

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

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November 12, 2015
Start: 1:20 p.m.
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HELD AT: 250 Broadway - Committee Rm.
16th Fl

B E F O R E: ANTONIO REYNOSO
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Andy L. King
Vanessa L. Gibson
Costa G. Constantinides
Steven Matteo

A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Kathryn Garcia, Commissioner
Department of Sanitation and Solid Waste Management

Dennis Diggins, First Deputy Commissioner
Department of Sanitation and Solid Waste Management

Paula Gavin, Chief Service Officer
New York City Service

Lori Ardito, First Deputy Commissioner
Department of Transportation

Matthew Drury, Director
Government Relations
NYC Parks Department.

Molly Krakowski, Director
Legislative Affairs
JASA

Monica Bartley, Community Outreach Organizer
Center for Independence

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2 [sound check, pause]

3 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: We welcome all to
4 the Sanitation Committee hearing. Thank you for
5 being here. I hope everyone had a good Veterans Day.
6 Thank you to our military folks overseas. I mean God
7 bless them. I hope they--they're all fine. Welcome
8 to the DSYN's 2015-2016 snow planning hearing. We're
9 also hearing testimony concerning two bills that
10 relate to snow: Intros 9 and 714. Most of us recall
11 the blizzard that hit New York at the end of 2010,
12 which dumped as much as two feet of snow on the five
13 boroughs that significantly impacted the daily lives
14 of all New Yorkers. And after the storm (sic) the
15 Council held a series of hearings focused on city
16 preparedness, future storm events and subsequently
17 enacted several laws including Local Law 28 of 2011.
18 This law requires the DSNY Commissioner to submit to
19 the City Council borough specific plans for snow
20 plowing and removal no later than November 15th of
21 each year and submit draft plans a month prior.
22 These plans cover the department's planning,
23 training, snow removal, priority designation
24 categories, assigned equipment and personnel and
25 implementation of the plans during a snow event. The

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3 2015-2016 draft plans includes a pilot program that
4 has not--has new plowing routes for all of Manhattan,
5 Queens and Staten Island, Bronx Community District 6
6 and Brooklyn Community District 8. In addition to
7 these plans, we will be considering two snow related
8 bills Intro 9, introduced by Council Member
9 Greenfield, will require that the Office of Emergency
10 Management identify pedestrian bridges for snow and
11 ice removal, and establish a plan for removing snow
12 and ice from such bridges.

13 Intro 714 introduced by Public Advocate
14 James would exempt or partially exempt seniors and
15 persons with disabilities from penalties for failing
16 to remove snow or ice from sidewalks, crosswalks,
17 curbs and other locations. In addition, the bill
18 would require the Commissioner to establish a program
19 for the renewal of snow or ice from crosswalks, curb
20 cuts and other locations. In addition, the bill
21 would require the Commissioner to establish a program
22 for the renewal of snow or ice from crosswalks, curb
23 cuts and other relevant areas where the person having
24 charge of such building or lot is at least 65 years
25 old or has a disability. I look forward to hearing
from DSNY and other interested groups and other

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3 individuals about the draft snow plans as well as
4 Intro 9 and 714. So thank you. I want to just note
5 that we are joined by Committee member from Staten
6 Island, Council Member Steven Matteo. Thank you for
7 being here, and I guess we're going to go straight to
8 testimony from DSNY, and we're joined by the
9 Commissioner Kathryn Garcia.

10 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: [laughs]

11 Good morning--good afternoon Chair Reynoso and
12 Members of the Committee on Sanitation and Solid
13 Waste. I am Kathryn Garcia, Commissioner for the New
14 York City Department of Sanitation. With me here
15 today is Dennis Diggins, First Deputy Commissioner.
16 I would like to thank Chair Reynoso and the members
17 of the committee for this opportunity today to
18 discuss the department's Draft Borough Based Snow
19 Plans and our preparedness for the 2015-2016 winter
20 season that actually officially began last Monday. I
21 will also separately address each of the two bills
22 under consideration today by this committee, after
23 which I will be happy to answer your questions and
24 address any comments.

25 Since last year's snow season the
department reviewed its own internal operations,

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3 strategies and policies in order to improve its
4 future performance during snow events. The draft
5 plans detail the department's snow fighting
6 procedures from the onset of precipitation to
7 clearing operations after a major snowfall. The
8 plans include the application of personnel and
9 equipment resources and our agency coordination of
10 services and customer service protocols. They also
11 outline the continuation of policies and programs
12 that we began implementing last year as well as any
13 new initiatives that we are implementing to enhance
14 our response and effectiveness for this upcoming snow
15 season. We will consider all comments and
16 recommendations received by elected officials on our
17 draft plans, and we will shortly publish the final
18 borough snow plans on the department's website. As
19 you know, last year the department initiated a
20 sectoring snow pilot that eliminates the
21 differentiation between the secondary and tertiary
22 streets, and instead creates critical and sector
23 routes. Critical routes include highways, and major
24 thoroughfares plus schools, hospitals, firehouses,
25 police precincts and ambulance depots. Sector routes
are designed to be compact and continuous and

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3 minimize overlap. Building on our positive
4 experiences, we have achieved to date we will
5 continue to expand sector routing throughout the city
6 as we continue to develop and pass new routes by
7 removing duplicative travel mileage to improve our
8 response time. To illustrate the improvements and
9 efficiencies accomplished under this pilot sector
10 routing in Community Board 1 on Staten Island created
11 efficiencies equivalent to adding 10 more spreaders
12 for the entire borough. In keeping with our
13 traditional snow fighting procedures during the early
14 stage of a snow event, we deploy salt spreaders to
15 reduce the accumulation of snow and prevent the
16 formation of ice conditions on more than 19,000
17 roadway lane miles across the five boroughs. We
18 begin plowing operations once the snow accumulation
19 exceeds two inches. Plowing and deicing operations
20 continue until all of the city's traffic lanes are
21 passable. Depending upon the amount of snow that
22 accumulates, Sanitation workers may begin piling and
23 hauling and clearing operations as other crews begin
24 collection operations. An unavoidable consequence of
25 winter precipitation is that any amount of snowfall
or icy precipitation can disrupt normal traffic

3 patterns and public transportation. And the
4 disruption may last for extended periods of time.
5 Department workers make every effort to clear snow
6 and ice from the city's highways and streets as
7 expeditiously as possible. But it can be a lengthy
8 process particularly when persistent or heavy
9 snowfall occurs combined with falling temperatures
10 and high winds. Every storm brings different
11 challenges that impact the speed with which the
12 streets are cleared including the storm's intensity,
13 temperature, time of day, traffic on the roadways and
14 accumulation. We ask the public to be patient so
15 that department workers who are performing under
16 these types of conditions can safely complete their
17 tasks timely and effectively.

18 Once the snow season is over, and we move
19 into spring, we begin detailed planning and
20 preparation for the winter weather conditions in the
21 city for the next snow season. This is an annual
22 established practice for the department and consists
23 of reviewing all of the city's snow plowing routes,
24 which number approximately 3,000 and adjusting them
25 as necessary, reviewing personnel, prepping fleet,
maximizing inventories and assessing equipment needs,

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3 and identifying additional temporary sites for
4 storing road de-icing materials and locations for
5 melting snow, undertaking preventative maintenance on
6 all snow equipment and upgrading them as necessary.

7 Meeting with local community boards, conducting
8 refresher courses and spreading plow operations and
9 equipment training; performing snow drill exercises;
10 and coordinating services with other agencies. For

11 the 2015 snow season, we began our planning with a
12 view towards maximizing our efficiency and response
13 this winter. We review our internal operation

14 strategies and policies to identify what measures we
15 could undertake to enhance our performance,

16 organization and supervision. We also evaluated our
17 strategies for communicating with the general public,
18 and with other city agencies, including the MTA, Port
19 Authority and the TBTA to enhance the interagency
20 coordination of services during snow emergencies.

21 This year new policy improvements include expanding
22 our snow sector and routing pilot to all districts in
23 Manhattan, Queens, Staten Island, and in one district
24 each in the Bronx and Brooklyn. Purchasing or
25 rehabbing 79 additional salt spreading vehicles,
training more than 7,700 department employees on

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3 defensive driving as part of Vision Zero and
4 eliminating one of the tertiary street contracts that
5 the department previously used for Brooklyn and parts
6 of Queens, and instead used internal resources to
7 perform the same work due to the deficiencies
8 achieved by sectoring. We will continue to use
9 private contracts at least for this snow season for
10 areas in the Bronx, Queens East and Staten Island.
11 The department snow budget for the current fiscal
12 year 16 is funded for \$77.5 million. To date, in the
13 current fiscal year the department has hired 492 new
14 sanitation workers who have received snow operations
15 training. At the onset of this new snow season, the
16 department has adequate staffing with over 6,400
17 sanitation workers available to combat this winter's
18 snow and ice storms. When, if necessary, the
19 department will temporarily redeploy sanitation
20 workers to other districts to ensure that every
21 district in every borough across the city receives
22 the same level of service. As we enter the new snow
23 season, the department has over 300,000 tons of salt,
24 more than we've had in inventory in recent years.
25 I'm also pleased to announce that starting this snow
season, the department will begin utilizing the

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3 Spring Street Salt Shed at the Manhattan 125 Garage,
4 which has been highlighted in numerous--numerous
5 architectural publications worldwide. The department
6 will use a variety of equipment to fight snow
7 including collection trucks and equipment from our
8 Lot Cleaning and Solid Waste Management Divisions.
9 Other city agencies--thank you very much--provide an
10 additional 135 plows and operators. Of course, the
11 plan is only as good as our ability to put it into
12 action, and we are ramping up our snow drills in
13 advance of this winter. On Monday, we will be
14 conducting a full scale annual snow drill rehearsal,
15 which entails department personnel loading salt
16 spreaders; attaching plows to the trucks and
17 installing chains; field testing GPS equipment;
18 testing emergency radio talk groups and operating
19 equipment along plowing and spreader routes. So if
20 you see a whole bunch of spreaders on Monday night,
21 it is a drill. Conducting a mock drill reinforces
22 the importance of early coordination along--among the
23 many agencies that provide us central services from
24 public transportation to emergency response so that
25 we and the Administration are ready and able to
manage any type of snow event. Our Draft Snow Plans

3 outline the framework of policies and procedures that
4 fortify preparedness. The department is a dynamic
5 agency that responds quickly and learns from past
6 experiences. Last winter allowed us to examine our
7 snow fighting procedures, and future department
8 practices will benefit from that experience.

