

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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March 17, 2025

Start: 1:05 p.m.

Recess: 3:34 p.m.

HELD AT: COMMITTEE ROOM - CITY HALL

B E F O R E: Amanda Farías, Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Alexa Avilés

Erik D. Bottcher

Jennifer Gutiérrez

Kevin C. Riley

Rafael Salamanca, Jr.

OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS ATTENDING:

Sandy Nurse

Lincoln Restler

A P P E A R A N C E S

Andrew Kimball, President and Chief Executive Officer of the New York City Economic Development Corporation

Jennifer Montalvo, Chief-of-Staff at the New York City Economic Development Corporation

Julie Coker, President and Chief Executive Officer of New York City Tourism and Conventions

Machiko Grasso, Vice President of External Affairs at Non-Traditional Employment for Women

Gregory J. Morris, Chief Executive Officer of the New York City Employment and Training Coalition

Malat Seyoum, Director of Local Affairs and Strategic Partnerships at the New York City Network of Worker Cooperatives

Catherine Murcek, worker owner at Samamkaya Yoga Back Care and Scoliosis Collective

Ofelia Salgado, corporate business developer at Sunset Park Center for Family Life

Ahn Thu Nguyen, Director of Strategic Partnerships at Democracy at Work Institute

Christopher Leon Johnson, self

2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Mic check, mic check,
3 this is a mic check on the Committee on Economic
4 Development. Today's date is March 17, 2025, in the
5 Committee Room recorded by Walter Lewis.

6 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good afternoon, and
7 welcome to the New York City Council Preliminary
8 Budget Hearing on Economic Development.

9 Everybody, please silence your cell
10 phone.

11 If you wish to testify, please go to the
12 back of the room to fill out a testimony slip with
13 the Sergeant-at-Arms.

14 At this time and going forward, no one is
15 to approach the dais. I repeat, no one is to approach
16 the dais.

17 Chair, we are ready to begin.

18 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: [GAVEL] Good morning,
19 and welcome to today's hearing on the Fiscal 2026
20 Preliminary Budget for the New York City Economic
21 Development Corporation. My name is Amanda Fariás,
22 and I'm honored to be the Chair of the Committee on
23 Economic Development. We're also joined today by
24 esteemed Colleague, Council Member Alexa Avilés.

2 Today, we will be hearing from NYC EDC on
3 the Fiscal 2026 Preliminary Budget, including the
4 Preliminary Capital Commitment Plan and updates on
5 their Fiscal 2024 Investment Projects. In addition to
6 the NYC EDC capital projects, NYC EDC also manages
7 capital projects for various other agencies. The
8 agency also oversees much of the discretionary
9 economic development investment projects, which
10 involve advisory and financial assistance from EDC.
11 Each one of these programs should support and be well
12 integrated with one another to properly execute the
13 City's economic development and vital infrastructure
14 goals. Today we plan to examine to what extent this
15 is occurring, where improvements can be made, and the
16 overall feasibility of NYC EDC's capital and
17 investment program.

18 NYC EDC is the City's primary agent for
19 economic development and their principal mandate is
20 to encourage investment and to attract, retain, and
21 create jobs in New York City. As such, this Committee
22 is interested in having a robust conversation about
23 how NYC EDC's budget is laid out in this year's
24 Preliminary Plan, connects to the larger job creation
25 and economic development strategies of the City. One

2 of the ways NYC EDC supports the growth of the City's
3 economy and job market is through what it calls
4 investment projects. These represent discretionary
5 financial assistance, largely in the form of tax
6 breaks and tax-exempt bond financing. In Fiscal 2024,
7 there were 440 total active investment projects at a
8 total cost of 293 million. Many of these projects
9 represent investments made years or even decades ago
10 under prior Administrations. However, 20 of these
11 projects were new in Fiscal 2024 and represent a
12 commitment of multi-year tax reductions worth roughly
13 31.7 million. I would like NYC EDC to update us on
14 how the economic impact of these investment projects
15 are calculated and to what degree the agency
16 coordinates with other arms of the City, including
17 OMB, to ensure that these impacts are reflected in
18 our budget process.

19 The Fiscal 2026 preliminary capital
20 commitment plan, which covers Fiscal 2025 to 2029,
21 includes 3.9 billion for NYC EDC. NYC EDC's 10-year
22 capital plan includes 5.9 billion in Fiscal 2026 to
23 2035. Today, I would like EDC to provide this
24 Committee with information regarding both revenue
25 contributed by NYC EDC to the general fund and net

2 revenue generated post-contributions to the general
3 fund. From Fiscal 2019 to Fiscal 2021, NYC EDC had
4 negative net revenue with a positive 96 million in
5 Fiscal 22 and then revenue dropping by nearly two-
6 thirds to 32.5 million and increasing slightly to
7 37.6 million in Fiscal 2024. The Committee would like
8 to know what the reason for EDC struggling to come
9 close to the peak of Fiscal 2022's numbers are and
10 what they can do to achieve greater increases. It is
11 essential that the budget that we adopt is
12 transparent, accountable, and reflective of the
13 priorities and interests of the Council and the
14 people we represent. This hearing is a vital part of
15 this process and I expect that NYC EDC will be
16 responsive to the questions and concerns of Council
17 Members. I look forward to an active engagement with
18 the Administration over the next few months to ensure
19 the upcoming Fiscal 2026 adopted budget meets the
20 goals the Council has set out. I would like to thank
21 Andrew Kimball and Jennifer Montalvo for coming here
22 today and testifying. I would like to thank NYC EDC
23 staff who have been consistently responsive to our
24 many requests. We would not be able to analyze the
25 City's budget at such a detailed level without your

2 cooperation, so I thank you. I would also like to
3 thank both my Staff and the Staff of Finance and
4 Legislative Divisions for helping in preparing for
5 this hearing. Thank you.

6 I'll now turn it over to Committee
7 Counsel.

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Do you swear to tell
9 the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth
10 before this Committee?

11 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: I do.

12 CHIEF-OF-STAFF MONTALVO: I do.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you.

14 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Good afternoon, Chair
15 Fariás and Members of the Economic Development
16 Committee. I'm Andrew Kimball, President and CEO of
17 the New York City Economic Development Corporation,
18 and I'm here today with my Chief-of-Staff, Jennifer
19 Montalvo. We appreciate your leadership as Chair of
20 this Committee as well as that of your Colleagues in
21 the City Council as partners on major development
22 projects such as ULURP approvals for Willets Point or
23 Sparks Kipps Bay, or quality-of-life improvements
24 such as the introduction of electric helicopters and
25 ferry discounts for high school students. I'm glad to

2 have the opportunity to update you on the progress we
3 have made over the last year and provide a bird's eye
4 view of our work across the city.

5 EDC is a mission-driven, not-for-profit
6 organization that works to create a vibrant,
7 inclusive, and globally competitive economy for all
8 New Yorkers. In the third year of this
9 Administration, our mission and strategic priorities
10 continue to underpin the City's recovery. Our work
11 has helped New York City navigate a period of
12 transformation, responding to the impacts of a
13 pandemic and the challenges of our time, including
14 changes to work patterns and industry and our housing
15 and affordability crisis while continuing to build a
16 robust and diversified economy that competes globally
17 while creating opportunities for New Yorkers locally.
18 I'm proud to say that in 2024, New York City reached
19 record highs in employment and labor force
20 participation. Our economy reached a new employment
21 record with 4.8 million jobs and a 61.8 percent labor
22 force participation rate, both all-time highs. New
23 York City's thriving startup and entrepreneurial
24 ecosystem continues to grow with one in eight
25 businesses in New York City starting in the last 12

2 months. This astonishing statistic speaks to the
3 importance of small businesses and entrepreneurs as
4 the backbone of New York City's economy. From Sunset
5 Park to the north shore of Staten Island, from Hunts
6 Point to Willets Point, and from Midtown Manhattan to
7 Jamaica, Queens, our city is showing its strength and
8 optimism. New Yorkers are back at work. Our streets
9 and plazas and parks are full of life. Our commercial
10 districts exude an energy that you just don't feel in
11 many other cities. Tourism is back and on track to
12 hit an all-time high in 2025. To bolster the City's
13 economy, we've continued to focus on high-wage, high-
14 growth sectors, attract a job-creating businesses and
15 academic institutions, and made substantial progress
16 in reimagining and revitalizing commercial and
17 industrial districts, driving office space
18 modernization and activation, public realm
19 improvements, industrial innovation, and reactivation
20 of our waterways for commercial uses. And yes, of
21 course, we continue to play an important role in
22 addressing New York City's greatest need, creating
23 housing across the boroughs.

24 Through our capital program, we've
25 channeled City capital towards projects that support

2 and promote economic development and create strong
3 communities for New Yorkers. For example, this year
4 we completed the renovation of four public libraries
5 and broke ground on the renovation of the Bronx
6 Museum, the largest contemporary art museum in New
7 York City with 100 percent free admission. Our
8 business development team is working tirelessly to
9 attract high-impact, job-creating companies across
10 innovative industries of the future. This year,
11 OpenAI opened its first New York City office, global
12 investment firms Citadel and Citadel Securities
13 announced they will serve as anchor tenants at 350
14 Park Avenue, which will serve as home to 6,000 jobs,
15 and yogurt giant, Chobani, is locating its new
16 headquarters at 360 Bowery. All of our projects and
17 initiatives are guided by data and an analysis of the
18 City's economy, which we continue to report monthly
19 and which we shared in our inaugural State of the
20 Economy Report in January. Our 2024 Impact Report,
21 which you have in front of you provides additional
22 details on our work. You can also learn more about
23 our work in recent reports on academia in New York
24 City and New York City's artificial intelligence
25 advantage.

2 EDC is committed to the success of
3 industries critical to our city's current and future
4 economy, tech, life sciences, and the green economy.
5 New York City is a booming global tech hub with the
6 second largest technology workforce in the world. The
7 sector has grown 32 percent over the last decade. Our
8 programs and initiatives in partnership with
9 investors, innovators, and academic institutions have
10 moved this sector forward. AI is both a technology
11 tool impacting every sector of the economy, from law
12 to accounting to life sciences, but it's also an
13 exploding technology subsector in and of itself.
14 Recognizing artificial intelligence as a critical
15 force in shaping the future, EDC is committed to
16 securing NYC's leadership in AI and supporting AI
17 sector growth and job creation, cultivating local
18 talent and ultimately advancing New York City's
19 standing as a premier AI hub. To that end, in the end
20 of January, EDC will issue an RFP to create an AI
21 nexus hub. To provide workforce training and access
22 to AI opportunities, we launched the EDC Startup
23 Internship Program that targeted connecting CUNY
24 students to dynamic roles at AI-first startups. And
25 to improve AI literacy, we're piloting a new AI

2 literacy program for librarians across New York
3 City's libraries. T

4 he New York City life sciences community
5 is launching dynamic new startups and leading
6 scientific breakthroughs that are improving health
7 outcomes and powerfully enhancing our basic quality
8 of life. EDC's commitment to investing in life
9 sciences has made the sector a cornerstone of the New
10 York City's economy. Through the City's 1-billion-
11 dollar LifeSci initiative, we're driving innovation
12 in this multidisciplinary sector that unlocks modern
13 therapeutics and life-saving medicines. Vaccines,
14 diagnostics, and devices, all for the advances of
15 humanity. The city's life sciences sector has grown
16 into a citywide ecosystem with neighborhood-based
17 clusters that each make a distinctive contribution.

18 Similar to tech and life sciences, EDC
19 sees the green economy as a major source of growth
20 for New York City in the coming years and decades.
21 Last February, we joined the Administration to
22 announce the release of the Green Economy Action
23 Plan, a first-of-its-kind plan laying out a roadmap
24 to growing the city's green economy. The plan invests
25 in jobs and sectors that will help the City combat

2 climate change and train and position New Yorkers,
3 particularly those from environmentally disadvantaged
4 communities, to benefit from the nearly 400,000
5 green-collar jobs in New York City by 2040.

6 Underlying all of our work is a
7 commitment to an investment in the development of New
8 York City's greatest asset, its people. We do this by
9 supporting diverse entrepreneurship, expanding
10 workforce development, and improving access to M/WBE
11 firms. This work is at the heart of our mission and
12 our projects and helps us ensure that all New Yorkers
13 can participate in the industries of tomorrow.

14 Diverse entrepreneurship is EDC's first equity
15 pillar, and our initiatives aim to enhance diversity
16 within three innovation industry sectors. EDC's
17 Founder Fellowship supports a diverse community of
18 New York City tech and green startup founder teams
19 with much-needed access to resources and networks to
20 help them grow their companies. We have had 250
21 Founder Fellowship participants since 2022, and over
22 161-million-dollar increase in company valuation for
23 those companies across their teams the last two
24 years. The Venture Access Alliance is a coalition of
25 venture capital investors brought together by EDC who

2 believe New York City's diversity is its greatest
3 strength and opportunity for growth, and it worked
4 together to build an inclusive tech and venture
5 ecosystem in New York City.

6 Second pillar of our equity work is
7 workforce development, creating the educational and
8 talent pipeline so that all New Yorkers can
9 participate in the city's growing innovation
10 industries. Building on the foundation for a diverse
11 talent pipeline into startups, we continue our
12 partnership with Company Ventures and CUNY in 2024.
13 Summer Internship Programs provides accessible
14 pathways to tech careers for low-income college
15 students. Our LifeSci NYC Internship Program
16 continued strong in 2024, providing undergraduate and
17 graduate students quality internships at
18 pharmaceutical and biotech companies, digital health
19 companies, research organizations, and startups,
20 while offering curriculum and training support. Since
21 the program's inception in 2018, it has placed more
22 than 1,000 students at over 200 companies. One of the
23 great things we're seeing is that interns from the
24 early years of this program now have their own
25 companies and are hiring LifeSci interns. To advance

2 a green economy workforce, EDC launched the NYC
3 Waterfront Pathways Program to counter documented
4 disparities in public procurement by increasing
5 opportunities for minority-owned, women-owned, and
6 disadvantaged business enterprises in the offshore,
7 wind, and waterfront industries. EDC is preparing to
8 select three economic mobility networks in the coming
9 months, which will implement a workforce development
10 strategy to foster long-term economic mobility in
11 Hunts Point, Sunset Park, and East New York. These
12 economic mobility networks will leverage EDC assets
13 to expand employment and work-based learning
14 opportunities for local residents, and expand local
15 awareness and training for the city's innovation
16 industries.

17 Third pillar of our equity work focuses
18 on M/WBE utilization. Last year, EDC committed over
19 234 million dollars to M/WBE firms. To support the
20 development and capacity building of city M/WBE
21 firms, EDC's Construct NYC program is designed to
22 connect small- to mid-sized, minority-woman-owned,
23 and otherwise disadvantaged business enterprises with
24 exclusive opportunities to work on EDC projects
25 through contracts of up to 3 million.

