

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

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March 25, 2025

Start: 9:34 a.m.

Recess: 1:35 p.m.

HELD AT: Committee Room - City Hall

B E F O R E: Shaun Abreu,
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Chris Banks
Selvena Brooks-Powers
David M. Carr
James F. Gennaro
Julie Menin
Kristy Marmorato
Sandy Nurse
Vickie Paladino
Lincoln Restler
Rafael Salamanca, Jr.
Sandra Ung
Inna Vernikov
Susan Zhuang

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

Javier Lojan
Acting Commissioner of the New York City
Department of Sanitation

Joseph Antonelli
Deputy Commissioner for Management and Budget

Joshua Goodman
Deputy Commissioner of Public Affairs and
Customer Experience

Rhonda Keyser
Cafeteria Culture

Janmairo Ortiz
PS/MS 46

Amy Vargas Santos
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Amaya Colbert

Camila Piron
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Scarlet Zapata
PS/MS 188

Mamadou Sy
PS/MS 188

Deborah
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Cayla Burser

Kayla Kyloni Kirston
New York Harbor School

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

Ellington White
Urban Assembly New York Harbor School

Gabriel Gilson
Urban Assembly New York Harbor School

Stevie Masonet
Student

Emily Farrell
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Jenille Scott
NYLPI

Eric Goldstein
Natural Resource Defense Council

Justin Wood
NYLPI

Andrea Lieske
Self

Louis Reyes
Queens Botanical Gardens

Clare Mifflin
Center of Zero Waste Design

Kenny Burgos
New York Apartment Association

Christine Datz Romero
Lower East Side Ecology Center

Justin Green
Big Reuse

Marisa De Dominicis
Earth Matters New York

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

Domingo Morales
Compost Power

Rhonda Keyser
Cafeteria Culture

Matthew Serello
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Maggie Clarke
Manhattan Solid Waste Advisory Board

Jimmy Martin
ACE New York

Shawn Campbell
CB14 Brooklyn

Lacey Tauber
Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso

Julia Werner
Self

Brandon
SOHO

Julie Stein
Union Square Partnership BID

Lauren Collins
Church - Flatbush Community Alliance

Evan Sweet
Meatpacking BID

Francesca Fernandez Bruce
Grand Street BID

Noah Sheroff
Bayside Village BID

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

Christopher Leon Johnson
Self

Joyce Bialik
Self

Mary Arnold
Self

Mohamed Attia
Self

Pedro Suarez
Self

Corazon Valiente
Self

Camelia Tepelus
Self

Anna Sachs
Self

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

6

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Good morning, good morning,
this is a microphone check for the Committee on
Sanitation and Solid Waste Management. This is done
on March 25, 2025. It is recorded in the Committee
Room and this recording is done by Ginelle Yearwood.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Good morning and welcome to
today's New York City Council Budget hearing for the
Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management.
At this time, we ask that you silence all electronic
devices and at no time are you to approach the dais.
If you would like to sign up for in person testimony
or have any other questions throughout the hearing,
please see one of the Sergeant at Arms. Chair Abreu
we're ready to go.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: [GAVEL] Good afternoon and
welcome to the Fiscal 2026 Preliminary Budget hearing
for the Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste
Management. My name is Shaun Abreu and I am the
Chair of the Sanitation and Solid Waste Management
Committee.

This afternoon we will be discussing the
departments \$1.9 billion fiscal 2026 budget. As
presented in the Preliminary Financial Plan and the

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

7

Preliminary Capital Commitment Plan for DSNY for
Fiscal 2025, 2029 which totals \$2.2 billion.

I would like to begin by thanking the members of
the Sanitation Department for their hard work over
the past year. The frontline responses of sanitation
workers have been on full display throughout the year
and because of their actions, our city is a cleaner
place. The Sanitation Department members are known
as New Yorks strongest and I believe that nickname is
apply given.

The Sanitation Departments Fiscal 2026 budget
totals \$1.9 billion with 9,478 full time positions.
The Fiscal 2026 budget as presented in the
preliminary financial plan is \$15.4 million less than
the Fiscal 2025 budget at adoption. Budget actions
in the preliminary plan increased DSNY's budget by
\$46.4 million in Fiscal 2025 and \$700,111 in Fiscal
2026 when compared to the November Plan.