9 Intro No. 9. Turning now to the bills,
10 I'll address the first bill on today's agenda, Intro
11 No. 9. This bill would require the identification of
12 the number and locations of pedestrian bridges
13 throughout the city, as well as a plan for the
14 removal of snow and ice from such pedestrians bridges
15 by either the Department of Sanitation, Department of
16 Transportation or the Parks Department, including
17 resources to be used for such removal. Such
18 information and plan would be required to be
19 incorporated into the report generated by the New
20 York City Emergency Management Office, and must be
21 shared with the community boards and members
22 representing the community district in which and
23 pedestrian bridge is located.

24 DSNY, Department of Transportation and
25 the Parks Department share responsibility for
clearing pedestrian bridges around the city. DSNY in

3 it's required Borough Based Snow Plan already
4 identifies a plan to address pedestrian bridges
5 following a snow event, and the resources available
6 by community district, and we believe this
7 legislation is duplicative and unnecessary.
8 Specifically, DSNY employs individuals as temporary
9 snow laborers to assist in the clearing of
10 crosswalks, pedestrian curb cuts, catch basin, paths
11 for loading and unloading of stops, sidewalks
12 adjacent to vehicles, overpasses and pedestrian
13 bridges.

14 The second bill, Intro No. 714 has two
15 components, which I will address separately. The
16 first part of the bill will exempt or partially
17 exempt seniors and certain persons with disabilities
18 from penalties for failing to remove snow or ice from
19 the areas abutting their properties. This bill would
20 require that the penalty in place for the failure to
21 remove snow and ice, which is currently set at \$100
22 be reduced by 50% if a person can prove the he or she
23 is at least 65 years old or has a disability that
24 substantially interferes with his or her ability to
25 remove snow and ice. And that the building or lot
that is the subject of the violation is his or her

3 primary residence. While the department understands
4 the rationale behind the intent of this bill, we
5 cannot afford to loosen requirements on snow removal
6 in the interest of pedestrians' safety. The lower
7 fines provided for in this bill could lead to fewer
8 people taking responsibility for ensuring that snow
9 is removed from in front of their property, which in
10 turn could lead to more people slipping and injuring
11 themselves.

12 The second part of the legislation would
13 require the department to establish a program, which
14 may include contracting for not for profit
15 organizations for the removal of snow or ice from the
16 crosswalks, curb cuts, bus stops and other city
17 property, and from sidewalks and gutters abutting
18 residential buildings where the primary resident of
19 the building is at least 65 years old or has a
20 disability that substantially interferes with such
21 person's ability to remove snow and ice. Such
22 disability shall be defined in rules promulgated by
23 DSNY in conjunction with the House Department and the
24 Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities.
25 Additionally, a person falling into this category
would be required to register for such program, which

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3 the bill requires that DSNY develop with the
4 Department of Aging, the Department of Health and the
5 Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities.

6 Local Law No. 27 of 2011, already
7 requires that DSNY or an entity designated by the
8 Commissioner assist community organizations to
9 establish registries of snow removal volunteers. New
10 York City Service has taken n this role and has taken
11 recent steps to test a framework for connecting and
12 matching volunteers with several local organizations
13 who are working to maintain lists of volunteers to
14 help elderly, sick and disabled residents by
15 volunteering to do snow removal for them. This
16 winter New York City Services targeted two districts
17 with a high concentration of residents in single-
18 family homes owned by senior citizens and is
19 coordinating with several non-profit organizations in
20 those areas to identify seniors in need. The
21 legislation under consideration today shifts the
22 emphasis of a volunteer program under Local Law 27 to
23 a permanent contractual program and defeats the
24 spirit and intent of the original law. As a result,
25 we believe that this part of the legislation is

3 unnecessary because it duplicates existing provisions
4 of the Administrative Code.

5 In closing, I want to assure you that
6 snow fighting is a core agency mission, and the
7 department's workforce understands that their
8 performance is critical to keeping the city
9 functioning 24 by 7. The department is a dynamic
10 agency with over 6,400 sanitation workers on staff
11 for this snow season, and I am confident that the
12 department's workforce can and will respond quickly
13 and effectively to any major snow event. As this
14 week ushers in the initial 2015-16 snow season I
15 appreciate this opportunity to engage this committee
16 and members of the Council in the present review
17 process of our Draft Borough Snow Plans, and look
18 forward to your input, comments and suggestions. Once
19 again, thank you for this opportunity to testify this
20 morning. My staff and I will be happy to answer your
21 questions.

22 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Thank you,
23 Commissioner. Now, you say a drill. So you're
24 guaranteeing that there be no snow following that
25 drill.

3 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: Oh,
4 following the drill. So have I seen the long-term
5 outlook for Monday that we could possibly have. I'm
6 going to say that I'm--I am 99% confident that we
7 will have no snow on Monday when we do our drill.

8 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Okay. Just wanted
9 to make sure. Just want to make sure. I don't want
10 to confuse anyone. I want to make sure they know
11 that you said 99% chance of now snow.

12 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: No snow
13 Monday. Yes.

14 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Okay. I just want
15 to ask. I want to give an opportunity to one of
16 those sponsors of the bill that is here to speak on
17 their bill, and it just happens to be Madam Public
18 Advocate, Leticia James.

19 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you. So
20 first I want to thank Chair Antonio Reynoso and my
21 colleagues in government for allowing me to--for
22 allowing me to say a few words, and also for agreeing
23 to hear Intro 714. As many of you know, I used to be
24 the chair of this committee, and it's wonderful to
25 see a number of familiar faces. I'm glad some people
are still in place. I'm really happy about that.

3 They were allies and very helpful during my tenure as
4 the Chair of Sanitation. And I particularly want to
5 thank Commissioner Garcia for all of the
6 conversations that we've had, and I want to praise
7 you for the work that you've done, and particularly
8 as it relates to increasing the number of women on
9 the force. We've got to do a better job, but I know
10 that you're focused on that, and I thank you for that
11 particularly an issue that I talked about in my
12 tenure addressing co-facilities. So that we have
13 facilities for women at some of our depots all
14 throughout the City of New York or gender-neutral
15 since I want to be politically correct, gender-
16 neutr4al depots. And I also want to say that we are
17 a big city, and we need laws to ensure quality of
18 life but that does not mean that we cannot be
19 sensitive to the needs of populations that need our
20 assistance, and that deserve our help. I know that
21 we need to strike a balance, ensuring that we achieve
22 our common goal of keeping our sidewalks safe. But
23 also at the same time being sensitive to the needs of
24 seniors and individuals with disabilities.

25 I came about this bill. It was a personal
experience. I have a--when I was a council member I

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3 had a constituent who had a larger corner lot in
4 Clinton Hill right next to a subway station, and that
5 lot had not been shoveled for a number of days. The
6 constituents had reached out to me because I lived
7 not too far, and because I was council member, and
8 the woman who was 80 plus, 84 or 85 at the time
9 reached out to me and said, "Tish, I need help." So
10 as our neighbors we all--I got my neighbors together
11 and we shoveled. But I also recognized that there
12 are similar senior citizens all throughout the city
13 of New York who need assistance. I also know that
14 there is a core of volunteers that the city
15 organizes. I know that there are a number of not-
16 for-profits. There are a number of youth programs.
17 The question is what can we do to marshal those
18 services to assist individuals living with
19 disabilities and our senior citizens who are not in a
20 position to shove their sidewalks. And last, but not
21 least, I do not want to treat senior citizens and
22 individuals living with disabilities as cash cows.
23 And during the winter season they are cash cows, and
24 that's just fair. And I recognize that, you know,
25 you've got a job to do, but we've got a job to do as
well, and that is to protect our most vulnerable in

3 the City of New York. And so I--I heard your
4 comments, and I recognize that, you know, you want to
5 make sure that the law applies to everyone as well as
6 I, but I do know that certain populations need
7 certain considerations. And I would hope that you
8 would reconsider your position with respect to Intro
9 714 or come back with an alternative program that
10 would address the needs of seniors, and people living
11 with disabilities. Any comment to that opening--
12 those opening remarks?

13 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: I may turn
14 it over--turn it over to Commissioner Berman (sic) to
15 discuss more about what NYC Service is doing to
16 coordinate across the city because I do think that
17 the focus should be on volunteers helping seniors who
18 seem to be incapable of managing their property. But
19 I think, you know, the overall perspective is that if
20 you own property--

21 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]
22 Can I just stop you? They're not incapable. They're
23 impaired. They want to take care of it.

24 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: But
25 everyone--if you own property in the City of New
York, you are responsible for a wide variety of

3 things as being a property owner, and--and just
4 because you are older does not mean that you--you
5 have not foregone that responsibility. You still
6 have that responsibility. My mother is 75. I
7 absolutely anticipate that she is supposed to shove
8 her sidewalk.

8 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: And so, they
9 aren't opposed to shoveling your sidewalk, they want
10 to shovel, they are just physically impaired. They
11 are not are physically fit--physically capable.

12 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: I
13 understand.

14 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: And they're
15 responsible. They reached out to me. Seniors I'm
16 sure reached out to their local elected officials.
17 The question is what programs, if any, exist so that
18 they again could shovel--so that they could contract
19 with, contact an organization so that they adhere to
20 the law. It's not like, you know, senior citizens
21 are, you know, just ignoring or, you know, being
22 slackers. You know, obviously they want to adhere to
23 the law. They're probably the most responsible
24 individuals amongst us. The question is what are we
25

3 doing as government to assist them so that they could
4 conform with the law?