2 Before I take you on a flyover of the
3 Harbor of the Future, I'd like to briefly highlight
4 some of EDC's procurement opportunities. We currently
5 have procurement opportunities to support housing and
6 commercial activation at the former Flushing Airport
7 site, the East New York Industrial Business Zone,
8 Gansevoort Square, Coney Island West, and 100 Gold
9 Street. The Harbor of the Future is a bold plan to
10 reimagine New York City's waterfront to fuel 21st
11 century growth and innovation. This brief
12 presentation puts the breadth of our work into
13 context across the city and highlights our mission
14 and strategy in action. This vision includes historic
15 investments to build our future-focused industries,
16 utilizing them as vehicles for job growth, economic
17 diversification, and equitable pathways to
18 prosperity. A new reinvigorated use of the city's
19 waterfront space will create 53,000 temporary and
20 permanent jobs, generate 95 billion in economic
21 impact, offer a hub for connectivity and
22 transportation, make New York City more sustainable
23 and resilient for the future, allow us to reimagine
24 major spaces and assets, and bring us a step closer

2 to building a modern 21st century city that continues
3 to capitalize on our waterways and waterfront assets.

4 Along the north shore of Staten Island,
5 we're building a vibrant mixed-use waterfront
6 community that will explore new kinds of sustainable
7 urban design and job creation. This plan outlines a
8 roadmap for a clear and unified vision for the future
9 of Staten Island's north shore, with 400 million
10 dollars of City investment, creating over 20 acres of
11 public space, more than 7,500 family-sustaining jobs,
12 over 2,000 housing options for all income levels, and
13 3.8 billion in economic impact over 30 years. The
14 centerpiece of the action plan is 20 acres of new
15 waterfront open space from Stapleton to St. George,
16 on par with Hudson River Park or the Brooklyn
17 Waterfront that improves the quality of life for
18 North Shore residents and unlocks nearby private
19 investment in housing and commercial space. Along the
20 west shore of Staten Island, EDC is working with
21 private partners to make available hundreds of acres
22 of underutilized land for the offshore wind industry
23 and other large-scale manufacturing opportunities. On
24 the South Brooklyn waterfront, EDC manages
25 approximately 200 acres of waterfront assets

including the Brooklyn Army Terminal, BAT. BAT is home to over 100 businesses and approximately 4,000 employees. A key initiative of the Administration's historic Green Economy Action Plan is the Climate Innovation Hub at BAT. The hub will bring business development incubation and acceleration to a four million square foot campus and continue to grow Sunset Park as a center for clean tech innovation, manufacturing, local entrepreneurship, and workforce opportunities. The MADE Campus at Bush Terminal is a center for artisans, advanced manufacturing, and media production. The campus will synergize modern facilities, amenities, and well-designed public space. In December, we're thrilled to open the first 220,000-square-foot industrial building as part of the MADE redevelopment. Last June, in partnership with the City, State, and Equinor, we announced the start of construction to transform the South Brooklyn Marine Terminal into the nation's largest offshore wind port. SBMT is poised to deliver 810 megawatts of renewable electricity to the city, providing enough energy to power 500,000 homes, advance the green transition to renewable energy, bolstering the city's national leadership in the offshore wind industry,

2 and serve as an operations and maintenance hub for
3 Empire Wind One.

4 Equity and economic mobility are at the
5 center of our offshore wind work, ensuring that
6 diverse businesses and diverse workforce are prepared
7 to best participate in this opportunity.

8 Last May, after 50 years of dysfunctional
9 government and disinvestment as a result of the
10 ineffective City, State, and Port Authority tri-party
11 agreement, EDC assumed full control of the Brooklyn
12 Marine Terminal. Working with local elected officials
13 and stakeholders, we're working on a transformational
14 plan for this 122-acre site that will spur economic
15 development and job growth in Brooklyn and beyond,
16 develop a modernized 21st century maritime port to
17 bolster the Blue Highway and a micro-distribution
18 network, removing trucks from New York roadways and
19 neighborhoods, and create a mixed-use community that
20 provides improved access to open space and the
21 waterfront while creating thousands of units of
22 housing that help address the city's greatest need.

23 Governor's Island is home to the New York
24 Climate Exchange, a 400,000-square-foot campus
25 dedicated to research, education, and public programs

2 addressing the global climate crisis. Climate
3 Exchange is being built by the City in partnership
4 with the Trust for Governor's Island and its Climate
5 Exchange Consortium, which is led by SUNY Stony
6 Brook. And of course, the Brooklyn Navy Yard has
7 become an international model for successful
8 transformation of outdated industrial spaces into a
9 center of modern manufacturing and a home to
10 startups. The Navy Yard is in the midst of an
11 ambitious master plan that will nearly double its
12 size in the next 10 years. These three sites are
13 collaborating to create the Harbor Climate
14 Initiative, three-mission-aligned public entities
15 with sites along New York Harbor connected by NYC
16 Ferry, the Trust for Governor's Island, EDC's
17 Brooklyn Army Terminal, and the Brooklyn Navy Yard to
18 make New York City the global capital of climate
19 innovation. These three campuses totaling 600 acres
20 and 10 million square feet of building space were
21 first built as military bases to defend our country
22 at home and abroad, and are now being reimagined to
23 tackle perhaps our most existential challenge of
24 today and the future, climate change. The
25 collaborative will facilitate research, education,

2 workforce training, and space for companies to grow,
3 as well as an opportunity for the piloting of new
4 technologies. These sites will support the creation
5 of 5,000 permanent jobs, educate and train 2,100
6 students, and generate 55 billion dollars of economic
7 impact for our city.

8 Just last month, we announced the next
9 phase of an ambitious new vision for Coney Island
10 that will deliver 1,500 new homes and invest in the
11 reconstruction of the historic Riegelmann Boardwalk.
12 In addition, the City will invest in new streets,
13 sewers, and public realm improvements, including a
14 42-million-dollar renovation of the Abe Stark Sports
15 Center. Coney Island West redevelopment advances the
16 Administration's commitment to forward-looking
17 housing projects to make New York City the best, most
18 affordable place to raise a family.

19 Moving away from the waterfront for a
20 moment to an important neighborhood hub in East New
21 York, EDC is working to improve the Broadway Junction
22 Station Complex and support the East New York
23 Industrial Business Zone. At Broadway Junction, we're
24 working alongside MTA with a 500-million-dollar
25 public investment to deliver accessibility upgrades

2 to the Broadway Junction Station Complex and
3 additional investment to activate underutilized
4 public spaces around the subway complex, improve
5 street safety, and create new open space. We're also
6 working to strengthen the historic industrial hub and
7 secure its future as a thriving employment center
8 through RFPs for several industrial sites.

9 Coming back to the East River, EDC
10 controls two of the city's heliports, the East 34th
11 Street Heliport and the Downtown Manhattan Heliport.
12 At the end of 2023, we released a bold new vision to
13 transform DMH to capitalize on new technologies like
14 electric vehicle takeoff and landing aircraft,
15 EVTOLs, and create a first-of-its-kind hub for
16 sustainable transportation and deliveries as part of
17 the City's Blue Highway Network. We recently
18 announced the selection of Downtown Skyport as the
19 new operator of DMH. As part of our new operator
20 agreement, the City will see increased revenues as
21 well as investment to upgrade the heliport's
22 infrastructure to support EVTOLs as well as last-mile
23 maritime freight delivery.

24 At East 34th Street, our operator has
25 also agreed to invest in new heliport infrastructures

2 to support EVTOLs. These agreements will create the
3 needed infrastructure to allow New York City to
4 become one of the first heliports in the nation to
5 support EVTOLs, greening our skies while reducing
6 ambient noise.

7 Resiliency against flooding and overall
8 effects of climate change is at the core of our work,
9 partnering with city agencies like DEP and DDC to
10 build and manage the city's waterfront
11 infrastructure. Lower Manhattan is the financial
12 capital of the nation and one of the most important
13 areas of commerce in the world. We've seen how
14 vulnerable this area is to climate change and the
15 impacts of increasing storm activity. To protect
16 Lower Manhattan from rising sea levels, EDC is in the
17 design phase of the last section of the Lower
18 Manhattan Coastal Resiliency Project, which covers
19 the FiDi Seaport area. This is only one of many
20 resiliency initiatives we're working on with DEP and
21 DEC underway across our city.

22 In Spark Kips Bay, we're transforming an
23 entire city block into a state-of-the-art and first-
24 of-its-kind education, job, innovation hub focused on
25 life sciences and health tech. Last month, the City

2 Council voted to approve the Science Park and
3 Research Campus, SPARC Kips Bay, and Innovation East
4 projects, an historic win for New York City's
5 thriving life sciences industry and broader economy.
6 The project is backed by a 1.6-billion-dollar
7 investment from the City and the State, as well as an
8 expected 2 billion dollars in private investment. The
9 project will create over 3,100 permanent jobs and
10 generate 42 billion dollars of economic impact while
11 building pathways to the life sciences and health
12 sectors. On one side of the campus, there will be
13 three CUNY schools focused on public health and life
14 sciences careers as well as a DOE high school with a
15 STEM focus on life sciences and health. On the other
16 side of the campus will be over one million square
17 feet of private biotech space, as well as critical
18 public health facilities for Health and Hospitals and
19 the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner. The public-
20 private sides of this campus will strategically
21 incorporate workforce development strategies to
22 ensure opportunities for our New York City students
23 in their careers of the future.

24 Moving back across the harbor, Long
25 Island City is a neighborhood that has seen enormous

2 growth over the last decade and has emerged as a
3 vibrant, live, work, learn, play community. The
4 neighborhood has experienced some growing pains
5 around housing, open space, community resources, and
6 infrastructure. To address these issues, EDC is
7 working with the Department of City Planning and a
8 local Council Member to conduct an extensive
9 community engagement process which will guide the
10 long-term vision for one of the city's fastest-
11 growing neighborhoods.

12 Cornell Tech, founded in 2012, is a
13 groundbreaking center for technology research and
14 education on Roosevelt Island. Its creation was a key
15 strategy to transform New York City into the second-
16 largest global tech ecosystem, employing over 360,000
17 New Yorkers, 7 percent of the city's workforce. Our
18 partnership with Cornell Tech continues to grow. We
19 are working with them on growth strategies right now
20 and programs with graduates that have brought nearly
21 200 startups to the city. This partnership is an
22 example of EDC's strategy of finding piloting
23 opportunities to scale urban innovation on City-
24 controlled assets.

2 The East Midtown Greenway is a major
3 public realm project that brought us one step closer
4 to the grand vision to close the loop of the
5 Manhattan Waterfront Greenway and provide New Yorkers
6 with continuous waterfront open space around
7 Manhattan. As part of this work, EDC is rebuilding
8 the pier at 107th Street and repairing and
9 reconstructing portions of Bobby Wagner Walk
10 Esplanade from 94th Street to 124th Street along the
11 Harlem River, and we're working on over 80 miles of
12 greenways with Parks and DOT across the city.

13 At Willet's Point, we're making history
14 through a once-in-a-lifetime public-private
15 partnership to build a mixed-use neighborhood from
16 whole cloth. This project includes 2,500 units of
17 affordable housing, the city's largest affordable
18 housing project in over 40 years, and a 750-million-
19 dollar privately-financed, world-class, all-electric
20 soccer stadium for the New York City Football Club.
21 The stadium, housing, a new school, and dedicated
22 open space will generate 16,000 jobs and 6.1 billion
23 dollars in economic impact for the city.

24 Jumping back inland, earlier this year,
25 the Mayor and EDC unveiled El Centro Kingsbridge, an

2 ambitious new plan for the future of Kingsbridge
3 Armory, to redevelop the historic and long-
4 underutilized site and create new economic
5 opportunities in the Bronx. Phase One of the project
6 envisions a vibrant mixed-use development with a
7 state-of-the-art event venue space, sports field for
8 local youth academies, cultural space, and over
9 25,000 square feet of dedicated community space, an
10 educational facility focused on workforce
11 development, and more. Phase Two, 450 units of
12 permanently affordable rental housing will be
13 adjacent to the armory. The redevelopment is expected
14 to generate 2.6 billion dollars of economic impact
15 over the next 30 years, creating 3,000 construction
16 jobs and 3,600 permanent jobs.

17 The Bronx is also home to the Hunts Point
18 Food Distribution Center, FDC, the city's primary
19 food distribution hub. The FDC has spread over 200
20 acres and includes three major cooperatives, fish,
21 meat, and produce, as well as other major food
22 manufacturers and distributors. EDC is working on a
23 number of major upgrades with its partners at the
24 FDC, including a massive redevelopment of the produce
25 market that will take over 1,000 trucks a day off of

2 fossil fuel generators. The FDC's waterfront access
3 also creates a strategic opportunity to develop a
4 blue highway node at the distribution center,
5 allowing for waterway linkage between the Brooklyn
6 Marine Terminal and food distributors at Hunts Point
7 via barge service and marine terminal operation.

8 The Harbor of the Future showcases our
9 assets, their interconnectedness, and their position
10 as an integral part of New York City's vast
11 waterfront. The city was established upon our vibrant
12 waterways, and those waterways remain a vital tool to
13 support the city's creation of a sustainable blue
14 highway network to move freight from our roadways to
15 our waterways. We're evaluating potential sites for
16 micromobility and blue highway landings, while also
17 studying how we can utilize New York City Ferry's 25
18 landings to move goods across the city.

19 Currently, freight is almost entirely
20 delivered via trucks, which clog our roadways,
21 contribute to air pollution, and negatively impact
22 our communities. To alleviate these problems, we need
23 to remove trucks from our streets. We envision
24 waterfront landings throughout the boroughs, allowing
25 goods to be delivered directly by water from one

2 borough to another, from warehouses in New Jersey,
3 removing trucks from our street.

4 Delivering on Mayor Adams' vision of a
5 modern and connected harbor is integral to EDC's
6 mission and strategic priorities, and delivering on a
7 cleaner, greener future for New York City is
8 fundamental to supporting a modern, sustainable city.
9 We're proud to do this work in partnership with all
10 of you, and I thank you for the opportunity to speak
11 with you today. We welcome any questions you may
12 have.

13 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Thank you so much for
14 the very thorough testimony that included really
15 great visuals. Always appreciate that.

16 I'd like to start off by acknowledging
17 we've also been joined online by Council Member Riley
18 and Council Member Gutiérrez.

19 I'd like to start off with discussing the
20 economic impact of the investment projects. State law
21 requires that NYC IDA undertake a cost-benefit
22 analysis before providing any discretionary tax
23 breaks. This evaluation must show that the tax break
24 will have a net positive impact on the City's budget,
25 so every approved IDA investment should have a

2 positive tax revenue impact on the City. How much in
3 tax revenue impact do you think IDA projects are
4 having in FY25?

5 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Well, let me just
6 start by saying there's a return-to-City analysis,
7 which is similar to what the State Legislature
8 requires for IDA build, for every one of our
9 development projects that we go through with the
10 City's OMB, and that analysis includes a projection
11 of job creation, direct and indirect. It includes an
12 analysis of overall economic impact, so goods sold,
13 ripple effect on the local economy, and an analysis
14 of tax return to the City. All of the projects we
15 undertake, otherwise OMB doesn't allow us to
16 undertake them, have a positive impact in terms of
17 return to City and net positive tax revenue that far
18 exceeds the value of any tax break or capital
19 investment.

20 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Do we have, like, an
21 estimate on?

22 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: I can get that for you
23 in terms of just pure tax revenue. I'd be happy to
24 follow up on that.

2 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Great. I asked the
3 OMB Director if their revenue estimates included
4 these calculations. Do you know if they do? Does IDA
5 share their analysis with OMB's revenue team? Do you
6 think it's a problem if not incorporating your tax,
7 your economic and tax impacts into their budget?

8 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: The question is, does
9 the Budget Director assume those tax?

10 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: If we know for a fact
11 that OMB is incorporating their...

12 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: In future tax
13 projections?

14 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Yes.

