8 112:20 138:7 178:5 186:7 225:19 231:23 255:10,11 278:6 281:11 (18)

guido 13:8,15,18 20:21 23:14,18 (6)

guy 291:13

guys 159:16 178:7 231:3

half 21:13 58:18 80:9 81:9 109:5 220:9 245:3 266:17 271:2 302:7 304:2 309:12,15 313:18 317:24,25 320:19 (17)

halfrented 244:4

halfyear 173:21

hall 174:8 227:12

hallway 36:25

hampshire 319:22

hand 245:8 302:23 324:18

handle 251:19

handwriting 214:25

hangs 260:25

hannah 247:3 256:2

happen 46:15 48:2 93:18 164:9 182:13 202:20 210:11,12 223:25 242:5 277:16 294:3 (12)

happened 65:25 278:7

happening 71:5 118:18 149:6 150:5,8 152:17 184:5 195:2,3 210:5 215:17 221:25 223:12 240:7 248:14 (15)

happens 178:9 189:25 223:12 273:13 (4)

happy 20:7,20 37:8 65:15 67:24 85:16 93:7,17,18 104:3 112:11 142:23 145:21 176:16 178:13 187:25 188:12 221:15 (18)

harassment 112:8 175:14 296:23

harassments 297:22

harbor 135:12 169:5 318:17

harborwood 204:23

hard 131:18

284:25

harder 129:11

harlem 53:14,17

harmful 313:6

harpooned 204:23

harris 302:16 306:16,17

harvard 203:5

has 9:24 12:14,18,22 17:10 18:7 20:14 21:17,21 22:3 25:10 26:16 31:19 35:8 41:11 42:12 60:22 65:6 66:8 68:13,17,19 76:2 77:20 82:4,5,7,16 85:7,23 86:2,8 102:11 105:15,19,21 107:21 109:10,12 110:4,8,13 112:20,24 113:17 117:9 118:10 120:8 124:21 125:18 126:12 127:17 128:22 129:19 130:6 134:20 136:5,9 138:10 139:24 141:3 144:8 152:24 154:21 157:20,21 159:7 160:3 163:15 170:7 172:22 174:5,22 188:6 192:3 196:8 197:4,13 199:13,20,22 200:6 201:12,22 206:12 207:16 208:19 209:24 211:14,25 213:16 215:9 216:3 219:12 220:8

222:19,22 223:4
225:24 230:19
232:11 235:14
237:11,12 241:14
246:21 248:10
253:16,24,25
265:15 276:21
277:3 278:6,8,11
290:10,23,25
295:6,14 297:19
299:6 302:23
306:5 307:20
308:13 312:3,13
313:8 315:17
(131)

hasn't 165:3
233:19 284:18
297:14 (4)

hats 216:16

haven't 27:5
68:23 113:2
153:23 162:14
165:13 241:9
320:11 (8)

having 50:9
82:10,17 115:2
121:15 181:11
190:23 218:24
236:19 240:21,23
257:14 288:15
(13)

hayes 2:10

he'll 284:11

he's 21:14,15
53:23 284:16
297:16 (5)

head 226:3
235:14 261:2

heads 202:6

health 295:10

healthcare 196:6
244:25 245:5

295:2 (4)

hear 85:16 104:3
113:11,11 188:12
195:16 213:17
263:15 269:7
298:4 308:16 (11)

heard 65:24 66:7
85:25 94:11
97:13,23 100:25
103:18 106:25
107:9,19,20 113:9
122:25 141:2
180:24 187:15
196:10 202:7
215:9 236:12
263:25 273:23
276:7 307:14
308:25 311:10,16
315:3 (29)

hearing 1:4 3:6
5:7 12:24 13:3
32:21,25 35:13,17
38:14,21 45:3
57:4,9 98:12,19,25
99:5,20 100:24
181:8 195:10
222:25 232:23
239:24 270:9
287:17 289:14
306:6 323:3 (30)

hearings 99:3

heart 78:20
86:16 244:13

heartbreaking
296:16

heartily 168:12

heat 96:3 213:25
297:13 318:11 (4)

heating 48:8

heats 317:22

heed 268:2

height 63:6 68:11
69:22 70:16 74:24
76:18 101:19
105:11 137:9
235:6,9 (11)

heights 18:2
33:15 36:18,21
127:10 (5)

held 3:5 5:7
98:25 99:6 118:24
189:18 285:3
318:13 (8)

hello 35:23
148:10 243:11
286:6 294:22 (5)

help 32:7 41:5
48:10 96:23,25
109:2,23 111:5
116:10,24
118:5,18,20,21
145:23 149:19,20
151:15 175:6
190:22 191:7,15
193:2,4 194:3
196:17 210:21
237:8 267:20
285:15 297:25
304:7 (32)

helpful 20:19
68:5 98:11 114:17
135:15 162:19
191:12 226:16
229:6 231:18
283:9 (11)

helping 86:9,12
111:12 152:18
191:11 196:16 (6)

helps 111:10
136:8 225:23

hence 106:4

her 245:3,5 269:1
7,20,21,23,24
270:2 271:20
284:22 285:9

288:2,2,3 301:22
(15)

here's 18:21
33:22 36:16,19 (4)

hereby 324:10

hereunto 324:17

heritage 276:22

hesitate 228:16

hi 70:11 74:6
77:5 79:5 123:13
140:20 143:7
148:9 176:22,23
188:21,22 196:22
199:10 289:21
(15)

high 43:21 75:24
128:23 182:24
205:6 214:6
239:24 269:12
293:7 297:7,13
302:6 (12)

higher 80:7
101:17 105:10
109:10 186:15
211:14 255:7
277:23 280:21
299:5 314:8 (11)

highest 235:22
266:6 319:16

highlight 110:24

highlighted
200:11

highly 44:19
195:24

hill 14:14 21:5
26:22 27:4,8 53:7
57:23 68:25 201:5
(9)

him 188:3 297:19

hiqa 166:7

historic 110:5
174:13 220:19
227:11 (4)

historically 197:4
242:9

history 157:25
200:16 279:7

hit 205:11

hockey 153:12

hold 216:9
244:22 281:21

holding 102:3
176:12 237:3

holiday 173:23

holistic 143:25

holnagel 74:5
79:3,5 80:25 (4)

home 17:4 30:13
111:11,15 118:18
126:17 133:4
189:17
211:8,18,22
213:21 214:9
245:8 274:22
288:9 290:13
293:5 295:2
296:24 297:23
300:10 (22)

homefix 111:8
119:9

homeless 19:22
34:12 36:15 45:15
46:7 55:19
210:9,20 217:25
299:9,9,10 (12)

homelessness
118:21 271:23

homeowner
74:11 79:6 81:9
112:4 283:25
287:23 (6)

homeowners
79:13 109:11
111:5,5,10
119:10,13 189:10
271:11 (9)

homeownership
19:3,9 107:23

homeport 199:23
215:22

homes 75:7,16
79:18 80:18 81:21
92:25 100:21
101:10 109:17
110:6 111:7,25
214:4 239:3
254:16 291:21,25
299:8 300:7,12
(20)

honest 172:7

hook 215:13

hope 2:9 8:4 47:8
72:18 80:22
123:16 154:9
158:15 183:4
218:4 232:17
236:3 292:10
295:21 (14)

hoped 241:19

hopefully 93:18
97:5

hoping 47:11
67:5 321:8

horeb 84:25
85:11 86:17

horizon 249:3

horse 309:20

hospital
309:10,13

hospitals
309:13,14

hostage 260:9

hosting 112:4

hot 172:3 213:25
297:13

hour 146:25
163:3,4 164:9
166:9 245:17
317:23,24 320:19
(9)

hours 156:17
165:20 166:6

house 15:6 87:21
239:6 250:12
269:23,25
284:12,13 286:8
(9)

household 65:9

households 55:20
62:12 109:6,8
265:23 266:3,5
267:24 (8)

houses 36:9
40:16 58:24
91:20,23 92:20
94:5,16 95:21,22
(10)

housing 15:19
24:2 31:22,23,25
32:4 39:9 41:2,3
55:17,25 58:10
62:8 66:4 68:21
75:19 76:17 82:22
85:15,17,21
87:2,16,20 89:2,12
91:6 92:15,16
93:3 95:17
96:9,24 99:23
100:14,17,18,19

101:4,6 102:19
103:2,17,19,20,20
106:13,16 107:21
108:22 109:3,5,18
110:4,9,12,17
111:2,3 112:18,18
113:18 114:14
115:5 123:25
124:20 131:9
135:18 200:19
209:16 210:22
211:18,23,25
213:20 215:25
216:13 217:4,19
219:10,11 235:12
257:16 258:25
260:2 262:18
264:20,24
265:12,18 266:14
267:11,18 268:22
269:3,4
270:7,21,23
271:13,16,24
272:8,13,13 275:3
279:21 280:12,13
281:11 284:2
286:24 287:16
288:15,20 289:5
291:10 292:8,10
294:4,10,11
296:11 297:21
298:7 299:5
301:16 302:11,25
304:25 307:14
311:9 321:23
(133)

housings 106:15

how 8:2,5 15:23
18:10,17 20:16
26:23 47:19 48:22
52:8 61:11 64:12
65:19 71:12
75:9,14 76:10
77:5,11 78:11
94:13 103:13
104:10,10,20
116:5,8,25 117:4,6
,7,14,19,20,22
118:2,6,7 120:2
121:7 122:3,7
123:17,22 131:7

132:9,9,10,21
133:19,24 134:23
135:3 146:10
148:23 156:8,24
159:7 163:21
164:17 183:11,13
185:24 186:24
187:8 189:6,10
190:5 194:12,15
212:4 226:6,6,17
229:10 230:20
236:7 238:12,22
248:18 254:13,23
264:3 265:4
288:18 291:5
294:2 297:6
310:22,25 321:23
(91)

however 31:22
55:20 107:16
208:2 233:18
243:15 251:16
288:4 289:6 297:9
302:25 (11)

hp 124:14

hpd 39:23 40:23
100:3,19,25
101:5,21 107:3
110:17 111:16
112:19 116:13
118:23 120:4
121:16 122:16
123:22
124:3,9,16,18
183:19 189:8
258:23 259:5
261:19 262:17
277:17
281:7,17,24
282:21 298:21
(33)

hpd's 16:12
17:3,23 19:7,19
39:12 41:23
100:16 111:23
112:2 114:4 (11)

hub 128:8 130:17

huge 75:18
135:19 136:5
152:13 223:14
237:19 290:17 (7)

human 211:3

hundred 34:8
36:12 65:8 66:16
102:22 104:18,18
105:9 107:16
124:4,9,19,25
144:16 164:16
207:20 255:3,12
259:17 265:20
267:17 277:20
281:11 282:6,9
303:13,19 316:17
(28)

hundreds 199:14

hundredyear
205:17

hunter 217:2
263:8

hurricane 270:24

hurt 269:8

husband 285:9
288:3

hydroponic
42:23

hylan 165:19

i'd 20:20 52:6
143:12 156:23
158:9 187:25
188:12 215:17
218:2 315:2 (10)

i'll 13:17 18:8,19
20:21,21 29:23
33:12,24 36:15
41:7 60:11 64:5
65:17 66:21
112:21 113:16
118:8 121:21

140:15 159:6,25
163:6 193:15
200:24 218:16
225:19 232:22
245:7 295:19
307:25 (30)

i'm 8:11 11:3
20:22 23:19 31:8
33:8,9 35:24 36:2
43:15 51:18,23
52:15 55:6
67:9,24 70:11,14
74:7,17 79:5,6
81:9,23
82:12,21,23
83:2,14,16 87:3
88:16 90:7
92:2,14,19 93:17
94:4,17 95:8
99:22,24 104:3
107:5 108:21,23
112:11,20 113:3
118:3 125:13,14
128:20 133:19
136:11 138:11
139:6,15 141:24
143:8,8 145:14
154:14 158:6
160:2,5,6,18
165:15 169:20,22
171:24 172:13,16
178:13,17,25
187:12,17,17
193:17 194:13
198:5 204:19
207:5 209:14
215:7,15 216:16
217:21 218:25
219:4
221:15,19,21
225:14,25 228:6
229:2,2,17
230:13,14 233:20
234:7 236:11
237:10 238:4
239:21 243:15
245:7
246:14,16,19
247:20 248:11
250:13,15 252:24
253:9,16 256:24
262:4 264:18

268:19 270:19
271:2,6 273:11
274:17,19 278:13
281:19,24
283:23,24,25
286:7,16 288:20
293:2 295:22
296:9 297:8 298:3
299:9 300:13,23
301:13,15 302:18
306:22,23 307:18
309:25 313:16
314:13 316:10
321:25 (159)

i've 8:3 26:16
52:16 53:8,13
92:20,22 147:13
166:4 177:15,22
178:17,18 187:15
209:19 215:15
233:25 243:21
271:12,14,17
276:2 287:20
288:14 289:22,23
295:3 297:18
300:23 (29)

iconic 145:18

idea 79:10 82:18
131:2 156:24
243:18 254:2 (6)

ideal
231:10,14,15

ideas 116:22
160:7,19 162:10
188:5 219:21 (6)

identified 100:13
222:10
224:8,21,25 (5)

identifies 265:7

identify 3:14
173:7,14 221:10
226:13 230:2 (6)

identifying
226:15

ignored 212:7
260:23 313:24

ignores 272:23
273:2,14,21 294:3
(5)

iii 2:7

ill 288:4

illuminated
27:25

illustrates 15:20
17:25 61:11

image 44:4

imagine 113:10
119:15 131:18,22
(4)

immediate 26:18
40:15 237:21
249:8 250:15 (5)

immediately 14:7
81:14 97:24
123:3,6,7 (6)

immensely
150:14

immigrant
213:20

immigrants
301:11

impact 27:15
75:15 82:12,19
99:5 136:5,16
155:4 229:21,24
230:17,18,21
233:2 234:18
244:23 245:9,10
305:7 317:15,16
320:14 323:2 (23)

impactful 174:6
287:8

impacting 256:23

impacts 162:21
244:24 304:10

implement 50:12
172:24

implementation
167:20

implemented
50:18 244:11

implementing
112:7 144:3,6

implications
197:14 227:24
228:22

implore 304:24

importance
219:6 303:20

important 47:5
71:7 97:25 113:22
127:15 129:18
144:9 145:10
155:19 156:7
180:22 199:19
200:10 206:6
208:23 220:14
221:22 235:25
282:23 283:2
299:20 307:16
308:16 317:21
321:11 322:11
(26)

importantly
267:15

imposed 29:12

impossible
110:16 292:6

improve
220:16,22 221:10
226:20 227:10
291:12 (6)

improved 15:3
150:13 183:6

improvement
150:9 151:18
166:23 168:2,25
(5)

improvements
142:9 144:4 145:7
151:22 166:21
169:22 173:25
182:23 191:15
220:3 221:6
226:24 227:3,6
230:2 238:14,24
242:12 246:5
303:7 312:3 (21)

improving 219:7
221:4 237:6

inaudible 50:16
65:24 125:22
208:19 209:3
246:2 281:13
301:4,4,21,24 (11)

incentives 14:18
42:14 46:20
111:17 117:24
130:2 188:10
290:18 (8)

incentivizing 8:6

inception 173:22

inclement 33:18

include 40:13,14
49:3 51:15 52:3
54:14 90:16 92:12
175:10 204:8
313:9 (11)

included 24:14
43:4 45:6 61:5
72:19 82:4 201:6
230:22 308:11
313:19 314:2,4
318:7 (13)

interreligious
271:7

intersect 60:16

intersection 62:3
70:12 150:14

intersections
304:12

intersects 58:6

intervening 59:9

intimately
192:23

into 3:15 20:4
37:24 43:23 75:11
76:6,13,13 78:9
79:17,18 81:17
101:7 107:3 117:5
132:14 138:14
143:25 145:19
147:16 151:15
161:23 171:10
180:17 184:3
189:24 190:12
192:6,12 193:5
205:22 207:14
212:8 215:22
216:6 227:14
240:6 244:13
249:5,16 270:21
271:19 286:11
288:22 292:2
299:16 300:6
321:4,11 322:3
(50)

introduce 24:7
43:10 303:15

introduced
217:25 263:7

introducing
101:6

introduction
76:22

inventory 171:21

invest 246:22

invested 279:8

investing 173:6

investment
173:15 174:18
195:2,12 200:22
227:24,25 236:18
248:16 249:22
(10)

investments
172:25 204:4,6
246:24 252:7
260:11,19 (7)

investor 279:7

inviting 307:20

invitingness
227:10

involve 160:21

involved 99:11
115:24 236:19
238:23 240:18 (5)

involves 162:13
228:24

irrespective
223:3

island 11:13
12:16,20 40:7
85:13 98:13 99:22
102:20 103:3
109:14 110:3,13
112:5,19 114:7,9
115:6,9 118:14
125:22 128:22
131:4,8 134:2
143:9 145:18
148:18 149:22
151:23 152:23,24
153:11,23 171:12
172:7

173:11,18,19
175:4 176:2,19
177:24 179:20,24
184:25 185:22
188:24 192:19,19
199:20,21
201:17,19 202:16
205:24 207:5,7,12
208:5 209:17,21
211:7,14,16,22,25
213:16 215:7
216:20,25
217:7,8,12,14
233:18 236:16
237:16 238:5,6
241:10 242:9
243:12
261:2,10,23
268:21 270:23
271:3,7,12
274:6,18
275:19,21 279:6
283:25 285:15
287:15 288:14,17
289:23,24
290:3,7,8,15
291:11 292:25
293:11,14,17
294:7,24 295:3
299:2 302:4
309:11 314:12
(118)

island's 109:6
174:23 216:18

islander 154:6
216:17

islanders
144:10,17,19
205:21 217:17
272:12 285:15
290:24 291:6
293:11 318:24
(11)

isn't 26:3 107:7
117:10 155:15
254:12 256:15 (6)

isolated 22:14
61:6

issue 26:22 27:5
48:12 94:14
101:22 103:9
140:9 163:24
167:16 189:5
216:3 223:17
238:13 240:13
241:20 305:16
306:2,25 307:16
321:11 (20)

issued 19:25
228:12

issues 77:8
82:5,15 96:2
136:8 138:15
148:16,21 149:2
161:2 164:10
175:15,16 213:18
234:25 247:17
261:24 268:25
271:13 276:17
297:22 305:4 (22)

item 4:18
12:18,22 56:25 (4)

items 179:16

iterations 241:13

its 27:9 89:5
106:9 130:6
137:13 163:19
190:2 192:9 208:5
233:20 234:15,16
244:9,10 250:5,24
283:2 301:9 (18)

itself 24:9 78:9
117:15 149:18
154:9 188:12
194:15 228:24
238:16 319:7 (10)

ivan 206:21
209:10,14

j 2:5

jacques
13:8,11,13 20:20

22:20 23:5 28:5
29:7,16 30:17
31:3 57:15,17,19
58:15 66:2,20
67:12,24 68:6,15
69:9,14 71:18
72:3,15 73:24 (27)

james 218:20
233:7,10 236:7
239:12,18 (6)

janet 268:13
270:17,19

japan 53:23

jay 216:23
217:17

jeffrey 57:16,23
69:15

jersey 100:2,6
101:9 157:3 201:4
267:12,14 (7)

jimmy 301:6

job 126:9 129:24
130:17 172:25
175:20 176:8
194:5 213:16
214:8 216:10
272:10 301:24
(12)

jobs 31:15,19,23
32:3,5,11
55:13,22,24
56:5,14,18 83:24
84:5,7 86:4,11
91:2,7 125:17
143:20 172:20
194:2 195:24
196:2,12
202:21,21
207:15,22 209:3
213:23 272:9,11
286:16 301:21,22
(37)

john 33:4,10

57:21 216:23
217:17 (5)

join 206:11,11

joined 13:15 33:9
57:15,22 (4)

joining 184:17

jones 268:13
270:17,19,19
273:5,6,11,15,19
274:12 (10)

joseph
317:4,8,9,12,12
319:20 320:3,6,11
321:25 322:17
(11)

josé 246:10
257:11,14 261:13
267:22 (5)

julia 263:7

july 144:13
318:4,7,9 (4)

june 217:5 319:5

junk 40:18

jurisdiction
136:14 138:16
163:17 170:8
253:24 254:2 (6)

just 8:11 20:22
21:11 23:11 24:16
30:7 33:12,17,24
36:16 37:2,3
46:3,3 48:7,12
49:14,15 50:21
52:5 54:11 58:24
64:5 66:4,18
69:10 72:9 76:4
82:11 87:3,15
92:18 93:6,17
94:4 95:20 97:17
102:8 103:10
104:9 105:8