5 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: Let me turn
6 it over to New York City Service and let them talk
7 about the program that they are operating.

8 PAULA GAVIN: Thank you all. My name is
9 Paula Gavin, and I am the Chief Service Office for
10 New York City, and I proudly took that job on March
11 31st, 2014, and one of the first people I met was
12 Kathryn Garcia and the folks at Sanitation to talk
13 about our partnership. When I discovered and learned
14 about the local law, we were very clear that we had a
15 responsibility to attempt to identify volunteer
16 registries per the local law. So during last year,
17 we tried a process where we reached out to over 4,000
18 community-based organizations. We tried to pre-
19 identify volunteers, tried to pre-identify those in
20 need, and quite honestly we had very few takers, and
21 very few matches. We do have about 175 matches that
22 we made, and there were also matches--extensive
23 matches made in Staten Island with the Where to Turn
24 Organization. So we realized that we needed to be
25 more focused, and so we embraced an idea of really
piloting a program, which would target those places

3 where we had the most seniors who owned their own
4 home. Those turned out to be Staten Island as we all
5 probably could have guessed, but also Northwest
6 Queens ten zip codes in Councilman Vallone's
7 district. So rather than do a general approach,
8 we're doing a very targeted approach right now.
9 We've identified that there are about 1,000 seniors
10 in those communities who are most likely homebound.
11 So the Department for the Aging is our partner on
12 this, and they're pre-identifying those individuals
13 most in need. We simultaneously then started to
14 recruit community based organizations again knowing
15 that the random wasn't really identifying and
16 providing what we needed. So Where to Turn in Staten
17 Island then stepped up again, and they will be a
18 partner in Staten Island. And in Queens Catholic
19 Charities as well as the YMCA have signed up. So
20 they are right now recruiting volunteers just at the
21 same time as they Department for the Aging
22 identifying those in need, and we will pre-match
23 them. So they will then be dispatched and as a
24 snowstorm occurs and will indeed step up to provide
25 them that need. So, we want to do this in two
districts. We want to do it right, and we want to

3 find a process that really works, and we think we can
4 do that this year with those two districts. I will
5 offer we will take any call at NYC Service, and find
6 a community based organization, and keep trying to do
7 that with any call, with anyone in need. But our
8 real focus this year is to get a pilot that works.

9 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Okay. So, you
10 know, I'm open to a pilot and I love Staten Island.
11 A shout out to Staten Island, and Northwest Queens, a
12 shout out to Council Member Vallone. Obviously,
13 there--we really want to make sure that it's targeted
14 where there is a significant number of seniors. But
15 I do know that Council Member Gentile and Council
16 Member Gibson as well as my district, which is a
17 brownstone district. I used to represent the
18 Brownstone Belt in Downtown Brooklyn where we've got
19 two, three and four brown--four-story brownstones.
20 There is a significant number of seniors who might be
21 in the shadows. So I would love to work with you and
22 Council Member Matteo and any other Council Members
23 to create a pilot program. We had a program in
24 Brooklyn. It was called something Soldiers. I can't
25 remember. It was in Central Brooklyn, and it was
young people who were shoveling for senior citizens.

3 I can't remember the name of the program, but I
4 believe it came out of the Bedford-Stuyvesant
5 Restoration Center. So programs like that I really
6 want to work with. I just don't want seniors to feel
7 (1) trapped in their homes, (2) to be treated as cash
8 cows, and (3) I want them--who--who desperately want
9 to adhere--adhere to the law, and make sure that
10 their sidewalks are shoveled, but unfortunately, are
11 physically impaired. Thank you for this opportunity
12 I look forward to any other suggestions. And lastly,
13 our work force, Commissioner, is it sufficient? Do
14 we need to hire any additional Sanitation women.

[laughs]

15 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: No, I--I--
16 I--the one thing I will tell you on the Sanitation
17 women is that, you know, the--we just finished the
18 last list and the list will be for next year. Um, we
19 still ended up with less than 10% taking the test.
20 And I--we did a huge amount of outreach to--to
21 schools with a lot of our current female forces going
22 out to say like this is a great job.

23 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing] It
24 is.

3 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: You really
4 need to participate in it. We still think that we're
5 trying to overcome the stigma among young girls--

6 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]
7 Yeah.

8 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: --around
9 taking on this role.

10 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Right.

11 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: I also
12 think just as an aside, I think mothers of the boys
13 signed them up more frequently than the mothers of
14 the girls.

15 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [laughs]

16 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: Because I
17 do think there clearly was some people whose sons did
18 not necessarily want to become Sanitation workers who
19 found themselves signed up for the exam. So we
20 continue to push very hard. We've made a lot of
21 progress, though, in our women's facilities so maybe
22 that will help bring them in. But we are at 6,400
23 right. A little bit over. So I think we're in a
24 very good place. We just hired a little shy of 500
25 new Sanitation workers, and had a graduation ceremony
two weeks ago.

3 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Well, I'm sure
4 that the Women's Caucus of the City Council as well
5 as my office and the Speaker would love to work with
6 you to try to draw in some more women when you--at
7 the next recruitment. And lastly, I'm so glad that
8 you eliminated the contracts, the tertiary street
9 contracts utilized for Brooklyn and Queens. I would
10 hope that we could eliminate the remaining contracts
11 for the Bronx, Queens East and Staten Island, and
12 instead use internal resources to perform the same
13 job. I think we would save the city a lot of money,
14 and clearly the strong men and women the Department
15 of Sanitation are in a position to handle the work.
16 Thank you, Commissioner.

17 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: So we are
18 phasing that out, and that's my goal, too.

19 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Great. Thank
20 you.

21 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So speaking of
22 tertiary contracts and so just to get clarity because
23 I didn't know that they were--I don't think they're
24 gone, Public Advocate.

25 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: One of them
is gone.

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2 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Which is what one?

3 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: The one in
4 Brooklyn and--and a portion of Queens, CSB.

5 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Okay, so the
6 increase was 400 workers, Sanitation workers?

7 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: We are at
8 about the headcount as last year, but we just did 492
9 new Sanitation workers.

10 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Okay, and it's
11 because of that that you feel more comfortable not
12 having to use this tertiary contract?

13 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: I--it's
14 both. I actually, to be quite honest with you, I
15 felt comfortable last year, too, but we are--we are
16 tapering it down. Um, I'm very pro having this work
17 come back into the department. So we're going to do
18 this one. If we're successful, I do not intend to
19 renew these contracts.

20 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So, I kind of--this
21 conversation you were having with the Public Advocate
22 regarding the volunteer efforts, I think Council
23 Member Steven Matteo from Staten Island has actually
24 dealt with some type of similar service in his--in
25

3 his district, and I just wanted to kind of give him
4 the floor to speak on what he's doing.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Thank you, Chair
6 Reynoso, and thank you Commissioner Garcia, and Madam
7 Public Advocate just to your point, the pilot that
8 we're working on in Staten Island is--is through
9 Where to Turn not-for-profit and what--what I've done
10 through our initiatives through the Council is I've
11 also funded some of the snow shoveling, and we have a
12 multi-pronged effort. One is to make sure that we
13 reach out to our seniors to get them on the list, and
14 the problem with--not the problem--it's been so
15 successful that we have so many seniors on the list
16 now. So that is the problem, and we are now trying
17 to obtain volunteers from our school. So my office
18 [coughs] in conjunction with my colleagues has
19 reached out to every high school and intermediate
20 school asking the principals to get sign-ons from
21 our--from out high school age children and 8th
22 graders. What they're doing is they would be
23 responsible for snow shoveling for the--the senior
24 that they're assigned to, and they would do it every
25 time, and they would say in the neighborhood. They
don't take a bus. They don't have to worry about

3 driving or taking public transportation in a
4 snowstorm. You basically just do it in your
5 neighborhood or on your block or on the next block.
6 So, to expand that effort citywide it's actually
7 pretty easy. You've just got to get the right not-
8 for-profit to join us. We have a high, high number
9 of seniors. So our problem this year is getting the
10 volunteers. So I think we've started to step up by
11 reaching out to the schools to get community as well.
12 Sanitation has been a big help. My staff is on--is
13 on the committee that we spoke of before. So, I
14 think it's getting the non-profit and then just
15 easily duplicating what we're doing. And--and all of
16 us get the Litter Initiative and you can allocate
17 snow shoveling to that, which I have, and I'm trying
18 to get my colleagues on Staten Island to do it as
19 well. So we could expand and the biggest issue right
20 now is finding volunteers.

21 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Right, we could
22 if--Council Member, since I'm no longer in the City
23 Council and have access to resources if you could do
24 a citywide initiative, I would greatly appreciate
25 that.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: I'll do a
4 citywide initiative at the next budget.

5 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: I will pass it
7 back onto the Chair.

8 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So obviously I
9 think NYC Service also--also spoke to the volunteer
10 issue or the lack thereof, and I guess what Madam
11 Public Advocate is trying to do here is figure out a
12 way to close that gap by kind of putting the onus on-
13 -on us in the city to take care of that, or our
14 agencies to take care of that. I did just try to get
15 on the NYC Service website and volunteer, and it's
16 down right now the website.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: [off mic] It's
18 not recognizing something.

19 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: I'm not able to
20 sign up as a volunteer is what it's saying on my
21 phone, but I think that they do have organizations on
22 there, but it doesn't necessarily let me sign up. So
23 just--[background comment] All right, please. So I
24 just wanted to give you a heads up. Well, all calls-

25 -

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3 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: [off mic] Call
4 me. I'll get something going. (sic)

5 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Council Matteo is--

6 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Next week
7 something.

8 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Something. Just
9 let him know if you want to volunteer, but I'm--I
10 just want to speak to that. What are efforts made by
11 Sanitation to kind of get this word out that there is
12 something available to folks who are 65 and over or a
13 disability that there's an effort by the City of New
14 York to try to get this done. And then also you
15 talked about reaching out to 4,000--

16 PAULA GAVIN: off mic] Last year.

17 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: -- last year and
18 only--How many? 100?