15 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: I don't know the
16 answer to that. I mean, typically those tax revenues
17 come in years after the investment because whatever
18 the investment is takes a while to build, in some
19 case many years, and then you start to leverage
20 positive tax revenue after that. You're typically
21 looking at these projects over somewhere between 20-
22 and 40-year time range. I have a number. This is for
23 Fiscal Year '24 of 151 million dollars in tax
24 revenues on IDA projects.

2 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Thank you for that
3 response. The three M-CORE projects announced to have
4 a tax benefit cost of 142 million, but a total tax
5 benefit of 1.3 billion over a 20-year period. This
6 works out to be a net positive impact of about 60
7 million per year. Do we know where that shows up in
8 the City's budget?

9 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Again, these would be
10 years in advance. So, as an example, there's a
11 project on Water Street. Some of the capital work has
12 been done on it already that's resulting from this
13 program. Some is to come. They will then finish that
14 capital work. They will lease the building. You know,
15 you're looking at full occupancy within a few years,
16 and then you get full tax revenue. Does OMB count
17 those tax revenues three or four or five years out?
18 I'm not sure the answer to that question, but
19 certainly we have to demonstrate to them that as
20 positive tax revenue that exceeds the initial
21 investment. So, you know, the numbers that you put
22 out about the value of the incentive versus the
23 projected return, I think it was 10 times value.

24 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Yeah. I just think
25 for us what we're always trying to manage is making

2 sure that there's intercommunication, right, and that
3 what the right hand is saying, the left hand is
4 saying, and both agree upon, just so when we're
5 looking at those assumptions, whether or not OMB
6 agrees with them or whether or not the work you folks
7 are doing is calculated into the future projections
8 so I appreciate the response.

9 We've also been joined by Council Member
10 Restler that I saw come in and step out shortly.

11 More than half of the new investment
12 projects in Fiscal 2024 were for educational or
13 social service-oriented projects. These are not the
14 types of projects one traditional considers economic
15 development. How do you evaluate the appropriateness
16 of these investments as an economic development
17 agency?

18 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Well, first of all, I
19 believe firmly that educational investments are a key
20 part of economic development in this City. We put out
21 a study, which I really encourage everybody to check
22 out, on the state of academia in the city and, just
23 in the colleges and universities alone here, they
24 generate 35 billion dollars a year of economic impact
25 and employ over 200,000 people so it is a key part of

2 our economy just in terms of their daily operations
3 and functions, but also in terms of the people that
4 they graduate. Just bear with me for a second because
5 this is one of my favorite stats, but since 2021,
6 over 500,000 recent college graduates, university
7 graduates have moved to New York and they tend to
8 stay here over 10 years. There were recent census
9 updates that just came out that show our population
10 growing for the first time. A lot of that is foreign
11 immigration and migration, but there's also internal
12 domestic migration into the city, and that tends to
13 be very young and highly educated people. There are
14 another 500,000 students in colleges and universities
15 right now. That's a million people. College and
16 university recent or current. And then you've got, of
17 course, the buildup to all of that starts at pre-K
18 and all the way through the system and high school.
19 So, we're really proud of the fact that many of our
20 economic development projects incorporate DOE
21 programs as well as college programs, particularly
22 CUNY. And really the project that speaks to our
23 values the most is the SPARC project where we're
24 taking three CUNY schools, a two-year, a four-year,
25 and a graduate school, incorporating them into one

2 building with a STEM high school focused on public
3 health and biotech careers on half of the campus. On
4 the other half of the campus will be a million square
5 feet of private biotech and two City agencies. All of
6 those things will be wrapped together into one
7 coherent economic development strategy so those
8 students are stepping into internships,
9 apprenticeships, training programs so that they get
10 into these high wage, high growth sectors of the
11 future. So going back to your question about IDA and
12 BUILD, so we have a tax-exempt bond finance program
13 called BUILD. It is primarily focused on not-for-
14 profits, a lot of whom come are private schools or
15 charter schools, and we've done a number of those
16 projects in recent years. And again, I think those
17 are all critical to our economic development future
18 in the city.

19 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: And are there any
20 metrics that you include in the evaluations beyond
21 the economic impact?

22 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: I certainly think that
23 those metrics, jobs, economic impact, long-term tax
24 return, really important. Another one I would say,
25 another couple, and I talked to it a little bit in my

2 testimony, is diverse entrepreneurship. When people
3 ask me what are the biggest challenges the City faced
4 right now, by far it is the housing crisis. I would
5 put as second is diverse entrepreneurship. One of the
6 reasons young people want to be here is not just for
7 the industry options but for the rich cultural
8 diversity of the city and, if we lose young people of
9 color because they want to be entrepreneurs in some
10 other city, that is a massive loss. Cities like
11 Atlanta are doing great on diverse entrepreneurship.
12 We are doing much better, I think, in part because of
13 the programs that we're putting in place at EDC.
14 That's one.

15 The second I would say, and EDC hasn't
16 done as much on until the last couple of years, is
17 creating these local employment networks. So, Council
18 Member Avilés has been a fervent advocate for her
19 community and wanting to see more direct lines for
20 impact for local residents, and so part of the
21 economic mobility network that we've introduced
22 there, or we are in the process of introducing there,
23 and in Hunts Point, we also have a significant number
24 of assets, in East New York, is developing a network
25 of local not-for-profits that will work with us on

2 pre-screening and placement from the local community.
3 Even without that, and we recently did an analysis
4 that we'll be preparing to share with you soon with
5 the Sunset Park annual report that we plan to put out
6 now on an annual basis, it'll show that a very
7 significant portion, close to one-third of all of the
8 workers at the Brooklyn Army Terminal, as an example,
9 our highest employment site in Sunset Park come from
10 the surrounding community. So, where the people are
11 getting the jobs don't always come in those return-
12 from-city investments, and we want to make sure that
13 we are doing the best job we possibly can to create
14 job pathways for local residents. It's not just the
15 right thing to do for the communities we serve, but
16 it's more economic development because people who
17 have a short commute or walk to work are much more
18 likely to stay in those jobs.

19 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: And in terms of
20 watching the metrics or looking at the local economic
21 impact of some of this, are we also evaluating how
22 the local hire, for example, or the education piece
23 that we've created impacts working with the local
24 community organizations and non-profits that impacts
25 the local hire and what that's actually doing in

2 terms of at the rate that we're developing in the
3 city or some of the projects that we're rolling out.
4 I think time and time again, we're in a constant
5 dialogue around how do we build faster, but how do we
6 also ensure that we're building union or including
7 the unionized workforce, but also making sure we're
8 getting the lowest cost, most efficient cost per
9 build. Are we looking at metrics that way or how are
10 we evaluating project by project?

11 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Yeah. I mean, if you
12 can't measure something, it's hard to know where you
13 are, and so we are doing a better job at measuring
14 and that goes to some of the data I just talked about
15 with local folks being employed at the Brooklyn Army
16 Terminal. There's similar data around Hunts Point as
17 an example. Your question about good paying jobs and
18 union jobs, also at the forefront of what we do. The
19 vast majority of our work is prevailing wage work
20 when it comes to construction. For the first time
21 ever, EDC has entered into project labor agreements
22 on multiple large projects. These are projects that
23 tend to have city, state, federal dollars in them as
24 well as private. So, some of the examples there are
25 Willets Point infrastructure work is being built on a

2 PLA as is the stadium. The SPARC Project, both the
3 public side and the private side, two separate PLAs.
4 Up at Kingsbridge Armory, we've committed to doing a
5 PLA and at the Brooklyn Marine Terminal, we plan to
6 do a PLA as well. And Hunts Point, we've committed to
7 a PLA as well on the 650-million-dollar food produce
8 center. Yeah, and SPM too also.

9 CHAIRPERSON FARIAS: Great. We look
10 forward to hearing about all of those PLAs as they
11 progress.

12 I'd like to shift over to NYC Ferries. In
13 early 2015, the de Blasio Administration announced
14 the establishment of the citywide ferry system. The
15 intent was to connect waterfront communities
16 throughout New York City. As you may remember, my
17 mother is a huge fan of the ferry system, and I have
18 a few questions regarding our NYC Ferries and
19 followup from last year. Because if I don't ask about
20 it, she'll ask about it. The ferry saw its highest
21 ever average monthly ridership of 827,000 in the
22 first four months of Fiscal 2025. The trend of
23 increasing ridership has continued since coming out
24 of COVID. Does EDC expect the ridership to plateau
25 eventually?

2 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: I hope not.

3 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Me too.

4 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Kudos to the past
5 Administration for standing up NYC Ferry. When we
6 came in, partly because of COVID and partly because
7 there had previously been a commitment to only charge
8 what the MTA charges across the board, the ferry
9 service was really a financial crisis. We're really
10 proud that we have brought some more financial
11 stability to that. Part of that is that one-time
12 riders now pay 4.75. If you're buying a 10-pack or
13 more, it's the same rate as bus or subway. As you
14 know, thanks to your leadership and the Committee's
15 leadership, there's now a discount program for high
16 school students. We were able to reduce the per-
17 passenger subsidy 30 percent at the same time as we
18 hit record highs in ridership, which we're noting.
19 We're continually looking to increase ridership, to
20 also increase the number of folks who have access to
21 our Fair Fares program, half price. There are now
22 20,000 New Yorkers participating in that program.
23 You'll be glad to know that I believe it's your
24 mother's route, the Soundview route, has another
25 famous rider, which is the new Deputy Mayor for

2 Economic Development and Housing, Adolfo Carrión, so
3 the two of them should lobby together.

4 CHAIRPERSON FARÍAS: Yeah. What does EDC
5 attribute to the increases in ridership to be?

6 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: I think that during
7 COVID, New Yorkers were looking for alternatives,
8 outdoor alternatives, frankly, to commute, and we saw
9 that numbers increasing coming out of COVID. I think
10 that has only increased since then with the good
11 stewardship of our operator, Hornblower, and the
12 support of EDC in that with improved marketing
13 campaigns around it so I think all of those are
14 factors.

15 CHAIRPERSON FARÍAS: EDC recently expanded
16 the ferry system to include the St. George route. Are
17 there any plans to expand the ferries to include more
18 locations in NYC?

19 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Yeah. It's been a few
20 years since we brought on St. George. That was before
21 my time and before the Ferry Forward Program, as
22 we've been digging ourselves out of some of the
23 financial strains that I just mentioned. We love it
24 that New Yorkers love NYC Ferry, that the Council
25 loves NYC Ferry. We want to continue to work with you

2 on growing NYC Ferry in smart ways. We have had lots
3 of requests for expansion, and we look forward to
4 continuing that dialogue over the course of the year.
5 We do not have specific plans today for expansion. It
6 is quite expensive any time you add a route, and so
7 we have to balance that with what is the enthusiasm
8 for it and the demand for it.

9 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Sure. Outside of
10 adding maybe more landings throughout the routes,
11 have we expanded any more to the fleet? Do we plan to
12 expand any more boats to the fleet?

13 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: We don't plan to
14 expand boats to the fleet. We have a good number of
15 boats today. The biggest action we're taking with our
16 fleets is converting all the engines to be able to
17 take biodiesel. There is a movement now
18 internationally and nationally to try to incorporate
19 electric ferries into fleets, and we applied for a
20 very significant federal grant. Unfortunately, we did
21 not get it. It was at the same time that we were
22 successful at getting a big grant for the Brooklyn
23 Marine Terminal, so we got one and didn't get the
24 other. We will continue to apply for those funds, but
25 that really requires a whole new ferry, and as

2 batteries get bigger, more efficient, and able to
3 really move boats, I think they'll be more and more
4 appropriate for New York Harbor, where the tidal
5 impacts are pretty intense, and so you need to have
6 real power on those engines, but we would like to
7 incorporate those over time. Certainly, if we were to
8 expand stops, there may be a need in the future for
9 acquiring more boats.

10 CHAIRPERSON FARÍAS: I do think part of
11 the goal for us should also be making sure that we're
12 adding to the fleet over a course of years just to
13 make it a more reliable commuter service. I think
14 right now, sometimes it does feel as if folks can't
15 rely as often on the ferry system if it's every 45 to
16 55 minutes to get a vessel to get you to your
17 location, so I just say that in the interest of folks
18 like my mom who love the ferry but know that if
19 they're just three minutes off, they're going to have
20 to find another way to get to work.

21 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Appreciate that.

22 CHAIRPERSON FARÍAS: And then, just on the
23 note of you saying it's somewhat expensive or costly
24 for expansion, do you folks have an idea or have you
25 folks looked at what the City subsidy EDC would need

2 to request for operating or capital cost if the ferry
3 system were to expand?

4 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: I think that would
5 certainly have to be part of the conversation if the
6 ferry service was to expand. It is subsidized today,
7 just to be clear, so there's a per-passenger subsidy
8 that is about 8.50 per passenger. It was about 13.50
9 when I got to EDC three and a half years ago, so it's
10 come down substantially, but 8.50 times a lot of
11 riders is a lot of money, and so there is a subsidy
12 today, just to be clear, like all mass transit, and
13 if the ferry service was to expand, that would go up.

14 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: The ferry system in
15 Fiscal 2023 hit 96 percent on-time performance. In
16 Fiscal 2024, it was at 91 percent. How's the ferry
17 system on-time performance performing so far in
18 Fiscal Year '25?

19 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: I think it's in the
20 same range. What you don't get is sort of mechanical
21 failure, signal failure that you might get on an AG
22 subway system. What you get is impacts from weather,
23 and so particularly in high-wind, high-sea days, that
24 can slow down service and impact those on-time
25 service times.

2 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Would you say that
3 that's relatively what's impacting the performance
4 timing generally?

5 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Yes.

6 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Okay. Does EDC have
7 plans for the ferry to come at any given point to 30-
8 minute intervals beyond the 45 or 55 that we have
9 now?

10 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: No plans that are
11 imminent, but certainly, you know, looking way down
12 the road, would one like to see a ferry system that
13 had even shorter intervals? Absolutely.

14 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Back in March of
15 2023, as you mentioned in your testimony, my bill,
16 Intro. 236, was passed. The bill expanded contracted
17 ferry service at reduced cost for City high school
18 students. Have we seen an increase in ridership in
19 high school students since we spoke last year?

20 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: We have seen an
21 increase in ridership. I will get back to you on the
22 exact percent, but it's about 1,000 high school
23 students that have taken advantage of the discounted
24 service. Obviously, you've gotten, you know, you have
25 a captured audience, in a sense, with the Harbor

2 School on Governors Island. I think we're seeing more
3 students take it along the other routes as well.

4 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: And are there any
5 complaints that jump out immediately at you folks
6 that you've heard about the ferry from riders?

7 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: I'm sorry. About the
8 ferry from?

9 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: From riders.

10 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: From Rikers?

11 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Riders, like ferry
12 riders.

13 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Are there complaints?

14 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Any complaints?

15 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: I think your question
16 about more, you know, shorter intervals between
17 ferries is certainly one that we see, but
18 overwhelmingly the feedback we get is very positive.
19 Certainly, in the summer months when you've got
20 spikes, like on Saturdays and Sundays when people
21 come out, sometimes there are lines for the ferry at
22 certain stops. You know, typically you're getting on,
23 if you don't get that first boat, you're getting on
24 the second boat. So, I'm sure on some of those

2 Saturdays and Sundays, you know, people would like to
3 see additional boats added.

4 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Okay. Thank you. I
5 have a bunch more questions, but I'm going to break
6 for some Members, and I'd like to first recognize
7 Council Member Salamanca.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Thank you.
9 Madam Majority Leader. How are you, Mr. President?