107:14,14 110:24
113:3,16 114:6
116:3,4 117:2,2
122:5,20 126:2
127:14,19,22
128:4 129:25
130:23 135:12
136:16 139:21
140:7,24 141:12
142:17 145:14
146:15 148:24
158:15,16 159:6
160:6,11,18
161:5,7 162:15,23
164:25 168:14
169:2,20,25
170:21 171:8
174:25 181:4
182:7,7 183:23
184:11,21
185:5,15,20
187:17,19 188:7
190:14,17 195:8
198:11 199:20
201:24 202:12,25
206:2 212:16
218:2,11
225:14,15,18,20
229:8,12 230:12
231:2,24 232:6
236:11 239:25
243:15 247:5
248:13
250:13,17,21
252:15 255:24
256:16 257:17
266:8 271:22
274:19 275:24
277:4 281:22
287:25 293:10,23
296:15,15 297:19
298:5
305:15,22,25
318:21 (151)

justice 272:18
274:5

karen 74:4,7 79:8
80:3 (4)

kaston 79:4
81:6,8,9 83:4,5 (6)

kathlyn 286:4
287:12

keep 76:11,18
80:23 152:7
154:2,12
157:14,16 169:12
213:5 235:10
254:25 255:2
256:21 263:3
292:9 (16)

keeping 87:10
166:8 285:5

kelly 199:3,11
204:17 206:14
260:24 (5)

kenneth 2:5

kent 8:3

kept 122:21
319:23

kevin 278:20,25

key 31:12 85:10
150:20 173:20
191:20 207:13
233:21 238:18 (8)

kid 206:6 215:7

kids 147:9 153:3
206:4,9 278:6
284:12 (6)

kids' 214:9

kills 59:8

kind 20:18 26:18
27:9 47:7 49:15
79:23 81:22 94:20
107:25 116:12
129:7,22,23
130:3,9 133:21
134:16 135:3
137:5,10 138:24
142:2 153:22
162:25 166:21,22

180:25 186:20,22
191:3 192:14
193:11 194:2,18
241:23 247:22,23
248:16 284:24
311:19 (40)

kinds 22:14 52:8
171:11 190:3 (4)

knew 194:25

knight 2:9 4:7,8
6:12,13 7:19,20
9:14,15 10:19,20
12:4,5 (13)

knocked 118:12

knocking 122:9

know
22:11,16,17
24:8,14
25:3,14,16,22
26:9,17 27:7,10
28:6,10 29:16
30:21 31:12 34:2
50:8,24 52:6 53:9
65:21 68:12
70:13,15,19,21,25
71:6,9,10,14 77:23
79:17,18,23,25
80:9,14,20 83:19
87:12,18 93:11,16
94:22,23 95:12
97:18 106:25
107:6,11,16
111:22 112:23
113:17 115:22
116:15 117:2,20
118:4 119:23
121:5,15 122:9,25
124:10,14
131:17,20 135:16
136:16 138:13,15
139:16
140:8,11,25 141:2,
8,12,14,16,16,18
147:18 149:3
150:23
151:8,10,13,14
152:6,8,12,24

153:9,13,17,24
154:7,14,16 155:6
156:4,8,25
157:5,9,9,12,13,17
158:5,22,25 159:2
160:15 161:4,15
162:2,3,5,8,19
163:25 164:9
165:18,19,21,22
166:3
167:2,5,10,15,20
168:3,8,9,15
169:6,21,22
170:15,16,17
171:11,18,19 177:
7,8,14,21,23,25
178:9
179:10,15,17
180:11,18,23 181:
4,5,10,13,22,24
182:6,8,13,21
183:11,11,14
186:3,24
187:4,5,6,16,19
188:8 189:13
190:24
191:3,6,9,23
192:20,22,23
193:6,10
194:7,9,24
195:6,13,18,23,24
196:11,22
197:2,7,21,25
198:2,5,12 199:20
200:2 201:17
202:17,25 205:6
222:6,21
223:8,8,16
225:18,25
226:2,10
228:17,18
231:3,8,9,23 235:3
236:14 237:12
240:7,7,16,25
241:12 242:10
250:14,22 251:6
252:5,21,25
253:21,22
254:6,14,18
255:4,20
261:18,21,23
271:14 281:8,16
284:19,22 285:8

286:15 305:16
307:12 311:21
318:11 320:22
321:12,15,18
(275)

knowing 192:25
193:18 194:14
236:20 (4)

knowledge 113:4

knowledgeable
239:23

known 100:2,6
101:12

knows 92:21
155:14

knuckles 2:5
3:19,20 6:4,5
7:11,12 9:6,7
10:11,12 11:20,21
30:11,12
45:11,12,20 46:10
69:6,7,10 70:6,9
84:15,19,23
86:19,21 88:6,8,10
176:15,18,21
183:23 184:14
196:19
198:20,23,25
199:8 202:12
203:6
294:13,16,19
295:24 296:3,5,7
298:10,14
310:11,12,15,21
311:3,7 314:21,23
(61)

kushner
125:10,11,13
128:18 129:10
130:19 132:4,23
133:21 134:4
135:23 136:19,21
138:6,21 139:13
140:4,15,18,21
141:24
142:6,11,21,23

143:2,3 (27)

la 2:8 3:25 4:2
6:10,11 7:17,18
9:12,13 10:17,18
12:2,3 30:4,5
46:25 47:2
65:16,17 66:17
67:4,22 86:23,24
88:5 106:22,23
108:4 112:13,14
113:25 114:17
187:7,9,13
203:20,21 204:10
212:12,13,18
258:12 261:12,13
263:15 281:5,6,15
282:12 283:4,8,12
320:2,3,7 321:6
(56)

labeled 44:22

labor 319:4,6

lack 109:21
112:17 123:4
175:15 303:9,12
310:18 (7)

lacks 305:6

lago 2:4
3:2,17,18 4:22,25
5:3,10,13,15 6:2,3
7:9,10 9:4,5 10:10
11:18,19 13:7,12
20:8 22:8 27:19
29:21 30:11,23,25
31:4,7 32:13,15,21
34:21
35:4,6,8,13,20
37:10 38:6,8,10,14
43:13 45:10
46:11,25 49:9,25
52:4 54:6,8,21,23
55:2,4 56:20,23
57:4,13 58:13
65:16 68:4,7 69:6
70:10 71:19
73:20,22,25 77:2
78:22,24 79:2
80:25 81:4

83:4,6,8,12 88:14
89:20,24 90:7
91:12,15,19
93:19,25 94:25
95:4,7
97:6,9,11,16
98:4,8 99:9,17,19
102:2 104:6
106:22
108:5,13,15,17,19
112:10,13 114:19
116:2 120:21
122:19 123:11
125:5,7,9,11
128:15 130:21
139:17,20 140:19
142:4,13,16,24
143:2,4 146:7
148:8 158:14
159:20 166:11
169:19 172:2,9,11
203:8,20
204:12,14
206:17,20,25
209:4,6,8,10,12
212:11,20,22
213:5,11
214:15,17,23,25
218:7,15,19,22
221:17 224:5
225:10 229:7
231:22 232:22
233:6 236:4
237:23 239:15,19
243:4,6,8 245:24
246:3,6,8 247:10
253:14,17 254:21
255:22 257:6,8,10
260:13 261:12
263:14
264:7,11,13
268:6,9,11
270:13,16
273:5,7,10,12,16
274:8,13
275:10,13,17
278:17,20 281:3
283:13,15,17
285:22,25
287:4,11
289:15,18
292:14,16,18,21
294:22 298:16

300:15,18 302:14
305:11,19
306:4,13,15,20
310:6 314:25
316:4,15,20,23
317:2,7,11 319:20
321:7,22
322:13,16,22
323:7 (256)

laid 12:18,22

lake 287:19

land 14:8
40:5,14,23 59:13
74:20 168:4
205:23 257:22
260:25 261:4
267:8 299:14
314:5,18 (15)

landed 205:3

landing 185:19
204:22

landlord 112:5
175:14 190:23
213:24 262:21
292:24 296:23
297:5,15 (9)

landscape 64:2

landscaped 18:18
76:9

landscaping
63:16

lane 78:2 82:4
140:12 164:5
165:21
167:10,12,22
168:9 245:12 (10)

lanes 144:5,7
152:6

lankans 301:12

lap 317:13

318:6,10 319:22
(4)

large 15:4 20:25
22:2 27:13 52:23
59:21 76:7,24
102:4 126:24
205:2 208:10
225:17 234:20
242:17,18 (16)

largely 260:23

larger 22:3 26:15
185:4,10 186:14
234:13 290:11 (7)

largest 53:15
55:9 182:3 201:7
237:9 315:23 (6)

larisa 2:12

last 21:12 23:24
111:7,23 126:2
139:22 157:24
177:25 188:7
190:14 194:23
211:19 227:21
233:16 240:19
245:15 271:2
272:2 273:18
290:20 300:24
319:5 322:17 (23)

late 111:23 179:5
319:14

lately 261:24

later 49:6 50:18
75:5 119:2 220:21
227:6 308:2 (7)

latest 13:17

laugher 172:8

laughter 52:22
93:23 159:23
165:12 176:20
198:19 206:16
218:14 (8)

launch 132:15 134:11,15 173:8 215:13 (5)

launched 144:12 169:4 176:4 194:23 (4)

law 52:19,24 214:2 263:6,9 (5)

laws 210:24

lawyer 52:20,21 262:18 281:20 (4)

layer 195:18

layout 42:9

layouts 48:19

lead 53:2 158:23 165:2 168:11 249:18 (5)

leadership 271:8

leading 49:21 145:17 257:25

leads 208:20

leak 44:23

learn 194:19 206:7

learning 241:13

lease 24:20 37:23 175:10,13 190:13,19,20,24 191:11 210:24 234:4 259:4 262:19 (13)

leases 175:13 192:25 234:2

least 80:24 115:9 171:24 178:14 179:22 180:7

187:6,20 237:21 269:19,21 277:13 (12)

leave 71:25 199:8 264:7 269:10 270:5 285:9 286:19 302:12 (8)

leaving 61:6 179:11

led 154:15 286:10

left 15:22 19:21 43:5 49:14 64:9,12 92:13 150:14,16 153:10 167:21 283:19 287:23 314:16 317:6 (15)

legal 30:21 72:14 175:9,12 190:22 211:4,6 261:19,23 262:25 291:21 (11)

legislation 261:25

less 23:21 87:22 105:20,21 109:9 110:12 156:23 158:2 210:14 265:24 266:4,7 272:25 273:22 274:21 275:7 302:5 317:22 320:19 (19)

let 33:17 92:18 95:12 96:20 102:7 111:22 131:15 138:4,7 146:15 148:24 189:4 221:20 236:10 247:20 250:3 294:3 313:15 (18)

let's 26:3 149:5 189:5 199:11

262:11 263:6,9 309:20 (8)

leticia 274:15 275:15,18 278:19 (4)

letter 24:21 90:6,8 296:14 (4)

letters 46:14

letting 143:13

level 25:11 27:9,11 29:17 34:9 36:12 43:21 72:22 87:4 128:20 139:3 191:3 193:22,23 195:19 222:5,16 322:11,12 (19)

levels 42:6 87:11 101:4 107:10 114:3 124:3 235:22,23 267:23 277:24 282:16 (11)

leverage 175:24

leveraging 193:7

levin 2:10 4:9,10 6:14,15 7:21,22 8:13,16 9:16,17 10:21,22 12:6,7 20:10,11 27:20,21 28:13,25 29:13,20 52:4,5,11,13,21 53:20 54:5 71:19,20 72:13,16 73:11,14,19 94:2,3,9,24 97:15,17 98:7 99:15 123:12,13 124:12,15 125:4 142:7,8,12,15 159:24 166:12,14 167:25 168:14,22 169:10,16 231:22,23 232:16

254:22,23 255:8,14 314:25 315:2,8 316:7 321:7,8,25 322:9 (77)

liberian 301:11

library 176:13

life 66:18,24 143:18 163:22 215:15 219:8 235:16 244:13 247:18 272:18 297:21 312:4 (12)

lifeblood 238:10

lifelong 85:5 234:8 274:17

lift 262:22

light 30:5 75:13 152:22 153:5,6 154:15 (6)

lightindustrial 59:18

lighting 40:17 43:20

lights 151:10 153:13 154:15 157:15 173:24 245:12 (6)

like 20:16 21:7 25:12 28:19 32:18 34:4 36:8 37:17 50:12,17 52:21 55:11 56:25 67:4 71:15 72:23 80:10,16,17,17 81:18 82:20 83:22 92:19 96:18 97:13,22 98:3 111:12 119:7 122:16 124:6 129:13,20 132:25 133:7,12,22

134:12,13,23 135:12,13 136:23 137:4,4,23 138:25 139:2,8 143:12 150:19 153:4,6,16 156:16 157:17 158:9 163:18 165:18 167:13,14,19 168:7,23 180:6 181:18 188:18 190:12 192:13 194:25 197:4,9 198:6 199:7 201:8 205:6 207:11 208:18 215:14,17 216:9 217:25 218:2 233:23 234:5,16 237:4 244:17 252:13,16 256:20 257:2 260:4,8 263:21 276:11 277:15 286:24 295:21 297:25 298:21 314:15 315:2 322:7,19 (106)

likely 25:23 32:6 73:9 111:14 124:23 158:18,22 205:23 242:2 259:11 282:2 (11)

likewise 176:25

limit 3:14 27:24

limited 64:4 99:13 102:25 109:24 196:24 254:7 293:7 294:6 (8)

limiting 107:6 293:14

limits 245:10

lin 39:5

linchpin 137:14

line 14:4 15:9,15 34:18 36:7 74:25 86:10 150:13 277:11 304:4 (10)

linear 22:12

lines 15:10 85:25 89:11 106:10 217:2 220:17 (6)

linkage 179:9 181:22,23 182:2,8,18 183:24 184:13 (8)

lirr 47:6,13

list 121:2 312:22 317:25

listening 195:3 270:9

literally 118:16 308:10

little 8:10 20:12 49:14 52:6 65:19 70:20 71:22 105:2 110:8 117:14 119:6 128:20 140:25 147:9 154:25 155:2 190:11,11,15 195:9 201:16 242:7 251:17 258:3 272:6 277:7 318:21 (27)

live 32:4 55:25 70:13 78:3 82:25 84:11 85:12 86:4 89:15 91:4 93:15 94:7,11 95:19,20,20,21 109:15 163:7 168:15 169:12 204:20 207:7,22 214:7 235:17 247:19 269:20 271:10 276:4 277:10 284:9

289:2 290:6 293:5,24 294:23,25 295:16,17 297:24 300:4 308:19,24 309:8,24 311:15 316:22 (48)

liveability 145:4

lived 53:5 74:9 92:20 207:4 289:22 292:25 300:23 (7)

lives 185:18 254:17 293:24

living 86:10 91:2,20 96:14 111:14 149:14 195:24 204:25 216:24 243:20 271:16 277:9,24 284:11,16 288:5 290:2 291:20 293:3 294:6 295:5 (21)

llc 13:15 57:21,21 84:3 (4)

llp 13:13 57:19

loading 54:10,13,14,16 64:4 (5)

local 21:25,25 22:6 32:6 40:12 42:21 59:15 62:25 84:8 87:10 91:7 102:12 119:4,4 120:13 121:13 146:4 173:7,13 174:14 178:4 179:23 184:11 186:18 192:2,9,17 195:14 219:13,21,24 221:8 245:3 272:9 278:5 282:19 (36)

locally 62:21 182:2

locate 158:24 180:13 242:18

located 13:23 14:9 15:6 40:6,8,12 58:22 61:15 62:2 63:21,23 90:22 175:19 182:19 196:17 318:16 (16)

location 22:15,19 46:24 47:6 59:14 71:9,13 89:6 106:10 115:10 130:6 137:14 269:11 (13)

locations 163:20 235:9

lock 50:24,25 51:11

locked 46:13

long 30:20 40:7 85:13 113:18 126:12 136:20 138:3 188:17 189:17 213:13 241:23 244:10 248:18 280:3 (14)

longer 72:4 121:11 190:15 215:13 262:2 269:20 271:19 293:5 (8)

longstanding 173:4

longterm 37:25 202:21 234:18

look 37:17 46:2 87:20 97:22 114:20 126:8

128:3 135:11 146:5 152:9 155:20 171:10 175:23 183:19 186:6,8,11 197:15 201:4,9,10 205:8 227:11 252:6 257:2 280:4 285:12 312:24 313:7 (29)

looked 68:23 153:6 170:23 177:25 224:20 225:5 286:22 (7)

looking 34:12 36:15 64:7,10 73:11 79:17 94:4,4 104:2 114:9 122:16 123:22 130:25 137:15 141:7,10 151:11,21 155:19 181:6 184:22 191:14,19 196:5 210:8 216:21 225:16 227:3 249:15 251:22,23 265:5 269:22 270:3 293:6 295:4 (36)

looks 49:18 98:3 168:23 205:5 234:15 254:14 260:4 283:19 (8)

looming 97:23

lopez 212:23,25 214:15 246:10 257:11,13,14 260:13,18,22 261:8 262:8 263:17 264:11,12 (15)

lose 79:15

loses 318:11

losing 245:3

loss 75:13 222:3 223:14

lost 198:16,17 221:2 222:9,12 225:2 301:7 318:18 (8)

lot 14:21 15:4 20:25 21:18,21 24:23 26:9 60:19 74:24 76:9 82:5 100:6 123:2 128:9 129:24 131:5,10 133:3,12 134:11,14 137:2 150:24 154:21 158:6 167:3 169:6 179:15 188:5 191:13,22 193:7 194:21,22 195:2 216:5 241:21 252:13 259:14 277:25 279:15 280:9 286:15 296:12 314:16 318:8 (46)

lots 35:19 36:4 40:17 74:22 81:24 106:14 132:2,18 150:3 164:10 170:15 208:9 (12)

love 92:23 93:7,12,16 96:7,12 129:3 164:7 244:14 301:14 (10)

loves 172:6

low 19:23 62:11 74:24 110:6,14 211:9 284:21 318:8 (8)

lowdensity 291:19

lower 3:7 5:8 51:20 66:8 76:13,17 131:13

280:5,25 282:23 322:4 (11)

lowerincome
66:14

lowering 68:22

lowerrise 70:2

lowest 235:22

lowincome 55:19
109:7,8 111:4,5
272:14 299:23
301:19 309:24
311:18 (10)

lowpaying
301:22

lowroad 31:23
55:22 56:14

lowscale 97:24

lowwage 299:6

luxury 93:5
243:25 289:11
310:2 (4)

lyons 222:10,11
224:7,8,10,21
301:7 317:13,19
318:16 319:10,11
(12)

lópez 209:11
213:2,13

m1 59:11 60:7

m13 59:7

macro 197:16

madam 10:9
57:17 58:14 90:4
97:15 233:9 264:8
323:5,6 (9)

made 8:16 25:14

85:8 110:5 141:17
207:16 228:15
295:17 308:6 (9)

magic
104:12,13,15

magnificent
314:13

mailers 119:12

mailing 122:9,12

mailings 119:3

main 151:5
217:14 319:11

mainly 85:13
133:2 311:10

maintain 55:10
69:5 83:21

maintaining
256:18

maintains 69:2

major 52:25
53:2,4 59:25 86:5
126:4 134:19
236:17 (8)

majority 75:23
76:24 109:15
213:20 (4)

make 97:17
103:14 109:17
111:6 140:6 147:8
151:23 158:10
159:25 165:23
167:6,22 169:16
175:25 189:21
191:14 194:4
202:20,24 203:3,4
208:3,20 209:15
213:14 227:3
230:3 231:25
249:23,23 255:11
256:7,8 257:15