19 PAULA GAVIN: [off mic] 4,180 (sic)

20 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So many calling--
21 calling on--Yeah, so by calling on the not-for-
22 profits and you get, what is that? Less than 100% of
23 the folks trying to help?

24 PAULA GAVIN: [off mic]

25 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Can you--can you
get to the mic. Could you just sit there? You can

3 stay. You could say there because you are going to
4 come up next and we'll have you speak thereafter and
5 see your statement and everything.

6 PAULA GAVIN: So just to repeat that last
7 year we did a very general outreach on CBOs because
8 there are many obviously in the city. Got very
9 little response, as well as we didn't have enough
10 pre-identified individuals in need. So we decided to
11 do a much more targeted approach. The volunteers do
12 need to sign up with a CBO. They have to work with a
13 community-based organization because they have to
14 give supervision to it. They cannot be assigned to
15 the city to do that. That's why students, as the
16 Councilman said, need to sign up for a non-profit.

17 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So the reason it's
18 not that's closed, it's that as an individual you
19 can't sign up as a volunteer. You have to sign up
20 through--

21 PAULA GAVIN: You have to sign up with an
22 organization as a volunteer.

23 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: I see. Okay.

24 PAULA GAVIN: So I'll go back and check
25 why that didn't happen for you, but it really--I

3 wanted to emphasize it does go through a community-
4 based organization so they can give oversight to it.

5 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So just to be very
6 clear, the organizations are listed and you can click
7 on one and I guess sign up through there but--

8 PAULA GAVIN: [interposing] Exactly.

9 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: --but as soon as
10 you enter the website, it doesn't let me personally
11 like as an individual sign up, but you're saying that
12 that's because of supervision reasons?

13 PAULA GAVIN: You could register as a
14 volunteer and say what your interest was. So that's
15 why I want to check on it. So the process works.
16 You could come in as an individual and say, I'm
17 interested in snow shoveling. Then we would find a
18 place to send you to. So I'll double check that and
19 get back to you.

20 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Okay, thank you,
21 thank you, and I kind of want to get to the--now the
22 study. You know, the snow--the snow plan. What
23 happened last year you might want to change and see
24 happen moving forward. What have you done to address
25 in doing so outside of adding more salt?

3 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: Um, well,
4 there--adding more salt was a big deal. Not everyone
5 wants to have a giant pile of salt next to their
6 house. So we increased the amount of salt that we
7 have in the city right now as well as having more
8 contractual capacity for salt. The other thing that
9 I think was really clear last year is that we needed
10 more spreaders. And so we have this significant
11 increase in the number of spreaders, which are both
12 from our conversions of dump trucks to be able to
13 spread, and some are new spreaders. As you may
14 recall, we bought 40 additional new spreaders above
15 our allocation over the summer. Clearly, when we're
16 in ice storm after ice storm and not snow storm after
17 snowstorm, we have far fewer pieces of equipment. So
18 that I think was a priority for us. Um, we also
19 expanded significantly the sectoring. Queens is, you
20 know, lane miles wide. It goes on forever in terms
21 of getting it done. So we wanted to really tackle
22 that very, very large borough next. It also
23 particularly in the east or the land of the critical
24 and the land of the tertiary like no secondary
25 streets. Everything is either a tertiary or it's a
major highway. We wanted to make sure we could try

3 and spend a lot of time putting those plans in place,
4 and we really working all summer to make sure that
5 they were effective. So those have been the primary
6 pieces. We also upgraded our GPS system on all of
7 our vehicles and put external antennas to make it so
8 that we're snapping to grid. You know, every now and
9 then you might have--if you track the vehicles all
10 the time, you see something whacky like it looks like
11 the collection truck is in the middle of the harbor,
12 and it's just the way the signals bounce. So adding
13 the antenna we think will help and make it so in
14 certain areas where we also have canyon effects.
15 Mainly Manhattan, the GPS signal bounces all over the
16 buildings and doesn't end up actually showing you
17 where the vehicle is. So that's been a big
18 improvement as well.

19 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: All right, so I'm
20 going to go ahead and allow for Council Member Steven
21 Matteo followed by Council Member Vanessa Gibson of
22 the Bronx to ask some questions.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Thank you, Chair
24 Reynoso. So, Commissioner, last year with snow
25 sectoring, you know, from my standpoint I believe it

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3 was a success on Staten Island. Part of--one of my
4 concerns for the upcoming--

5 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: I'm sorry, can you--
6 -It was a what?

7 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: A success.

8 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Oh, it was
9 success. I got you.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: You like that.

11 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: I do like that.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: You want to hear
13 me say it again?

14 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: I like that Staten
15 Island because Steven does. (sic)

16 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: That's right. I
17 like that.

18 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Good Job.

19 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: I don't
20 know if you both are supposed to have that much fun
21 while you're up there?

22 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: So one of, um,
23 one of the issues I do want to make sure that we are
24 highlighting and bring to your attention is our
25 schools. Obviously in Staten Island, we are--you
26 know, we our parents, our teachers we--when school

3 are open most of them are driving there. You know,
4 we have a lot of schools in--in residential
5 neighborhoods. Take Wesley for one example where the
6 streets are extremely narrow. Um, you know, I've
7 spoken with Chief Martino about. But, um, um, with a
8 con--concentrated effort, um, and I know it's
9 difficult, you know, when parents are on the road and
10 everything, but that we ensure that our schools are
11 clear. That the stop and drops are clear so we can
12 at least move parents and their children safely and
13 we get them out so--because obviously parking is
14 limited. The traveling is--is, you know, dangerous.
15 So I think we just need a much more concentrated
16 effort on our schools, and I just want to hear your
17 thoughts on that.

18 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: Yeah, I
19 mean schools are all on critical routes. For you,
20 you know, it is definitely a balance between DSNY and
21 the custodians. I think sometimes we step on each
22 other but we have been reaching out to make sure that
23 there's coordination and we're not recreating ridges
24 after ridges that are going to be difficult for
25 school children to climb over. It was definitely a
tough winter last winter, but we do--I mean we had

3 the department and you obviously talked to your local
4 chief pretty constantly. You know, they're very--
5 they're very aware that a lot of people are driving
6 to school on Staten Island and that we need to make
7 sure that we are keeping clear lanes for those people
8 to drop their children off. But if there is also
9 ever any particular, um, school that we need to make
10 sure that we're addressing more effectively, you can
11 certainly reach out to me or reach out to Chief
12 Martini (sic).

13 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Yes, and
14 meanwhile I'll continue to do that. You know the
15 unfortunate reality is this, and especially in the
16 residential areas, we know that they're not supposed
17 to, and we tell them not to, but when a school is
18 located in the heart of a residential area and
19 they're right around residential streets, they're
20 putting, you know, the homeowners or whoever resides
21 there, renters there throwing the snow back in the
22 street.

23 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: Yeah, we
24 know.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: And then--and
then it's becoming a problem, and we're on a

3 sectoring plan, which is working, but then by the
4 time we have to get back to pick up our kids, those
5 streets look like--

6 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA:

7 [interposing] Nobody came.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: --they were not
9 plowed.

10 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: Right, and-

11 -

12 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: [interposing]

13 And, you know, and it's--and it's a dangerous--it's a
14 dangerous problem especially around 3 o'clock picking
15 up the kids on Staten Island or 2 o'clock, or between
16 2:00 and 3:00 when most--most kids are getting out.

17 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: And I know,
18 and I know, but I appreciate both your and everyone
19 on Staten Island's focus on getting the message out
20 that throwing the snow back into the street once
21 we've already cleared them, um, is extremely
22 problematic and dangerous. Um, I think you know that
23 we've tried to do enforcement around that particular
24 issue, and I believe actually the Staten Island
25 Advance has requested that I increase the ticket, um,
for that particular--I think--I think they did.

3 [laughter] Um, so I mean we will--we will continue
4 to--to do enforcement around this issue, and to
5 educate the public. It is extremely frustrating for
6 the department when you may have done an extremely
7 gorgeous beautiful job, and a resident goes down and
8 doesn't think that we were even there because so much
9 snow has been pushed into the street.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Well, I
11 appreciate that, and I appreciate the efforts of the
12 men and women of the Sanitation Department. They've
13 done a great job without a doubt. Just a few more
14 questions. I know--so my colleagues have some more
15 questions. Um, you talked about salt spreaders.
16 Have we increased the number Staten Island?

17 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: You got
18 your increase last year when you got salt spreaders.
19 (sic)

20 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: [interposing] Oh,
21 we got our increase last year? Well, I'm here to
22 officially just request that we have a few more.

23 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: [laughs]
24 You were ahead of the game.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Are you're
jealous.

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3 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: [off mic] No.

4 (sic)

5 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Oh, okay. All
6 right. But, um, so, um, you know, in terms of the
7 ice storm because that was big problem last year. So
8 just to clarify so I think we talked about this last
9 year, and after. The spreaders are going out, and
10 prep and we're not plowing until it's two inches?

11 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: That's
12 correct and just-- So there are two things around it.
13 One of the other things after that particular flash
14 freeze that occurred on Martin Luther King weekend,
15 which I think caught folks by surprise because it was
16 projected to be over 45 degrees that weekend.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Right.