10 I want to start, you know, by just
11 stating the facts of the good working relationship
12 that my office has with EDC. It's appreciated, and I
13 wanted to just say thank you for the open lines of
14 communication. I represent the Hunts Point, where I
15 have the Hunts Point produce markets, produce, meat,
16 and fish, and over 700 businesses there as well. I'm
17 excited about the Blue Highways project that we're
18 working on now with the closure of the floating jail.
19 Can you give us a status of where we're at with the
20 Blue Highways?

21 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Yeah, appreciate that,
22 and Blue Highways is very top of mind. I'm spending a
23 significant portion of my days on it now. Between the
24 work we're doing on the Brooklyn Marine Terminal as
25 one of the key nodes, we have a MARAD grant of 5

2 million dollars where we're looking at five other
3 stops to deploy dollars, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens,
4 the Bronx. Then there are the two locations on the
5 Hunts Point Peninsula, the work that you know of that
6 we're looking at with the fish market and FDM, as
7 well as where the prison barge location is that could
8 be an outstanding transloading point for perishable
9 goods in containers being barged from the Brooklyn
10 Marine Terminal. I am hopeful working with you in the
11 coming weeks, we're going to take some major steps
12 forward on that. We're also working with the private
13 sector, UPS, Prologis, FedEx, Amazon, to encourage,
14 support, prod where necessary, folks to take a closer
15 look at the use of the waterways. There are some
16 promising signs of those with significant warehouse
17 distribution centers in the Jersey side finally
18 realizing that the cost of having trucks paying
19 tolls, getting stuck in traffic on the bridges, much
20 less fouling the air in our neighborhoods is leading
21 them to seriously consider moving goods by water.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: All right. I'm
23 looking forward to that. The Hunts Point produce
24 market, they're going through a phase now where they
25 are going to, in terms of remodeling or building a

2 new facility from their antiquated facility. There
3 are concerns about the amount of acres that they have
4 and the possibility that EDC may want to take certain
5 acres of land and utilize it for another business to
6 move in, and there's pushback on that. Can you speak
7 a little bit about that?

8 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Yeah. So, we've been
9 working with them for years, as you know, and thanks
10 to support from you, from the Mayor, there's 130
11 million dollars in the project. That was matched by
12 the Governor, and then there's a 110-million-dollar
13 federal grant. As you know, EDC is, for the first
14 time, also pursuing a loan, a federal RIF loan, to
15 close the gap because the produce market co-op
16 preferred to not work with a third-party private
17 developer. We are making very good headway at
18 building a much more efficient plan for the site that
19 both embraces rail, so getting more trucks off the
20 road, eliminating 1,000 trucks from fossil fuel
21 generators. Recently, the co-op has brought to my
22 attention their interest in having some additional
23 parking space, and so we're going to have those
24 conversations, and I'm happy to consider that. But
25 EDC is plowing a lot of time and resources into this

2 project, and so part of the scenario and part of our
3 agreement with the co-op had always been that there
4 would be some amount of space that would come back to
5 EDC that we could put back out on the market for
6 additional cold storage space. Just on cold storage,
7 and your District is such an exception city-wide
8 because you have a lot of cold storage, but less than
9 5 percent of all the cold storage in the entire
10 region is in the City of New York. It's in New
11 Jersey, it's in Westchester, it's Long Island, so
12 what does that mean? Trucks coming from everywhere.
13 Hunts Point is obviously an exception to that. We
14 would like to build more cold storage on that take-
15 back space as part of the produce deal.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: All right.

17 Well, we'll continue to have conversations on that.

18 Lastly, I need your help. My office has
19 constantly, throughout the years, we've advocated
20 funding for the fish market, for example, and the
21 meat market, and many times we've had the situation
22 where they may need a new façade and they may quote
23 it at a certain price, and then the budget comes, the
24 Council allocates that funding, and (TIMER CHIME)
25 then after the funding has been allocated and they go

2 through the process on the designs, we figure out
3 that, of course, it's a different price tag than what
4 we were quoting. How can EDC help the markets when
5 they're requesting funding from the Council to ensure
6 that they're giving us accurate numbers so that we
7 can fund the project in its entirety and we don't
8 have to go back and forth with getting the funding
9 from another budget?

10 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Appreciate the
11 question, and I think we have the team in place and
12 the trust in place with all the co-ops that if they
13 work with us on the front end, we can properly
14 project what the cost will be realistically because,
15 as you know, even in the best of times, from the
16 moment you allocate capital dollars to the day it
17 gets spent can be a number of years, and so you have
18 inflation, and in some cases you have insane
19 inflation like we've had the last few years. So that
20 is one reason. Another reason that this was a
21 particular problem that I inherited and been trying
22 to work on with you and you've rightly been
23 frustrated with at times is that during the COVID
24 period, all of our capital funding was frozen. So
25 that was like another stretch of time. So, when you

2 came out of that, you were even farther behind
3 between the point the money was allocated and the
4 time it was going to get spent. So, I appreciated
5 that you have added dollars. I appreciated that
6 you've worked with us to consolidate some of those
7 projects so we get projects going again, and I think
8 we're making real headway.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: All right.
10 Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair.

11 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: I'd like to recognize
12 Council Member Restler followed by Avilés.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Great. Thank you
14 so much, Chair, and it's good to see you, President
15 Campbell, Jennifer. Thank you for being with us today
16 and for your hard work on behalf of New Yorkers.

17 I have a few questions of a more
18 parochial nature. Firstly, I'm very concerned about
19 Downtown Brooklyn and the weakness of our office
20 market. I looked at a report recently that showed
21 Downtown Brooklyn office rents are higher than Lower
22 Manhattan, which I found perplexing, but I have some
23 guesses on why that may be, but still found it
24 bizarre. And while I am generally supportive of
25 conversions to residential where it makes sense, I'm

2 worried that we're going to, if we convert all of the
3 office space away in downtown Brooklyn, we're going
4 to lose an opportunity for really good jobs that we
5 should have in our community. And with the higher
6 educational institutions like NYU, City Tech, this
7 should be a hub for entrepreneurship, and yet we see
8 50, 60, 70, 80 percent vacancy rates in the key
9 downtown Brooklyn office buildings. So is this on
10 your radar? How can we work together to try to
11 develop some smart economic opportunity and economic
12 development strategies for downtown Brooklyn that
13 leverages the assets we have and maximizes the space
14 that's available to us?

15 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: It's 100 percent on my
16 radar screen, and I think we're very aligned in
17 wanting to make sure that we build a robust
18 commercial scene in downtown Brooklyn. We absolutely
19 have to. There may be some instances with some
20 buildings, and we should go through a list together,
21 where you can convert partially in order to jumpstart
22 the other part of the building going, but there
23 should be commercial at its core of the strategy. I
24 know you've been speaking with Regina Meyer about
25 this. I have as well, and I'd be happy to meet with

2 the two of you together to figure out how we can do
3 more. Metro Tech should be much more of a college
4 hub. I'm optimistic about the new leadership at NYU,
5 particularly at Tandon, with coming up with creative
6 strategies. You can just imagine that plaza filled
7 with both entrepreneurs, small businesses, and
8 college students, and really creating a special
9 ecosystem, so I'd love to work with you on that.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Great. I'm old
11 enough to remember, you're old enough to remember,
12 you worked, did you work on the rezoning in Downtown
13 Brooklyn? You did. That rezoning was sold to our
14 community as primarily being the third major economic
15 hub for New York City. The very first building opened
16 last year, there was a commercial building, since the
17 rezoning in 20 years, everything that's been built
18 has been residential, and already those guys have
19 come to me to talk about a conversion, right, to
20 residential. So that's where I just, I'm just
21 frustrated, and so I would love to work with you to
22 actually find some positive paths forward. It's been
23 a long, long road. EDC was involved in finally
24 opening the first park in Downtown Brooklyn 20 years
25 after the rezoning. We just opened the first school

2 in Downtown Brooklyn 20 years after the rezoning this
3 September. I spend too much of my damn time trying to
4 make sure that the promises that were made in the
5 second term of the Bloomberg Administration are
6 followed through on today, which gets me to my next
7 question, which is that EDC has graciously been
8 leading the way on Box Street Park. It's only 85
9 percent of the park space that we're building out
10 because the MTA still refuses to leave from 15
11 percent of the park that they keep their vehicles on,
12 the emergency vehicles that they refuse to relocate,
13 but for 85 percent of the park land that we are very
14 close to getting ready to break ground on, it looks
15 like as a result of additional EPA testing, we have a
16 small funding gap. This is approximately a 30-
17 million-dollar project. There's a funding gap that
18 we'll get a final number on by the end of the month,
19 but we think it's between 1 and 2 million dollars, so
20 a small percent of the total project. Do you think
21 this is something that EDC can self-fund?

22 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Let me get up to speed
23 on the project and let's talk offline.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Okay. It would be
25 enormously helpful if you can. The best-case scenario

2 right now is a summer 2028 completion. I am now, as
3 I'm sure my Colleagues are, thinking about what
4 projects can we get done before they kick us out of
5 this building, which is already frustrating to be
6 thinking about, but it's where we're at and we want
7 to make sure that we're laser-focused on getting it
8 done.

9 And then last thing I want to ask about
10 is probably the topic that we agree on the least,
11 which is helicopters. So, as you know, my
12 constituents hate all of the helicopters, and the
13 Chair knows very well, that pervade our community and
14 cause enormous noise and (TIMER CHIME) environmental
15 disruptions. We've been increasingly looking at
16 analyses that have been shared with our office that
17 do not believe that the Lower Manhattan helipad will
18 be able to accommodate electric helicopters because
19 of the intensity of the wind in that area. Is this
20 something that you all have looked at? Do you think
21 that electric helicopters are a viable solution at
22 that site? Or is this on your radar?

23 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Absolutely, and we
24 tested it. Over a year ago, we had two different
25 eVTOLs do a test flight and fly in the harbor between

2 Brooklyn Bridge, Governor's Island, and Downtown
3 Manhattan heliport. So, absolutely, we think that
4 eVTOLs can be transformational in terms of the
5 experience for New Yorkers. They are incredibly
6 quiet, and we're very aware that New Yorkers do not
7 appreciate the ambient sound from helicopters. So, we
8 are working very hard to address that. The eVTOL
9 charging equipment will be in place thanks to
10 investments from our new operator so that the minute
11 that the FAA approves the use of eVTOLs, which we
12 expect will be within the next two years, they will
13 be ready to begin to implement.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: I will conclude,
15 but I will just say I feel like the timeline on these
16 magical electric helicopters has been sliding for I
17 don't know how long, but I imagine we'll get there
18 someday. I will say, and I think the Chair has been a
19 great leader here, that they have the promise of
20 having dramatically less negative impacts on our
21 communities. The noise impacts are just so severe
22 that people can't have a conversation while they sit
23 on their stoop in their backyard in Brooklyn Bridge
24 Park, and the environmental impacts are similarly
25 troubling. One helicopter idling is the equivalent of

2 40 cars. And I don't see why we facilitate it on
3 City-owned property so that tourists can get a view
4 from Brooklyn Bridge Park from above. It's perfectly
5 pretty from down below. So, I appreciate your pushing
6 on the electric, on the eVTOLs. I hope we can get
7 there as quickly as possible. And I don't think we
8 should have any of the fossil fuel guzzling
9 helicopters in the sky until we do. So, thank you.

10 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Thank you, Council
12 Member. We've also been joined by Council Member
13 Nurse.

14 And I'd like to turn for questions to
15 Council Member Avilés.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Thank you,
17 Majority Leader. Thank you. Good to see you all.
18 Every day.

19 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Every day.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Every day. I want
21 an office space in the EDC property, by the way.
22 It'll make it easier for Mikale (phonetic), who has
23 to chase me.

24 Oh, so many questions, so little time. I
25 guess I'd love to, Andrew, you mentioned in your

2 testimony regarding Long Island City and extensive
3 community engagement process. Can you tell me what
4 that means?

5 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: So, Council Member Won
6 has set up an engagement process. There have been a
7 number of meetings so far, and there will be others
8 leading up to the certification into ULURP in the
9 coming months.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: And is EDC just
11 participating, or is this a process that you're
12 investing in?

13 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: DCP is the primary.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Okay. So, it's
15 like a rezoning process that you're participating.

16 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: It's a zoning process,
17 yeah.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Got it. So much to
19 say on that. In terms of Brooklyn Marine Terminal, in
20 your testimony, you list an enormous amount of
21 projects, and I, too, really appreciate the flying
22 around New York City. I need that every single day.
23 And it's really striking to hear in some instances
24 you clearly note the City's investments in the
25 projects and other instances, not really. It's

2 probably embedded. But what's really striking to me,
3 where you even have mentioned them, like in Staten
4 Island's North Shore, a 400-million-dollar City
5 investment. The Climate Innovation Hub, which is one
6 little piece, 100-million-dollar investment. East New
7 York, 500-million-dollar investment. Hunts Point, 130
8 million from the City, 130 million from the State,
9 and I'm sure that is just a little piece of the
10 investment. And so I'm a little shocked when we talk
11 about BMT, that is of regional importance, of
12 importance, obviously, to our District, to our city,
13 that the City has only committed 80 million dollars
14 to the investment. Can you tell me why that
15 tremendous disparity in investment and importance?

16 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: So, first of all,
17 there's a lot more in South Brooklyn that I didn't
18 run through every project.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: I know, and we
20 could go through the list.

21 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Yeah, I mean, you
22 know, the Brooklyn Army Terminal alone, outside of
23 the Climate Innovation Hub, another 100 million...

24 (CROSS-TALK)

2 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: (INAUDIBLE) in
3 particular.

4 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: MADE Campus, 100
5 million, SBMT, almost 100 million. So at BMT, to
6 answer your question, there, as you know, had been
7 little to no Port Authority investment for 50 years.
8 As soon as we got control of the site about a year
9 ago, the City committed 55 million dollars for near-
10 term bulkhead improvements. So, for example, at Pier
11 10, ships are already having trouble coming in
12 because of the fendering system, and so we are moving
13 to enter into contract with a several-million-dollar
14 investment right now. This week, we are signing the
15 contract to move forward with a 15-million-dollar,
16 all-electric crane for the facility. The rest of the...

17 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Is that paid by
18 the State, the 15-million-dollar...

19 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: The City.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: The City.

21 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Yeah, the State had a
22 separate 15-million-dollar commitment for cold
23 storage. So that is 70 million there. As you know,
24 there's a federal grant of 164 million, which, if

2 we're lucky enough to keep, requires a 109-million-
3 dollar City match. So that gets you closer to...

4 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Is that in the
5 budget?

6 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: It's not in the budget
7 yet. As we've discussed, the Budget Director has made
8 it clear, and City Hall on the other side, clear that
9 they are prepared to do that match if they see that
10 there is a master plan that's financially feasible
11 moving forward. I would hope, going forward, and
12 would love to see more City or State investment in
13 the project overall.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: And what has EDC
15 requested from the state? Because my understanding
16 is, even though 15 million dollars is the total of
17 the State investment, again, a property, 122 acres,
18 probably the smallest investment we've seen in
19 economic development projects across the city, quite
20 frankly. What has EDC asked from the State?