258:11 261:21
268:2 285:17
296:18,19 297:12
299:20 302:5
313:13 317:17,24
318:25 (47)

makes 70:21
81:21 104:12
110:15 131:5
170:2 202:22
210:14 213:25 (9)

making 87:8
103:15 151:22
228:24 244:16
265:19 299:18
315:10,12 (9)

mall 279:4
290:25 308:13

malls 244:6

manage 202:24

management
215:21

managing 126:22

mandate
315:10,12

mandatory 15:18
58:9 87:6,16
92:15 (5)

maneuvering
164:10

manhattan 128:2
131:13 211:9
237:15 276:11
308:18 316:19 (7)

manicure 129:3

manifest 194:15

manner 132:21

manners 145:25

---

manny 12:21

manufacturing
8:8 197:6,19,22
208:9 250:6,9,25
251:8 252:3
257:22 299:14,16
(13)

many
24:6,9,11,19 26:13
48:3,22 75:2
115:7 119:8 156:8
158:3 162:3
181:25 189:22
199:15 204:8
205:21 207:11
208:8 219:20
222:6 228:7
233:16 240:18
271:11,21 276:17
293:22 296:25
297:22 302:21 307
:13,13,23,23,23
308:5,5,7,25
312:22,22
313:5,17 314:22
321:23 (47)

map 5:22,22 8:25
10:5 13:4 14:9
15:12,20,25 20:23
21:7 33:16
36:16,18 38:24
39:25 40:4,20
57:10 58:2
59:2,3,4,13
60:4,8,14 61:11,12
98:20 113:22
265:16 (32)

mapped 14:10,12
15:14 59:8,10
60:6 61:7,9,18
113:2,13 162:5
170:5 171:14,15
258:13,14 263:22
266:10,13,24
280:11 (22)

mapping 107:2
266:12

---

march 5:6 112:6
322:24

marcus 143:6

marin 2:11
4:11,12 6:16,17
8:12,14,15 9:18,19
11:5,6 12:8,9 (14)

marisa 2:4

maritime 133:3
202:3,10,15,19,25
203:3 (7)

marius 306:19
317:3,5

marked 44:13

market 62:15
73:5 76:16
109:3,25
113:18,20 124:7,7
126:12 141:15
142:3 146:21
147:22 190:2
198:7 212:15
277:23 (18)

marketable
194:4

marketing
173:25 177:9

marriage 285:9
324:15

mary 296:5,9

maryland 53:19

mas 302:19 304:6

mason 84:21
88:10,13,16 (4)

mass 63:6 234:24

massing 17:2
69:25

massings 18:20

massive 81:13
240:20

master 199:4
204:15,17 206:18
(4)

match 201:2
295:7

matches 113:5,22

matching 194:8

material
69:16,23

materials 16:25
69:11 71:7 166:18
(4)

matter 5:21 7:4
8:24 10:5 11:14
13:4 32:17,25
35:9,17 38:11,21
57:9 95:23 98:19
209:3 210:10,11
315:13 323:3
324:16 (21)

maximize 135:3

maximum 48:18
49:7 60:21,23
68:19 251:24
267:9 (7)

may 10:25
34:2,12,20 37:9
42:13 45:8 110:22
113:20 117:3,8,8
121:6 138:12,18
142:4,8 153:5
154:6 158:17
170:3,8 189:14
205:21 211:8,13
214:10 235:7
238:17 260:6
265:12 274:8
283:19 289:12
293:18 311:23,24

312:8 316:9 (39)

maybe 69:12
76:13 93:2 114:6
117:13 190:14
286:21,24,25 (9)

mayor 146:16,16
157:21 219:11
222:22 223:3
312:4,12,15 (9)

mayor's 40:25
110:12 222:21
223:7 (4)

mayors 115:3

mcdonald 9:2

mcmahon 215:20
312:11

mean 25:19
26:24 27:3 70:17
78:7 94:21 107:6
113:25 114:4
116:20
122:20,23,24
124:16,18 129:6
133:9,15 140:7,9
152:12 154:7
155:3 157:19
162:18 167:15
168:6,11 169:2
170:15 178:6,16
181:17,21 183:4
184:8 185:21
187:24 197:11
228:11 235:4
238:20 253:22
261:18 267:17
292:24 299:10
311:6 (48)

meaning 36:11
151:25 178:19
272:10 311:2 (5)

meaningful
130:9 137:24
207:12

means 36:7 77:10
164:6 193:14
207:9 210:17
251:6,13 257:23
259:3,9 266:13
279:17 312:23
(14)

meant 133:5

measure 49:24
50:17

measured 77:22

measurements
77:23

measures
47:14,23 50:13
303:9 (4)

mechanism
218:5 316:8

medgar 217:17

median 65:9 87:9
166:19

medians 167:4

medical 24:24
25:4,5 126:5 (4)

medium 58:2

meet 46:22
103:16 184:12
245:19 297:12 (5)

meeting 3:3,5
4:19,20 75:22
277:19 296:18,19
306:24 307:6
323:8 (11)

meetings
103:10,11 144:16
219:22 315:20 (5)

melting 301:10

member 83:16
187:4 207:3
209:16 224:12
243:14 253:12
257:15 271:6
296:11 298:6
317:6 (12)

members 31:7
32:7 55:5,10
83:13 84:8 85:11
89:14 95:7,21
96:11 98:9 108:20
114:22,23 172:12
206:25 207:7
218:23 219:19
224:2 265:3
269:14 270:20
296:14 299:3,8
300:9 (28)

memo 267:2

memorial 319:4

memorialized
67:18

mention 50:22
85:8 311:23
321:23 (4)

mentioned 16:14
23:20 25:18 42:12
50:2 57:22 61:2
77:6 107:21 117:2
118:23 133:11
146:14 147:13
177:4,8 200:4
203:21 215:12
216:15 218:15
240:17,24 255:25
(24)

merc 202:3 204:3

merchant 192:22

mere 85:21

merely 235:13

mess 154:20

message 171:24

messed 154:19

met 45:2

metal 17:22
69:20,22

meter 255:16

methodologies
305:8

methodology
183:20

metric 226:16
229:19 231:19

metropolitan
290:11

mexicans 301:13

mi 212:25

michael
108:17,21 116:3
123:13 172:10,13
212:23 214:19,22
246:16 278:21
283:17 (12)

michelle 2:8

microphone 3:16

midblock 61:17
70:3

middensity 59:21

middle 110:7
132:16 146:25
193:25 244:2 (5)

midtown 127:23
169:22 314:7

might 20:18
25:24,25 26:5
73:14 106:18

113:19 122:13 130:12 166:16 180:12 188:4 192:15,25 193:8 194:5 225:19 228:25 230:2 273:16 280:18,20 298:16 (23)

mih 15:19 16:9 19:5 41:18 62:9,17 64:25 65:18 66:3 67:14,19 107:2,6,14 112:24 113:5 123:18,25 124:3,8 257:19 258:13 262:7 263:16,19 265:16 266:10,23 267:19 274:2 277:15 281:22 (32)

mike 112:14

mile 15:8 21:13 80:9 304:2 (4)

miles 80:10 135:9 320:16

military 133:3

millennial 245:2

miller's 132:15 134:11,15 215:12 (4)

million 87:22 126:3 127:21 133:16 138:24 173:16 179:9 181:23 183:24 254:10 256:14 309:12,15 315:4 (14)

millions 208:11 272:4

mind 152:7 157:14,16 165:6

239:16 (5)

mine 295:21

minimizing 307:15

minimum 46:21 72:25 105:14 258:8,10 (5)

minorities 311:18

minority 175:7

minus 309:14

minute 189:4

minutes 3:15 4:19,22 5:3 95:11 99:13,16,18 102:3 127:22,24 213:7 257:17 273:20 274:9,10 313:17 (17)

misinformation 277:8

mismatch 180:8

missed 137:5 206:7 280:4

missing 121:9

mitchell 90:5

mitigate 184:14 205:15 230:20

mitigates 182:12

mitigation 230:24 245:11,18 304:15 (4)

mitigations 232:5

mix 40:14 47:16 102:23 216:3

301:9 (5)

mixed 103:23 197:19 219:10

mixedincome 24:2 282:10

mixeduse 17:7 39:19 61:22 85:9 88:21 92:9 125:21 135:19 277:20 (9)

mixeduses 251:3

mixnmatch 17:24 19:19 282:3

mobile 176:4 192:5

mobility 31:17 56:2 167:16

model 195:23 196:3 255:17

modeled 255:19

moderate 110:6

modern 256:7

modest 126:10

modesty 312:8

modified 10:24 66:13 67:8

modulated 69:25

mom 286:19

moment 17:5 60:12 104:10 136:4 176:19 215:17 227:18 239:17 308:13 313:15 (10)

monday 4:21 10:23 19:24

106:25 (4)

monetary 290:17

money 96:6,7 133:17,20 203:4 269:22 285:19 291:7 (8)

monitoring 44:23 249:9,10,23 (4)

monolithic 235:20

monstrosity 79:24

montgomery 300:25

month 126:2 213:22 289:8 292:5 (4)

months 34:13 124:24 127:19 144:13 (4)

monthslong 109:19

more 8:4 22:22 25:13,20,23 28:22 31:13 43:11 49:17 55:14 65:19 66:4,13 67:10,20,23 68:2 70:20 71:3 73:3,14,20 80:19,19 82:10,17 83:19,25 87:8,10 93:4 94:18 101:2 105:23,25 109:12 111:20 114:16 115:21 119:6 121:15 123:16 126:2 127:9,10 130:3,3 131:5 137:9,9 138:12 142:6 144:6,7 147:21 148:21 151:24 158:18

164:13 168:11,15 170:11 171:9 174:10 179:16 181:11 183:4,7,8 186:11 188:12 193:15 194:19 195:10,16 197:20 203:4,23 206:14 207:19 208:2 210:17 235:8,8,13 239:7,9 240:18,25 242:4,4 251:18 252:16 256:19 259:11 264:4 266:9 267:12 269:21 270:2 277:2,2,3 278:12 280:16 291:24 293:15 297:20 302:7,23 305:14 309:19 310:2 312:7 319:17 320:8,16 322:7 (118)

morning 3:4 13:11 23:17 31:6 33:6 39:7 43:13 55:4 81:8 83:12 84:22,23 86:2 88:13 90:4 91:18 95:6 108:19 125:11 140:20,21 143:8 150:17 153:2 154:2 161:22 163:4,25 165:24 172:11 206:24 209:12 245:17 300:25 318:10 319:15 (36)

morris 90:3 91:16,18,19 93:19,24 94:7,17 95:2,3 (10)

mortgage 270:2

most 15:5 32:6 84:7 113:14 131:22 132:12 138:8 148:17,17

my 8:10 10:22
13:12 20:6 23:18
26:14,24 27:4
30:10,17 31:7
33:7 35:23 43:14
47:2 52:18 53:21
55:5 57:18 65:14
66:22 72:8,16
74:6 79:18 81:8
83:13,17 86:16
88:15,17 89:14
91:19 92:3,4,13
93:10 95:10
99:20,21 100:17
103:6 114:7,13
122:13,21 125:12
128:22 139:5
141:14
147:6,6,8,18
172:13 180:14
191:20,24 193:5
197:13 198:15
199:6,10
204:17,22
206:14,25 207:6
209:14 213:13
215:15 216:22
218:24 226:3
233:10 234:11
243:11,17 244:7
245:8 246:12
260:19 263:24
264:17,25
268:19,25 271:11
272:16
274:16,22,23,24
275:17,21 277:18
278:13,25 281:21
284:9,12,13 286:6,
8,13,18,19,20,25
287:20,23
288:4,9,10,12,25
289:21 290:2,3,5
292:22 293:3,4,5,7
,16,16,18
294:2,22,25 295:5,
6,6,8,9,11,11,14
296:9,14,14,23,24
297:3,5,11,12,14,1
5,21,23 298:4,22
300:22 301:14,14
302:17 307:21
308:3 310:2,22

313:21 317:12
318:18 324:17
(166)

myself 129:3
293:5

mysterious 105:2

n11 258:9

n180295zrk 10:4

n180529zrq 57:9

n190103zrx 13:3

n190114azrr
98:16

n190114zrr
98:16

n190162zrk
38:19

n190179ahar
98:19

nadine 79:3
81:6,9

nail 129:6

name 13:12
23:18 31:7 33:7
35:24 43:14 55:5
57:18 74:6 81:8
83:13 88:15 91:19
99:21 125:12
131:5 172:13
199:11 206:25
209:14 213:13
218:16,24 233:10
243:11 246:12
264:17 268:19
269:4 272:17
274:16 275:17
276:22 278:25
286:6 289:21
292:22 294:22
296:9 298:22
300:22 301:13

302:17 307:25
313:11 317:12
(46)

names 104:18
308:2

narrow 15:2 51:7
78:2,7 79:9,11
82:3 164:19 (8)

nascar 199:24

national 280:18

nationalities
290:13

native 216:17

nature 26:16
156:18 157:10

naval 126:17

navigating 175:7

navy 215:21

near 15:6 62:3
86:15 89:8 90:24
100:11 246:25
247:5 308:19 (9)

nearby 44:11
70:13 82:6 220:23
(4)

nearly 42:17
109:7 110:10,15
144:16 312:25 (6)

necessarily 24:6
26:13 103:22
147:23
182:2,10,11
184:10 197:16
218:10 243:19
(11)

necessary
45:21,25 86:15
96:21 139:3

158:11 238:14
242:22 254:11 (9)

necessity 87:3

need 24:10 34:9
50:12 72:9 73:16
85:15 94:18 95:24
102:9 106:12
110:21 112:15
113:6 115:4
129:17 132:19
162:16
164:8,12,17 165:4
169:14,16 179:13
180:23 181:7,8
191:3 192:15
193:3 196:2,12
201:7,9 206:2
207:12 213:23
223:10,18 232:14
238:11,22 248:12
253:21,22
254:3,11,18,18
266:19 267:24
268:4 286:23
291:11 293:20
294:4 297:20
305:4,24 314:8
318:11 (61)

needed 40:24
44:2 86:15 88:21
89:13 92:8 93:15
95:18 96:22 188:4
195:19 229:2
248:17 250:12
277:2 288:20
309:6,7 (18)

neediest 258:20

needs 21:25 22:7
103:16,17 113:4
118:17 119:14
120:12,19 127:12
134:12 140:11
164:3 173:12
177:7 185:6 186:2
194:20 195:17
200:11,19
201:5,10 208:2
223:10 232:3,4

236:22 245:5
247:22 249:8
250:15 254:9
285:14 (34)

negatively
290:25

negotiate 191:7

negotiated 234:2

negotiating 24:20
190:20

negotiations 38:3
175:14

neighbor 204:19

neighborhood
13:24 26:7 40:20
42:20 74:8
75:6,11 76:19
77:7 78:5 79:12
80:13,17 81:14
83:2 89:13,15
95:18 97:24
100:15 108:21,25
109:4,18,19
110:25 112:3
116:19 118:11
119:7,15
120:10,14,17
122:22,23 123:4
124:17,21 127:16
133:5,25 136:7
139:10
149:15,16,16,17
163:23 165:9
168:16,17,19
169:12 171:7
172:14 173:5,17
174:17,22 176:9
189:7,22,23 190:5
191:25 192:18
194:16 201:2
209:15 219:2
220:12 226:17,21
231:4,11 232:2
234:16 237:20
238:11,20
244:7,18 250:5,9

253:3 264:20
280:22 294:24
295:8 301:14
313:12 (92)

neighborhoods
111:11 119:14,16
123:6 131:12
145:16 172:21
195:9 197:18
263:11 264:24
(11)

neighbors 149:21
301:14

neither 244:17
256:25 270:4

nello 11:16

nephew 274:19

net 141:3
178:22,23,24 (4)

network 237:13

never 79:19
92:25 165:5
237:11,12 254:17
258:13 263:2
284:12 316:2 (10)

new 1:3,8,8 16:4
19:16 21:9,10
31:13 35:19 36:4
37:23 39:9,18
41:2 51:20
53:12,13 55:12,15
56:5 61:13,21
62:7 72:25
83:20,25 88:21
89:11,17 95:17
109:11,25
110:4,5,7,10,15
111:3,8 112:7,18
119:8 120:15
123:14,21 125:18
126:13,14,16
127:19,19 128:5
129:23,24
133:14,21 135:6

136:2,7,23 137:17
138:23 139:2,5
141:9,11,21
143:9,10,19,23
144:3,9 145:4,23
151:15 153:14
157:3 164:14,22
165:5,8 172:19,24
174:25 175:12
176:11 177:17
178:2 179:22
180:12 181:20
182:14,25
183:6,11,12
187:21 188:3
189:5,21 190:19
193:17 194:5
195:25 196:15
197:16 198:2
200:16 201:21
203:15 204:4,5
205:12,21,23
208:10 209:16
211:2,24 213:14
214:8 219:3,6
220:6,7,9,11
221:11 226:7,8
230:4,11 238:19
240:11,25 242:22
244:8 245:12,23
246:13 250:12
256:23 257:15,19
260:2 263:10
264:25 267:21
272:11 277:14
287:19,23
290:16,22 292:10
297:23 301:8
302:19,24 303:22
304:25 309:12
318:17 319:22
320:10 321:2
324:4,9 (169)

next 5:16 12:23
18:19 29:2 31:4
55:2 79:2 81:6
89:25 91:16 95:4
108:17 124:24
125:9 134:8
137:17 143:4
146:25 172:9
204:15,19 206:20

209:10 212:22
217:7 218:19
233:7 243:8 246:9
247:15 264:13
268:11 270:16
274:13 278:20
283:17 286:3
287:11 289:18
292:18 300:18
302:15 306:15
307:4 317:3 (45)

nice 36:23 69:19
75:20 76:10
123:13 130:22
148:12 161:12
166:19 (9)

nicholas 199:5
204:16 206:20
207:2 (4)

nieces 274:19

night 72:9
146:20,24,25 (4)

nights 307:23
313:11

nike 234:6

ninestory 17:6

nineteen 303:14
304:5

ninety 102:21
104:19 105:17
109:17 144:23
211:11 (6)

ninetynine 18:12

ninetythree
211:10

no 4:4,6 5:2,14
23:7 28:15,20
30:24 32:14,20
35:5,8,12
38:7,10,13 48:9,15
49:4 54:18,22

56:22 57:3 72:13
73:21 75:12,14
78:23 80:7,10
81:3 83:7 88:7
89:23 91:14 96:3
97:8 103:21
105:20,21 107:13
108:14 112:8
121:10 124:2,23
125:6 131:23
135:10 139:17
142:25 155:8
156:24 167:25
184:2,6 187:3,13
198:22 201:11,12
204:13 206:19
208:15 209:3,7
211:20 214:2,16
215:13 233:5
238:17 240:14
241:4 243:5
244:23 246:7
250:14 252:22
257:7,18 259:4
263:4 264:10
266:14 268:8,15
269:20 270:15
271:19 275:12
280:19 283:14
285:24 289:17
291:4,21 293:5
294:15 295:21
296:2 298:13
300:17 301:18,24
305:19 307:15
309:10,13
312:8,23
315:6,7,8,9,10,12
320:24 322:15,21
323:6 324:15
(122)

nobody 234:15
278:14

nodding 253:11

noise 29:5

nombre 213:2

**nonapplicantown
ed** 61:4

nonconforming
72:5

none 210:23
308:9,10 313:19
(4)

nonfixing 297:4

nonilluminated
28:9

nonpay 262:23

nonprofit 63:2
96:18 180:20

nonprofits 119:4

nor 244:17 257:2

nordstrom 234:5

normally 235:17

north 7:6 14:4,10
16:18 58:24 59:20
63:12 75:17 78:15
103:2 109:6,10,12
110:8 111:12,25
112:9 118:13
125:21 126:11,13
127:5,25 128:5
130:10 132:14
141:15,20 143:16
144:8 146:22
169:4 174:24
175:19,25 199:16
204:8 210:22
213:22 215:10
220:3 221:13
233:15,19 234:8
241:11,21 257:19
260:10 265:24
266:4 267:19
271:10,12,21
272:6,24 273:22
274:17 275:6
276:3,10,13,15
279:5,7 280:17
284:25 285:2
288:10 289:22,24
290:7 291:16,23