18 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: We are now
19 capturing ground temperature in our vehicles to make
20 sure that's getting reported back up. So if there's
21 a differential I mean that rain precipitation that
22 the ground temperatures are below freezing that we
23 really have a heads up on that to make sure that
24 we're out there with even more rough forces.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Okay, and another
issue I want to bring up that we've talked about

3 after last year's snow is the bus stops. I know you
4 have a day--a day labor program. Unfortunately,
5 Staten Islanders have not signed up enough, and we
6 will do, you know, another--another process of
7 letting everyone know, um, but it's a problem and we
8 have a lot of bus stops and shelters that are not--
9 are not being--are not being shoveled. And they're
10 on--the passengers are waiting in the streets.
11 Obviously, that's not good for anyone. So, um, I,
12 you know, I'd like to work with you on a renewed
13 effort to try and get more day laborers especially on
14 Staten Island. Obviously, my colleagues feel the
15 same. Um, so however we can all work together to
16 sign people up, to get, you know, get more day
17 laborers because I--that to me has been a big issue
18 for the last few years. I know it's--it's difficult
19 and we need more day laborers, but it's something
20 that we--we definitely need to address because, you
21 know, having my constituents wait on Victory
22 Boulevard or North Gannon, or West Fingerboard Road
23 or Highland Boulevard is--is dangerous. So I think
24 we'd like to have a renewed effort from and a
25 partnership with Sanitation to make sure that our bus

3 stops and our sidewalks around public property are
4 clean.

5 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: Right now,
6 you know, we completely want to work with you to get
7 the message out. We did increase the amount that
8 we're paying for day laborers this years in the hopes
9 of attracting more people to both register and also
10 to show up when it's very cold. In addition, which
11 it is challenging on Staten Island. There aren't as
12 many people who--who sign up to be day laborers. Um,
13 and we will move people around, but we lose a lot of
14 time when we're moving people around. Um, the other
15 thing is that we do have a piece of equipment it's
16 called the Skid Steer. We have 50 of them, and they
17 look like Bobcats. You might know the trade name,
18 they--they allow us particularly in icing conditions
19 because when you send a crew of day laborers out to a
20 bus stop where it's icing, they're going to be there
21 a long time. The Skid Steer has been more effective.
22 I think also you were very helpful in pointing out
23 there was an express bus stops that were not--they
24 didn't have bus shelters. So they weren't being
25 services by the private sector, and I think we were
able to get out there and make sure that we were

3 dealing with them. They were--I think they were not
4 on our radar before.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Great, and I look
6 forward to working with you. Just--just the tertiary
7 where we're phasing out for Staten Island one, too,
8 as well?

9 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: This will
10 be the last winter hopefully that you have tertiaries
11 on Staten Island. I intend not to have them the
12 following winter, but my folks in Brooklyn and Queens
13 better do a bang-up job so I can give everyone
14 confidence to let go of the extra contracts.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: And one last
16 question. What--when you--when you put a claim in
17 place that, you know, we have the--we have the snow
18 coming, um, so when they're--when the trucks are
19 ready to go and everybody is in and they're waiting,
20 you know, Richmond Avenue and wherever else in
21 everyone else's district, is--is--I just want to be
22 clear. Is that because it just hasn't--the salt
23 spreaders have gone out, but it just hasn't reached
24 the level where--because, you know, in--in my
25 district my constituents will call me and say, well,
26 why are they waiting there? And I just want to be

3 clear and sometimes just making sure that they have
4 the right--the right message that those are the
5 plows. They're not going out to two inches, and the
6 salt spreaders are already out.

7 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: So,
8 they're--they're--so in that particular--what you're
9 talking about that is absolutely right. We have to
10 wait until we get over two inches because the plows
11 are not supposed to gear to us here. (sic) They're not
12 supposed to drag all the way to the asphalt. They're
13 supposed to be over it. Um, so that I don't rip up
14 every newly paved road on Staten Island.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: The only contact
16 is to that pothole? (sic)

17 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: Yes, we--
18 when we get--we make them busy in the spring. But
19 you also see spreaders out ahead of storms, and--and
20 part of this is that, you know, we're planning at
21 least 24 hours out, um, you know, who's going to be
22 in. And so, you think a storm is coming at 6:00 a.m.
23 so we put people out a little before that. It
24 doesn't show up until 11:00, um, which is I've
25 discovered that the meteorologists are not quite as
precise as you would want them to be from a snow

3 planning perspective. Um, so you will often see
4 people out for extended periods of time because we
5 want to make sure that they're--they can jump on the
6 first flake with the spreaders.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: And the shifts?

8 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: 7:00 to
9 7:00.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: 7:00 to 7:00. So
11 there's no 4 o'clock split? Um, when, 7:00 to 7:00
12 and a new shift comes in, are they getting out
13 quickly? Is it taking a while? Is there--is there a
14 delay within an hour of getting--

15 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA:

16 [interposing] So, we--we try when we know that we're
17 in heavy--when the snow is very heavily falling
18 during that period of time to bring people in.
19 Either keep them on overtime later, past the 7:00--we
20 can keep them four hours or five hours overtime.
21 Then they've got to have eight hours off. Um, or
22 we'll stagger them in. Particularly on Staten Island
23 'cause there are a couple of very large garages where
24 there's an enormous amount of equipment. So we will
25 stagger them in to make sure that we can fuel and
26 refill and get back out there. Um, but, you know,

3 one of the challenges is we also have, you know,
4 people. So we have to give them some sort of shift.
5 If--if we're going to end up, which we ended up
6 multiple weeks on 12-hour split shifts, we need to
7 give them some consistency so that they can sleep and
8 stuff.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: [interposing]

10 Right. Thank you, Commissioner, I appreciate it.
11 It's been great working with you for the last years.
12 I'm confident that we are ready for the next snow
13 season, and I look forward to working with you more.

14 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: I just want to say
15 you should have started the pilot program at Staten
16 Island because if you can make Staten Island happy
17 everyone is going to be happy. Um, not just State--

18 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA:

19 [interposing] Staten Island is happy. Staten Island
20 is happy.

21 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: But I'm saying
22 with the--with the program--you have the pilot
23 program that you put forth, right. If you would have
24 started in Staten Island and been successful there,
25 you could have done it anywhere. You could have put--
-you could have put it throughout the United States.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: [interposing]

3 See. See how--see the influence that I've had now on
4 my colleagues.

5 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: I think
6 it's the--I--I think you should appreciate the
7 support.

8 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [off mic] I
9 write down everything that I do. I-- (sic)

10 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: [interposing]
11 There's a Staten Island campaign. This is a Staten
12 Island campaign.

13 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [off mic] I
14 didn't hear you.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Okay, everyone
16 else can now go and--upon their issues.

17 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: No, I just want to
18 ask very quickly. You said that heat--I'm sorry, I
19 didn't catch you right. There was a--you guys ere
20 testing the temperature of the--of the road? I mean--

21 -

22 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: So we--we
23 capture in the vehicles. We have sensors that give
24 us both the ground temperature, as well as the
25 ambient temperature.

3 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Okay.

4 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: And we were
5 not sort at the headquarters level looking at the
6 round temperature as much as we were looking at
7 ambient temperature. We are now looking at ground
8 temperature on an hourly basis to make sure that
9 where there is that differential we don't get caught
10 short with icing issues.

11 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: All right, and
12 right before I go to Council Member Vanessa Gibson,
13 bikes. I know Staten Island is crazy about them.
14 [laughter] I just want to know what happens on bike
15 lanes. How are we taking care of those, and is it
16 getting better? I do want to say we talked about
17 the--the bridges and our overpasses. I have an
18 overpass and I want to let you know by street name on
19 Marcy Ave.--in between Marcy and Rodney from Broadway
20 all the way to Lincoln--Lincoln Avenue, it is--it is
21 not ever, ever taken care of.

22 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA:

23 [interposing] Do you think? It's on the list.

24 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: You have to go all
25 the way around through the--around the pass. So I
just want to give you a heads up, but also the bike

3 lanes. I just want to talk about what you guys are
4 doing for that before I turn it over to Vanessa
5 Gibson.

6 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: Certainly,
7 so bike--after we finish the roadways, we go back and
8 do the bike lanes. We cannot use the big spreaders
9 in the bike lanes. We have to use small pieces of
10 equipment. Um, but we do back and do them on the
11 streets. DOT will take care of them on bridges.
12 They are--they don't like salt on their bridges. So,
13 they take care of their bridges themselves, but we
14 will do the bike lanes. They are the next tier after
15 the roadways.

16 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Okay. So two
17 things I'm going to do I am going to see how the bike
18 lanes are taken care of because usually where the
19 piles--the piles come up on the bike lanes more so
20 than anything else and folks that ride, if they're
21 riding their bikes after a snow storm, for example,
22 they are sharing the street with vehicles, which is
23 very dangerous. When we have designated areas for
24 bikers, we might as well just allow for everyone to
25 be safe. And then the overpasses, I'll be paying
attention to that specific site, but it's a ice

3 skating rink to get to and from one side to the south
4 side and another in Williamsburg.

5 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: If there is
6 a specific issue where you think we're not getting it
7 done, please reach out to me.

8 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Okay. I want to
9 pass it over to Council Member Vanessa Gibson from
10 the way down borough. (sic)

11 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Thank you so
12 much. Thank you, Chair Reynoso. So you've heard
13 from Brooklyn, Queens, Citywide Staten Island. Thank
14 you, Commissioner. Now, I just want to take it to
15 the Bronx. I appreciate all the work you have done.
16 Working with your agency it's truly been a pleasure,
17 and very responsive. In addition to the overpasses,
18 I wanted to ask about the bus stops, which are very
19 important as well because a lot of bus stops were not
20 simply covered. And not only just not covered just
21 in a timely fashion. So many of these have these bus
22 depots where our commuters are getting off the train,
23 and there are a lot of people at the bus stop. So
24 what you will see during the winter snow season is
25 many people standing in the street because they
simply can't stand on the sidewalk. Upper Manhattan

3 and the Bronx have the distinction of having a number
4 of step streets. So you will know I always speak
5 about step streets because I have 25 of them in
6 Community Boards 4 mainly and a little bit of 5. So
7 I just want to understand in terms of the agency,
8 Sanitation and DOT, who has the jurisdiction over the
9 cleanup during the snow season. Is it Sanitation,
10 DOT as well as for the overpasses, and I have a
11 couple of pedestrian bridges as well. So I just
12 wanted to find out how that's working this year. So
13 with the step street?