21 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: So, both Senator
22 Gounardes and Congressman Goldman, and I would ask
23 you as well, have made their voices clear, you may
24 have already, to the Governor's Office about the

2 importance of more (TIMER CHIME) State investment
3 here.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: So have you asked
5 for a specific number from the State?

6 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: I would certainly like
7 to see, and what we have done on other big capital
8 projects together is a match for the City investment.
9 So you saw that on SPARC, you saw that at Hunts
10 Point, you're seeing that at Kingsbridge Armory.
11 Ideally, for me, that would be a big step forward.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Is the request
13 about 150 in match from the current investment?

14 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Closer to two.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: So that's been the
16 request from the State, is a 200-million-dollar
17 match.

18 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: That is a discussion
19 that has been had, yes.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Okay. So, okay.
21 Okay, I guess, you know, I think we know all the
22 problems of the BMT process, particularly that it was
23 a 122-acre property that's been rammed into a four-
24 month planning process, and all the challenges of
25 that. But also, the investment is not at the level

2 that reflects the importance to the City, quite
3 frankly, of this property. And I get very excited
4 when I see the Blue Highway concepts coming together,
5 and we really want this to be successful. You
6 certainly have our commitment to fight through it,
7 but I still find the investments in this quite paltry
8 compared to not only its economic importance, both
9 for our surrounding community, but for the city
10 entirely. And when you look at it compared to other
11 projects, it really significantly pales in
12 comparison. And there's a real discord there that is
13 very challenging for people to understand, because
14 we're seeing lots of commitments, but we're not
15 seeing the actual investments, and we're seeing
16 luxury housing on public land as what is going to
17 actually subsidize this work, and that's just an
18 unacceptable proposition for us.

19 But one last question, Chair, if I may.

20 In terms of, we have so many projects
21 together, I could probably have you here for eight
22 hours, but one thing, really quickly. In the line of
23 investments, we know that EDC has mentioned
24 investments into properties, including the King
25 Solomon and the meat distribution area in Sunset

2 Park. How has that been unfolding? I haven't heard
3 much.

4 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Is the wholesale meat
5 market?

6 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Yeah, yeah.

7 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: In between? Yes,
8 absolutely. We have been working closely with the
9 tenants there. We are now fully leased up, I believe,
10 and have scheduled a number of shorter-term capital
11 projects. We've got some great tenants there, great
12 local employers, and we're eager to see that facility
13 be modernized further and grow.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Great, so I guess
15 we'll get further updates. Thank you, Chair.

16 CHAIRPERSON FARÍAS: Recognizing Council
17 Member Nurse.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Thank you, Chair.
19 How you doing? Good afternoon.

20 I just had a couple... it is on, I'll be
21 louder, sorry. I just had a couple questions. If you
22 could put on record a status update on the work of
23 the plazas over in Broadway Junction. I know you
24 mentioned in your testimony, but if you could

2 elaborate on just kind of where you all are on the
3 process for the record.

4 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Yeah, those are moving
5 along in pre-design phase. A big step, as you know,
6 to securing the kind of public realm we want around
7 the subway station is relocating the NYPD presence,
8 and have appreciated the conversations we've had with
9 your office in collaboration on that. That's huge to
10 move them, to really get the kind of open space that
11 we want. We will be selecting a design firm shortly
12 in the coming months and are moving forward. The
13 funding is there, as is the MTA funding.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Okay. And do you
15 know if you have a number of M/WBEs who've applied
16 for that design?

17 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: RFP is out or about to
18 go out, and so in every one of those we work very
19 hard to make sure that there are applicants who are
20 M/WBE as lead, or they're brought in as subs to the
21 prime.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Okay. Great. And I
23 know we have a bimonthly public realm working group
24 where the community members come and agencies come. I
25 think we've been trying to figure out how to land a

2 website somehow that has the commitments, that are,
3 you know, be able to track what's coming, and what
4 we're doing, so we're looking forward to getting that
5 online soon. I can't remember if it landed with EDC
6 hosting it, or what (INAUDIBLE)

7 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: That's a great idea.
8 Yeah, let me look into that.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: We've been really
10 harping on that to include what kind of local hires
11 are coming out of that. We don't expect to get local
12 hires out of the MTA work, sadly, but it would be
13 great to see if we can get some targets for the plaza
14 work where you all have discretion. I had a question
15 about, and I'm sorry if you covered this, Chair, the
16 basement ADU one-stop shop. Can you tell me a little
17 bit more about why EDC is hosting that, or what that
18 is?

19 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Honestly, that's the
20 first time I've heard of it, so let me look into it
21 and get back to you.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Well, it was in the
23 Committee report, so it would be great to find out
24 what EDC's role is with that.

2 And then the only other thing I would say
3 is, I see also that the partnership with OpenAI, and
4 I just want to express caution and concern for
5 partnering with a platform that is right now being
6 accused and sued for taking the work of
7 entrepreneurs, artists, their ideas, their work for
8 their own gain, and just kind of brings into question
9 who the City is partnering with in terms of
10 undermining our creative class that's here that we
11 celebrate and it might be at odds with our goals. So
12 that's it.

13 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Thank you so much to
14 the Council Members for asking questions.

15 I'm going to just jump into for a couple
16 more with around City of Yes. City of Yes committed
17 two billion in infrastructure investments to
18 accompanying zoning changes and anticipated growth
19 across the city. Does EDC's Preliminary Capital Plan
20 include any new investments as part of the City of
21 Yes's infrastructure commitments?

22 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: I do not believe any
23 of the City of Yes capital monies are flowing through
24 EDC, but I will check that and get back to you.

2 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Great. And
3 considering the role the EDC's Neighborhood
4 Development Fund has played in financing
5 infrastructure associated with neighborhood growth,
6 why hasn't any additional funding been added, and
7 would you have liked to see, if anywhere?

8 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Almost all of our
9 really big projects have neighborhood infrastructure
10 associated with them, so it may not be showing up in
11 exactly that fund, but actually showing up in the
12 capital lines of each of the projects. So just to
13 name a few, you know, our work on the North Shore,
14 certainly our work at BMT will include that, our work
15 at Hunts Point, our work at CUNY, our work at
16 Kingsbridge Armory, SPARC, etc.

17 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Okay. The City of Yes
18 City for All plan also included significant
19 investments for affordable housing development and
20 preservation in the city. Does EDC anticipate playing
21 a role in financing or developing affordable housing
22 as a result of the changes to the City's zoning
23 resolution with City of Yes?

24 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Yes, but primarily the
25 way that EDC participates in affordable housing

2 development is through RFPs of City land, where the
3 project is not going into HPD's tax-exempt pipeline
4 which means a wait of five to 10 years before the
5 project gets built. EDC is able to leverage the RFP
6 to essentially cross-subsidize through the value of
7 the land what would look like a 485-X project or
8 above.

9 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Okay. And are there
10 any particular projects that you're currently looking
11 at that fall into that?

12 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Yes. Coney Island
13 West, 100 Gold, Gansevoort Street, Stapleton B4, B5,
14 just to name a few.

15 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Okay, great. And
16 we've also been joined by Council Member Bottcher.

17 Did EDC's capital program receive any of
18 the two billion in housing investments that the
19 Administration included in the City of Yes package?

20 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: I do not believe any
21 of those funds are flowing through our capital
22 budget.

23 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Okay. Thank you. And
24 just to move over to revenue to the general fund,
25 over the last couple of Fiscal Years, EDC has been

2 contributing less and less to the general fund. What
3 programs and initiatives do you think are causing the
4 decline and is it because EDC's costs have increased
5 or activity has decreased?

6 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Yeah. So, EDC's
7 revenues primarily come, the vast majority of them
8 come from the land that we manage on behalf of the
9 City. It's about 66 million square feet of land. Some
10 of that is just a land lease, so like Metro Tech is
11 an EDC land lease, some of the sites in Times Square,
12 EDC land lease, and then some that we actively
13 manage. So the Brooklyn Army Terminal, Hunts Point,
14 are examples of those. There are then sales of land
15 or long-term leases with upfront payments. So, in
16 order for EDC to function as an entity, some
17 substantial portion of those funds come to EDC so
18 that is in part the way that we close the gap on the
19 funding of the ferries, just as an example, so that
20 is typically a conversation with the Office of
21 Management and Budget when we have a sale or a long-
22 term lease with an upfront payment about how much
23 just goes in the City fund and how much goes to fund
24 EDC. So that's why you have some variability from one
25 year to the next.

2 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Got it. And has there
3 been a net decline in any income over the years for
4 EDC?

5 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DE LA UZ: No. I
6 wouldn't say that. Every year is a little bit
7 different, and not every year do we have a big sale
8 or a front lease payment.

9 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Sure. When EDC
10 calculates its net loss or income, does it factor in
11 expenses and revenue generated from programs at
12 Brooklyn Navy Yard or other component units? For
13 example, the Brooklyn Navy Yard had an operating loss
14 of 6.8 million, but a change in net position in 2024
15 of 21.4 million driven largely by an increase in
16 capital City contributions of 45 million. Similarly,
17 the Trust for Governors Island had an operating loss
18 of 28.3 million in 2024. However, City capital
19 contributions were 35.6 million. Are these kind of
20 offsets in component units accounted for in
21 contributions to the City's general fund?

22 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: We have no
23 interconnection from a budget point of view with the
24 Navy Yard or with the Trust for Governors Island.
25 What we do have for the first time is a formal

2 programmatic partnership. So, for years, EDC has
3 invested in innovation projects at the Navy Yard,
4 particularly at the new lab. What we have now through
5 the Harbor Climate Collaborative is a formalized MOU
6 where we are partnering together, piloting
7 technologies across our three campuses. I mean, it's
8 mind-boggling how big these campuses are, 600 acres,
9 10 million square feet of space, all of us targeting
10 very similar pieces of the climate strategy. Exchange
11 is more research and development. Navy Yard is more
12 mature companies. At the Climate Innovation Hub,
13 we're going to be targeting more early stage and
14 startup, but those companies have the ability to use
15 our physical assets, our land or our water, to
16 collaborate at each of the three different sites. So,
17 for instance, there's a company called Pliant at the
18 Navy Yard right now that does underwater robots, and
19 so they're working both at land, at that underwater
20 Navy Yard, and at the Climate Exchange. You know, it
21 seems like a very simple thing, but in the past, that
22 kind of level of cooperation was not happening.

23 CHAIRPERSON FARÍAS: That's great to hear
24 that that's how we're utilizing the programs.

2 And then, just my last question in this
3 space. In Fiscal 2016, EDC had a net income of 100
4 million, much larger than any other years. Do we know
5 what the reason for that was? Have we reflected back
6 and seen if there's any way we can get back to those
7 levels, or what were the larger?

8 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: FY 2016?

9 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Yes.

10 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: My guess is that it
11 was a couple of big sales that occurred.

12 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Yeah. That's what I
13 would assume, too, but.

14 And then, before I break for another
15 round of questions for Members, just some questions
16 around the World Cup.

17 The Preliminary Plan includes 20 million
18 in EDC's budget for the World Cup. OMB testified that
19 this funding was to hold, and I quote, fan events for
20 economic development purposes, end quote, and that
21 EDC performed its own return to the city model. OMB
22 told the Finance Committee that the Council would
23 receive that analysis and explain how it landed on
24 the 20 million. Can you share with us the model of

2 how EDC concluded 20 million was the right amount to
3 invest in fan events for the World Cup?

4 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: In the instance of the
5 World Cup, when New York and New Jersey were bidding
6 to be a host city, one of numerous ones across the
7 country, there was an economic impact analysis done
8 by a third party. We went outside to a third party.
9 Often, we do these in-house using different
10 established models. So, for this one, we went
11 outside, and it showed a very, very substantial
12 economic return to both New York and New Jersey, but
13 particularly to New York, because this is where so
14 many of the people will come to then go out to the
15 Meadowlands and see the games at MetLife. So, both
16 New York and New Jersey are making a direct
17 contribution to that host Committee and their
18 operations, which include fan fest things on both
19 sides of the harbor, but particularly in New York
20 City, because this is where most of the people will
21 be, and that was the rationale for the 20-million-
22 dollar commitment.

23 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: And arguably, the
24 World Cup is one big fan event. Do you think that the

2 use of tax levy is appropriate for fan events
3 associated with the World Cup?

4 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: I do, because these
5 kinds of events generate enormous sponsorship
6 opportunities that help pay for the event being here
7 in the first place, and again, the overall positive
8 economic impact of having both some of the
9 preliminary games, the semifinal games, and the final
10 in New York City. The net value to New York City is
11 massive, and we'll coordinate with OMB to make sure
12 that you see that analysis.

13 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: That would be great.
14 I did request it at the Finance hearing, and they
15 chucked it up to you folks to hand it over to us.

16 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Okay, we're on it.

17 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: And just in the same
18 vein of different tax arguments on benefits. In the
19 past couple years, the City has had conversations
20 around hotels and hoteliers and how to utilize
21 different types of, either the hotel occupancy taxes,
22 reducing it, or using those ways to see if there
23 could be a benefit for our hotels and bringing those
24 workers back to work in the hotels. Have we spoken
25 with the Administration at all to look at a hotel

2 occupancy tax evaluation on whether or not that could
3 be beneficial to the hotels in anticipation of the
4 FIFA World Cup?

5 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: I have not been in
6 those conversations, and EDC has not been asked to
7 study that. Typically, as it relates to hotels, NYC
8 Tourism handles that because it's in their bailiwick.

9 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Okay. And I will
10 break again for Council Member questions, and I'd
11 like to call on Council Member Avilés.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Thank you. In
13 terms of, can you speak to us a little bit about how
14 EDC supports M/WBEs to ensure that they're growing?
15 And in particular, I'm thinking about a very specific
16 instance at BAT that EDC has invested in its growth,
17 but is now seemingly choking out this business
18 because it's decided a pier can be used for
19 generating revenue outside of maritime but as a
20 concert venue. But can you talk to me generally about
21 how EDC is supporting its M/WBEs?

22 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Sure. We're really
23 proud of our work around M/WBEs. I think we awarded
24 235 million last year to M/WBE contractors. I think
25 that's a roughly 35 percent rate. And then on top of

2 that, we have two programs that focus on small
3 startup M/WBEs. So one is called Waterfront Pathways,
4 particularly focused on getting M/WBEs into
5 construction sub-sectors in which they are not in
6 right now, particularly waterfront work so this is
7 relevant to work at SBMT, or future Blue Highway, or
8 hopefully at BMT. And then Construct NYC, where we
9 have a pre-approved list of vendors that have gone
10 through a training program with us that can access
11 contracts for under 3 million dollars. We also have
12 the Founder Fellows, which is overwhelmingly diverse
13 entrepreneurs in the three sectors that we focus on.
14 And so those are some of the entrepreneurship
15 programs we have.

16 The small business you're referring to
17 that runs party boats at the Brooklyn Army Terminal,
18 there has been a concern there about safety. This
19 isn't just about revenues, but we are happy to work
20 with you on that. We know that they are a local
21 business, and (TIMER CHIME) there should be ways that
22 we can both meet their needs and also be able to do
23 the kinds of larger events there, some of which are
24 purely revenue-generating for EDC, and some of which

2 are community events. We do tens of millions of
3 dollars at community events every year.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: You just made my
5 blood pressure go up real high. I'll talk to you
6 about that. The public safety issue is not a real
7 issue. What is an issue is there's a business that
8 you've grown and you should be very proud of that
9 operates seasonally, and there's only 12 weekends
10 they could operate, and EDC has effectively removed
11 four to eight of those weekends. How do you run a
12 temporary business when you cannot run on the only
13 weekends in the year because EDC has decided it's
14 holding those weekends for concert or community
15 events, right? It's a challenge, so I'll follow up
16 with you. It's not a safety issue. It is a planning,
17 but I believe there's a path. We can get there, but
18 hopefully we get there before the businesses shutters
19 because we couldn't find something more, we couldn't
20 be more aggressive on it.