292:9,25 294:6 299:19 300:9,12 302:4,5,22 307:9 309:17 (86)

northeast 18:23

northeastern 97:21

northern 58:6 59 :5,10,11,12,19,24 60:6,15 63:8 70:5,18 71:4,10 77:9,12,14,16,17 78:12,17 80:4,5,15,19 81:20,24 85:23 89:7 90:23 127:8 136:23 137:15,25 230:12 280:7 321:16 (37)

northsouth 64:10

northwest 18:24 86:9

note 8:10 22:11 29:24 65:9 99:11,12 166:17 232:22 233:17 266:25 298:16 306:4 322:22 (13)

noted 19:5,23 123:19 265:15 (4)

notforprofit 295:2

nothing 27:6 163:11 259:5 262:14 312:16 316:17 (6)

notice 98:25

noticed 34:22 94:5 122:13

notwithstanding 78:17

november 137:23 185:2 299:11

now 3:16 8:3,11 18:8 43:10,10 73:5,25 74:11 75:10 80:2 83:8 87:22 88:4 97:19 101:20 107:24 112:23 113:20 123:20 127:3 131:5 133:10 146:5,23 153:8 154:13 156:8,20 162:10 163:12 167:19 169:5 184:22,24 189:15 198:25 199:24 200:7 209:13 214:18 215:16 216:19 217:9 220:19 222:2 223:15 228:5,21 229:3 236:20 237:3,13 240:14 241:3 242:3 250:20 252:9 253:6,8 257:10 270:2 275:14 276:19,25 277:9,12 278:2 279:12,14 285:2,5 287:25 288:6 289:7 295:23 297:9 301:2 306:5 309:9 313:4,14 322:17 (83)

nowhere 293:19 314:5

number 5:19,20,20 6:25 7:2,3 8:24 9:3,25 10:2,3,4 11:14,17 12:14 13:2,3 27:22 32:24 35:16 38:18,18,19,20 54:13 57:8,8 64:23 66:5 67:16 69:2 76:12 81:24 98:15,15,16,17,18, 18 99:10 102:4,17

104:13,13,15 115:3 118:24 121:14 125:19 179:17 182:24 197:21 200:25 211:9 277:15 282:14,15 (57)

numbers 5:5,18,24 6:23,25 7:8 8:22 10:8 11:12 12:17,21,25 38:17 57:7 64:21 98:14 178:18 259:20 265:6,25 273:23 (21)

numerous 212:3

nursing 301:20

nyc 3:6 5:7 34:7 126:3 (4)

nycha 58:24 92:2,21,22 (4)

o'clock 153:25

oasises 241:4

obamas 52:24

obscurities 244:9

observe 231:24

obtain 175:12

obvious 221:20 247:17,18

obviously 24:14 25:20 27:10 65:18 81:23 106:17 107:16 116:18 118:3 120:7 131:24 148:14 157:16 162:19 163:24 167:17 181:24 184:9 189:24 222:25 238:10 (21)

occupied 133:2 137:21

occupy 26:2

occur 140:2 158:19 304:10,22 (4)

occurring 164:15 165:6 255:25

occurs 189:25

oddo 146:3 174:17 292:4 312:6 (4)

off 3:10 8:11 85:22,22 104:9 116:16 117:3 149:22 156:8 159:4 160:14 172:3 173:12 226:2 238:17 239:4 240:5,8 241:18 242:20 243:20 248:5 276:9 (23)

offenders 255:10

offer 150:14 178:14 188:12 193:9 235:13 293:13 294:10 (7)

offered 318:2

offers 111:16 175:22 191:23

offhand 28:10 29:11 186:3

office 28:17 33:21 126:11 129:21 130:13 141:5,13,15,18,20 177:18 178:4,21 193:22 219:25 222:21 226:22 242:8,15 244:4

(20)

officer 2:14

offices 20:3 129:15 234:3

official 202:6

officials 116:11 271:25 320:13

offisland 154:6

offset 265:13

offstreet 88:24 90:20 92:11

often 82:14 119:2 213:25 254:24 318:17 (5)

oh 159:21 160:9 172:5 209:13 273:19,19,19,19 311:5,8 320:25 (11)

old 93:22 147:6 154:14 193:24 215:16 244:8 252:13 256:6 (8)

olivet 90:9

olmstead 14:3,5,23,24 15:16 17:9 (6)

once 84:5 135:6 266:9 279:25 (4)

one 8:9 27:22 35:8 36:20 37:20 38:10 40:15 47:2 50:4,23 51:14 55:11 65:8 66:16 71:16 75:4 77:8 78:13 83:22 85:22 86:5 91:21 100:6 104:11,14,18 105:8 109:16

110:13 116:12
118:25 119:16
121:20,20 127:16
130:11 131:19,24
133:14 134:12,17
135:10 136:17
140:12 145:5
146:20 147:13
148:16,21 151:2
153:15 155:8
156:12,20 157:14
162:12,13 164:5
165:15 170:4
171:23 174:24
175:17 187:18
197:2,10 198:14
200:2,13,14,25
201:4 210:19
213:18 214:25
223:8 234:9,19
235:21 238:17
241:20 248:13
250:22 251:12
255:19,24 257:19
261:23 265:20
267:17 269:15
270:20 271:17,22
276:17,24 277:20
281:7,12,25 282:6
284:6 285:13
288:24,25 290:20
291:20
296:14,21,25
302:13,22
303:13,18
307:4,10,11
309:16,22 310:2
311:11 312:21
313:2
315:19,21,23
(126)

onebedroom
19:9

onebedrooms
64:18

oneonone 190:21
192:14

ones 42:4 164:22
193:17 255:20

272:25 285:4 (6)

onestory 15:3
257:24

onethird 126:17

ongoing 133:10
143:24 190:7
193:12 220:8
222:5,16 228:18
277:4 (9)

online 183:6
184:6 220:11
230:5 (4)

only 32:16 73:10
135:10 138:21
149:17 151:12
192:4 211:19
234:7 257:16
258:19 261:3
262:8,24 266:22
269:10 288:12
293:12 294:4
298:5
309:12,16,22
313:19 314:15
315:14 321:4 (27)

onthego 176:6
192:8

onto 92:5 166:15

open 17:3 19:8
30:12 76:7,14
79:19 86:13
126:14,15,18
127:2,3 130:15
139:23 145:22
182:25 183:8
187:11 198:8
201:24 205:11
219:7,15
220:2,11,12,17
221:11 225:24 226
:8,10,14,19,20,25
229:9,14,18,20
230:18,21
232:4,7,24 244:18
254:3 276:14

282:22 285:5
303:5,24,25 304:7
308:14 317:19,20
319:4,5 322:23
(59)

opened 278:10

opening 86:7
308:21

openings
69:18,22

operate 256:11

operates 174:24
175:17

operating
256:12,13

operations
256:21

operator 24:21

operators 24:19

opinion 76:23
242:21

opponents 94:10

opportunities
84:10 89:12 95:17
109:24 169:23
170:11,24,25
171:5,6 173:15
175:21 176:3
194:6 196:9
207:13 219:16
220:2,25 221:10
226:20,24
227:9,17 237:5
290:21 302:21
(27)

opportunity
39:13
96:4,5,8,16,17
97:2 100:14
112:17 114:10

130:7 131:11
137:6 155:23
192:14 194:18
208:4 213:17
217:19 221:14
223:20 244:13
246:22 248:20
264:17 267:25
279:25 280:4 (28)

oppose 257:18
275:4 286:14,21
307:2 312:21 (6)

opposed 4:25
5:13 70:25 159:4
216:24 252:2
266:8 288:21
307:7 311:20,21
312:25 313:4 (13)

opposes 307:12

opposite 44:7

opposition 74:2
99:12 199:2 235:5
257:11 263:23
284:3 290:15
307:10 (9)

optimize 150:21

option 15:19
16:10 41:18 58:10
64:25
65:18,20,21,21
66:3,11,13 67:6,9
87:7,16,19
113:5,12,12,16,22
225:6 265:18,18 2
66:10,11,12,12,23,
24 267:4 292:3
(33)

options 26:10
44:6 89:9 90:25
107:3,7 109:21
112:24 113:2,13
114:11 116:7
117:8 123:4
144:11 190:15
204:8 222:8,8

228:8 245:4
258:13,15 262:7
263:16,20,20
265:17 266:13,23
274:2 (31)

orange 154:10
169:6

order 46:19
55:14 73:16 83:24
134:13 213:23 (6)

organization
74:12 86:14
213:15 262:25
295:3 320:9 (6)

organizations
121:5,16 172:23
209:20 270:11 (5)

organizer 213:16
243:13

organizing
192:22 257:14

oriented 62:21

original 264:2

orlando 2:11

orleans 309:12

ortiz 2:12 4:13,14
6:18,19 8:17,18
9:20,21 11:7,8
12:10,11 22:8,9
23:3 25:14 26:20
27:17 49:25
50:2,19,21 51:6,17
70:10,11 77:4,5,19
140:19,20,22
176:21,22,24
177:2 178:22,24
181:21 182:6
183:9,22
196:21,22
198:10,12
229:7,8,16
230:7,22 231:2,7,1

2,14,17,21 239:15,20,22 242:21,25 243:3 316:23 (65)

other 16:25 17:6 27:19 30:3,23 35:4 36:25 38:6 52:4 53:4 54:17,21 68:7 77:8 78:22 82:20 88:6 103:13 104:6 106:14 108:13 110:9 111:16 116:19 118:21 123:11,16 125:5 131:12 138:14 142:24 147:17 149:18,23 157:14 158:24 162:7,23 165:25 172:2 175:14 177:15,23 181:15 183:3 188:9 193:6 195:4 196:19 197:17 198:20 200:12 201:5 204:12 205:25 217:24 225:10,16 227:16 230:6 233:4 237:23 242:13 243:4 245:8 254:21 255:22 257:6 263:14 264:9 266:13 269:22 279:4 283:13 291:6 307:8,17,19,24 310:23 311:2,5 316:2,9 317:25 322:14 323:5 (87)

others 25:21 34:23 102:22 189:19 195:17 267:22 311:25 (7)

otherwise 100:6 101:12

ours 20:24

ourselves 143:22

out 3:12 8:2 11:3 42:17 47:9 49:21 50:9 53:11 77:7,22 86:6 92:23 98:9 103:9 107:25 111:23 112:20 114:8 116:14 119:5,9,24 121:18 122:4 138:15 139:21 140:25 145:3 148:23 151:8 153:3 154:18 156:21,25 157:8 160:19 166:5,14 171:12 182:8 192:3,6,15 193:14 202:5 203:2,5 206:7 210:9 214:4 232:9,11 234:15 236:20 238:12,22 245:8 246:18 249:17 251:23 262:24 265:5 266:17 271:14 277:8 278:13,15 284:6,7,18 291:25 293:24 297:11 300:2 302:12 307:21 309:9 312:8,18,22 314:14 315:4 316:14 320:23 (84)

outcome 324:16

outcomes 130:4

outdated 62:6

outdoor 224:14

outfalls 255:6,17,18

outlet 151:4,9,13,20 156:15 181:15 184:9 (7)

outlets 158:22 159:11 183:25

233:25 234:4 279:4 (6)

outlined 60:9 112:24 114:13 229:23 (4)

outlining 112:15 114:2

outreach 96:20 111:21 112:3 118:11 119:11,17 120:24,25 174:14 176:4 191:21 192:11 195:6 209:18 (14)

outside 139:8 175:2 193:8 228:9,14 (5)

over 12:19,22 18:7,18 63:25 76:8 87:17 93:6 97:23 109:5 118:25 121:21 124:22 137:3 141:18,20 144:8,14 147:6,24 170:8 173:21 177:24 178:11 199:22 209:19,25 216:10 233:15 235:13 249:3 253:24 254:2,10 258:25 260:25 265:8,21 266:17 267:18 269:5 272:2 275:25 276:7,7,7,15 286:22 293:2 295:4 298:19,20 301:17 303:17 306:25 307:5 312:11 313:7,19 314:6 315:15 323:8 (62)

overall 19:4 101:3 109:12 128:9 177:14 (5)

overcrowded 274:22 308:11,12

overdue 203:13

overflow 251:15 254:24

overlay 14:12 15:14,24 16:2 20:13 22:10 25:3 28:8 58:5 61:18 71:25,25 (12)

overlays 21:3,21 59:17

overlook 29:6

overlooked 316:13

own 27:9 52:18 96:3 167:12 169:12 193:7 214:2 269:20 271:23 279:12 284:12 295:19 (12)

owned 38:23 169:11 241:22

ownedsite 107:7

owner 119:5 120:14 190:22 191:12 257:23 258:2 259:16 (7)

owneroccupied 111:15 211:15

owners 111:13,21,24 119:6,8,18,20,25 120:19 124:21 175:11 176:8 191:18 192:24,25 208:6 (16)

ownership 17:4 30:13

owns 315:14

p 2:2,2,6

pacific 40:22

package 124:16 126:3,4

page 5:17 12:24 69:7 74:20 319:9 (5)

paid 56:11 185:22

painted 297:14

painting 150:13

pairing 59:7 162:13

pairs 111:8

pamela 263:8

paneling 17:22

papers 297:16

para 214:15

parakaló 218:18

parcel 315:14

parcels 241:22

pardon 273:15

parenthesis 64:21

parents 274:23,24,25 284:16 (4)

parishioners 95:19 96:12 269:15 288:25 (4)

park 18:13

127:22 142:19 201:5 220:7,15,18,23,24 221:9 225:17 227:11 230:4 275:23 276:20,22 301:2 308:18 309:7 (19)

parkchester 15:8

parked 159:12

parking 15:4 18:7,11,17,18 20:25 22:16,21,23,23 23:2,8,12 40:18 41:17 43:3 44:4 47:15 48:13,15,20,25 49:4,4 50:6 62:18,19 63:25 64:3,4 73:8 76:9 79:12 88:24 90:20 92:11 149:12 277:25 279:15 280:5,14,25 301:4 (43)

parkland 220:10

parks 126:14 201:18,20 219:3,6,7,12,23 221:3,11 222:6,20 224:18 225:14 226:12 253:20 276:14,21,23 320:4,10 321:2 (22)

parks' 320:13

part 5:16 12:23 32:11 43:9 47:23 54:15 56:18 65:22,23 73:9 86:17 96:19 100:15 101:3 103:8 107:11,25 117:4 124:16 126:6 131:7

133:13 135:4 136:21,24 138:24 143:16,24 145:21 152:23 161:8,9 164:12 166:25 167:2 183:14,15 192:3 193:11 201:16 203:18 207:17 215:11 225:15 234:20 236:16 240:13 265:17 266:24 268:23 276:19 283:9 287:16 291:17 292:8 321:21 (56)

partial 60:13

partially 23:5

participants 19:17

participate 106:20 160:25

participated 219:16

particular 27:7,23 47:8 52:11 85:7 86:13 102:17 107:10 201:19 233:19 235:21 238:8 255:15 282:17 298:18 (15)

particularly 55:18 96:23 101:3 102:20 103:24 115:5 135:18 155:21 163:10 165:20 193:20 241:14 272:24 288:16 (14)

parties 324:14

partner 53:21 172:22 186:19 192:9,17 219:13

(6)

partnered 173:10

partners 39:17 41:8 43:11,15 52:16 56:3 120:13,18 173:7 192:2 195:15 219:24 221:8 230:6 279:2,3 (16)

partnership 312:14

parts 162:7

pass 70:12 141:24 263:6,9 267:25 277:13,19 295:20 (8)

passing 28:2

passive 303:25

past 85:3 110:23 118:12,25 233:15 271:3 290:3 301:2 (8)

pastor 84:24,25 88:14 95:8,9 270:25 288:13 298:15,23 299:8 300:15 (11)

pastoring 85:3

path 44:10 212:2 237:20

pathbreaking 306:8

pathway 128:6 145:17

pathways 42:20 46:9

patience 166:11

patrick 91:17 95:5,8

pattern 149:2 152:25 165:8

patterns 160:4,22

paul's 144:5

paved 237:11

pavedunpaved 205:14

pavement 161:11

pay 31:15,20 93:3 96:6,7 213:22,23,25 214:5,6 286:18 292:6 297:13 (13)

paying 210:17 277:23 289:7 291:23 (4)

pd 158:9

pdc 134:6

peace 297:24

peak 156:17

peakhour 304:11

pedestrian 17:16 43:25 44:10 128:6 133:7 135:3 144:3 157:16 (8)

pedestrians 159:14 167:5

pedicure 129:4

peek 75:25

peer 206:3

pelt 276:22

pelton 234:9,10

pending 30:22

pension 284:20

people 26:13 32:16 49:2 79:16 82:17,25 102:3,4 121:10 122:10 131:22 136:7 137:4 146:24 147:24 148:15 149:13,22 150:15 156:5 157:2,3,4,6 163:12 165:8,22 167:22 168:15,18 169:11 170:12 171:7 181:8,13 189:16 193:24,25 194:3 197:23 201:24 202:8,23 205:8,9 209:25 215:5 238:16 239:3 241:10,23 247:19 254:15 276:9 277:2,3,9,21,22 278:3,14 280:2 285:2,20 286:23 290:12 292:9,11 297:25 299:10 301:19 302:10 306:25 307:5 308:24 309:8,12,15,24 310:8 311:15,18,21 314:19 319:18 320:21,23 321:3 (88)

per 16:11 107:18 165:14 229:16,18 231:16 237:5 255:3 259:9 272:25 289:8 292:5 320:20 (13)

percent 16:13 30:20 34:8,17 36:12 37:6 41:19,20,21 42:2,2

playgrounds 40:20

playing 191:4 193:3 194:13

plays 148:23 196:13

plaza 233:24

plazas 314:10

pleas 102:14

please 3:10,13 32:19 35:10 38:12 57:2 97:14 98:6,7 116:24 148:3 188:16 221:25 229:5 253:14 278:14 297:24 300:12 302:12 313:7 316:13 322:20 (22)

pleased 84:2 207:16

pleasing 151:24 167:8

plenty 256:13

plowed 237:12

plug 131:6,14

plumbing 44:24

plus 102:21 124:8 245:23

pm 1:1 317:19,21 323:10 (4)

pockets 272:5 297:11

point 10:23 25:15 28:12 87:2 133:6,6 137:10 159:17 162:14

182:17 187:24 212:16 213:7 233:24 238:22 250:7 254:4,6 261:14 262:3 279:24 284:14 285:7,10 311:11 316:13 (26)

pointed 114:8

points 44:12 47:4 107:2 244:16 (4)

poleshuck 287:13 289:19,21,22 292:14,15 (6)

police 151:16 159:12

policies 124:11

policy 16:12 197:3

polly 143:12 147:5 148:5

pool 222:10,11 224:7,8,9,10,13,14 301:7 317:13,17,1 7,19,20,22,23 318: 5,8,16,19,20,22 31 9:3,10,11,11,13,18 ,23 320:15,20,21 321:4,12,18 322:3,11 (37)

pools 318:13

poor 180:4

population 103:22 189:20 226:8 265:8 319:17 (5)

populations 103:23

port 13:24 126:17 247:2

portfolio 194:14

portion 16:2 45:14 62:24 71:22 120:24 132:12 135:20 136:3 (8)

portions 59:5 235:11

pose 193:16

posed 177:11 305:21

poses 302:21

position 288:10

positive 27:15 144:21 220:23 234:18 236:2 (5)

possibilities 130:16

possibility 48:18 101:6 138:19 180:7 (4)

possible 60:21 68:22 142:18 161:10 181:10 212:6 223:25 239:4 267:14 (9)

possibly 170:14 210:19 315:23

posthearing 29:21 30:2 98:5 283:10 316:4 (5)

postsandy 134:20

pot 301:10

potential 30:15 50:5 130:17 131:11 132:6 152:18 172:19 178:20 189:9,12 193:14,17 225:17