14 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Yeah, with the step
15 streets first.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: So the step
17 streets--

18 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: [interposing] So
19 the step street folks are the ones that know. (sic)

20 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: Do you want
21 me to give the definition, or do you want me to?

22 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Um--

23 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: [interposing] Who
24 do you--who do you--you've got to let us know.

25 [laughter]

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3 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: So--so, um,
4 in certain areas of the city based on their geology
5 their street is actually a staircase, but it is--it
6 is actually a mapped city street.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Okay.

8 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: But it's--
9 for those of you who don't live in the Bronx or Upper
10 Manhattan, you would think it's a big staircase.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Right.

12 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: So it has
13 to be hand shoveled, and it is the Department of
14 Sanitation's responsibility to hand shovel it, and we
15 do that with the snow laborers.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Okay, and I
17 appreciate the work you've done because for those
18 that don't know, step streets are heavily used. As I
19 said, I have 25 of them, and I know that they're used
20 a lot because I see them. I work with Parks, I work
21 with Sanitation and I work with DOT because there are
22 so many layers with the lighting, the cleanliness.
23 The maintenance spans over multiple agencies. I'm
24 sorry. I'm just putting it out there now as we
25 prepare. I certainly want to make sure. I really
sense this in Upper Manhattan probably Board 12 and

3 in the Bronx. If you could give that a lot of
4 attention because of, you know, the fact that they
5 are heavily used. I think that will go a long way to
6 make sure the Bronx is taken care of.

7 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: And also,
8 if there's anyone where you ever feel like we're not
9 getting to them quickly enough, you should just reach
10 out because we do feel that that's our responsibility
11 to make sure the step streets are taken care of.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Okay. And I
13 wanted to ask a question about borough commissioners
14 and the level of personnel and equipment that each
15 borough is given, and how that's dispersed to the
16 local districts, right. So I don't usually work with
17 the Bronx Borough Commissioner. I work with my
18 managers in the various community board that oversee
19 the district. But is there a difference? Like what
20 factors do you look at for a borough like the Bronx
21 in terms of giving and disseminating resources to
22 each of those districts? Is there a difference or is
23 there a minimum? How does that work?

24 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: So really
25 what we're--what we're trying to do is look at--and
it's a little bit different than when we're

3 collecting refuse and recycling because you have very
4 significant density in the Bronx--

5 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: [interposing]

6 Right.

7 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: --in terms
8 of the tonnage. So on any given day for refuse and
9 recycling you're going to probably have a
10 disproportionate based on your population of
11 Sanitation workers working. That is not for during
12 snow. During snow we're looking at lane miles. So
13 we're looking at how--how do we--how many lane miles
14 are we clearing, particularly on the critical routes.
15 So, you know, your Major Deegans, all of those
16 different highways that cut through the Bronx. Um,
17 and that's the primary way that we distribute
18 equipment. Um, and so our--the borough commissioners
19 have pretty broad discretion if they are in the
20 middle of the storm. So we lay out a plan, but there
21 is constant communication between headquarters and
22 the boroughs about how things are going. And they
23 are responsible for managing and getting things out
24 and done in their boroughs, and they're held
25 accountable for how it's going overall. And that
obviously trickles down, and they're holding their

3 district superintendants accountable, and I'm glad to
4 hear that you work with your districts because they
5 are at the front lines.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Okay, and I
7 wanted to ask about the outreach for day laborers. I
8 know that you've done, you know, a number
9 communications, email, social media. Are you looking
10 to do anything different this year since, you know,
11 with the snow season that we prepare for, we should
12 expect, you know, more people to buy into the coming
13 day laborers. So are you looking at like churches,
14 and community board meetings, precinct councils.
15 Some of the dedicated meetings that happen across the
16 city to outreach on--on getting more laborers?

17 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: I mean we
18 certainly are at all the district meetings and such.
19 But we will refocus to make sure that we're having
20 that be part of the promotion. I mean we've been on
21 social media. We've done press releases. So we are
22 trying to get as many as we can, but I think some of
23 those ideas in terms of more grass roots could be
24 useful.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Okay. Thank you
very much, Commissioner. Thank you, Chair.

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3 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Thank you. I want
4 to give it back to Madam Public Advocate Leticia
5 James.

6 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Two last
7 questions, two or three last questions. The digital
8 handheld technology is there a way that you could
9 identify properties owned by senior citizens and/or
10 individuals with, um, living with disabilities? Is it
11 possible to--is that technology--is that connected to
12 the Department of Finance or--

13 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA:
14 [interposing] So

15 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: --or DFTA?

16 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: --we don't
17 have handheld technology that would tell us--

18 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]
19 Yeah.

20 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: --but I
21 know that there clearly are lists of people who have
22 tax-exemptions--

23 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing] Uh-
24 huh.

25 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: --for being
elderly at DOF. I don't really know whether or not

3 that's something that New York City Service has
4 already looked into.

5 PAULA GAVIN: So I would answer it for
6 the Department for the Aging. They have pretty
7 extensive records of all the seniors that are
8 associated with them in some way with a case.

9 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]
10 Right.

11 PAULA GAVIN: So that's who they're going
12 to. So it's not based on technology. It's based on
13 their relationship with us. They're also going to
14 senior centers to test if there are others that they
15 may not have. So they're using their network of
16 connections to identify those seniors who are
17 particularly homebound. They know about a thousand
18 seniors are sort of eligible in the sense that they--
19 they do need help, to your point earlier. So that's
20 how they're approaching it.

21 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: So is it possible
22 that we could identify them using tech--technology
23 going forward?

24 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: The--the
25 Sanitation worker and the supervisors do not have
handheld technology, but only the enforcement agents.

3 Um, and their system is I would say not ready for
4 some--any change.

5 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Right.

6 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: They don't
7 want to change anything not right this second
8 because--

9 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]
10 It's not right for prime time?

11 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: Well, I
12 mean it, well, it does exactly what it's supposed to
13 do right now, but it's--it's very old code. So any
14 time you try and make a change in very old code, you
15 could damage the code.

16 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Got it. Okay.
17 Um, um, I'm having a--let's see, what was the other
18 question that I had? Um, oh, the--the bus shelters
19 aren't they contracted? Do we have a contracted with
20 the--

21 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA:
22 [interposing] Yes, we do have a contract-

23 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: --it seems like--

24 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: --there,
25 but they're--they're--not all bus stops have bus
shelters. So, yes, at the bus shelters they are

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3 required, um, to clear the bus shelter area. Um, I
4 believe it's after four hours, but there are probably
5 another 10,000 bus stops that don't have a shelter.

6 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: So I remember
7 having this discussion, um, in my former life as
8 chair, and I remember there was some problems with
9 some Cemusa, actually honoring your obligations or
10 performing your obligations under the contract.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: [off mic]

12 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: And-and so I'm
13 hearing comments from Council Member Matteo that it's
14 still a problem.

15 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: I'm going
16 to ask First Deputy Commission Lori Ardito to answer
17 questions about her contract.

18 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yay, we love her.
19 [laughs] [background comments]

20 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER ARDITO: Lori Ardito,
21 First Deputy of the Department of Transportation

22 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yay, and from
23 what borough did you formerly--were you formerly the
24 commissioner?

25 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER ARDITO: Brooklyn.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yay. [laughs]

3 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER ARDITO: But I do
4 love Staten Island. I love all of my boroughs, but
5 obviously my heart is in Brooklyn. So--so to answer
6 your question Cemusa is required by--by--by the
7 contract to, um, to get to a bus a shelter--to bus
8 shelters within four hours. Um, they have also been
9 competing sort of with us for laborers. So, you
10 know, they contract out the same way we're
11 contracting out. So they have certainly stepped up
12 their game. Um, they're not, you know, they're not
13 quite there yet I don't think. And obviously if we
14 have certain ones that we know are problematic to
15 you, please let us know. We do have them at our OEM
16 Center. So, you know, on snow events they are there.
17 We're in constant contact with them, and we can
18 certainly address any issues at they arise. Um,
19 another part of the--the problem may be, and what
20 we're seeing and what we've heard is that when they
21 do get to them within four hours, we kind of
22 encounter the snow plow comes after that four hours,
23 and pushes it back up against. So we're--we're sort
24 of--we're talking maybe how we can even, you know,
25 better coordinate that with Sanitation. So, you
know, so those are a couple issues you may be seeing.

3 They mat actually get there and this may be
4 happening. So, we're going--we're going to work more
5 closely with them.

6 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: So this winter I
7 know all of us will be monitoring our bus shelters to
8 make sure that Cemusa is honoring their con--their
9 obligation over their contract. And for day
10 laborers, how do they register with Cemusa and with
11 Sanitation. I know some kids who want to get some
12 holiday money. What do I--what do I recommend?

13 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: And they
14 work for, you know, \$13.50 an hour.

15 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Okay.

16 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: So I feel
17 like it's not dead.

18 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Okay.

19 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: You know,
20 we're getting there.

21 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: [off mic] It was
22 \$10.00 an hour. (sic)

23 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: It was
24 \$10.00? Okay.

25 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Okay, \$13.50 an
hour.

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3 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: \$13.50 an
4 hour and they can certainly reach out to the 311.

5 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Okay.

6 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: Or they can
7 reach out directly to Sanitation and we will be happy
8 to get them registered, or they can go straight to
9 District Garage and register there.

10 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: And what are the
11 requirements? Over a certain age?

12 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: Um, I don't
13 remember.

14 MALE SPEAKER: Over 18.

15 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: 18 and they
16 have to have a Social Security Card. They need to
17 have two forms of ID. In the little booklet that I
18 left of *All Things Sanitation*, it actually has the
19 requirements.

20 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Oh, okay, and the
21 responsibilities. Okay. Excellent. Thank you so
22 much. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

23 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Thank you. Thank
24 you. Why do they need a Social Security Card and two
25 forms of ID?

3 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: Because
4 they basically become New York City employees. For
5 payroll purposes.

6 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Wouldn't the New
7 York City ID created by New York City--the City of
8 New York allow for people to become New York City
9 employees?