The Department had three new heads for Fiscal
2024 totaling \$45.9 million for higher than projected
PS and OTPS spending across multiple program areas
and a new mobile battery drop off program. The
Departments Fiscal 2025-2029 Capital Commitment Plan
totals \$2.2 billion and supports 196 distinct capital

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

8

projects. The Committee has held oversight hearings on various topics over the past year about the city's containerization and refuse and organic waste and commercial waste zones.

The Committee would like to revisit this items and others including lot cleaning, which has not seen a full restoration, containerization and how costs are being potentially shifted to community organizations, litter basket service, Preliminary Mayor's Management Report indicators among other things.

I would also like to discuss headcount and the increasingly reliance on overtime to alleviate these decreases. It is the Council's responsibility to ensure that the city's budget is fair, transparent, and accountable to New Yorkers. As the Chair of this Committee, I will continue to push for accountability and accuracy and ensure that the budget reflects the needs and interest of the city.

It is essential that the budget that we adopt this year is transparent, accountable, and reflective of the priorities and interest of the Council and the people we represent. This hearing is a vital part of this process and I expect DSNY would be responsive to

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

9

the questions and concerns of Council Members. I
look forward to an active engagement with the
Administration over the next few months to ensure the
Fiscal 2026 Adopted Budget meets the goals the
Council has set out. I would like to thank our
Committee staff for their hard work, Financial
Analyst Tanveer Singh, Unit Head Aliya Ali, Committee
Counsel Morgan Barrett, Policy Analyst Ricky Chawla,
and my Deputy Chief of Staff Jalissa Quigley.

I would like to welcome and thank Acting
Commissioner Javier Lojan, our Sanitation Workers and
the Department Civilian Staff for the work that they
do.

I'm looking forward to hearing from the
Commissioner. The Committee Counsel will now swear
you in.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Good morning. Can you please
raise your right hands? Do you swear to tell the
whole truth and nothing but the truth and to respond
to Council Member questions honestly?

PANEL: I do.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. You may begin
your testimony when ready.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

10

JAVIER LOJAN: Thank you. Good morning Chair
Abreu and members of the Committees on Sanitation,
Solid Waste Management and Finance. I am Javier
Lojan, Acting Commissioner of the New York City
Department of Sanitation, and I am joined today by
Joseph Antonelli, our Deputy Commissioner for
Management and Budget and Joshua Goodman, our Deputy
Commissioner of Public Affairs and Customer
Experience.

I am in my 26th year with New York's Strongest,
and today, the men and women of this Department are
doing more to create and maintain a clean, livable
and sustainable city than at any time that I can
remember. This Administration has shown an
unflinching willingness to essentially run a street
sweeper over the avenues of red tape that had bound
filth to our communities for decades and has made
investments in personnel and equipment to match. We
are cleaning more areas, diverting more material and
enforcing quality of life more effectively. And
we're just getting started, with plans to expand or
refine virtually every one of our successful
strategic initiatives.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

11

1 Let me begin by sharing some astounding news.
2
3 Some new rat numbers and I know what you're thinking,
4 this is a new Commissioner, are we really still
5 talking about rat numbers? You bet we are. For the
6 last several years, we have been proud to announce
7 decreases in rat sightings across the city,
8 correlated with our efforts to get trash off the
9 street through containerization, composting and
10 enforcement programs.

11 But please allow me to emphasize, the numbers you
12 are about to hear are amazing in virtually any
13 historical context. For years, rat sightings
14 reported to 311 basically only increased. In 2023,
15 low double in the city's four rat mitigation zones.
16 That alone was cause for true, meaningful
17 celebration.

18 In December of 2024, was the first full month in
19 which buildings with one to nine residential units
20 were required to put their trash in bins. In that
21 month, rat sightings were down 23 percent compared to
22 the same time the year before.

23 January 2025 was the second full month
24 residential container rules, and rat sightings fell
25

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

12

24 percent compared to the same time the year before,
a time when sightings were already falling.

In February of 2025, the third full month in
which 70 percent of New York City's trash was covered
by requirements to use bins, rat sightings were down
26 percent compared to the year before.

This isn't an accident. It isn't an anomaly. It
is something that cynics in Chicago, LA, Paris and
even right here in our town never thought possible.
A turning of the tide in New York City's war against
rats. It is a direct result of once in a generation
change to the way that trash is set out, a trash
revolution being waged on many fronts with more still
to come.