226:7 227:25 238:19 240:10 244:8,20 281:10 302:23 311:12 (22)

potentially 23:4 114:10 135:25 141:19 186:10 197:3 (6)

potentials 244:10

pour 269:5

poverty 34:9 36:12 86:10 277:11 (4)

power 264:23

powerpoint 33:13

practical 149:5

practice 52:24 213:6

practiced 52:19

practices 190:18

praises 207:21

precedent 81:19

precinct 139:25

precious 260:25

precise 71:13

precisely 182:20

predates 223:16

predecessors 147:14

predominant 69:16

predominantly 21:6 311:16

prefer 191:8

preference 30:14,15,19 89:3 90:18 92:17 (6)

preferred 65:21 87:15 222:11 224:21 (4)

prek 25:8 180:25

preliminary 282:21

prendamano 218:21 233:7,9,11 236:5,8,24 238:2 239:7,11,13,21 240:13 242:24 243:2,7 (16)

prepared 246:19

preparing 306:6,8

preschool 62:23

preschoolers 37:5

prescott 40:8 44:8

presence 220:23

present 4:17 13:17 32:18 114:22 285:13 290:4 297:8 (7)

presentation 13:8 20:6 33:4,13 35:21 39:3 41:7 45:13 51:16 57:14 65:14 76:20 116:7 209:22,22 (15)

presentations

99:9

presented 48:7
209:20,24 307:18
(4)

presenting 39:11

presently 28:5
251:11 287:22
288:5 289:25 (5)

preservation 8:6
39:10 99:24
108:23 111:4 (5)

preserve 41:2
68:20 111:2
291:15 (4)

preserving
111:18

president 19:25
23:19 27:21 29:15
45:4 91:23,25
92:2 115:23 121:4
125:13 146:3
152:13 162:12,12
171:20 174:17
205:19 223:23
271:3 275:22
287:15 292:3
306:23 312:6,15
313:5 (27)

president's 28:17
68:10 177:5 188:2
236:14 (5)

presidents
136:11 307:7,24

pressed 145:14

pretty 30:9
105:13 113:9
127:17 128:22
307:13 (6)

prevailing 55:13
56:5,17 84:4 91:2
96:13 207:17

208:16 (8)

prevalent 25:5

prevention
118:21

previous 36:20
127:17

previously 15:4
55:16 73:4

prewar 59:23

priced 245:8

prices 109:22

pride 143:22

primarily 16:23
47:17 60:6 74:21
95:25 246:19 (6)

primary 236:15

prime 168:16

primed 202:17

prior 101:24
298:17

priorities 108:3
219:15 223:2
224:25 232:13 (5)

prioritizing
143:21

priority 222:4,20
232:20

priscilla 270:18
274:14,16 286:9
(4)

private 40:5
75:15 80:18
129:11 132:5
200:15 201:12,13
208:5,14 210:22

213:21 214:3
227:25 259:16
291:7 315:15 (17)

privately 169:11

privileged 290:6

proactive 111:20
190:25

probably 69:19
80:16 119:12
179:21 181:19
247:15 252:16
279:6,16,21 288:7
307:16 308:15
(13)

problem 58:12
164:18 165:4
253:13 256:23
295:10 (6)

problems 187:16
200:3 213:19
266:21 275:25
276:6 296:24
308:5 (8)

proceed 27:12
254:12

proceedings
3:1,9

process 7:24
103:8 106:2 107:9
108:2 113:8,15
114:9 131:7
145:21 171:19
183:14,16 185:12
190:8 195:11
199:19 219:18
226:13 249:25
294:2 (21)

processing
167:20

produce 202:20

produced 200:19

profit 31:25
208:12 258:2

program 17:4,24
19:8,16 34:5,6,11
36:9,14 41:24
46:20 47:3 62:10
73:18 92:16
103:12 106:14
111:8 112:8 119:9
123:18,25
144:12,17,23,25
161:11 169:4
173:5 175:11
190:13 192:8
193:11 194:19
195:17 222:14
224:22 262:17
267:10 277:12
281:25 282:3
318:6 (43)

programmable
220:18

programming
173:23 225:8

programs 45:7
46:8 111:22
112:19 116:22
117:5,11 124:11
187:21 188:4,5
190:3 191:17,23
193:7,12 194:9,22
195:5 318:2 (20)

progress 129:24
137:24

progressing
222:13

prohibitive
234:21

project 13:21
19:4 20:2,5
21:12,14,15
23:22,25 24:8
27:16 30:18 32:5
38:22 39:18,23,24
41:5,10,12 43:16

52:11 53:15,17,19
56:3,11,19
64:17,24 66:19,24
67:15 68:16 74:14
80:13 81:11,22
85:6,7,20
86:7,13,18 89:11
95:16,25 96:10,15
98:21 100:4
133:15 135:5
137:15,19 139:22
150:12 156:20
166:18 173:20
207:18 282:9,10
302:2,9 303:23
304:12 305:7 (68)

projected 177:17
265:11 304:18

projecting 105:7
257:21

projections
140:24 141:11,12
157:9 (4)

projects 52:8
53:13,14 56:6
85:14 125:20
135:17,20 136:14
150:9,18 153:21
154:4 156:20
166:16 167:24
173:9,24 177:3
201:14 217:24
230:5 233:17,23
246:15 248:22,25
249:5,11,12,13
253:8 272:21
291:5,10 314:17
(36)

promenade
132:14

prominent 71:8

promise 278:11

promote 96:16
143:20

promoted 154:5

promoting 154:8

prone 305:2

properties 53:11
61:4 76:6 111:11
128:23 201:13,14
211:16 233:12
241:4 (10)

property 31:15
32:11 33:2 35:18
38:23 39:25 55:9
56:17 62:5 83:20
98:22
111:12,21,24
129:11 192:24
201:16 208:6,19
234:22 279:12
319:10 (22)

proportion
109:10

proportional
19:6

proposal 85:6
88:19 92:3,6
101:7 107:24
109:22 122:16
126:7 196:23
202:5,7 207:8,20
208:8 209:24
212:13 216:2
229:21 235:12
248:3,4 291:17
303:2 305:6 (25)

proposals 101:22

propose 309:21

proposed 10:24
13:22 15:21
16:3,5,14
18:4,5,7,24 31:10
39:10,18 40:23
41:9 55:8,11 59:2
61:3,8,12,20
62:5,14 63:11

64:16 65:7 71:24
74:9 79:21
81:10,12,15 82:23
83:22 89:18 90:13
91:5,8,9 95:12
97:4 101:19,20
110:16 123:8
127:8 128:21
162:11 163:21
216:6 219:5
234:17,24 242:25
247:24 251:24
267:4 301:16,19
310:19 312:10
315:14 319:16
321:16 (65)

proposing 20:13
265:16 280:9
315:10 (4)

pros 251:12

prospect 124:15
241:17

prospective
94:10 115:10
178:5,14 181:4
183:10 187:20
236:25 (8)

protect 167:5
211:21 259:7

protected 110:19
152:5 167:12
168:9 210:23
277:12 (6)

protection 43:7
117:18 157:17
246:14 259:3,8
262:12,16 263:5
(9)

protections
211:21 214:13
258:24 261:16
277:10 291:21 (6)

proud 127:18
173:22 233:12,21

297:24 (5)

proven 86:8

provide 29:22
36:10 41:9 42:24
43:6,10,11 49:7
55:12 63:2 65:2
66:4 68:2 84:4
85:17,21 90:25
96:14,21 111:13
139:2 144:10
150:15 170:9
185:11 188:14
191:10 201:15
203:16 220:22
242:13 262:25
265:12 275:2
282:23 314:10
315:24 320:7 (38)

provided 18:13
21:10 45:15,25
46:6 63:13 91:7
96:9 309:5 316:8
(10)

provider 42:19

provides 22:22
41:24 42:11,22
43:21,24 49:18
110:18 272:6,9
309:23 (11)

providing 3:13
30:8 56:17 62:25
83:23 96:24 191:2
207:21 208:21
248:19 (10)

provisions 72:8
226:18

proximity 15:10
47:13 70:20,22
106:10 126:15 (6)

prudent 113:14

ptac 48:5

public 1:4 3:3,5

5:7 12:24 13:3
15:7 32:21,24
35:13,16 38:14,20
40:5,10 44:11
57:4,9 62:3 75:13
85:24 89:8
98:9,12,19,25
102:25 103:10
108:2 113:8,14
126:18,25 131:16
148:2 149:19
169:23 170:12
201:15,16 204:2
220:6,9 221:5
226:10 236:24
237:4,6 244:6
246:17 267:8,9
279:18
291:2,7,9,12,15,15
303:5,21
308:14,21
309:10,13
314:10,11
315:11,17,25
316:11 318:23
321:13 323:3,7
(75)

publicly 315:5
316:6

publiclyowned
261:4

pubs 197:25

puck 153:12

pugsley 14:13

pull 20:22 61:15
181:13

pump 202:17
256:25

pumping 247:3

pumps 256:20

purchases 30:16

purple 60:5

pursuant 23:10
99:6

purview 162:25

push 262:23

pushed 232:10
285:6

put 70:18,21
79:10 128:12
131:6 149:5
185:24 197:13
202:5 228:16
286:9 297:23
309:20 (13)

puts 272:4,19,22

putting 43:19
51:25 133:18
214:12 249:8
266:16 (6)

puzzle 128:13
132:3,19

q104 89:11

q66 89:10

quadrant 42:19
43:5 49:14

qualify 42:14
46:19

qualifying 17:14

qualitative
179:19

quality 99:7,8
109:21 143:17
163:22 172:20
176:2 219:8
247:18 280:21
312:4 (11)

quantitative
179:18

quarter 109:7

quarters 78:15

queens 57:6 58:7
60:2 62:10 65:10
76:22 83:15
85:2,5,13,18 86:9
89:4 90:9,19
92:18 99:22
276:12 324:6 (19)

question 21:23
22:21 37:11 47:12
50:5 51:18 52:6
54:9 71:6,20,21
72:17 77:6 82:19
94:3 102:16,25
103:21 105:2
112:22 122:21
123:17 138:8
140:5 141:14,25
142:3 150:7
156:12 160:17
177:11,13
178:5,15 181:22
183:17 187:12
189:8 193:15
200:9 218:11
221:20 231:6
236:10 239:19
251:5 253:2 294:2
305:15 307:14
310:22 311:24
315:11 316:24
(54)

questioning 39:5
258:23

questions
13:10,19 20:7,8
27:19 30:3,10,23
32:13 33:11 34:19
35:4 37:8 38:6
45:8,10 47:3
54:6,12,21 56:21
57:16,24 65:15
68:7 73:20 77:3
78:22 81:2 83:6
84:16,17 86:21
88:6 89:22 91:13
93:25 97:7 104:6

108:13 112:12
123:11 125:5
128:15 139:19
142:6,24 146:6
148:24 159:23
172:2 176:17,18
196:20 198:20
203:8 204:12
206:18 209:6
212:11 218:8
221:16,17 225:10
233:4 236:4
237:23 243:4
246:6,20 247:9,10
248:21 253:23,25
254:4,21 255:22
257:6 260:13
263:14 264:9
268:7 270:14
275:11 278:18
281:3 283:13
285:23 289:16
292:16 294:14
295:25 298:12,12
300:16
305:12,21,23
310:10 319:25
322:14 (102)

quick 160:2
273:20 274:9

quickly 18:8,20
33:12,24 36:15
64:5 229:8 (7)

quinn 216:7

quite 25:10 28:21
36:21 51:7
70:11,25 75:21
78:9 89:14 93:9
194:22 198:4
202:8 203:24
227:18 242:15
245:7 284:21
288:2 307:17
313:20 (21)

quorum 4:17

r3x 291:18

r5 14:9,15
15:13,21 18:6
58:3 59:21 63:11
101:15 (9)

r6 258:6,7

r6a 10:24 258:7,9

r6b 11:3 58:3,4
59:16 61:7,16 (6)

r6bc24 72:6

r7a 15:13,22 18:5

r7ac24 15:22

r7x 58:4 59:7
61:13,25 68:19,23
(6)

r7xc24 61:8

race 266:2

rack 51:21 234:6

racks 51:9,10
52:3

radius 80:9

rail 40:7
161:14,17,20
215:24 238:8
277:17,19 278:9
(9)

railway 238:6

rain 318:7

rainfall 255:13

rainwater 44:21

rainy 320:18

raise 136:8
286:20

raised 27:22

28:16 48:12 86:25
219:21 234:9
261:14 265:2
274:18 287:20
306:2 (11)

raising 305:16

raj 2:13

ralph 40:11

ram 261:4

rampershad 2:13
4:15,16 6:20,21
8:19,20 9:22,23
11:9,10 12:12,13
54:8,9,20 68:8,9
(18)

range 19:20
42:3,7 113:9
191:16 213:17
282:22,23 (8)

ranging 41:25

rank 231:3

rankings 231:3

rapid 151:23
194:25

rare 244:12

rate 62:11,15
73:6 76:16 109:25
124:7,8 128:23
177:22 178:9
179:7 184:20
185:13 211:10
212:15 239:25
242:15 277:23
303:18 (19)

rated 309:14

rather 66:15
97:24 167:17
168:19 308:22 (5)

ratio 101:18
102:21 105:10
226:14
229:9,14,22 230:8
(8)

rational 152:19

ratios 104:2

ravenswood
85:12 95:20

reach 119:6,13
121:18 145:3
266:17 (5)

reached 111:23
244:11

reaching 119:24
122:4 176:11

reactivated 130:7

reactivating
130:25

reactivation
126:9

reactive 195:10

read 74:17
116:18 296:14,17
321:9 (5)

readily 186:4

reading 90:6
149:3 214:25
322:2 (4)

ready 139:23

real 27:5 47:10
52:19 146:21
200:5 260:11,19
261:14 286:24 (9)

reality 187:19
210:4 218:4

really 7:24 36:23 47:19 51:23 70:14,25 71:15 78:8,19 82:14,22,24 86:6,15 93:8 94:17 104:14 112:16 119:11 128:10 130:8,15 131:17,23 132:19 133:22 134:9,19,24 135:2,8 137:5 141:7 157:11 162:14 163:11 164:11 168:17,22 169:8 177:4,13 181:7,12 183:4,7 186:19 188:18 189:20 192:2,3,21 193:3 195:14,22 196:4 200:10 201:9 206:2 223:17 226:16 236:22 238:15,21 251:2 253:21 254:9,11 279:25 285:3,6 286:23,23 289:5 296:19 301:19 313:20 (77)

realm 221:5

reap 208:7

reason 34:10 36:13 50:12 93:20 110:14 202:9,14 268:23 312:20 (9)

reasonable 295:18

reasonably 282:2

reasons 32:9 49:23 56:15 84:12 146:20 150:3 164:17 257:18 307:13 312:22 313:6 315:23 (12)

reassure 128:25

rebuild 199:12

rebuilding 203:14

rec 221:3 222:10 224:10,12 (4)

receive 99:4 319:11,14

received 21:12,18 45:4 134:6,21 137:2 211:6 269:13 (8)

receiving 56:6 261:23 290:19 322:25 (4)

recent 110:9 290:14 306:24

recently 15:5 51:19 126:2 144:4 176:4 202:25 217:5,24 237:15 269:13 (10)

reclaim 215:14

reclaiming 215:10

recognize 10:23

recognizes 219:6

recognizing 226:4

recommend 202:2,9,15

recommendation 32:12 56:18 199:24 262:5,9 (5)

recommendations 20:2 199:18 200:25 203:22

212:8 261:18 304:6 (7)

recommends 29:15

reconfigured 150:10

record 35:23 158:4 169:3 232:24 322:23 (5)

recorder 110:17

recreation 126:19 202:4,16 219:4 221:2 222:9 319:7,9 (8)

recreational 225:2 309:6

recruitment 175:22

rectangular 14:20

recused 10:18

red 8:11,12,13 58:18 59:4 60:4,9,11 (8)

redesign 68:25

redevelopment 100:11,20 137:17 216:11 (4)

redoubled 168:23

reduce 280:14

reduced 68:12,17 293:3

reducing 68:14

reduction 70:7

redundant 256:19

refer 298:21

referenced 229:9

referencing 116:14 230:7

referred 166:15 181:23 216:13

referring 120:16 122:21 123:5

refined 225:8

reflect 282:25 305:4

reflects 221:6 244:17 290:16

refreshing 169:8

refrigerant 44:18

refuse 297:17,17

refused 31:19

regard 30:12 43:16 261:13 262:7 (4)

regarding 36:2 43:12 48:13 57:24 175:12 304:9 (6)

regardless 149:11

regards 54:10

regional 184:10

regret 10:25

regrets 53:24

regular 4:19 119:23 241:11

278:8 (4)

regulate 214:3

regulations 28:9 36:7

regulator 251:21

regulatory 107:18 304:24

reiterate 315:19

reject 270:8 274:2 294:9

related 13:19 99:4 131:16 170:3 225:20 253:23,25 324:13 (8)

relates 77:12 137:3

relating 70:23 71:2

relation 81:13

relationship 192:21

relationships 119:21

relative 75:19

relatively 19:16 29:24 82:3

released 222:7 227:12,21

relevant 107:8 122:14 138:8,12 (4)

relief 150:15 170:10

relies 245:4

religious 269:8

relocate 139:25 191:9 193:2

relocated 100:12

relocation 134:15

rely 25:20 186:21

relying 192:2

remain 7:22 34:5 191:5 232:24 304:13 322:23 (6)

remainder 293:24

remarkable 159:7

remarks 3:14 128:19

remauro 274:15 275:15,16,18 278:17 (5)

remedy 266:21

remember 153:5 154:8,14 258:24 (4)

remembering 230:14

remote 243:25

remove 62:5 102:9 309:22

removed 21:19

renaissance 215:9 241:21

rendering 69:8 97:21

renderings 50:24

renewal 38:2,4,25 40:3 190:25 210:25 259:5 262:19 (8)

renewals 175:13

renovate 111:17

renovating 53:11

renovation 126:5

rent 93:4 175:13 210:18,19,25 213:21,22 214:5,7 261:16 262:20,22 266:6 269:17,25 271:20,22 284:21 285:10 286:25 289:7 291:24 296:25 297:3,10 300:4 302:8 (27)

rental 17:24 19:3,18 62:11 76:12 109:24 114:14 123:4 292:5 (9)

rentburdened 62:13 210:16,16 245:2 258:18 266:8 273:25 (7)

renter 74:10

renters 109:11,13,15,18 111:13 259:3 261:15 271:11,22 272:20 (10)

rents 42:7 87:23 214:3 265:9 269:11 288:18 293:7 295:7 297:7 299:4 302:6 (11)

rentup 66:18

reopen 227:5

reopened 217:7

repair 40:19 111:17 128:3 134:19 135:5 228:23,25 247:6 (8)

repairs 111:6,11 118:20 175:15 214:2 297:11,16 (7)

repeat 301:15

repeatedly 259:16

replacement 222:24

replacing 220:25 223:2

report 5:17 9:3,24 10:7 116:13,13,15 117:9,15 211:4,13 230:10,16 317:18 319:3,6 320:13 322:2 (18)

reported 232:7

reporter 324:9

reports 5:24 6:22 7:7 8:21 11:11 (5)

represent 23:18 60:20 64:22 70:6 74:11 199:11 263:18 311:17 313:17 (9)

representative 120:21 216:18 261:19

representatives 283:3

represented 60:4

312:19

representing 52:25 99:25 111:24 302:18 (4)

represents 83:19

request 27:24 32:10 56:16 89:19 91:9 97:4,17 98:4 101:22 177:6 267:5 (11)

requesting 225:3

requests 253:7

require 22:16,25 29:14 48:20,22 87:17 180:18 301:17 (8)

required 22:22 23:10 48:25 63:12 67:13,14 73:15 228:23 232:5 314:10 (10)

requirement 23:7,8 46:21,22 48:16 62:8 (6)

requirements 149:12 280:6,15

requires 180:18 232:6

research 177:23 197:13 271:24

reserve 201:14

reshape 68:25

reside 234:11

residence 270:4 293:10

residencies 101:12

resident 74:7 85:4,5 117:18 204:19 234:8 243:16 274:18 283:24 287:18 (10)

residential 16:17,20 17:7,11 21:6,8,17 23:11 41:19 44:13 48:16 61:2,22 63:22 66:6 74:21,23 75:2,6 77:9 78:20 83:15 123:20 207:19 208:9 234:23 244:24 251:2,9,10 252:2 257:23 291:19 299:16 304:21 308:22 (36)

residents 44:6,8,14 49:5 76:10 82:10 89:3,5 90:18,22 92:17 93:10 110:19 121:24,24 123:2 127:25 145:2,11 172:24 174:21 176:2 179:11 183:5,11,13 200:8 207:12 214:13 219:8 221:9 229:18 231:16 234:16 240:23 241:5 245:23 250:12 253:2 261:2 271:13 274:6 291:17 302:9 311:12 312:18,19 (47)

residing 296:20

resignalling 245:11

resiliency 303:9 306:11

resilient 256:8

120:7,8,17,22 141:25 142:4 172:18,21 173:6,10,16 174:22,24 175:17 176:3 177:13 186:20 190:3 193:6 194:14 196:13 (22)

sbs's 189:6

sca 305:24

scale 22:5 23:23 24:8 26:15 69:19 234:13 (6)

scared 245:7

scares 293:17

scattered 40:16

scenario 141:3,9 159:3 177:20 210:4 (5)

scheduling 5:4,6

scholarships 86:11

school 34:11 36:14 127:12 163:19,23 278:6 287:24 303:5,12,16,21 305:16 (12)

schools 204:4,5 214:10 291:9,15 303:13 308:12 (7)

scope 11:3 37:21

scoping 306:5 321:10

screen 19:21 58:12

screened 63:16

screening 174:12

sculpture 174:9

se 165:14

seacrest 12:18

search 295:6

searches 109:20

seat 172:3 268:24 305:16

seated 298:20

seats 303:5,12,18,21 (4)

sebastien 31:5,8

second 21:23 22:20 48:12 54:12 111:15 116:13 129:14 134:17 137:22 161:8,9 179:24 182:3 204:21,22 267:8 (16)

secondfloor 63:24

secondly 48:23

secretary 199:9 264:8 275:20 323:5 (4)

section 5:17 12:24 41:6 64:7,10 74:20 110:3 277:22 296:17,20 297:2 319:8 (12)

sections 64:6 76:13

sectors 196:8

security 31:17

49:22,24 284:20 (4)

see 8:2 14:6 15:23,25 20:23 21:7 33:15,20 40:19 41:22 42:6,10,15 43:2,4 44:25 46:18 48:4 49:16,20 50:23 51:2,14 60:3,14 63:24 69:21 71:15 78:3 96:5 106:6 114:21 123:14,15 130:22 137:23 146:12 148:11,12 153:22 169:6,9 176:24 178:6 188:3,18,23 193:13 197:20 198:5 200:3 220:10 223:24 242:3 244:10 246:22 248:17 249:7 250:14 253:10 254:19 259:17,19 263:22 271:15 277:15 278:5,7 286:21 313:19 (70)

seeing 7:23 97:21 132:11,25 181:7 197:21 262:2 280:17 (8)

seek 272:17

seeker 47:24 226:13

seekers 173:2 175:20 176:9

seeking 15:11,17 39:23 40:23 57:25 58:8 62:23 68:18 84:3 269:16 (10)

seeks 231:10

seem 310:17

seemless 145:12

seems 65:22 87:5 114:9 141:16 168:14 178:11 198:3 267:3 281:25 (9)

seen 27:3,5 110:8 153:24 166:4 177:19 178:17,18 180:21 182:21,25 203:17 241:9 258:13 271:12,14,17 277:17 288:14 316:9 (20)

segment 126:11

segregated 167:10

selection 22:17

sell 19:10,12,15 242:2 (4)

selling 233:18

semblance 234:23

semidetached 75:3

senator 216:8 263:7

sends 53:23

senior 95:8 101:4,6 102:18,19,21,23 103:18 105:14 106:16 107:21 125:13 216:12 293:2,9,10,12 294:5 298:23 (19)

seniors 55:19 101:12 103:13 276:9 293:14,21

299:24 (7)

senor 214:15

sense 70:21 77:11 131:5 152:25 228:11 231:4 247:21 258:11 (8)

sensitive 103:24

sentence 202:13 260:20

separate 135:17

separating 249:17 251:23

september 93:24

series 174:7,10 305:21

serious 109:3 295:10

seriously 262:12

serve 22:5 34:14,15 37:4 40:17 63:14 73:10 117:12 133:5 248:23,25 249:13 252:2 265:4,19 267:23 271:4 302:9 (18)

served 21:9 237:2 253:6 268:21 270:24 (5)

serves 15:9 244:18 309:16

service 22:6 31:15 32:5,11 34:7 55:9,13 56:8,17 62:21 63:25 83:20,24 84:5,7 91:3 146:19 157:22 207:9,15