21 In terms of, sorry, I just lost my
22 questions. See what happens when your blood pressure
23 goes up? You can't read. So the Mayor launched a
24 community hiring effort to be in compliance with the
25 State law that requires 40 percent of labor hours to

2 be performed by people who live in NYCHA. I was
3 curious how EDC has been implementing this effort in
4 its economic development projects, in particular
5 anything related to BMT property. How much of any of
6 those jobs have been allocated or, I can't find my
7 words now, NYCHA residents are employed by?

8 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Yeah. I mean the City
9 has had a citywide program run out of the Mayor's
10 Office of Talent and Workforce Development and with
11 SBS, with job fairs across the city. EDC has not been
12 a part of that. What we have been a part of is
13 focusing on those areas where we have assets and
14 significant investments happening. So that's South
15 Brooklyn with the economic mobility network we're
16 setting up. It's East New York with a similar
17 mobility network and Hunts Point, the same, where the
18 idea is to make sure wherever possible we're working
19 with local non-for-profits to pre-screen and place
20 local residents in the jobs. At BMT, we're very
21 mindful that a positive outcome of this process must
22 involve workforce development. That's part of why
23 we're working with the Red Hook Initiative on one of
24 our advisory councils. We are doing in-depth work now
25 with the leaders of Red Hook East and West to make

2 sure there is a plan, both for current work-ready
3 residents of those buildings and students. And within
4 our plan, I think you may have seen it on Friday, but
5 we're going to be talking more about it in the coming
6 meetings, would be a very significant workforce
7 development center onsite.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Do you have any,
9 and I know actually you mentioned earlier, you're
10 going to be producing a report related to this local
11 hires question that I'm constantly asking. Is within
12 that any reporting around current NYCHA residents
13 getting employed at any of the Sunset Park Red Hook
14 assets?

15 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: I'm not sure we are
16 able to ID exactly what building folks come out of,
17 but I will check. So, the data that you'll see in the
18 Sunset Park annual report that we're going to put out
19 for the first time includes data tracked through W-
20 2s, but also tenant interviews. And typically you can
21 ask a business for zip code data. They're not legally
22 required to provide it, but sometimes they do. And
23 overwhelmingly that data shows good numbers, you
24 always can do better on local hire. I do not think it

2 specifically would show who's coming out of East and
3 West as an example, but I will ask the same.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Or even probably
5 zip code. We could figure out more or less by zip
6 code on the Red Hook side. I haven't heard very much
7 mention of, I want to know about the current
8 employment numbers...

9 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Understood.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: For current
11 residents. We could talk all about the future
12 projection and all the fancy numbers, but currently
13 that would be great to know. Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON FARÍAS: I'd like to ask some
15 questions about capital funds. EDC has several funds
16 in its capital plan. Historically these funds were
17 used in the future for various projects based on City
18 priorities. As the recipients of these funds are
19 decided later, the City Council's not always aware of
20 all the projects when the budget is adopted. The
21 current capital commitment plan shows that the
22 housing fund, the tenant improvement fund, and the
23 manufacturing and industrial investment fund are not
24 funded. Do you have plans to bring them back? And can

2 you help us understand the governance structure of
3 these funds?

4 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Can you say it again,
5 the tenant fund?

6 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Yeah. We have the
7 housing fund, tenant improvement fund, and
8 manufacturing and industrial investment funds.

9 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Yeah. I think those
10 are funds that may have been active way in the past,
11 but have not been active for some time. Typically,
12 our capital funds are specific to projects. So as an
13 example, you know, at SPARC, there's 500 million
14 dollars for the CUNY schools that we'll be helping to
15 build, 164 million for SCA, and then additional funds
16 for OCME and H and H to move into the private
17 development campus. We have, you know, 400 million
18 dollars on the North Shore. We have an ask in, it
19 hasn't been funded yet, on our Coney West project. So
20 it tends to happen, you know, project by project, as
21 opposed to sort of general funds.

22 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Okay. So, can I
23 follow up to see?

24 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Sure, we'll follow up
25 and confirm.

2 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: If these are just
3 defunct, because they were associated with the
4 certain project. Great.

5 Capital funding for Phase Two of the
6 Willets Point redevelopment is 262 million in the
7 first five years of the Capital Commitment Plan, with
8 just 10 million committed in the latter half of the
9 plan period. Why is the plan so front-loaded for
10 these projects? What will these capital commitments
11 support in the Willets Point development?

12 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Yeah. So, we're
13 constantly working with OMB to line up our capital
14 needs in the year that they actually happen, and so
15 that means that capital funds may be laid out over a
16 number of years. There may be an instance in which we
17 don't need the money, you know, say until 2027. So
18 the money starts in 2027, goes '28, '29. In the case
19 of Willets Point, that project is actively, the
20 housing is coming out of the ground in Phase One. We
21 already did Phase One infrastructure. We're doing
22 Phase Two infrastructure right now. And the stadium
23 is coming out above ground on a portion of Phase Two.
24 So the reason we need that in the near-term years is
25 we're actually literally spending it right now.

2 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Okay. Great. And what
3 about the additional phases and the funds?

4 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: So beyond Phase Two of
5 public infrastructure funding for Willets, I do not
6 believe there is other capital fund allocated as of
7 now.

8 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Okay. And then I'd
9 like to just chat about some of the RFPs. EDC
10 recently released an RFP for the development of 100
11 Gold Street, a City-owned site. The recent request
12 seeks proposals to develop mixed-income housing. Why
13 was EDC chosen to issue the RFP, and how did you work
14 with the Administration to select the site, and is
15 there any additional funding in EDC's budget for this
16 project?

17 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: So, this is a good
18 example where on a City-owned asset, and Gansevoort
19 Square is another one that we're working with Council
20 Member Bottcher on, where the City is through mandate
21 from City Hall to develop housing wherever you can on
22 underutilized City-owned assets. Now, the reason I
23 would use the word underutilized in the case of 100
24 Gold is the building is literally falling apart. If
25 you work at HPD, mold is falling on your head. I

2 mean, it's, I don't know if you remember the old 250
3 Broadway, but it was a lot worse than that. And so
4 HPD, and there are six other entities in there, but
5 HPD's the biggest one by far, are going to have to
6 move soon, or you're going to have to renovate the
7 building in place around them. So that would cost an
8 enormous amount, hundreds of millions of dollars, for
9 the City to sort of renovate in place as you move
10 your people around within the building. So the notion
11 was, let's decamp the building, move all of those
12 uses either into other City-owned assets that are
13 underutilized office space or into new, into rental
14 office space in the private sector. That gives a
15 private developer then the opportunity to come in,
16 take down the existing building, build a new building
17 that could be host to 1,000 new residents. Some of
18 the money that comes off of that will pay for the
19 relocation of the City agencies. So at this time,
20 there is no additional money put into the City's
21 budget. Could that be an issue in the future? It is
22 possible, but it's not needed today.

23 CHAIRPERSON FARÍAS: And can we expect to
24 see the EDC issue any more RFPs for residential
25 projects on City-owned assets?

2 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: We just put out a lot
3 of them, and I do not anticipate any others in the
4 next few months.

5 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Okay. Great. And then
6 lastly, last March, EDC issued an RFP for a 100
7 million climate innovation hub at Brooklyn Army
8 Terminal. Can you update the Committee on the status
9 of the RFP and the timeline for establishing the hub?
10 And does the prelim include any funding for this
11 project?

12 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Yes, it does. We are
13 very close to publicly announcing the operators of
14 the climate innovation hub. It will include both
15 incubation and acceleration, as well as workforce
16 development, local outreach in the community, in
17 particular around workforce development, but also
18 entrepreneurship.

19 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Thank you for your
20 response. I am going to turn it over to Council
21 Member Bottcher for questions.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: Good afternoon,
23 how are you?

24 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: I'm good. Thank you.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: Thanks. As you
3 know, obtaining shore power for the Manhattan Cruise
4 Ship Terminal is one of my top priorities, and it's
5 so important for our residents because when cruise
6 ships are docked, their diesel generators are
7 running, and they emit toxic fumes that waft into our
8 neighborhoods, specifically Hell's Kitchen. And we've
9 been working closely with you on this, and recently
10 the plan changed somewhat when EDC decided that you
11 are now going to pursue a master plan for the Cruise
12 Ship Terminal to plan for the next 75 years of
13 receiving cruise ships at those terminals, and that
14 pushed out the timeline for when we can expect ships
15 to be able to plug in when they're in port. I
16 understand that this summer you're going to be coming
17 to us with a master plan for these cruise ship
18 terminals. What can be done now, and I know we're
19 going to be meeting about this in the near future,
20 what could be done now with respect to preparing for
21 shore power? Because we know that additional capacity
22 will be needed on land for the electrical grid,
23 substation capacity. What can start now rather than
24 waiting for the master plan to come together?

2 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Yes. Appreciate your
3 advocacy on this, and this is something that ports
4 all over the world are moving fast on and also
5 struggling with because this is relatively new
6 technology. We have made some big steps forward, and
7 it's too bad that Council Member Avilés had to leave,
8 but we're in constant contact with her about the
9 Brooklyn Cruise Terminal and implementing a mobile
10 harbor jib that can access most of the boats coming
11 in there with shore power, and we expect by the
12 summer to have the infrastructure in place so that
13 all ships can plug in. What's different there than at
14 Manhattan Cruise is there is a very significant
15 substation already on site bringing the power. What
16 we've been doing actively is working with Con Ed to
17 make sure that there is capacity. We have gotten
18 positive responses there. Now the question is siting
19 for where this substation will go. I know that we
20 have said we want to make sure that this is done
21 within the context of a master plan because one of
22 the things we discovered when we were seeking the
23 siting previously with Con Ed is understanding that
24 the subsurface conditions at 88 and 90 were
25 deteriorating quicker than we thought. Hence, we've

2 got to master plan this thing together and make sure
3 the substation is going in the right place in the
4 context of that master plan, and frankly, also line
5 up all of the money that we will need to do, which
6 will include both a new public sector ask but also a
7 significant ask of the private cruise operators, not
8 just on the per passenger fees that we've discussed
9 with you, but a significant capital investment in
10 exchange for a long-term lease. So, I appreciate that
11 there has been a delay. I'm not sure that in reality
12 it's as long as it might seem in order to get the
13 master plan done before we go ahead and procure on
14 the substation, but we will be back to you in a few
15 months on this and we understand that it's a very
16 high priority of yours in the community.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: If you had to
18 give a ballpark estimate of how much time it's going
19 to take, what year do you realistically anticipate
20 cruise ships will be able to plug in at the Manhattan
21 Cruise Ship Terminal?

22 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: I'm going to come back
23 to you on that one. I mean, my guess is that whether
24 we were doing a master plan or not, once you procure
25 a big capital project like that, particularly using

2 City capital dollars, as you know, it's a few years.

3 So I want to get back to you with a more precise than

4 just a few years. My hope is that not only do we have

5 a master plan together in '25, but we've put out an

6 RFP for long-term operators there and partners. As

7 you know, we have a long-term partnership with Ports

8 America for the day-to-day operations of the port,

9 but then there are those cruise lines coming in like

10 MSC and Norwegian and Carnival, and there's no reason

11 in my mind that in exchange for a very long-term

12 commitment to use those peers and have their presence

13 there, that they should also be contributing to the

14 long-term capital needed, including shore power. So,

15 I would hope that by the end of the year, we would be

16 out with an RFP to determine who our partners are

17 going to be on that project beyond Ports America.

18 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Okay. Two last bits

19 and then I'll end. Just on the capital projects for

20 waterfronts, the Committee knows how involved EDC is

21 with the city's waterways, and the Preliminary

22 Capital Commitment Plan includes a 152 million lump

23 sum capital project for waterfront improvements. How

24 does EDC decide to draw down on these capital funds

25 for waterfront improvements? Are they for new

2 projects or for projects currently underway that are
3 funding on a year-to-year basis?

4 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: They're for a wide
5 array of projects across the 520 miles of the city.
6 Some that are EDC managed, like Pier 36, there's a
7 very substantial project going on right now. We're in
8 application for some work at the Manhattan Cruise
9 Terminal. And then they're for other agencies where
10 we do the work on their behalf, like Parks
11 Department, and so we can get you a full list of all
12 of those projects that make up the 100 million.

13 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: That would be really
14 helpful. And can you explain why there's only 1.4
15 million committed for waterfront improvements in
16 FY26?

17 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: 1.4 million?

18 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Mm-hmm.

19 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: I don't know. That
20 doesn't make a lot of sense to me given the number of
21 projects we have, so let me check on that number.

22 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: You'll check back.

23 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Yeah.

24 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: And then last year we
25 had a discussion about finding savings in the City's

2 tax expenditures. We spend over 3.3 billion annually
3 in tax breaks to encourage economic development in
4 the city. While much of this represents commitments
5 made years ago, many of the same tax incentive
6 programs still remain on the books and are unchanged
7 from when they were developed years and in some cases
8 decades ago. Considering the limited resources we
9 have, do you believe that each and every single one
10 of the City's existing economic development tax
11 incentives are working as efficiently as they could?

12 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: By and large, I think
13 they are working very well and are critical to our
14 economic recovery right now and to growth in the
15 future. So, the work that we do through IDA Build and
16 we put out our first annual report just for those two
17 programs this year. It looks back about 15 years. The
18 positive impact of those programs is massive and
19 we'll make sure that we have in the record that
20 report as well. There are other programs that are new
21 like the M-CORE program, where we believe it will
22 have a very positive long-term impact. We talked
23 about the analysis earlier. Time will tell. The
24 Council's certainly right to shine a spotlight on it
25 and see where we are every year. Is it moving? On

2 smaller business incentives, the main programs are
3 initiated through the State Legislature. So the
4 Relocation Assistance Program, REAP, is a 3,000
5 dollar per head for 12 years if you move into the
6 city in most parts except for Midtown, or you move
7 from Midtown to the outer boroughs so we don't lose
8 those companies going to the suburbs or another part
9 of the country. I know from my time in the Navy Yard
10 and Industry City that those programs were absolutely
11 critical to the success along the Brooklyn
12 waterfront. I think you'd hear the same from Chambers
13 of Commerce in Long Island City and in the Bronx and
14 in Manhattan about the importance of them. So that
15 program is up for reauthorization. The City has asked
16 for it to be reauthorized and it's also asked for a
17 new tool called RACE. So, we have an ongoing
18 challenge despite the fact that jobs are going very,
19 very well. Tax revenue is strong. We have 100 million
20 square feet of vacant space. Space in luxury office
21 buildings are doing very, very well. Everything else
22 is not doing well, down about 10 percent the last
23 couple years. So, what the RACE program does is for
24 companies moving from outside New York City, taking
25 over 20,000 square feet of space, there's a lot of

2 space in pre-2000 buildings, the older buildings that
3 are hardest to lease, we will give them a 5,000-
4 dollar-per-employee tax break for 12 years. So richer
5 than REAP but really mirroring the moment in time in
6 which we have to move on that 100 million square feet
7 of vacant space. Some of that is going to be
8 converted to housing but, if I had to guess, maybe 10
9 million of it, that still leaves 90 million. So we
10 have to move to upgrade these older buildings and to
11 help the ones that are leasing today lease better.
12 That program would be capped if the State Legislature
13 passes it. I think it's a five-year cap with a
14 certain dollar amount. So again, that will be one for
15 the Council to watch, and we're very hopeful that it
16 passes the State Legislature because it's really a
17 tool that we think we need.