10 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: Um, can
11 they legally work in New York City under federal law?

12 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Federal law?

13 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: Federal
14 law.

15 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: It's the City of
16 New York.

17 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: It's tax
18 law. Yeah, we still have to comply with the IRS--

19 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: [interposing] Taxes
20 can still be paid. Um, I guess that's another
21 conversation.

22 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: That's
23 another conversation. [laughs] [background comments]
24 I defer to the Law Department. If they tell me it's
25 okay, I'm happy to have anyone who wants to shovel,

3 but I just need to make sure that I stay within what
4 I'm legally required to be.

5 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Give me--give me a
6 week and I'll let you know.

7 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: Absolutely.

8 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Well, I'll let--
9 I'll let some lawyers talk to your lawyers and make
10 sure [laughter] we can work that out. Um, that could
11 really help, by the way. I think I have one last
12 thing. Oh, yes, do we have it in a database where we
13 know--where we can see what these bridges are? A lot
14 of people don't know that a lot of these just regular
15 streets are bridges. Um, is there a database, um,
16 DOT, that's--

17 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA:

18 [interposing] We keep lists of what we're responsible
19 for.

20 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: And so, you have
21 one list and then the DOT has another list?

22 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: Uh-huh.

23 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Is there anything
24 that--

25 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA:

[interposing] The Parks Department.

3 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: And the Parks
4 Department. Is there anything that those three
5 agencies are not responsible for that exists on the
6 road of the City of New York?

7 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: I don't
8 think so. I mean I think that we've got--you know if
9 there's one that we're missing, then one of us hasn't
10 done our job.

11 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So for example a
12 bridge over the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway would that
13 be State DOT responsibility or City DOT
14 responsibility?

15 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: It--it--
16 possibly is State DOT's responsibility.

17 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: All right, so--

18 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER ARDITO: [interposing]
19 But-but--but--But, I'll give you a but, but we
20 maintain it. So the City of New York still maintains
21 that infrastructure.

22 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Beautiful. All
23 right. We've got another question.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Um, the Parks--the
25 Parks' property as I walk along Parks' property, is
Parks supposed to be doing that?

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3 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: [off mic]

4 No. (sic)

5 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Okay, because
6 they're not.

7 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: The Parks
8 property and sidewalks next to Parks property, as
9 with any other agency property, is the requirement of
10 the agency.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Well, I'm going
12 to have to bring that up. Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Do we have a Parks
14 representative here?

15 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: No. Do we?

16 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: All right.

17 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: [off mic]
18 All right.

19 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: On the spot.

20 COMMISSIONER KATHRYN GARCIA: [off mic]
21 Good.

22 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: By the way,
23 everyone that's been called I know has signed up to
24 speak, but if you're answering a question as it rolls
25 on, we're cool with that. So, if the Parks

3 Department just wants to step right up, and answer a
4 couple of questions, it would be great.

5 Well, thank you.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Sure. [laughs] I
7 think.

8 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Oh, don't worry
9 about it.

10 [background comments, pause]

11 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Because we've got
12 another--after this we have another panel. We want
13 to get them. We don't want to hold them up, too
14 long. And I hope that we--the agencies can stay.
15 [background comment] They could just go right, in
16 and I hope the agencies can stay because the
17 testimony that we're getting next is going to be from
18 folks that have issues regarding the plowing and
19 shoveling of their own snow. So, the Parks
20 Department, welcome. If you could just state your
21 name, your title.

22 MATTHEW DRURY: Sure. Matthew Drury.
23 I'm the Director of Government Relations for the
24 Parks Department.

25 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Okay.

3 MATTHEW DRURY: And specifically, I guess
4 since there's been some feedback about--about
5 sidewalks, yeah, if you can get us information about
6 those specific parks, you know, obviously I'll be
7 happy to circle back to our--to our maintenance cress
8 and make sure that's being addressed.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: Matt, it's from
10 my district. I'll have my staff send you the
11 locations--

12 MATTHEW DRURY: [interposing] I
13 appreciate that.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: --within the week
15 so that you have a heads up because some are just not
16 being done, and they do have bus stops around them.

17 MATTHEW DRURY: No, totally understood,
18 and--and, you know, obviously heading into the winter
19 season, as much advanced notice about any spots that
20 have been problematic would be good to know.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER MATTEO: We appreciate
22 that. We'll send them to you.

23 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: And what--what
24 capacity do you have to do that work? Is it general
25 Park workers that handle this stuff?

3 MATTHEW DRURY: Yeah, there's generally
4 CPW's, um, maintenance and park workers that are--
5 that are generally doing those, and--and these paths
6 of sidewalks are cleared sort of throughout the parks
7 as--as quickly as we're able to tackle those.

8 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Okay. So we'll be
9 better prepared to go to you next time we have a snow
10 session. But just--and we should have the Parks
11 Department at the official capacity to be responsive
12 to these things outside of just taking a--taking some
13 feedback. We just really want to know what they're
14 doing and how they're working.

15 MATTHEW DRURY: Yeah, no, I mean I--and I
16 think it's fair to say that our, you know, in core--
17 you know, much like, you know, Sanitation and the
18 other city agencies that own property, you know, we
19 do have an organized sort of snow plan. And paths
20 throughout parks are cleared, you know, as
21 expeditiously as possible, and--and in addition to
22 foot bridges like over a stream for example that are--
23 -are cleared sort of in the same manner so--

24 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: All right. So I
25 would just like to get, so I could send it to the
rest of my colleagues, a lot of all the--what do you

3 call them, the bridges and the streets, who's
4 responsible for what. So that when we're--when we're
5 getting calls from our constituents we know who to
6 call. And we could--and we could ask the right people
7 the right questions, and we don't need to roll around
8 in circles. So, we would really appreciate that from
9 every agency that's here. All right. So thank you
10 guys. I think we're good here. We have one more
11 panel. So thank you guys for your time. We really
12 appreciate it, and all the success for the next snow
13 season. No snow. No snow. [pause] All right, so I
14 want to call up Molly Krakowski from JASA and Monica
15 Bartley from the Center for Independence of the
16 disabled [background comments] to come up, and
17 pleased any state agencies if they could stay.
18 There's one panel and is this one panel is
19 specifically going to talk to folks that are for the
20 aging and disabled? [background comments] Matt is
21 out and Lori is out. Matt and Lori are excused from
22 having to come to the panel. But I would love for
23 all the agencies to stay. There is one panel
24 specifically that's going to speak to elderly and the
25 disabled. [background comments] Okay. All right.
Thank you.

3 FEMALE SPEAKER: You're welcome.

4 [background comments, pause]

5 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Okay, welcome. How
6 are you?

7 MOLLY KRAKOWSKI: Fine. Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Thank you guys for
9 being here. So, just remember the light has to be on
10 to hear you speaking. I guess we're going to go with
11 Ms. Krakowski first?

12 MOLLY KRAKOWSKI: Yes. Hi, my name is
13 Molly Krakowski, I'm the Director of Legislative
14 Affairs at JASA, and I really want to thank the
15 Council for hosting today's hearing, the Chairperson
16 and to the Public Advocate for pushing this
17 legislation today. I'm here to speak in support of
18 Int. 714. JASA is a non-profit organization serving
19 the needs of older adults in the Greater New York
20 area. Our mission is to sustain and enrich the lives
21 of the aging in New York metropolitan areas so that
22 they can remain in the community with dignity and
23 autonomy. And since our establishment, we've sought
24 to provide programs that maximize opportunities for
25 the fulfillment of safety and strength affirming and
cultural events for older adults. We serve 43,000

3 older adults in the New York City area. We have
4 clients ranging from Adult Protective Service
5 Community Guardians, Senior Centers, NORC services,
6 home delivered meal contracts, case management, the
7 whole--the whole gamut. [laughs] JASA supports Int.
8 714, which would require DSNY to establish a new
9 program of contracting for--to assist older adults
10 and people with disabilities in removal of snow and
11 reducing or exempting older adults and some people
12 with disabilities from penalties for failing to
13 remove the snow and ice from sidewalks, crosswalks,
14 curbs, et cetera. As one of the largest and most
15 problematically diverse agencies serving older adults
16 in the New York area, JASA sees first hand the
17 challenges older adults face each winter in removing
18 snow and ice from the sidewalks and paths. While
19 many New York City residents benefit from building
20 management and superintendants to handle among other
21 things maintenance, garbage, cycling, snow removal,
22 there are still many individuals and families who are
23 living in the community independently and who are
24 responsible for them. And for older adults, snow
25 removal can be very challenging, if not hazardous.
At JASA specifically in the outer boroughs this is a

3 major concern for clients and for staff. Without
4 family and neighbors to assist in snow and ice
5 removal, and often without the financial resources to
6 pay for removal service, older adults are
7 confronting--are confronted with an extremely
8 challenging and hazardous situation for themselves
9 and other. JASA's safety concern also extends to our
10 home delivered meals drivers who are tasked with
11 ensuring homebound older adults regardless of
12 inclement weather to make sure that they receive life
13 sustaining meals. Build up of snow and ice has
14 caused a number of drivers to slip and fall. On
15 occasion our drivers have shoveled the pathways to
16 client's homes and assisted in salting the sidewalks
17 to make their jobs less hazardous. Last winter,
18 several of the drivers in Queens encountered homes
19 where the snow had not been removed and ice had
20 developed on the stairs and the walkways. It's
21 particularly bad in Far Rockaway at Bayswater,
22 Rockaway Park and Bell Harbor. I know Council Member
23 Ulrich isn't here and Richards, but this is--it's
24 been disastrous. JASA Case Management reaches out to
25 the family member. We arrange--try and arrange snow
removal or have salt put down. In cases where

3 there's no family member involved, the case
4 management tries to find others who are going to be
5 willing and able to do that for them. Two winters
6 ago, our Director at Rockaway Park Senior Center
7 called Assembly Member Goldfeder's office just to see
8 if he had any referrals for somebody who might remove
9 snow and he came out and did it himself. So, you
10 know, we can't rely on our elected officials, as
11 wonder and as fantastic as they are, to be doing this
12 snow removal. But we would certainly support any
13 effort to try and establish a known entity that could
14 actually do some of this for the--for the harder to
15 serve clients. Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Thank you, and I
17 just wanted to ask if someone was to ask you for a
18 database of the--your membership of folks that have
19 home or own homes, um, would you be able to provide
20 that? Is that something that you--out of the 42,000
21 is what you said?