208:16,23 312:2 (23)

services 34:4 36:6 40:12 42:19,21 45:22 46:8 63:4 96:22,25 118:19,22 120:3 121:17 172:16 174:2 175:5,9,23 176:8,10 177:6 179:12,15 192:13 193:19 211:4,6 261:20,23 262:25 (31)

servicing 251:2

serving 21:24 50:6 139:10 179:23 182:3 247:2 250:2 275:20 278:2 (9)

session 19:24 29:22 106:24 321:10 (4)

sessions 307:22 319:18

set 19:22 36:23 74:25 110:18 200:13 206:5 241:3 258:7,9 272:11 324:17 (11)

setback 76:5

setbacks 17:18 18:2 64:8,11 (4)

seton 216:11

setting 67:15 81:19 207:25

seven 158:3,3 174:24

sevendayaweek

163:8

sevenstory 16:16

seventeen 19:10 127:24 299:2

seventy 93:24 266:7

seventyfive 49:19 210:15 258:17 273:24 (4)

seventynine 37:6

seventyseven 62:18 88:24 90:20 92:11 144:19 (5)

seventysix 34:17 304:20

several 15:10 125:19 160:7 220:4 266:20 295:13 297:18 302:21 303:2 317:14 (10)

severely 210:16

sewer 82:20 126:23 138:13 248:16 253:7 254:24 (6)

sewers 249:17 251:19 252:2 253:6 (4)

shade 94:22

shaded 58:11,18 59:4 60:11 64:14 (5)

shadow 75:13,18 78:10 79:14 317:23 318:21 319:8,12 320:23 321:17,20 322:10 (12)

shadows 318:23 320:12,14

shame 285:21

share 31:9 71:17 75:5 117:13 132:17 140:22 145:3 199:17 225:21 299:4 (10)

shared 121:8 219:20

sharing 120:18

she 41:9 74:4 102:12 253:16 268:12 269:18,20,21,24 271:19 284:21 285:10 287:24 288:2,6,7 296:16,16,17,18 (21)

she's 79:18 271:20 284:18

sheet 19:19 41:23

sheets 41:24 281:17

sheldon 88:11 89:25 90:6 91:10 (4)

shelter 217:25 271:19 286:11

shifted 163:23

shifting 116:12

ship 205:2,3,6

ships 202:23,24

shocked 308:7

shop 91:4 201:25 278:5 301:5 (4)

shoppers 184:11

shopping 22:2 184:5 276:13 277:3 279:4 285:4 291:10 (7)

shops 40:19 129:5

shore 103:3 109:6,10,12 110:8 111:12,25 112:9 118:13 125:21 126:11,13 127:25 130:10 132:14 141:15,20 143:16 144:8 146:22 169:4 174:24 175:19,25 199:16 204:8 210:22 215:10 220:3 221:13 233:15,19 234:8 241:11,11,21 257:19 260:10 265:24 266:4 267:19 271:10,12,21 272:6,24 273:22 274:17 275:6 276:3,10,13,15 279:5,7 280:17 284:25 285:2 288:10 289:22,24 290:7 291:16,23 292:9,25 294:6 299:19 300:9,11,12 302:4,5,22 307:9 309:17 (76)

shoreline 220:14

short 33:13 72:3 235:7

shortage 303:5

shorthand 324:8

shot 241:25

should 3:11 31:23 32:7 55:12,21 56:7,13 81:17 83:23 160:6 165:2 171:21 183:18 191:8 193:3 195:15 198:8 200:22 203:17 211:21,23 230:8 235:4,12 257:18 259:19,24 260:6 287:5 291:14 292:8 293:22 311:14,20 314:11,18 321:2 (37)

shouldn't 165:22 213:12

show 18:10 49:13 51:13 166:18 (4)

showed 179:6,8,21 205:10 (4)

showing 18:15,20 114:5 129:23 (4)

shown 14:8 15:21,22 18:25 19:6,20 44:3 51:15 58:25 59:3 60:8 (11)

shows 18:12,17 59:5,13 63:5,17 64:8,11 113:5 177:23 313:21 (11)

shuttle 217:13

sic 207:15 208:24 241:5

side 16:18 18:3 19:21 44:7,15 51:20 59:11 70:2 111:4 118:9 119:5 120:3 135:18,19 158:24 167:17

177:18 190:2
316:18 (19)

sidewalk 43:20
44:3 174:2 245:13
(4)

sidewalks 51:6

sidley 52:23

sign 28:9 253:15
297:15

signage 28:3,22
33:20 36:22 (4)

signal 150:19

signalization
152:12 154:23,24

signals 154:13
258:19

signature 111:13
324:21

signed 32:17 35:9
38:11 56:24 97:12
322:18 (6)

significant 75:12
120:9 128:2
133:17 138:25
158:23 174:23
222:4 230:4
244:23 245:9
258:2 279:18
304:9 321:12 (15)

significantly
279:9 280:20

signing 190:19

signs 27:24,25
29:25

silicon 202:18

silver 287:19

similar 21:16
23:23 24:5 25:11
155:3 189:8
215:25 216:5 (8)

similarly 21:19
106:24 220:21
280:11 (4)

simple 268:23

simply 69:3
245:15 262:22
297:23 (4)

simpson 292:20
294:19,20,21,23
295:24 296:4 (7)

since 47:6 49:4
52:17 64:24 86:25
102:12,18 110:11
145:13 155:21
173:21 191:2
199:16 215:18
218:15 219:12
239:22 257:16
287:20 (19)

single 51:21
197:20 202:5
211:15 245:4
279:6 307:10,11
315:22 (9)

sir 84:15 86:19
88:8

sister 220:16

sit 78:19 171:7
254:7

site 13:23
14:8,15,19
15:2,6,15,24
16:3,5,18,22
17:9,20,25 18:4,11
20:23 21:11,19,22
22:17 25:12
29:8,12 37:3
40:4,6,9 43:18
44:7 45:22

51:9,16 56:5
60:14,17,18,20,21
61:15,19,24 62:2
63:5,7 71:23 72:2
80:20 81:15 95:12
100:2,8,13,23
101:23 102:17
103:4,10,14,16,24
105:8,12 107:5,15
108:3 124:5 127:3
198:13,13 220:17
222:11 224:21
225:5 227:4 258:6
259:14,18 264:5
279:20 299:16
(82)

site's 59:13

sites 60:8,10
103:2 126:24
136:23 137:15,16
207:21 208:14
224:20 225:17
267:16 281:12
304:19 (14)

sits 76:8
77:16,17,18 (4)

sitting
155:7,8,9,15 161:5
215:2 320:25 (7)

situation 24:5
140:2,14 159:13
260:9 286:10
288:7 297:3 (8)

six 34:13 64:19
80:2,7,24 81:16
94:6 136:6 144:13
207:20 250:12
257:18 299:17
(13)

sixstory 76:3

sixteen 322:6

sixth 94:8

sixty 18:16 41:21

65:4,5,8,12
66:12,15,16 67:21
87:9 263:21 282:5
(13)

sixtyfive 19:2
278:11

sixtynine 91:21
93:22

sixtyone 88:25
90:17 92:13

sixtyseven 211:5

sixtythree 261:22

sizable 319:11

size 23:23 24:8
74:15 94:14
291:14 309:11
321:19 (7)

sized 251:19,24

sizing 252:4

skateboards
309:3

skepticism
290:16

skills 196:2,11

slab 69:20,23

slide 19:2,7,20
58:17 64:9 (5)

slides 18:9,20

slightly 72:4
139:21

small 74:12,25
75:7 78:10,16,20
80:18 109:16
111:10,12 119:8
130:9 172:15,25
174:3,19 175:4,11

176:12 177:7
183:8 191:12
193:9 225:17
234:3 290:10 (26)

smaller 22:5
280:16

smallerscaled
94:13

smart 115:10
152:11,22 153:4
154:24 155:11
157:15 (7)

smothering
40:17

snug 169:5

social 42:19
271:5 284:20

society 302:19

socioeconomic
235:14

solution 174:25
188:9 192:7
214:14 261:17 (5)

solutions 264:6

some 8:3 21:2,4
22:24 23:9,9,12
24:17 25:20 33:20
34:23 36:23 43:6
48:20 49:4 61:3
62:19 71:11 74:14
80:15 93:3,10
94:10 95:20
107:10 114:3,21
116:18 117:17
121:10,25,25
124:19 137:23
139:11 150:9
151:15,22 154:3
157:2,3,4 159:17
162:10 170:20
177:5,15
179:12,22 180:11

182:21 183:2,20 184:12 187:16 189:16 195:5,8 196:7 199:20,22 200:24 205:15 206:14 216:14 217:23 222:21 225:22,25 227:5 231:4 232:3 233:22 234:5 236:12,13,17 237:6,7 238:22,25 240:3,8 241:7 245:11 249:9 251:9 254:4,6 256:14 260:24 271:11 289:12 293:12 297:9 299:18 305:23 312:5 317:18 (99)

somebody 130:16 261:20 309:18 317:9 (4)

someday 302:13

somehow 244:9

someone 131:19 142:4,10 155:6 269:17 (5)

something 78:9 92:24 103:5 106:17,19 121:8 128:24 131:15 136:17 139:7 140:11 151:11 157:13,23 158:16,18 161:5 165:2 183:16,18 185:21 186:16 190:13 197:20 198:2,4,8 201:9 202:3 216:21 217:2,20 232:10,14 241:8 249:2 289:4 298:3 314:11 (39)

sometimes 96:3 153:24

somewhat 22:13 170:3 316:8

somewhere 26:6 87:24

son 284:10,22 294:25 295:12,14 296:21 (6)

sonic 174:8

sons 284:5 286:14,20

soon 91:24 223:25

sorry 50:20 58:11 92:14 103:6 133:19 160:2 166:13 187:12 198:16 214:23 225:6 229:2,17 239:21 273:11 298:3 299:9 318:18 (18)

sort 21:19 22:6 66:12 70:19 71:4 104:19 113:19 116:15,23 117:17,18 119:7 120:3,12 132:12,15 135:22 136:16 138:11 148:24,25 150:19 153:2 154:23 156:16,21,21 162:24 163:12 167:15 170:15 178:17 180:23 183:5 184:3 186:8,12 189:8 190:4,16,18 191:2,21,24 192:5,13,21 193:9,12,13 197:2,14,15,18,22 226:15,19 227:10 228:20,24 230:13 231:9 250:3 253:19 (64)

sound 47:14,24 48:11 116:20,21 211:8 (6)

sounds 67:4 216:9 318:10

source 281:16

south 14:3,7 15:8 18:12,22 40:22 58:22 127:6 137:12 241:11 300:10 (11)

southeast 18:23 22:3

southern 132:12 279:13 280:10

southward 64:7

southwest 63:7

space 8:7 19:21 20:15 25:17,22 28:24 33:21 34:2,3 36:4 41:15 42:11,12 43:6,23 46:3,4,6,15 49:24 62:24,25 63:18,21 76:14 88:23 100:23 101:14 126:14,15,18 127:2 131:16 141:4,11 149:19 169:23 170:12 171:6 181:20 191:6 219:15 220:2,7,11,12,18 222:9 225:9,25 226:9,10,14,19,20 227:9 229:9,14,18,20 230:4,18,21 232:5,8 240:4,8 244:6 254:3 269:21 276:14 279:23 303:6,24 304:2,7 309:6,7 314:11 (79)

spaces 18:13,16 23:9 39:21 41:17 42:17 43:3 47:15 50:3 51:12 62:18 88:24 90:21 92:11 180:20 183:5,6 219:7 221:11 226:25 244:4 291:15 (22)

spade 206:7

span 173:21

spanish 213:3

speak 3:15 23:15 32:17 35:9 38:11 57:2 60:12 69:10,12 77:10 115:19 118:17 120:11 145:7 159:5 186:16,17,23 207:8 219:4 221:14 308:3 321:9 322:18,19 (25)

speaker 31:4 55:2 74:3 79:2 81:6 89:25 91:16 95:4 108:17 125:9 143:4 172:9 204:15 206:20 209:10 212:22 216:7 218:19 233:7 243:8 246:9 264:13 268:11 270:16 274:13 278:20 283:17 286:3 287:11 289:18 292:18 300:18 302:15 306:15 317:3 (35)

speaker's 3:12

speakers 3:11 56:24 74:2,3 83:9 97:12 99:12,13 187:18 199:2 214:18 223:8

257:10 275:14 298:17 (15)

speaking 117:16 179:3 243:16 281:8 (4)

special 4:20 7:6 8:5 98:23 135:20 246:15 253:5 (7)

specialty 179:16

specific 23:14 72:22 104:20 124:23 182:19 185:15 194:20 196:11 201:11 262:5 (10)

specifically 34:3 36:6 106:17 107:5 117:17 168:2 182:23 293:9 (8)

spectacular 314:14

speed 147:8 211:19 318:17

spend 302:7

spending 183:12

spent 275:22 313:18

spiked 144:9

spin 149:6

spine 194:6

spite 234:20 313:2

spoke 141:14 260:24 298:17 320:5 (4)

spoken 124:22 212:3 308:17

312:2 (4)

sponsored
112:25

spot 280:10

spread 66:15

spring 227:7

sprinkler
37:12,13

sprinklered
34:24 35:2

sprinklers 34:22

spurring 130:13

square 16:19
17:11,12 24:3
25:22 26:3 38:25
40:3 41:13,16
42:11,17 46:18,18
54:14,15 100:22
101:13
141:4,9,10,18,21
178:2,3,10
187:7,13 224:23
240:2,5 252:5
279:23 (33)

squarefoot 234:3

sr 84:25

sri 301:12

ss 324:5

st 13:8,11,13
20:20 22:20 23:5
28:5 29:7,16
30:17 31:3
57:15,17,19 58:15
66:2,20 67:12,24
68:6,15 69:9,14
71:18 72:3,15
73:24 127:21
128:7 133:8
135:13 139:23

144:5 145:16
153:20 157:22
174:3,13 176:13
181:6 185:8
186:13,15 217:6
218:12 233:17
268:20 300:23
306:23 312:9
314:17 (51)

stabilized 286:25
288:18

stack 75:23

staff 33:8 35:25
282:20

staffers 281:8

stage 103:5

stages 226:5

staircase 49:22

stairs 293:4

stairway 50:10

stairwell 33:22

stairwells 43:8

stakeholders
146:4 174:14
219:14

stamp 313:24

stand 208:7
284:2

standard 31:20
208:22 228:3
229:19
231:10,14,15
252:17,21 (9)

standards 44:17
56:8

standing 85:15

standings 207:25

stands 295:23
298:8

stapleton 126:16
128:5 130:14
133:14 135:6,21
136:24 137:18
138:24 139:5
140:10 145:6,17
147:14 151:25
174:4 181:7
182:22 185:8
186:13,16
198:13,13 207:20
220:7 230:13
233:17 237:18
243:16,23,25
244:3,10,15 249:5
253:5 264:4
267:16 292:24
294:24 301:9 (41)

stapletons 243:22

star 44:19

starker 265:25

start 20:21 65:17
73:25 99:14
110:11 118:8
132:10,20 182:25
194:17 250:4 (11)

started 52:24
53:7,11,12 112:22
114:2,24 185:7
188:7 190:14
276:23 (11)

starting 52:17
53:16,18 63:10
76:21 83:9 155:21
195:13 199:2
214:19 242:2,5
275:15 (13)

starving 201:19

state 44:4 99:6
145:14 210:9

233:12 247:6
259:6,7 262:12
263:6,9 271:14
324:4,9 (14)

stated 41:12
55:16 68:16
258:11 (4)

statement 99:5
233:3 244:23
245:9,14 323:2
324:11 (7)

staten 11:13
12:16,20 98:13
99:22 102:20
109:5,13 110:3,13
112:5,19 114:7
115:6,9 118:13
125:22 128:22
131:3,8 134:2
143:8 144:10,16
145:18 148:18
151:23 152:22,24
153:11,23 154:6
171:12 172:6
173:10,18,19
174:23 175:3
176:2,19 177:24
179:20,24 184:25
185:22 188:24
192:19,19
199:20,21
201:17,19 202:16
205:21,23
207:4,7,11 208:5
209:17,21
211:7,14,16,22,24
213:16 215:6
216:17,17,20,25
217:7,8,12,14,16
233:18 237:16
238:5,6 241:9
242:9 243:12
261:2,10,22
268:21 270:23
271:3,7,12 272:12
274:5,17
275:19,20 279:5
283:25 285:14
287:15 288:14,17
289:23,24