18 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Great. Thank you. And
19 just for the Committee's information, who in the City
20 is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the
21 economic tax breaks are relevant and efficient? Is it
22 EDC or OMB?

23 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: I think it's EDC first
24 and foremost because primarily we're making the
25 decisions. In a program like REAP, we don't have,

2 it's as-of-right essentially. So DOF, Department of
3 Finance, technically provides the break. OMB is very
4 rigorous in reviewing all these programs, and we know
5 that Council oversight will be there as well playing
6 their appropriate role.

7 CHAIRPERSON FARÍAS: Great. Well, thank
8 you folks for testifying today. I don't see any other
9 questions from Members and you are adjourned.

10 PRESIDENT KIMBALL: Thank you very much.

11 CHAIRPERSON FARÍAS: Thank you. I now open
12 the hearing for public testimony.

13 I remind members of the public that this
14 is a government proceeding and that decorum shall be
15 observed at all times. As such, members of the public
16 shall remain silent at all times.

17 The witness table is reserved for people
18 who wish to testify. No video recording or
19 photography is allowed from the witness table.
20 Further, members of the public may not present audio
21 or visual recordings as testimony but may submit
22 transcripts of such recordings to the Sergeant-at-
23 Arms for the inclusion of the hearing record.

24 If you wish to speak at today's hearing,
25 please fill out an appearance card with the Sergeant-

2 at-Arms and wait to be recognized. When recognized,
3 you will have two minutes to speak on today's hearing
4 topic, the Budget for the New York City Economic
5 Development Corporation.

6 If you have a written statement or
7 additional written testimony you wish to submit for
8 the record, please provide a copy of that testimony
9 to the Sergeant-at-Arms. You may also email written
10 testimony to testimony@council.nyc.gov within 72
11 hours of the close of this hearing. Audio and video
12 recordings will not be accepted.

13 For in-person panelists, please come up
14 to the table once your name has been called in that
15 order. Julie Coker, Machiko Grasso, Gregory J.
16 Morris.

17 Just, yep, press the button on the mic
18 and you may begin when ready.

19 JULIE COKER: Okay. Good afternoon,
20 Majority Leader Fariás and Members of the Economic
21 Development Committee. I am Julie Coker, and I'm the
22 President and CEO of New York City Tourism and
23 Conventions. I thank you for this opportunity to
24 share the current status of the city's tourism and
25 hospitality industry and our efforts along with our

2 government and private sector partners to revitalize
3 the industry as we work for a full recovery. I would
4 like to take a moment to provide a quick background
5 of who we are and what we do as an organization. New
6 York City Tourism is the official destination
7 marketing organization and convention and visitors
8 bureau for the five boroughs to New York City. Our
9 mission is threefold, maximizing inbound travel,
10 building economic prosperity, and spreading the
11 dynamic image of five boroughs around the world.
12 We're a 501(c)6 not-for-profit member organization
13 and represent the interest of 1,400 member businesses
14 and organizations across the five boroughs. We are
15 governed by an 81-member board, and I am going to
16 skip ahead. Prior to the pandemic, 2019 was the 10th
17 consecutive year of growth in the number of visitors,
18 importantly, in visitor spend. The first year of the
19 pandemic hit our industry very hard. The good news
20 is, as we sit here in 2025, five years later, things
21 are looking much more positive. What I really want to
22 highlight today is that in 2019, we forecasted to be
23 at 76 million visitors in 2024. And while we are
24 grateful and excited about the 64.5 million visitors
25 that we had last year, as you can see, it is well

2 below what we originally forecasted. And for those
3 reasons, we are extremely concerned and want to just
4 highlight that we need dedicated funding for this
5 upcoming Fiscal Year so that we can remain
6 competitive. (TIMER CHIME)

7 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Please continue.

8 JULIE COKER: Okay. What I'd say is, as we
9 plan for the next eight months of this year and into
10 2026, New York City is facing increased competition.
11 Domestic visitors are traveling internationally
12 again, and businesses are traveling. Travelers are
13 becoming more cautious as concerns about a recession
14 swirl. And more importantly, first-tier meeting
15 cities such as Dallas and Los Angeles and Vegas have
16 bid funds that are making them also much more
17 competitive for the meetings market. What we really
18 need to double down is that we need to take a look at
19 the fact that we just recently adjusted our forecast
20 for international travelers down 3 percent. And as we
21 are all watching the conversations around tariffs
22 unfold, there is a concern about our forecast that we
23 just recently did, and we're hoping that we can hold
24 those numbers. What's really important about the
25 funding that we offer is that it supports community

2 programs like New York Restaurant Week, New York
3 Outings, I should say, which is a part of Restaurant
4 Week, Hotel Week, and Must Attractions Week. In
5 Fiscal Year 2026, without increased funding, we will
6 need to cut back on our global presence further and
7 further, and this will reduce community programs and
8 may have other lasting cuts that will essentially
9 make New York City not competitive.

10 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Thank you for your
11 testimony. You can continue.

12 MACHIKO GRASSO: Good afternoon, Chair
13 Fariás and Members of the Committee. I am Machiko
14 Grasso, Vice President of External Affairs at Non-
15 Traditional Employment for Women, or NEW. Thank you
16 to the City Council for your support of our work over
17 the years. Most recently, we received funds from the
18 Speakers Initiative, the Young Women's Leadership
19 Development, and Pride at Work. Our mission is to
20 prepare, train, and place women in careers in the
21 skilled construction, utility, and maintenance
22 trades, helping them achieve economic independence
23 and a secure future for themselves and their
24 families. NEW also helps create a skilled workforce
25 vital to economic development in the city. We provide

2 a pathway to jobs that provide good pay, benefits,
3 and safety protections. Through its core pre-
4 apprenticeship training program, along with job
5 placement and wraparound services, NEW lowers
6 barriers to a male-dominated industry and supports
7 women throughout their trade journey. Every year, we
8 train approximately 350 individuals. According to a
9 2023 report from the U.S. Department of Labor's
10 Women's Bureau, women are vastly underrepresented in
11 critical infrastructure fields. Despite being 50
12 percent of the total workforce, only 4.2 percent make
13 up the skilled construction trades occupations. There
14 are also pay disparities for women in these fields,
15 and further, the barriers for women entering the
16 trades are many.

17 So many more investments are needed in
18 the workforce development sector. With the shift in
19 federal funding, the City Council funding is more
20 important than ever. Investments in key programs,
21 such as the job readiness and training initiative,
22 are crucial for non-profits such as ours. We recently
23 submitted a request to this initiative to boost our
24 new partnership with NYCHA through its REES program.
25 We plan to reach out and serve NYCHA residents in

2 districts of elected officials whom we work with, and
3 your funding will maximize the impact of this
4 partnership. We also need more flexible dollars
5 (TIMER CHIME) for our emergency fund, which helps
6 tradeswomen who encounter unplanned expenses that may
7 prohibit the continuation of their work or force
8 their resignation. Support includes housing,
9 transportation, union initiation dues, and utilities
10 assistance. There are many opportunities available to
11 women in the trades, and we thank the Committee for
12 considering investing in this sector. Your investment
13 will return hundredfold. Thank you for your
14 partnership, and we look forward to building a
15 brighter future for our tradeswomen with you.

16 GREGORY J. MORRIS: Good afternoon,
17 Majority Leader. Thank you for making this time. It's
18 much appreciated. I always appreciate the
19 presentations from EDC because I learn about where
20 all the jobs are anticipated, and all I can think to
21 myself as the CEO of the New York City Employment and
22 Training Coalition is how it's possible to ensure
23 that the workforce development strategies are in
24 place to ensure that those particular jobs in every
25 particular region are actually accessible to local

2 jobseekers. True, by the way, that New York City is
3 experiencing record high employment levels, but what
4 we don't talk about, as you know, is wages. We don't
5 talk about quality jobs, and we don't talk about
6 career advancement, and we certainly aren't spending
7 the time that we should addressing the outrageously
8 high unemployment rates for Black men and young
9 adults in New York City.

10 Economic development cannot thrive
11 without a skilled, diverse workforce to support
12 business growth and innovation, and workforce
13 development cannot be effective without clear
14 pathways to high-quality jobs and expanding
15 industries. Workforce funding, economic development
16 investments, and philanthropic efforts must all be
17 intertwined to ensure that our most effective
18 programs and initiatives exist to create on-ramps for
19 new workers, re-skilling, up-skilling options, like
20 those provided by folks on the panel, and second-act
21 careers for those in need of those opportunities. As
22 identified by NYC ETC, the organization of 220
23 members I'm proud to represent as part of its
24 workforce development agenda released just last week,
25 we are hoping that this Council, led by this

2 Committee, ensures that making workforce development
3 a core requirement of publicly funded economic
4 development initiatives is at the fore of our focus
5 to ensure that those programs are resourced and that
6 we continue to focus on tracking and evaluating
7 private sector investment and workforce solutions, so
8 we don't just have a presentation about the number of
9 jobs. We can actually talk about who receives them,
10 how well they're doing over time, and how it is that
11 they continue to grow in those opportunities.

12 Workforce development is not an isolated
13 social service, but an economic imperative. Economic
14 growth is meaningless if (TIMER CHIME) it does not
15 translate into opportunities for those facing the
16 highest barriers to employment. I know you know that,
17 and I'm grateful for this time.

18 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Thank you all for
19 testifying. Just from the perspectives of NEW and NYC
20 ETC, how frequently are you hearing from the Economic
21 Development Corporation or any one of the community
22 projects that we're seeing that they're managing or
23 working on in terms of either getting more folks into
24 the workforce or asking for your collaboration on a
25 varying degree of different groups that are on the

2 ground that can help with the pipeline and/or other
3 deficiencies that the EDC might not be able to have
4 but need community partnership?

5 GREGORY J. MORRIS: I was very grateful to
6 have been called upon to support what was referenced
7 during the earlier presentation, the economic
8 mobility or economic network development RFP that EDC
9 put forward. In other words, allowing me the
10 opportunity to talk about what it would take to
11 create economic mobility networks in New York City
12 based on the history of the New York City employment
13 training providers. We did that in partnership with
14 EDC and talking about that, how to make that
15 possible. And we're grateful that that RFP went
16 forward and is identified in two different pockets of
17 New York City. There's more that needs to be done.

18 That said, and certainly as someone who
19 has championed the SPARC Campus project and has been
20 active in supporting and championing that project, as
21 someone who has talked about the cruise ships and the
22 plans on the west side, as someone who has championed
23 and focused on what is happening at the Kingsbridge
24 Armory and the plan for that for the future, I do
25 feel like I've had the opportunity to say, workforce

2 development counts. As you know, unless it's invested
3 in, unless the actual scaffolding is in place to
4 ensure that opportunity is available, it's not going
5 to hold true. So, from my perspective, I feel like
6 I'm being called into conversations and what it is
7 that I'm putting forward about what our coalition
8 believes workforce development should and could look
9 like has been received by EDC. I think the complexity
10 is about what is the investment that that means over
11 time, so we can actually see and manage the results
12 of that particular focus and that interest, and
13 that's the part where I would say there's still much
14 work to be done.

15 MACHIKO GRASSO: Definitely, we can
16 connect more with the EDC. Just out of transparency,
17 COVID did badly to our organization and we were one
18 of those non-profits that did not do well because who
19 can teach carpentry virtually, and we went through a
20 lot of staff transitions during the period and we
21 actually welcome our first tradeswoman and first
22 person of color, Leah Rambo, to become our President
23 last year so we are definitely eager to continue our
24 partnership and really dig deep into this partnership
25 with the EDC.

2 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Yeah, I'd love to
3 just keep in touch on that as I'm sure we still have
4 EDC folks here that are logging and taking this
5 information. I think it's important, especially for
6 folks like NEW or for your organization that has
7 hundreds of partners that can be on the ground, be
8 infiltrated into a lot of these projects and were
9 directly impacted by being hired on some of the
10 development projects that we have that can both
11 assist you folks and the City be able to track its
12 actual outcomes and metrics so appreciate that.

13 And then I just have a question around
14 the last statement that you read, Ms. Coker, on the
15 resources that will be needed without increased
16 funds, what our global impact is going to look like
17 and what that means for the city of New York. Can you
18 give us an idea of, prospectively, what could be new
19 needs that NYC ETC has and what that means in terms
20 of percentages or negative outcomes for the city of
21 New York if those aren't met?

22 JULIE COKER: Sure. So, currently we have
23 had the same contract with the City since 2006 and
24 that has been the 21.1. We are currently PEG'd and so
25 that contracted amount right now for Fiscal Year 2026

2 is looking to be at 17.45 million. And so that will
3 definitely, unfortunately, cause us to look at first,
4 I shouldn't say first, we'll look at international
5 presence. New York City has 17 international offices
6 as we should because part of our roles and
7 responsibility is to promote New York City
8 internationally, and so currently we only have 14.
9 Prior to COVID, we had 17, so we'll definitely have
10 to look at that and we wouldn't be able to maintain
11 the 14 that we have. The reason why international
12 visitation is extremely important to New York City is
13 because they stay longer and they spend more, and
14 it's also an opportunity to get those visitors into
15 the five boroughs so they're not just Manhattan.
16 They'll go all over. The other thing that we will
17 definitely have to look at is actual staff, and we
18 may have to do layoffs, if not job eliminations,
19 depending on the overall budget. The concern for all
20 of us with that is obviously, as we know, visitors,
21 they're an export. They come to the destination, they
22 leave money and they leave. And so not having the
23 proper funding to have appropriate strategic
24 marketing and sales programs to do the job so that we
25 can promote New York City. We've never questioned. We

2 don't have an awareness problem in New York City. We
3 do have an opportunity where if we're not marketing
4 at the level that we should to our competitors,
5 you're not able to get to actually buy. So it's one
6 thing to say, if you're in UK, I know where New York
7 City is. It's another actually to push the button and
8 actually make a visit and schedule a trip. And so the
9 concern that we have is, as we're looking at the
10 landscape today and the potential of the tariffs and
11 the impact that they could have, as well as increased
12 competition from other domestic cities, we could lose
13 our competitive advantage on both the domestic side
14 as well as the international side, and that will lead
15 to potential jobs obviously that we create. We have
16 388,000 jobs in the city that are tourism related so
17 those could be impacted and certainly the tax dollars
18 that we generate to the City.

19 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: And to the PEG that
20 we took last year, I'll include myself in the
21 general, we as the Chair, those three offices were
22 closed because of the PEG?

23 JULIE COKER: They were a part of the
24 reductions that we had to make because of a decreased
25 budget.

2 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Okay. And so are part
3 of our new needs for your organization going to be to
4 go back up to the 21.4? Or are we asking for
5 additional to ensure that we have expansive?