22 MOLLY KRAKOWSKI: Yeah. Well, I mean
23 what we could certainly do is go through our list of
24 clients. Certainly anyone who is getting a home
25 delivered meal and it's in a building that doesn't
have a super. But, certainly, we could go through

3 our clients and see which--and identify which
4 buildings would need to be helped out.

5 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Okay, and just
6 Public Advocate, we're current--currently phasing out
7 the tertiary street contracts. It doesn't mean we
8 can't use that money maybe for something else that
9 might help our seniors. Just a heads up. If we're
10 saving money one place, maybe we could put it some
11 place else.

12 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [off mic]
13 Exactly.

14 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Just spend more.
15 We love spending more.

16 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [laughs]

17 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: If it--if it means--
18 --if it means it's taking care of the most vulnerable,
19 absolutely. Um, just a--but just a heads up, but
20 thank you for your testimony. I have a--a couple of
21 JASA senior centers in my district--

22 MOLLY KRAKOWSKI: [interposing] And in
23 Newark.

24 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Uh?

25 MOLLY KRAKOWSKI: And the Newark--Cooper.

3 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: And one in Newark.
4 Yes, we just got it and we're really excited and the
5 people are excited, and give me all the credit. So
6 thank you for it.

7 MOLLY KRAKOWSKI: [laughs]

8 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: But it's amazing
9 the work the work that you guys are doing. It's
10 really--it's really great. Thank you so much for
11 your help.

12 MOLLY KRAKOWSKI: Thank you so much.

13 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Okay. So now we
14 want to call on--Do you have any questions, or do
15 you--?

16 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [off mic] No,
17 just--[on mic] Just congratulations to all that you
18 do and I just don't want any JASA workers to be
19 doing--to be shoveling snow. So whatever we can do
20 to get some volunteers or some individuals to assist
21 you, that's why we're holding this hearing and thank
22 you for attending.

23 MOLLY KRAKOWSKI: [off mic] Thank you.

24 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: You're welcome.

25 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Hopefully, this is
the last--let's go finally for the shoveling. [sic]

1 COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND
2 SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

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3 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [laughs]

4 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Ms. Monica Bartley
5 from the Center for Independence of the Disabled New
6 York.

7 MONICA BARTLEY: Thank you. Hi,
8 everyone.

9 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [off mic] Hello.

10 MONICA BARTLEY: I'm Monica Bartley,
11 Community Outreach Organizer with the Center for
12 Independence of the Disabled New York. Good
13 afternoon, Mr. Chair, and thank you very much for
14 allowing me to testify. It is very exciting to see
15 that so many bills are being presented this season,
16 this session with the help--that will help lives of
17 people with disabilities. Intro 714-2015 seems to be
18 a fair consideration of the difficulties people with
19 disabilities deal with during the winter. However, I
20 am concerned about the terms certain persons with
21 disabilities. Shouldn't we understand that the bill
22 states that the disability must substantially
23 interfere with such person's ability to comply with
24 the code. However, there are people with
25 disabilities who may have substantial difficulty
complying with the code for reasons of advanced

3 physical or sensory disabilities. We understand that
4 the term disability will be defined by rules
5 promulgated in conjunction with the Department of
6 Health and Mental Hygiene, and the Mayor's Office for
7 People with Disabilities. Will there be an
8 opportunity for the community to give input as to
9 disabilities that should be considered as people who
10 cannot comply fully because of substantial
11 limitations? This is a very important bill, and
12 support of the bill can only occur with the clear
13 understanding of what the definitions are. CIDNY
14 supports the principle behind the bill, but we want
15 to ensure that the definition of substantial
16 limitation is truly reflective of the issues faced by
17 people with disabilities who may not be able to
18 comply with this code. Also, it should be made clear
19 that people with disabilities are not being exempted
20 but rather partially exempted as the language in the
21 bill only states "shall be mitigated by 50%." Thank
22 you.

23 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Just so--so I guess
24 the community based processes are for input. Do you--
25 -do you not feel confident that the Mayor's Office
for the Disabled will be able to, you know, speak on

3 behalf of the disabled community in regards to what's
4 necessary in the law?

5 MONICA BARTLEY: Honestly no.

6 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: All right. Well,
7 that's good input for us, by the way, in general
8 because what we do want is to make sure that there is
9 at least proper representation within departments
10 that are supposed to be looking out for exactly what
11 you're talking about.

12 MONICA BARTLEY: Yes. We think that they
13 should include the Weber (sic) disability community
14 who are involved with people with disabilities on a
15 daily basis. At the Mayor's Office we've had some
16 difficulties in terms of emergency preparation and
17 things like that where our needs are not adequately
18 covered. So, we would like to have a direct input in
19 this.

20 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Okay, that--that's
21 good for us to know especially in the Department of
22 Sanitation. When you do have these meetings with
23 the--in emergency preparedness, we expect that your
24 voice is heard in those meetings. That's what we
25 expect. If it's not happening, it's something we
want to address. And I know the Commissioner is here

3 listening to your testimony, and--and will do
4 everything that she possibly can to make sure that
5 there's an opportunity here to make sure everyone's
6 need are addressed when we talk about emergency
7 preparedness. So it's good. Thank you for--I
8 thought you were going to say you appreciate this
9 legislation, but to know that you do appreciate it,
10 but that you definitely want more input is--is--is
11 important to us and it's good to hear.

12 MONICA BARTLEY: Yes, because we need
13 clarity with this--these certain persons with
14 disabilities. Yeah.

15 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: So first, let me
16 just thank the Commissioner for remaining. In the
17 past, other commissioners have left and emptied out
18 the room and they left usually an intern who took
19 copious notes, and I appreciated it. But, I really
20 appreciate your president--your presences and that of
21 Andrea and Madelyn. Girl power. Yay. Thank you. So
22 I really appreciate that from the bottom of my heart.
23 Ms. Bartley, thank you for the clarification, and
24 thank you for acknowledging the omission in
25 correcting the bill, and I appreciate that. To have--
-during the winter season, have some of your clients

3 notified your organization with regards to their
4 difficulty in cleaning--removing snow from--from
5 their sidewalks?

6 MONICA BARTLEY: Oh, yes, they have
7 several problems. I myself where curb cuts are not
8 cleared--

9 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing] Yes.

10 MONICA BARTLEY: --um, I know there's a
11 particular time in Queens I was going up the curb
12 cut, and my chairs turn around because there was so
13 much ice, and someone behind had to assist me.
14 Otherwise, I could not climb over the snow. Um, it's
15 very difficult when it snows. Um, the bus stops in
16 particular when it snows when only a section of it
17 is cleared--

18 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yes.

19 MONICA BARTLEY: --and--and the bus pulls
20 up to the stop, they cannot let the ramp down. So,
21 it's difficult to even go to the bus stop to take the
22 bus.

23 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: And what do you--
24 what do you--what are your suggestions and
25 recommendations to your clients? What do you tell
26 them to do?

3 MONICA BARTLEY: Well, they can't do
4 anything because they can't clear--they cannot shovel
5 snow or, you know, most of them are not in a
6 situation to do so. So they're just stuck at home.
7 If it snows, then they don't go out.

8 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Is--do any of--do
9 you recommend that they contact--they call 311?

10 MONICA BARTLEY: Um, well, we have not
11 been doing so, but that's something we could do.

12 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: And--

13 MONICA BARTLEY: [interposing] If we know
14 that there's provision there to address the problem.

15 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: And is it in--and
16 is it in any geographical area in the City of New
17 York? Is it concentrated in any borough, or is it
18 all five boroughs?

19 MONICA BARTLEY: It is all five boroughs.
20 The situation is the same just across the board.

21 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: So other than
22 this correction where we define the law--

23 MONICA BARTLEY: [interposing] Oh, the
24 best borough really, though, is Manhattan because
25 that's--that's where I work, and I'm able to move

3 around freely because the situation is cleaned up
4 almost immediately. I live in Brooklyn--

5 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing]

6 Yeah.

7 MONICA BARTLEY: --and it is difficult in
8 Brooklyn, and I work also in Queens. It's difficult
9 in Queens.

10 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Yeah. So other
11 than this, um, amendment, which would clarify the
12 definition of persons living with disabilities, other
13 than that, you approve or support--

14 MONICA BARTLEY: [interposing] Yes.

15 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: --the bill?

16 MONICA BARTLEY: It's a very good bill--

17 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing] Yes.

18 MONICA BARTLEY: --because, um, joined on
19 the CBOs--

20 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: [interposing] Yes.

21 MONICA BARTLEY: --to assist, and to know
22 that we'll be able to reach out to someone to get
23 some assistance, that's very good.

24 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: And also, thank
25 you for--

3 MONICA BARTLEY: [interposing] I was very
4 happy about that.

5 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you, ma'am,
6 and also thank you for recognizing that you--that
7 individuals with disabilities are--this is not an
8 attempt to be exempted, but actually to have it
9 mitigated.

10 MONICA BARTLEY: Yes, we want to be
11 responsible citizens.

12 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JAMES: Thank you so
13 much. I really appreciate it.

14 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Thank you guys for
15 your testimony, and Commissioner Garcia, I also want
16 to thank you guys, and everyone here, all the
17 agencies that are here I want to thank them. I'm
18 spoiled. Commissioner Garcia has been here for as
19 long as I've been here. So this is--this common
20 practice of her. So thank you so much for always
21 being here, and thank you guys and I guess we're done
22 with the hearing. [gavel] [background comments]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date November 21, 2015