290:2,7,8,15,24
291:6,11 292:24
293:11,11,14,17
294:7,24 295:3
299:2 302:4
309:11 314:12
318:24 (126)

stateoftheart
153:14 203:25

states 74:20
211:13 269:5
317:18 319:3
320:13 (6)

statewide 299:11

stating 297:16

station 15:8
40:11,11 58:23
82:13,18 247:4
256:2,6,25 (10)

stations 151:23
238:18,19

statistics 122:14

status 72:14
320:8

stay 93:6,14
111:6 166:6 191:5
211:7 269:11 (7)

steadily 263:24

steel 205:2,5

stellato 81:7
83:10,12,14 84:17
(5)

step 69:25 246:18

stepdown 76:2

stepdowns 18:3

stephen 300:19
302:15,18

steps 16:21 17:19 63:9 64:13 266:20 (5)

stereotypes 290:8

sterling 33:3,14,16

steve 317:12

steven 317:4,7

stewart 324:8

stick 163:6

sticking 80:12 278:24

sticks 86:6

still 30:22 104:23 155:7,9 224:24 225:9 226:9 248:22 284:16 286:12 288:5 301:8 (12)

stipulated 315:16

stock 75:19 109:18 210:22

stocks 258:25

stoddard 35:22 37:13,20,25 38:9 (5)

stop 58:13 161:23 239:5

stops 164:6 237:7 238:7

storage 43:3,5 49:11,17 (4)

store 48:19,22 183:3 201:24 245:3 309:16,23 (7)

storefront 43:23 125:22 173:25 179:25 182:23 (5)

storefronts 180:3,10 240:2 244:4 (4)

stores 22:4 78:13,18 82:9 182:4 184:6 186:25 187:11 189:24 278:5 285:5 309:19 (12)

stories 16:22 17:19 63:9 64:13 68:17,18 69:3 74:24 79:16,22 81:16 94:6 101:20,21 233:22 287:7 299:17 322:4,6,8 (20)

storm 205:17 241:24 249:18 251:7 253:13 254:24 (6)

story 78:16 215:6 218:3 288:24,25 (5)

straddles 244:15

straight 203:14

strata 311:21

strategic 111:20

strategies 110:18

strategy 192:4

straughter 99:14,19,21 102:2,24 104:4,15,22,25 105:4,21,24 106:4,8 107:13 108:8,10,16 (18)

stream 7:23

street 1:4 7:7 10:7 15:2 25:17 43:16,21 44:2,12 47:5,7 53:18 58:22 59:15,24 61:18 63:22,23 64:8,9,11 71:2,5 74:25 78:3,5,6 79:6,12 88:18,19 89:10 90:12 92:6,6 93:6 94:4 95:15,15 98:23 100:2,7,15,16 101:9 108:24,25 125:15,25 126:6,16 127:5,7 128:11 133:24 135:25 136:3,13,24 137:11 140:8 143:14,25 144:6,15 145:10,15 147:8,19 150:10 152:4,5,9,10 155:22,22 156:9,10,10 157:18,19 159:12 161:3,22 162:6 163:10 164:2 166:2,20,20 167:9,23 168:8 173:2,13 175:2 185:18,19 186:6 193:15 199:13 201:3,4,11 204:5,21,25,25 205:4,8 207:8 208:3 215:11 216:12 217:4 218:6 219:5,9 221:4,12 223:3 229:15 240:6,8,9,21 241:16 243:14,18,21 244:12,15,16 247:3 248:7,9 249:5,14,15 256:2 257:20 259:2,15 261:5,10

267:12,15,15 269:6 279:13 284:3 290:19 291:18 294:23 296:20 298:25 299:14,22 301:16,25 302:8,10,20 317:15 322:4 (165)

street's 174:18

streets 14:25 58:19,20 60:11 61:10,14 62:3 70:2 71:12 75:15 78:6 79:8,11 82:6,7 89:6 90:23 94:11 150:4 161:4,9 162:4,13 170:5,7,15,17 171:13,14 197:9 241:18 253:3 278:4,8 292:2 (35)

streetscape 17:16 142:9 151:21 166:19,22 168:2,10 169:21 240:15 (9)

strengthen 174:18

stress 312:17

stretch 69:4 78:18 257:21 299:13 314:15 (5)

strictly 102:3

strides 110:5

strikes 27:6

string 308:22

stringent 73:3

strip 244:5

strive 161:9

strollers 309:3

strong 74:15 207:25 223:24

stronger 172:20

strongest 164:8

strongly 49:3,3 76:23 89:18 (4)

structural 228:25

structure 18:19 29:19 276:20 311:13 (4)

structures 257:4

struggle 299:4

struggled 296:25

struggling 284:10 296:22

student 217:3,19

students 203:2 217:9 303:16

studied 184:4

studies 254:5

studio 269:18

studios 42:3 64:17 87:25

study 47:25 74:18 75:11 151:18 179:25 181:5 185:5 222:7 224:20 225:5 229:15 303:14,17 304:2,15 317:15 (16)

stuff 117:10

256:20 261:3

stumbling 293:23

stuy 126:9 130:5

stuyvesant
130:24 175:3,20

subject 30:19
72:7 239:23

submit 68:4
142:18 283:5

submitted 74:19
101:8 313:8

subotovsky
13:9,15 23:17,19
25:19 26:24 27:18
28:15 (8)

subprojects
133:12

subsequent
151:19

subsided 278:9

subsidize 124:4

subsidizing
124:3,25

subsidy 123:22

substantial
105:13 204:6

subutilizing
207:18

subway 15:9
40:11 58:23
70:21,22
82:13,13,16,16
89:10 (10)

succeed 22:17
236:23,23

succeeding
117:13

success 144:24
167:3 211:10
233:22 279:9 (5)

successful 20:17
129:19 237:13

successfully
258:20 263:3

such 27:13
34:5,10 36:8,13
40:18 44:17 51:22
79:10,10 101:5
102:19 123:14
125:24 126:19
138:3 144:21
174:6 175:5,15
299:24 309:25
(22)

sudden 135:9

suddenly 79:22
80:8,11

suffered 134:20

sufficient 179:21
181:19 208:7
225:24 254:19 (5)

suggest 280:24

suggesting 160:6
282:8

suggestions
308:7 313:13

suited 69:15
245:19

summarize
310:16

summary 200:24

summation 314:4

summer 174:7
319:12 320:17

summit 10:6

sun 79:15
317:22,22 318:25
320:24 (5)

sunlight 319:14
320:19

suny 202:25
203:3 218:13

supermarket
15:5 280:21

supermarkets
24:23 26:11
179:16

supplemental
174:2

supplied 178:12

support 31:21
45:22 46:7 55:16
74:3 83:9,18
84:12 88:17 89:18
90:10 91:5,8 92:3
95:13 96:17
97:3,3 108:24
118:9 123:21
126:10 141:23
172:17 173:23
177:9 182:9
183:10 189:20
193:19 196:25
207:13 214:12,19
236:17 238:19
242:23 243:17,18
247:23 250:24
254:13 272:4,15
275:15 277:6
279:10 280:23
286:18,22 293:18
300:5 301:22
303:2,22 305:6
313:3 (57)

supported 174:5

supporting 173:3
217:22 219:9

supportive
95:24,25 96:8

supports 44:5
272:13 292:4
299:22 (4)

supposed 117:12

supposedly 82:23

sure 27:18 52:12
69:9 73:13
82:22,24 83:2
103:14,15 104:25
118:3 129:10
132:23,23 134:3
136:11,19 138:21
140:6 142:21
156:11 171:10
178:13,17 184:19
187:17 188:20
190:9 194:17
208:3 215:7 224:6
228:6 238:4
247:14 249:24
252:24 253:16
256:24 281:24
314:13 (41)

surely 299:6

surface 15:4
20:25 62:19 64:4
205:13 206:4 (6)

surfaces 205:14

surgical 130:3

surrounded 24:6
78:14,14

surrounding
40:13,15,21 69:23
123:2,3,6,7 194:7
219:8 259:2 (11)

surroundings
270:5

surveys 144:18
179:19

survive 240:22

susan 199:4
204:15

sustainability
44:15 72:18,22
256:17 (4)

sustainable 31:13
73:6

sweatshirts 321:3

swim 318:3,10
320:16

swimmer 319:22
320:15

swimmers
317:13

swimming 318:6

swoop 200:13

symptoms
295:14

sync 154:18

synchronize
153:15 154:17

synergy 131:11

system 43:24
44:24 131:4
146:23 238:8,15
248:6 250:10,11,2
1,23,24
251:5,11,23
252:3,9,13,18,19
254:13 (21)

systems 37:12,14
44:19,23 82:20,21
(6)

table 159:4 160:14 238:12 268:24 (4)

taboo 234:12

take 34:19 37:8 47:22 61:3 67:24 77:24 106:7 112:11 133:13 154:6 157:6 158:18 159:22 163:2,9 176:16 186:6 201:4 213:12 236:18 246:18 248:18 249:16,19 251:7 281:7 285:12 288:22 300:6 312:16 (30)

taken 47:15,23 81:17 189:19 212:8 235:8 241:18 266:21 267:19 305:3 314:19 324:11 (12)

takes 60:12 71:10 165:2 249:4 260:24 262:12 (6)

taking 91:22 121:21 132:14 149:24 152:9 159:4 168:11 184:3 227:11 (9)

talk 20:12 65:19 67:23 132:8 138:22 142:10 189:5 235:2 261:19 284:22 (10)

talked 93:9 165:14 261:21

talking 22:11 100:18 121:24 131:19 136:6 140:10 163:17,18

178:25 212:14 246:21 248:13 311:12,14 313:16 (15)

talks 117:24 264:3 320:11

tall 16:21 17:17 79:10 94:6,16 317:16 (6)

taller 321:15

tallest 81:16

taneequa 283:21 286:3,7

tank 49:16

tap 151:15 192:12

tappen 220:23 227:8

tapping 193:5

tardes 212:25

targee 296:20

target 51:20,21,22

targeted 119:11,17 168:3 186:11 (4)

task 215:21

tax 5:22 7:5 10:6 14:18 15:25 42:14 46:20 60:8,14 74:22 111:16 112:2 117:24 130:2 205:19,22 (16)

taxes 86:12

taxpayer 56:13

taylor 90:4,5

teacher 289:24 300:23 301:20

team 13:7 31:2 33:3 35:20 39:3,16 45:13 54:24 57:14 66:22 67:25 73:23 176:12 186:20 191:24 193:5,6 197:13 206:11,11 (20)

team's 52:7

teams 176:7

teamwork 206:5

tease 140:25

tech 129:25 196:6 267:2

technical 264:19

technically 197:6

technology 153:5 154:12,20 155:12,19 156:3 (6)

techs 266:25 267:2

tell 114:23 139:14 156:23 158:7 172:6 184:23 194:12 200:24 215:8 218:2 229:10 260:3 262:14 277:5 320:17 (15)

tells 261:2

temperature 318:8 319:2 320:15

temperatures 318:19

template 157:24

ten 23:21 41:4 45:19,20 52:25 59:6 65:7 92:2 158:2 206:8 213:15 250:13,22 (13)

tenancy 22:24 45:23

tenant 23:4 46:13 48:22 50:7 91:22 112:4 117:17,18 118:9,23 209:23 258:23 261:25 262:14,21 296:20 (16)

tenants 21:22 43:6 47:20 48:20 54:17 111:19 117:20 118:14,17 189:10 209:18 210:6,10,23 211:5,17,20,22,24 214:4,5 259:8,10 262:13 263:2,4 265:8 269:7 278:3 291:20,22,24 292:6 302:5 (34)

tenants' 118:9

tend 48:20

tenfoot 17:18

tenminute 39:3 57:13

tension 244:7

tenstory 20:24 76:3 216:4

tentwenty 113:21

term 19:19

41:23,23 281:17 (4)

terminal 181:14 237:3

terms 30:15 42:6 66:4 104:15 107:18 113:19 114:5 130:12 135:15 148:25 149:9 159:5,6 171:12 194:5,8 222:13 225:8 226:14,18 228:9 248:23 251:25 252:17 (24)

terrace 140:13 157:18 159:10 167:9 291:3 (5)

terrell 243:9 246:9,12 247:13 (4)

terrible 295:5

terribly 288:21

terrific 131:2

tertulien 31:5,6,8 32:15 (4)

testified 283:20 323:9

testify 32:18 98:10 102:5 125:15 172:16 253:15 264:17 279:10 (8)

testifying 142:13

testimonies 110:23

testimony 3:13 65:24 81:5 89:21 93:20 99:21 103:6 113:10 114:13

122:14 190:10 199:7 213:3 216:15 253:19,20 263:24 264:2,25 283:5 286:2 294:17 303:4 310:13 315:22 321:9 (26)

text 13:5 15:17 38:24 40:2 57:11 58:9 98:21 306:7 (8)

than 22:22 23:21 25:10,13,21 28:22 49:17 66:15 71:3 73:4,14 80:7 83:20 87:22 93:4 105:20,22 109:11 110:9,12 111:21 115:22 142:3 156:23 158:2,3,18 168:12,20 174:10 185:4 189:19 203:4 207:20 210:14,17 215:5 235:13 240:18 245:19 250:11 260:5 265:24 266:4,7 270:2 272:25 273:22 274:21 275:7 302:6,7 305:15 308:22 314:8 316:9 318:12 320:16 322:4 (59)

thank 22:9 27:17 29:20 30:7 31:3 32:12,13,15 35:3,6,7 38:5,8,9 41:11 45:12 46:10 50:21 51:24 54:5,23,25 56:19,20 57:17 58:15 70:9 71:18 73:22,24 74:6 76:25 77:2 78:24,25 79:5 80:25 81:4 83:4,5,8 84:14,15,19

86:19,20,24 88:5,8,9 89:19,20 91:12 94:24,25 95:3 97:5,6,9,10 98:7,8,11 99:19 102:8,24 104:5,8 106:20 108:12,15 112:10 114:25 115:11,25 116:3 122:18 123:10 125:4,7,8 128:15,17,18 130:19,19,23 138:5 140:17,18 142:15,22 143:2,3,7,12 146:2,6,9,13 147:2,7,7,11 148:6,7 154:20 158:12 159:9,18,19 166:10,11 169:18 171:25 172:5 176:15,16 177:2 182:14 183:22 184:17 188:19 198:10,24 199:9 203:6,7 204:10,14 209:4,5,8,9 212:10 ,11,18,19,20,21 213:8,11 218:6,7,24 221:14 224:2 229:6 231:18,21 232:19 233:6,9 236:8 239:12,13 243:3,6,7 246:8 247:12 254:20 257:5,8,9,13 261:7,11 264:7,8,11,12,16 268:9,10 270:9,12,13 273:5,12 274:11 275:8,10,13,16,17 278:17,19,23 281:2 283:12,15,16 285:21,22,25 287:4,8,17 289:14,15 292:14 294:11,13,16,18 295:24 296:3

298:8,10,14 300:13,15 302:13,14 305:10,11,15 306:3,13,14 310:12,14 314:23,24 316:20 317:2 319:20 321:6 322:16 323:8 (231)

thankfully 143:18

thanks 30:25 56:23 89:24 91:15 106:23 108:16 114:18 245:24 281:6 (9)

theater 174:13

their 14:11 20:5 34:15 36:22 45:6 72:10,14 74:19 84:12 86:12 94:21 96:3,6,15 98:10 111:6 115:25 117:8,8,21 118:17,18 120:17,18 137:20,22 145:3,24 146:4,5 149:13 152:8 162:4 167:12 169:12 171:8 174:11 176:9 190:23,24 191:6 193:7 205:10 210:18,25 211:7,18 214:2,9 239:6 242:19 254:16,17 263:4 270:5 271:5 275:2 277:10 278:6 287:21 288:3 291:5,6,10,24,25 292:11 298:18 299:4 301:24 302:8 307:6 308:2,3,25 309:2 311:10,13 313:13 315:4 (80)

them 22:19 28:6,10 32:4 46:8,23 55:25 69:21 76:11 83:3 84:11 86:12 93:14 95:23 96:5,25 97:19 111:22 115:7 116:8 117:12 118:19 120:16 131:24 133:13 135:11 147:10 151:24 154:17,17 156:16 160:25 166:3,6 169:17 170:17,20 186:10,18,21,21,23 191:7 195:16 213:25 217:11 238:25,25 259:8 261:3 262:16,22,24 263:5 269:14 284:6 286:17 300:13,13 301:25 307:10,11 308:9,10 311:14 312:23 313:19 314:16 320:12,25 (70)

thematic 116:22

themes 116:23

themselves 73:7 151:10 194:4

theo 306:16,18,22

theory 184:7

there'd 147:22

there'll 168:8,9

there's 16:16 19:2,12,14 21:4,8,25 23:6 27:6 28:11 29:7 30:21 33:18 35:8 37:17 45:14 49:4 50:22 51:21 59:21

64:22 69:3 102:25 104:24 106:12,14 107:22 109:21 112:16 114:13,14,21 117:25 123:20 129:2,20 132:18 134:11,14 135:19 148:15 150:7 155:3,8 163:11 167:15,25 179:10 180:6 182:2 187:6 188:13 190:15,16,20 191:13,22 193:21 194:10,18 195:18 196:8 198:7 201:7,15 214:2 217:12,15 223:19 225:22 228:7 240:18 241:7 243:22 244:2 253:7 254:5 255:18 262:4 263:4 266:14 274:20 277:7 279:17 307:15 309:10 315:10,12 316:11 318:3 322:19 (91)

therefore 48:10 85:20 89:17 91:8 161:21 212:9 251:17 270:7 295:22 (9)

these 7:23 8:4,5,7 18:19,20 19:8 26:17 32:9 52:8 56:15 64:6 66:25 73:4,5 78:15 80:18 81:11 84:12 93:4 109:15 111:22 117:4 118:24 121:17 126:24 139:9 141:12,16 144:18 153:13,21 154:3 159:12 163:21 167:14 175:9 178:8 181:9 193:12 195:5

thriving 145:19 172:21 264:24

through 5:5 14:21 17:3,23 18:8,19 23:24 33:12 36:16 38:17 39:12 43:8 48:5 53:10 59:25 64:6 98:14 102:14 115:3 118:15 119:12 130:8 134:25 146:16 149:15 152:8 154:10 161:10 167:11,24 170:16,18 173:4 174:14 188:8 189:18 190:7 192:18 194:9,14 195:10 196:14 204:7,23 222:24 223:5 228:2 230:5 241:13 258:13 261:5 279:19 319:14 322:23 (54)

throughout 37:14 144:7 167:14 168:10 169:7 199:16 209:21 233:13 (8)

throughway 163:13

throw 297:25

throwing 182:8 278:14

thrown 309:9

thus 107:9 112:25 113:8

ticking 254:8

tiers 255:6

ties 181:8

time 34:18 41:7 45:9 53:3 87:17 98:9 103:5 106:6 116:15 121:22 126:13 128:13 133:13 136:4 138:3 145:14 188:17 189:18 198:14 204:18 206:15 215:20 222:21 223:13 232:16 241:23 242:3 245:15 249:3 254:7 263:2 278:13 280:3 297:2 298:4 304:11 307:24 308:3 310:9 313:13,15 318:3 323:10 (43)

timed 103:6

timeframe 113:18 222:17 227:19

timeframes 164:11

timeline 37:18 45:2 132:22 142:19 228:17 229:3 (6)

timerelated 163:24

times 165:25 166:4 189:18 212:3 254:10 255:12 262:2 270:2 295:13 308:25 318:12 (11)

timetable 232:18

timewise 223:12

timing 72:24 132:9 135:16 150:19,21 154:23

155:7 156:17 268:6 (9)

timings 156:19

tip 255:20

tipper 255:6

tippers 255:11

today 3:7 15:12 36:2 39:11 55:6 60:22 83:17 104:14 108:23 109:23 113:10,19 120:11 133:9 135:10 163:3 165:5 176:11 206:8 207:5 218:24 221:15 247:22 248:24 252:15 257:24 262:15 263:12,25 264:25 269:7 272:16 279:10 299:11 300:24 311:10 313:22 (37)

today's 251:25 252:10,21

todos 212:25

togba 298:22,23 300:15

together 74:13 128:13 136:5 149:21 151:5 181:10 265:19 267:19 277:24 305:3 (10)

told 205:18 215:15 218:3 297:5 (4)

tolerable 318:9

tom 125:10 143:4,8 148:9

152:12 158:12 (6)

tompkinsville 128:4 134:17 135:7 145:16 152:2 185:8 186:13 220:15 224:9 227:3,5 301:6 (12)

took 98:9 288:4,19 322:3 (4)

toolbox 160:12 162:15

tools 195:6 306:9

top 80:17 145:5 213:24 226:3 267:19 284:23 (6)

topic 97:13 127:16 322:18

total 19:4 74:22 76:18 111:24 136:16 187:13 259:15 (7)

totally 132:24 154:19 165:10 294:3 (4)

touch 195:19

touched 190:10 191:20 267:23

tourists 309:3

touts 260:2

toward 28:2 64:11 133:25 134:2 185:25 291:24 (6)

towards 38:3 64:7 67:9 70:2 125:20 133:18 134:8 201:22 (8)

towers 299:16 314:7

town 217:6 290:10

towns 181:10

track 254:25 255:2

traffic 25:21 26:4 77:22,22 78:4 82:5,8,11 140:2 148:18 149:2 150:18,24 151:7,8,10,16,18 152:19,25 153:13,17,22 154:3,13 156:5 160:4,21 165:7 170:25 245:12 303:6 304:14 308:12 (34)