6 JULIE COKER: We are asking for an
7 additional. So we're asking for an additional. Our
8 new needs ask is 7 million for Fiscal Year 2026 to go
9 beyond the contracted amount of 21. And that's for a
10 number of reasons, as we all know, and I heard when
11 we walked in, you were talking about FIFA. So, we've
12 got international events. And again, similar to what
13 EDC was saying is that the game may be played in New
14 Jersey, but we certainly want visitors here. But we
15 also want to be able to bring journalists as well to
16 experience and feel the city so that they can then
17 promote out. And the other that we want to do is make
18 sure that we are competitive when we're talking about
19 the meetings and convention market. And then lastly,
20 all of the work that we do around the five boroughs
21 and getting folks into the city and then into the
22 five boroughs and supporting those community vibrancy
23 programs that we do, all of that will be covered if
24 we're able to have that 7 million ask.

2 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: And then just my last
3 question for you in terms of the conversations you're
4 having with the Administration on your new needs ask
5 of 7 million, have they began? Have we received any
6 feedback? What are my efforts going to look like
7 towards June?

8 JULIE COKER: We have submitted our new
9 needs ask and we have received some questions back.
10 What I would say of some of the questions that we are
11 facing are it isn't an a la carte menu, if you will
12 so if we do this or that. It really is a
13 comprehensive. So, in order to keep the staff that we
14 have and also do the work that we need to do from a
15 marketing and sales perspective, that entire 7
16 million is needed, especially as we're going into
17 2025, the balance of this year and, of course, Fiscal
18 Year 2026, we are going to be on a world stage with
19 having FIFA here, so all of the efforts that we have,
20 I believe that they understand and we are certainly
21 not tone deaf and know that there is a lot of ask on
22 the budget, but really because we are revenue
23 generating and there's a return on investment for the
24 dollars that are invested into travel and tourism, we
25 do think that the ask is reasonable.

2 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: I appreciate that
3 response. That's what I was going to end with. I
4 think each of you up here are worth investments as
5 all of you provide revenue generation, whether that's
6 with jobs and outcomes in our small economies or
7 impacting our larger tourism budget that increases
8 both small and large economies in the city.

9 So, those are the only questions I have.
10 Thank you all for coming and being on the panel. This
11 panel is now dismissed.

12 JULIE COKER: Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Thank you. Seeing no
14 one else signed up to testify in person, I'm going to
15 now turn over to virtual panelists.

16 If you are in person and are not signed
17 up to testify, please go to the Sergeant-at-Arms to
18 request an in-person testimony.

19 For virtual panelists, once your name is
20 called, a Member of our Staff will unmute you and the
21 Sergeant-at-Arms will set the timer at two minutes
22 and give you the go ahead to begin. Please wait for
23 the Sergeant to announce that you may begin before
24 delivering your testimony.

2 I will now call our first virtual
3 panelist, Malat Seyoum.

4 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: You may begin.

5 MALAT SEYOUM: Thank you. Good afternoon,
6 honorable Chairperson, audience, and distinguished
7 Members of the New York City Council on Economic
8 Development. My name is Malat Seyoum, and I'm the
9 Director of Local Affairs and Strategic Partnerships
10 at the New York City Network of Worker Cooperatives,
11 also known as NYC NOWC. We are the member-led local
12 trade association representing local cooperative
13 businesses and democratic workplaces in New York City
14 metropolitan area. And here alongside my colleagues
15 from the Democracy at Work Institute and the Center
16 for Family Life and our advocacy Council Members
17 representing 11 other organizations that make up the
18 Worker Cooperative Business Development Initiative,
19 asking the New York City Council to continue
20 supporting the expansion of worker ownership in next
21 year's budget and firmly into the future.

22 Since the inception of the initiative,
23 we've created over 200 new cooperative businesses and
24 over 1,200 new jobs that are not only providing
25 higher hourly wages, but also building wealth and

2 assets for individuals who are overwhelmingly BIPOC
3 women and immigrants. We have seen firsthand how the
4 initiative has helped to bolster our sector,
5 strengthening existing cooperative businesses, and
6 creating new ones. The initiative partners have
7 collectively worked to create a comprehensive
8 ecosystem of support for cooperative businesses that
9 are not only ensuring the creation of new
10 cooperatives in low-income areas, but also the
11 technical assistance needed to sustain businesses and
12 create jobs, as well as the education outreach needed
13 for communities, interested entrepreneurs and allied
14 organization. We did a lot of work during the
15 pandemic. We brought in over 20 million in grants and
16 loans for cooperatives to keep them afloat. And we
17 did this with a 3.7 million budget. We are asking the
18 City Council to enhance our funding to 5,097,082
19 dollars in order for our initiative to really double
20 down and do the essential work that's necessary for
21 the long-term economic recovery of cooperative
22 businesses that's really necessary and needed to claw
23 ourselves out of this crisis. We thank City Council
24 for the opportunity to testify and hope (TIMER CHIME)
25 that you will consider our budget priorities...

2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Your time has expired.

3 MALAT SEYOUM: During this year's budget
4 negotiation process. Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Thank you so much.
6 I'd now like to call Catherine Murcek.

7 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: You may begin.

8 CATHERINE MURCEK: Thank you for the
9 opportunity to testify online today. My name is
10 Catherine Murcek. I'm a worker owner at Samamkaya
11 Yoga Back Care and Scoliosis Collective. We're a
12 member of the New York City Network of Worker Co-ops,
13 or NYC NOWC, which is, as you heard, the main line of
14 partner organization in the WCBDI initiative. Your
15 support of our community of democratically run
16 businesses helps to protect and create jobs for
17 women, immigrant workers, and communities of color
18 across the five boroughs and a wide array of
19 industries. I am testifying today to urge you to
20 continue to support the great work of WCBDI,
21 enhancing their funding to their ask, which the
22 specific number is in my written testimony, 5.1
23 million approximately, and to support also commercial
24 rent stabilization to protect New York City's workers
25 and small businesses from displacement.

2 My co-op, Samamkaya, is a very special
3 little studio in Chelsea specializing in therapeutic
4 yoga for back care with classes online and in studio.
5 I'm proud to say that my 19 other worker owners and I
6 just celebrated 10 years of democratically running
7 the studio together in the same space the whole time.
8 To make yoga accessible to all ages and abilities, we
9 use specialized rope walls and equipment, which
10 incurred a hefty startup cost that we are still
11 paying back. Our co-op business structure makes us
12 unique among yoga studios in New York, and I believe
13 it's one of the reasons we were more resilient
14 throughout the pandemic than many of the other yoga
15 studios, which we sadly lost. Even though the
16 pandemic forced us to close our physical space, we
17 were able to band together and decide as a team on
18 how we would pivot, divide the labor. We worked
19 together to keep the studio afloat while we made sure
20 our teachers who most needed to be working could keep
21 teaching online and make ends meet. We were really
22 grateful to have access to technical support from
23 WCBDI partners and a couple of small grants that are
24 specific to work at co-ops. One example is NYC NOWK's
25 Cooperative Sustainability Fund that allowed us to

2 pay for consulting sessions (TIMER CHIME) with
3 another co-op, which helped us...

4 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Your time is expired.

5 CATHERINE MURCEK: Okay, there's more of
6 my written testimony. Just to wrap things up, please
7 enhance WCBDI's funding and please support commercial
8 rent stabilization to ensure a just recovery in New
9 York City for our wonderful community of small
10 businesses. Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Thank you, folks. And
12 just a friendly reminder with the two minutes to
13 speak, the hearing topic today is the Budget for the
14 New York City Economic Development Corporation. For
15 the organizations that are asking for expansions,
16 please email those requests on the funding or the
17 Speaker's budget requests to my office so I can have
18 those handy.

19 I'd now like to call on Ofelia Salgado.

20 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: You may begin.

21 OFELIA SALGADO: Hi. Good afternoon, and
22 thank you for your time today, Chair Amanda Farías
23 and distinguished Members of the New York City
24 Council on Economic Development. My name is Ofelia
25 Salgado. I am a corporate business developer at

2 Sunset Park Center for Family Life. We are a 47-year-
3 old social service organization committed to helping
4 low-income Brooklyn families to build sustainable
5 futures. I'm here today to respectfully request that
6 the City Council continue its support for worker-
7 cooperative business development initiative, as
8 again, my colleague, Malat, already mentioned, by
9 allocating 5.1 million dollars to the Fiscal Year
10 2026. Since joining WCBDI in 2014, CFL has incubated
11 27 co-operative businesses and domestic work,
12 empowering over 600 women to control their economic
13 futures. Each year, we train over 400 participants in
14 business management and cooperative leadership and
15 provide over 250 business consultations, ensuring the
16 stability and the growth of the existing
17 cooperatives. With your support, we've expanded our
18 impact and now reach every corner of New York City,
19 so we're not limited to Brooklyn and, notably, we
20 launched Up and Go, an online platform where clients
21 book services from worker-owned cooperatives. Since
22 2017, Up and Go has generated over 3 million dollars
23 directly benefiting more than 100 families. So
24 cooperative members now earn 33 dollars an hour.
25 That's more than double the typical 16 dollars an

2 hour for domestic work in New York City. And
3 importantly, very important, it has completely
4 eliminated any wage theft, ensuring safe and
5 equitable working conditions. These achievements are
6 possible only with the continued support of the New
7 York City Council. Your investment in worker-owned
8 cooperatives is crucial in combating economic
9 inequality and building resilient communities. On
10 behalf of Center for Family Life, thank you for your
11 commitment to economic (TIMER CHIME) equity and..

12 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Your time has expired.

13 OFELIA SALGADO: We look forward to your
14 continued support. Thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Thank you. I'd now
16 like to call on Ahn Thu Nguyen.

17 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: You may begin.

18 AHN THU NGUYEN: Hi. Good afternoon, Chair
19 Fariás and distinguished Members of the New York City
20 Council Committee on Economic Development. My name is
21 Ahn Thu Nguyen, and I am the Director of Strategic
22 Partnerships at Democracy at Work Institute, a member
23 of the Worker Cooperative Business Development
24 Initiative, or WCBDI for short. Thanks to City
25 Council's investment over the last 10 fiscal cycles,

2 we've provided significant benefits, inspiring
3 business owners, and become a model of innovative and
4 inclusive economic development that has been modeled
5 across the country now. Our initiative has created
6 and supports resilient employment and business
7 ownership opportunities, unlike any other in New
8 York, where we provide critical support to small
9 businesses, workers, and recent migrants, connecting
10 them to business ownership and employment
11 opportunities, especially when alternative routes to
12 employment and business ownership are unavailable.
13 Some key achievements in the past few years have
14 included the successful launch of AfriLingual, an
15 interpretation and translation cooperative that
16 provides language support in over 10 African
17 languages. This language access has been key to
18 offering on-ramps to economic and social mobility for
19 African migrants, and is currently being used as a
20 model for other interpretation cooperatives across
21 the country. In addition, the establishment of
22 Radiate Consulting, which is a professional services
23 consulting cooperative made up of CUNY graduates
24 which builds capacity for immigrant services
25 organizations and small businesses, including

2 administration, bookkeeping, curriculum development,
3 and trainings. The worker owners have deep experience
4 in these spaces and have come from these communities
5 themselves, so they know it best. In the past few
6 years, Radiate Consulting has doubled in size and
7 reached profitability within the first two years of
8 its launch. It's also become a model for workforce
9 development for young immigrant professionals that is
10 currently being replicated by the city of San
11 Francisco, amongst other cities that are looking to
12 see how they can bring young people into the
13 workforce. Since its inception in Fiscal Year 2015,
14 WCBDI has created more than 1,000 jobs and pathways
15 to business ownership, created more than 200 new
16 worker cooperative businesses to offer higher hourly
17 wages, better working conditions, and importantly,
18 build wealth (TIMER CHIME) and equity for workers. It
19 has reached more than 10,000...

20 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Your time has expired.

21 AHN THU NGUYEN: With education and
22 technical assistance services. I have more to share
23 in my written testimony, but I urge City Council to
24 continue investing in worker cooperatives in New York
25 City in Fiscal Year '26 to the tune of 5.09 million

2 dollars, which will provide for the startup of 31 new
3 worker cooperative small businesses and over 100 new
4 jobs, as well as technical assistance and education,
5 reaching over 2,000 existing startup and aspiring
6 cooperative entrepreneurs. Thank you again, and I
7 appreciate the time that you've given me for
8 testimony.

9 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Thank you so much.
10 Please make sure to email over your testimony so we
11 have everything on record.

12 I'd like to call up next, Christopher
13 Leon Johnson.

14 CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: Can you hear
15 me? Can you hear me?

16 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: We can hear you.

17 CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: Can you hear
18 me?

19 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Yes.

20 CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: Hello, Chair
21 Fariás. My name is Christopher Leon Johnson. I'm
22 going to show my support to the (INAUDIBLE) Alliance
23 when it comes to the OMNY Card situation. I think the
24 (INAUDIBLE) Alliance need to start calling out...

2 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Mr. Johnson, Mr. Leon
3 Johnson, you have to remain on topic. This is solely
4 on the Budget of the New York City Economic
5 Development Corporation.

6 CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: I know, but I'm
7 trying to show my support while saying that the City
8 Council needs to start telling the NYPD to stop
9 policing poverty at the busiest stations in the City
10 of New York. You guys have the money to fund the
11 NYPD. (CROSS-TALK)

12 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: So, this.. this
13 (CROSS-TALK) your testimony currently doesn't have
14 anything to do with the hearing topic. If you'd like..

15 CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: (INAUDIBLE)

16 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Okay. Here we go.
17 Let's talk about the economic development component.

18 CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: (INAUDIBLE) do
19 Economic Development. You're cutting my time, okay?
20 Because if this works in those impoverished
21 communities, these people are able to save money and
22 they're able to go and support, like NYCFC, go to the
23 NBA games. At the same time, they're able to start
24 buying, be able to use that money and buy Citi Bike
25 memberships, and that will help the City out a lot

2 because everybody in New York supports the Bronx
3 Democratic Party. Everybody knows that. Now, I want
4 to make this clear about the bike lanes that we need
5 to fund the DOT, but they should not obligate the DOT
6 for only bike lanes. What about the deliveristas?

7 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: As I've already
8 mentioned, DOT is not being heard at this budget
9 hearing. This is for the Economic Development
10 Corporation.

11 CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: (INAUDIBLE) do
12 economic development because this is about
13 infrastructure. It's about infrastructure.
14 Deliverista hubs, put deliverista hubs outside of
15 City Hall. Why hasn't the City Council implemented a
16 plan to really put it outside City Hall? It's been
17 approved by the Department of Planning. (TIMER CHIME)
18 It's been approved by...

19 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: The time has expired.

20 CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: Yeah, you cut
21 into my time, but I mean, that's what I've got to
22 say. But thank you, you cut into my time.

23 CHAIRPERSON FARIÁS: Thank you so much.

24 We have now heard from everyone who has
25 signed up to testify. If we have inadvertently missed

2 anyone who would like to testify in person, please
3 visit the Sergeant's table and complete a witness
4 slip.

5 If we've inadvertently missed anyone who
6 would like to testify virtually, please use the raise
7 hand function in Zoom, and a Member of our Staff will
8 call on you in the order of your hands raised.

9 Seeing none, I will now like to note
10 again that written testimony will be received and
11 reviewed in full by Committee Staff, and it may be
12 submitted to the record up to 72 hours after the
13 close of this hearing by emailing it to
14 testimony@council.nyc.gov.

15 And with that, this Committee hearing is
16 now adjourned. [GAVEL]

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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 April 11, 2025