In October of 2022, the Adams Administration
kicked off this effort by changing set out times for
both residential and commercial waste from 4:00 p.m.,
one of the earliest set out times in the country to
8:00 p.m. effective April 2023, while also allowing
earlier set out if the material is in a container.
This incentive of containerization was paired with
major changes to DSNY operations, picking up more of
the trash far earlier, including ending a practice by

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

13

1 which up to one fifth of the trash had already been
2 left out for a full day.

3
4 Just over one year ago, container rules went into
5 effect for all businesses of every type in New York
6 City, requiring them to get the trash off the streets
7 into a secure bin. We wrote 70,000 warnings to
8 businesses as this rule went into effect, and have
9 written tens of thousands of summonses since, gaining
10 broad compliance and bringing bins to restaurants,
11 delis, bodegas, drug stores, boutiques and everything
12 else on our commercial corridors.

13 As mentioned, the first containerization
14 requirement for residential buildings in more than 50
15 years went into effect November 12th, requiring all
16 buildings with 1-9 residential units to use bins.
17 This can either be their own or the official New York
18 City bin, the cheapest high quality bin available on
19 the market.

20 New Yorkers have purchased over 650,000 of these
21 bins at www.bins.nyc or at NYC Home Depot locations,
22 and as you can see in the pictures behind me, they
23 have fundamentally altered the look and feel of our
24 streets, replacing piles of black trash bags that
25 attracted rats, impeded pedestrians, and generally

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

14

made New Yorkers feel that no one cared about their neighborhoods.

Starting June 2026, this will be the only bin permitted for trash, to facilitate safer, cleaner mechanized collection. As you all know, I was a Sanitation worker and I am still one at heart and it pains me that fully half of our line of duty injuries are sprains and strains from throwing bags. The two Sanitation workers operating a truck with mechanical tippers will have one less thing to worry about.

DSNY worked hard and demonstrated the incomparable creativity of the public sector in developing a contractual model that made this bin the cheapest on the market by far and about one third of the cost of similar bins. I know that many members of the Council still wanted free bins to be made available to some homeowners as shown by the recent passage of Intro. 1126. While I respect your desire to ease cost to homeowners, no matter how reasonable those costs may be, I must share major concerns about how this bill can be implemented. DSNY was not given the opportunity to review a final draft version of the bill until 11:00 p.m. the night it aged, despite

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

15

1
2 longstanding practice, and none of the input we
3 offered was taken before it was brought for a vote.

4 As written, the bill requires DSNY to give an
5 unspecified number of trash bins to one and two
6 family homeowners who are also enrolled in the STAR
7 or E-STAR tax programs and provide reimbursements to
8 eligible property owners who have already purchased
9 bins. As we told Council Committee staff, in vain,
10 it turns out, STAR and E-STAR are state programs, and
11 we do not have the data on enrollment. A property
12 owner would have to submit their tax return to DSNY
13 and DSNY would have to store that information
14 securely. As an operational agency, we do not have
15 the resources or expertise to do this safely and
16 effectively. The bin is affordable, but this law
17 risks taking away Sanitation services that benefit
18 all New Yorkers in order to pay for a complex
19 reimbursement program that will benefit relatively
20 few homeowners.

21 The same is true for reimbursements described in
22 the bill. Remember, the manufacturer of the bin is a
23 City concessionaire, selling to residents directly.
24 No money changes hands with the city on either side.
25 To our knowledge, there has never been before a

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

16

legislative requirement to reimburse New Yorkers for an item they purchased from a private company, not once in the city's 400 year history. We cannot review receipts and mail checks. The Council has created a program ripe for fraud and waste.

We proposed automatic dispersal of bins to property owners enrolled in the city's senior and disabled property owner tax programs. This would have been simple and straightforward. While that legislative proposal was rejected, we plan to prioritize these homeowners over those with incomes of close to half a million dollars and will distribute bins subject to appropriation. This will give a free bin to most of the people of greatest need and allow containerization efforts to continue.

And they certainly continuing. You all know that 70 percent of the trash is already covered by the containerization requirements but we have a plan for the remaining 30. In just over one month, installation of stationary on-street containers called Empire Bins will begin in Manhattan Community District 9 for the first full-district containerization pilot, serviced by new automated side-loading trucks. This is one of those

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

17

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2 innovations where we talk about it so much that it
3 may be hard to maintain sight of how fundamentally it
4 changes the way trash is stored and collected in New
5 York City and thus our experience of the streets in
6 general.