trail 276:18

train 237:7 238:7,16 239:5 (4)

training 34:11 36:14 175:21 176:3 191:17 194:3 196:15 272:10 (8)

trainings 190:17

transactions 53:2,4

transcript 324:11

transform 143:25

transformation 132:25

transformational 133:11 134:5

transformative

134:10

transit 14:17
15:7 58:21 62:4
114:11 148:2
151:23 238:8
239:9 (9)

transitaccessible
115:8 125:21

transitbased
239:8

transitfriendly
115:6

transition 137:10

transitions 59:17

transitrich 110:2

translate 213:8

translation
213:10

transparency
17:15 43:22 305:4

transportation
40:10 44:5,11
85:24 89:9 90:25
127:15 128:7
143:11
144:2,11,20 145:7
146:23 147:12
196:7 236:25
237:4,7,10 243:13
245:10 279:18
291:12 301:5
304:9,15 (27)

transportations
204:7 291:9

transporting
143:22

trapped 247:25
248:2

travel 148:2
204:9

treated 18:11

treatment 44:21
69:20 247:3
249:19 (4)

trees 166:20

tremendous
234:17 237:16

tremendously
134:21

trends 141:22
197:16

trepidation 242:6

triage 192:14

tried 151:2
245:16

triple 29:14,17

tripleglazed 48:3

trips 144:14

trottenberg
143:12 147:6

truck 164:6

true 179:4
235:12 290:9
324:10 (4)

truly 212:5
302:11

trust 245:6

trustees 216:19

try 134:23 135:2
136:25 140:16
161:25 166:8
189:20 263:2 (8)

trying 67:10
152:4 160:19
171:17 250:14
293:23 314:3 (7)

tshirt 321:5

tucker 289:20
292:19,21,22
294:13,18 (6)

turf 142:10

turn 3:10 41:7
71:9 83:8 99:11
121:21 150:14,16
156:25 167:21
198:25 214:18
257:10 275:14
307:21 (15)

turned 8:11
314:6 315:15

turning 133:25
134:2

turnover 242:3

turns 153:10

tweaked 195:17

twelve 69:3 79:16
220:6 275:22 (4)

twelvestory
61:22 68:13
75:10,25 79:23
250:13 (6)

twenty 38:3 65:3
216:10 258:8,10
316:16 318:11 (7)

twentyfive
41:19,20 66:7

twentyfour 180:5

twentyfouryearol
d 284:10

twentyone 85:4
177:22 179:6
185:3 239:25
242:16 (6)

twentyseven 42:2
74:10

twentythree
104:19

twentytwo
304:12

twice 94:15

two 15:11
16:4,16 19:11
25:23 34:8 36:11
38:4 40:12,20
59:22 62:3
64:18,23 66:14
68:17 69:24 70:7
74:23 78:16 79:21
80:10 88:17 89:6
90:11,23 92:5
95:14 104:18
127:21 133:9
135:9 166:15
170:2 194:23
202:22 203:23
213:7,23 216:16
258:11 263:20
269:13,15 270:2
274:19,23,23,24
284:5 286:14,17
287:20 298:17
301:21,22
309:13,14 322:4
(59)

twobedroom
269:19 292:4

twoblock 58:5

twofamily 75:4
211:15 291:20

twos 42:4

twostory 69:18

twothirds 266:3

twoyearold
296:22

type 80:21 131:9
249:9

types 24:10,24
25:5 42:3 103:13
106:14 121:17
193:18,18 293:23
(10)

typical 281:22

typically 26:6
119:3 318:13

udaap 38:22
39:23 98:21

ug4 46:5

ugly 301:3

uhhuh 132:4
135:23 260:21

ulrich 57:16,23

ultimate 113:15

ultimately 76:3,4
156:25

ulurp 20:4 74:18
99:3 199:19 (4)

unacceptable
31:24 238:21

unaffordable
85:19

unanimously
307:2,12 313:2
315:19 (4)

unbuilt 135:20
170:5,6

under 16:9 19:7

38:2 50:13 62:9
64:25 67:17 92:15
101:15 105:4,5
110:4 124:10
141:8 177:19
196:22,23 282:4
303:25 304:21
(20)

**underappreciate
d** 244:20

undercut 56:7

underground
50:6 76:8 251:7
254:15 (4)

undermine 303:7

underneath
277:11

underserved
303:23

understand 8:5
51:17 67:10 70:15
80:14 87:23 90:12
116:17,25 118:5
134:23 165:17
178:16 181:17
182:16 196:24
219:14 221:23,24
226:16 227:23
228:12,21 278:14
285:19 313:4 (26)

understanding
30:18 66:22 72:8
128:22 139:6
180:15 230:19 (7)

understood 66:2
73:19,19 106:5
139:15 251:4 (6)

undertaking
27:12

underutilized
43:17 62:4 244:6
279:15,16 (5)

underway 150:18
227:4 228:5 230:5
249:24 (5)

unfair 290:19
298:5

unfinished 301:3

unfold 133:14

unfortunately
31:18 53:22 286:9
299:7 (4)

unhealthy 285:8

uninviting 244:5

union 13:23 31:9
55:9 83:17 84:17
207:6 (6)

unique 156:16,17

uniquely 78:10

unit 18:24 19:6
30:9 42:7,8 64:16
85:9,16 111:15
112:3 118:10
166:7 176:5 192:6
301:16 (15)

units
16:6,9,11,18 17:10
19:3,3,4,5,9,18,21
21:10 24:2,9
30:20 39:20 40:25
41:3,12,21
45:14,16 48:5,18
49:19
62:9,15,16,17
64:20,24 65:4,5
66:5,13,25
67:15,16,21 69:3
75:23 76:12,13,17
88:22 89:2
90:14,17 92:9,15
101:13,16
105:9,12,15,15
115:22 207:20
241:16 250:22

258:8 259:15,21
263:4 266:17
267:18,21 279:20
280:12,13
282:4,10,14,15
298:18 301:18
302:25 321:23,23
(80)

universal 25:8
180:25 211:4

university 126:5

unless 305:18
315:16

unlike 48:3
200:12 217:23

unlikely 281:22

unlock 172:18

unlocked 244:19

unmapped
170:6,6

unmitigated
304:13

unpaved 205:13
206:4

unregulated
109:16 259:2,7
262:15 263:3
266:16 (6)

unrelated 149:24

unspeakable
308:13

until 157:10
262:11 276:25
284:13 303:2 (5)

unusable 318:25

up 17:2 20:21,22
22:5 29:2 32:17

34:8,13 35:9
36:11 38:11 46:13
50:22,25 56:24
58:12 67:23 80:12
84:18 86:7,14
87:25 94:20 97:12
100:21 101:10
105:7 109:17
114:15 116:10
119:2 120:22
129:4 130:15
138:8 139:19,25
148:20 154:19,20
158:16 164:3
167:23 179:18
183:8,20,23
185:18 190:24
191:11 192:16
198:11 200:20
201:17 203:14
205:24 206:5
210:6 211:19
220:17 223:19
228:3 229:4 234:4
241:3,16 244:18
247:6 248:25
249:6 253:15
254:23 255:24
259:6 261:24
267:25 269:24
282:6,13 283:10
284:21 285:3
307:4,23 308:2,21
309:25 310:9
313:10,12
314:7,16 317:10
321:9 322:18 (95)

upanddown 27:4

upbound 63:2
86:8 96:18

upcoming 142:5

update 135:22
186:10 225:12
252:16 (4)

upfront 199:21

upgrade 37:19
255:25 256:4,7,16

(5)

upgraded 37:15
247:5

uplift 32:8

uplifted 309:4

upon 66:18,18
87:24 150:4
267:23 (5)

upper 282:24
287:19

upset 209:23

upsetting 313:20

urban 38:25 40:3
42:20,23 46:8
63:2 86:7 96:18
100:3 (9)

urby 127:2
137:3,12,19
186:25 187:14
215:22 233:24
240:4,7 241:7
276:20,20 (13)

urge 32:10 56:16
84:13 214:11
267:25 274:2
285:11 294:8
300:5 304:13 (10)

urgent 25:4
199:17 203:22
295:13 (4)

urges 304:6

us 20:12 49:3
93:3 96:20 107:24
131:12 132:17
135:22 137:8
142:18 143:13
153:15 157:21
158:9 162:6 167:8
168:12 171:20
183:19 184:18

185:11 189:22
194:12 205:25
206:12 221:23
229:10 232:7
242:11 248:2
254:20 258:19
261:4 270:6
276:22 277:4
297:25 298:2,21
302:12,13 307:16
308:6 (43)

usable 317:17

uscianowski
233:8 243:9,11,12
245:22,25 246:3,4
(8)

use 14:9 16:25
26:4 33:25 36:3
40:24 44:22 54:19
59:13 61:2 72:2
129:21 130:10
135:10 153:9
168:5 180:19
197:7 206:4
208:10 251:8,9
257:23 279:18,22
280:16 281:25
308:2 313:15
318:22 (30)

used 15:5 46:5
47:20 56:13 69:17
100:8 123:15
149:19 153:4
169:3 217:8 238:9
260:15 267:9
278:7 308:19 (16)

useful 177:11

user 26:8 72:9

users 23:14
24:12,13,17
25:5,20,24 28:23
47:19 317:16
318:19 (11)

uses 17:21
22:14,16 23:13

24:7,24 25:7,17
26:17 40:14,14,18
59:18 60:2,24,25
62:7,21,22 72:5,10
74:21,23 125:24
126:10 129:16,22
133:3,3 181:12
197:3,19 229:19
250:25 (34)

using 28:23
82:18 105:17
123:25 130:2
153:11 163:12
267:10 281:18
291:7 306:9
319:18 320:21
(13)

usually 34:18
301:4

utilities 297:13

utilization
303:18 319:15

utilize 19:19

utilized 47:17
169:7

utmost 303:20

utterly 314:20

uz 2:8 3:25 4:2
6:10,11 7:17,18
9:12,13 10:17,18
12:2,3 30:4,5
46:25 47:2
65:16,17 66:17
67:4,22 86:23,24
88:5 106:22,23
108:4 112:13,14
113:25 114:17
187:7,9,13
203:20,21 204:10
212:12,13,18
258:12 261:12,13
263:15 281:5,6,15
282:12 283:4,8,12
320:2,3,7 321:6

(56)

v 2:14

vacancies 182:24
183:2 189:15
200:10 (4)

vacancy 26:22
27:5 62:11 128:23
177:22 178:9
179:4,7 184:20
185:12 186:3,15
239:24 242:15
(14)

vacant 40:16
125:24

valley 202:18

valuable 70:25
200:14

value
200:21,21,23
234:14 (4)

van 144:5 243:14
248:10 276:22,22
307:3 (6)

variable 44:18

variants 314:9

variation 195:19

varied 127:10
137:9

variety 103:17
144:11 148:16

various 17:25
26:15 151:22
156:19 224:20
227:2 304:10 (7)

vast 109:15

veer 161:23

vehicle 176:5

vehicles 152:7
156:9 161:23
171:2 (4)

vehicular 158:5

vein 97:2

verbal 297:4

version 153:4
303:4

versus 65:21 66:6
103:13 136:17
227:25 (5)

very 10:25 19:23
23:23 26:8 31:3
47:5 49:2 52:23
53:9 54:25 59:24
62:11 70:12,18,18
71:11 73:6
74:8,8,15 75:20
76:23
78:2,6,7,15,20
79:6,9 81:19,21
82:14 84:14
85:18,19 91:4
95:13,23,24 97:20
98:11 110:8
113:17 115:24
116:22 126:24
127:18 128:2
131:17 133:8
135:15 140:13
152:4 157:20,23
159:13 164:18
166:8 181:24
182:7 189:16
194:5 195:24
196:13 201:12,15
204:10 206:17
211:9 221:22
222:3 223:9
227:22 231:24
238:9 241:5,23
242:9,10 246:25
261:14 270:12
275:24 278:3
281:9 287:7,7

295:6 297:12
305:10 306:14
310:6 313:14
321:13 (94)

vetoed 312:12

via 192:5

viability 217:20

vibrance 243:24

vibrant 145:20
174:20 302:24

vice 2:5 3:19 6:4
7:11 9:6 10:11
11:20 30:11 45:11
69:6 125:13
275:22 310:11
(13)

viceversa 147:25

victor 300:19,22

victory 150:11
157:19 167:18,23
218:2 300:24 (6)

view 43:16 94:4
135:11 233:23
250:7 281:21 (6)

views 18:21
131:21 314:15

vilar
199:3,6,10,11
202:13,14
203:6,8,12,21,25
204:14 (12)

village 227:11

vinny 81:7
83:9,14

violations 297:4

violence 286:10

100:10,12,17
106:5,19,19
107:14,17 108:3
109:2 112:3
114:23 115:18
116:21 119:10,16
124:4,25 125:10
126:17 127:8,20
132:6
133:10,13,23
134:4,10 135:25
137:11 138:15
139:9 141:25
143:5,18
145:8,12,19 148:4
149:9,10,13,19,20,
21 150:4 155:12
162:8
164:13,14,14,16
165:17 167:11
169:11 172:9
177:19 181:21
182:19 183:11
187:18,22 190:4
194:13 196:23
199:3,4 204:16
205:16 206:21
207:14
208:8,14,16
209:25
210:7,11,12
212:23 213:5,6
214:8,18,20 215:8
216:2,4 217:3
218:19,20 220:5
223:23 226:6,6,9
230:4,17 232:16
233:8 234:17
235:25 238:3
241:2 243:9
245:22 246:10
247:19 248:18,25
253:18
254:9,13,17
256:24 259:11
262:22 263:2
264:13
265:4,12,19
268:12
269:6,7,8,9,11,21
270:17 272:21
274:14 275:14
277:13,16 278:21

283:20 284:12
285:13 286:4
287:12 288:7,8,24
289:19 290:5
291:5,8,11
292:18,19 295:21
300:18 301:17
302:9,16 304:10
305:24 306:8,15
316:4,15
317:4,16,24
318:19,21,25
319:17
320:14,20,23,23
321:22 322:22
(308)

williams 39:4
41:8,11 44:25
45:12,18,24 46:14
47:21 49:12
51:5,8,25
52:10,12,15,16,22
53:21 54:7,25 (21)

willing 180:12
186:23 282:15

win 237:16
264:23

wind 318:17,21
320:24

window 29:9
69:20 228:9,14 (4)

windows
29:14,18 48:2
204:24 (4)

wishes 38:12

wishing 102:5

within 14:9,15,16
25:3 45:7,22
58:21 68:22 69:21
74:12 90:18 92:17
144:13 190:14
220:18 235:11
303:14
304:2,19,22

309:17 320:19
324:9,10 (24)

without 31:25
50:9 105:6 123:21
158:4 165:5 200:5
208:13 214:12
233:20 236:17
240:21,23
241:24,25 242:14
261:10 277:9
297:22 321:19
(20)

witness 271:5
324:17

woman 301:21
320:4

womenowned
175:8

won't 118:4
205:24 239:2
245:14 263:12 (5)

wonder 20:11
160:11 162:25
284:16 (4)

wonderful
95:7,14,16 301:2
(4)

wondering 87:3
112:20 113:3
160:6 161:6
187:17 225:14,18
262:4 (9)

woodside 58:24
85:12 89:16
91:20,23 92:20
94:5,16 95:22 (9)

word 119:5 192:3

words 307:19

work 8:2 20:3
34:12 36:15 37:21
91:4 96:11 118:15

119:3 120:9
121:12 123:18
128:10 132:21
135:2 138:23
146:5 163:6,8
175:24 177:2,4
178:7 182:22
183:19 185:7,23
186:20 189:21
195:14 202:23
207:7 217:11
219:23 220:20
221:7 225:13
234:7,14,20
235:17 238:15
239:2 241:2,6
246:13 247:19,22
249:2,24 252:3
256:20 274:25
276:4 284:5
289:4,4,10 290:6
294:25 300:10
(61)

worked 156:14
216:7 232:11
233:16 287:22
293:21 (6)

workers 31:16
56:8,11 83:20
84:5 91:3
207:10,22
208:16,23 (10)

workforce
175:18 193:19
195:22,23 196:14
265:18 266:12 (7)

working 30:6
31:14 32:2 34:10
36:13 38:3 55:23
84:10 86:3 110:25
119:12 120:7,15
121:7 126:8 152:2
156:8 164:22
166:2 172:22
173:7
174:12,13,15
215:14,19 216:8
219:12
220:4,15,19

226:21 229:25
230:20 246:23
264:22 271:18
286:17 289:3 (39)

works 47:9
105:13 117:14
118:15 152:20
166:17,23 232:17
233:13 268:3
301:21,23 (12)

workshops 42:24

world 131:21
133:22 194:5
290:9 (4)

worse 297:9

worsening
304:16

worship 15:6
298:24

worst 159:3

worstcase 210:4

worth 188:15
200:6 206:9

would
16:3,6,7,15
17:14,14
19:10,12,14
20:16,18 22:25
23:7 25:23 26:14
27:10,15,25 32:18
34:4 36:8 45:17
47:9,11,12 49:23
50:12,18,19 51:3
56:25
61:3,8,12,18,20
62:5,7,14,15
63:18,19,21,23,25
66:3,23,23,25
67:2,13,14,18 68:5
69:12,15,17,19
71:14 72:9,11
73:9 75:12,14
76:18 83:2

yourselves 312:24

youth 198:15,17 206:2

yvette 2:14

zang 39:5

zero 157:23 159:5 259:3

zion 270:25

zone 8:8 14:17 47:8 58:21 62:4 234:22 241:3 304:20,23 (9)

zoned 59:16

zoning 5:22,22 7:5 8:25 10:5,6,24 13:4,5 14:9,16 15:12,13,17,20,21 18:4 23:6,8,10 29:24 38:23,24 39:25 40:2 57:10,10 58:2,3,8 59:3,4,21 60:19,22 61:6,11,12,16,25 62:6 63:11 71:20 73:16 79:7,25 80:2,23 98:20,20 101:15 105:5,5 110:14 113:17 127:7 177:14 201:8 234:21 241:20 250:6 252:10 253:4 282:7 306:8,9 311:19 (67)

¿preguntas 214:15

201 62:14 76:12 88:22 90:14 92:9 (5)

204 34:14 259:15

211 14:23

223 101:10

230 178:3,10 216:12

235 39:20 40:24

236 41:12

247 157:21

265 17:10 19:3,18

275 280:14 282:9

289 14:21

300 14:4 141:18 280:13

311 297:18

316 178:4

326 24:2

330 16:6 19:4 21:10

360 173:5,17 174:17,22 192:18 (5)

370 35:18 36:4

400 165:20

402 298:25

405 62:12

475 279:12

495 255:18

500 234:3

600 165:19,23

700 165:20

705 323:10

715 163:25

730 318:5

766 303:16

800 22:12 241:16

813 33:2,14

830 317:21

900 174:10 267:18

1000 165:19,23 229:18

1300 118:14

1700 209:25 259:9 265:8 277:8 291:19 (5)

1753 272:21

1755 23:16,22 24:18 25:9,13 (5)

1921 39:2 55:8

1995 287:20

2003 52:17,18

2004 270:22

2008 59:8

2012 304:18

2015 173:6 185:2,7 219:12 304:19 (5)

2016 62:12 65:11 179:6 185:3 199:16 318:4 (6)

2017 173:16

2018 217:5 227:22

2019 1:10 3:8 4:20,21 5:7 72:25 299:11 324:12,18 (9)

2023 100:13 108:8,9,10 (4)

2030 303:19

2050 304:20

2069 13:6,25 31:10,18 (4)

2080 216:3

2300 237:4

2700 277:14

3500 207:6

3745 111:24

4000 303:18

4715 57:11 83:18 88:20 89:7 92:7 (5)

5000 217:9

5050 212:6,13 263:24 264:4 (4)

6000 245:23

7000 136:7

7953 41:16

8000 42:17

9000 26:2

12000 118:13

14700 101:13

15000 41:13 42:11 46:22

15012 46:18 54:13

16000 24:3

18000 17:12 25:22

25000 187:8

35000 100:22 187:7,10 240:5 (4)

36000 141:5

40000 110:10

54000 144:14

64000 16:19

75000 301:18

80000 83:20

89000 299:10

183000 178:19

199000 17:10

200000 141:21

218000 141:5

230000 141:12

275000 141:3

300000 41:3

316000 141:13

600000 178:3

618000 141:10