7 This pilot will take those huge piles of trash
8 that are generated by the largest buildings off the
9 streets and instead store them in secure containers,
10 just like you'd see in Europe, South America or Asia.
11 Years faster than anyone thought possible. West
12 Harlem will see just over 1,000 Empire Bins, covering
13 more than 80 percent of their apartment units.
14 Unlike in other parts of the world, the bins are not
15 shared by the entire block. Bins will be assigned to
16 a single large building, using our density, which had
17 long been thought of the Achilles; Heel of
18 containerization, to our advantage, by allowing for
19 greater oversight. Property owners will have access
20 cards and designate appropriate staff to be able to
21 access the bins.

22 DSNY outreach staff is on the ground in the
23 neighborhood now explaining this process and upon
24 completion of the installation, use of these on
25 street containers will begin June 1st and we will

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

18

begin analyzing results and outcomes right away. But I must caution the members of this Council, if you would like to see this international best practice expand beyond West Harlem, if you would like to defeat the piles of trash and rats once and for all, there is pending legislation that must pass. Council Member Hudson is the lead sponsor on a bill that many of you have already joined, the Removing Animals from Trash Act or the RAT Act, is absolutely essential to the expansion of this program. Without that bill becoming law, this will just be another pilot for the dustbin of history and far more than just dust will return to our streets.

The same can be said for Chair Abreu's Intro. 1113 which would extend on street container requirements to city owned buildings. While we believe strongly in the spirit of this legislation, we know that city buildings just like residential buildings should not have a one size fits all approach. Schools and other buildings that generate large amount of waste should absolutely be moving towards an on street container model and we look forward to working with you Mr. Chair to get this bill targeted on those buildings specifically where

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

19

wheelie bins are not an appropriate containerization solution.

We know New Yorkers want this, as evidenced by the overwhelmingly passage of Proposition 2 last fall. We hope that you will join us in delivering for them.

Just another two points I'd like to make on containerization before we move on. First, you are all familiar with the BetterBin, our litter basket of the future, which is both easier to service than the traditional wire mesh basket and more rodent resistant. You may have some press reports that the roll out of these baskets could be impacted by tariffs between the US and Canada. I'm afraid that those reports are accurate. While we were able to get about 5,000 bins in this fiscal year ahead of the tariff but purchases next fiscal year will need to account for those tariff costs.

And finally, many of you have reached out with questions about the rule requiring Business Improvement Districts and supplemental sanitation service providers to stop placing bags directly on the street, which goes into effect August 1st. Despite what you may have heard, the idea is simple.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

20

Residents and businesses can't put bags right on the street. I can't just walk down to the corner and drop a trash bag. The rule simply holds BIDs and other similar entities to the same standard. The rule is agnostic in approach and we have proactively offered multiple options for how to comply.

Over the course of one on one meetings with 66 of the city's 76 BIDs as well as multiple meetings with the BID Association and with supplement services providers like ACE, we have explained that this could look like a stationary on street container for a mid-sized BID, an extra litter basket for a smaller one or direct trucking to a Sanitation garage for a large BID. We are working with all BIDs in good faith and many critics have come to see the importance of this program. I want to assure you that despite the effective date, we will not be summoning anyone who is making an honest effort to comply with this rule for a considerable period of time.

We can have clean sidewalks, clear corners, and passable curb cuts. We really can if we just see this through to the end.

Now I will seek to contain the desire to talk about bins and move to another exciting topic,

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

21

1 composting and the beneficial use of source separated
2 organic material. While curbside composting programs
3 have existed in New York City for the last decade,
4 until last October, none had ever served more than
5 approximately 40 percent of the city. When Mayor
6 Adams took office, he committed to developing a
7 universal program that works for New Yorkers and the
8 team at DSNY set to work developing a model built for
9 long-term success.
10

11 The resulting program is now running in the
12 entirety of our city providing residents with simple
13 universal weekly collection of leaf and yard waste,
14 food scraps and food soiled paper products on their
15 recycling day.

16 That simplicity is the most important part of the
17 program. There's no need for signups, special dates
18 to remember or specific locations to visit within
19 limited hours. Simply place your materials out on
20 the recycling day, your Sanitation workers will
21 collect it from your home and we'll ensure it's put
22 to good use. This is a composting program for all
23 New Yorkers.

24 Make the separation of compostable material easy,
25 and people will do it and we have the numbers to back

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

22

1 this up. In Fiscal Year 2024, DSNY diverted 265
2 million pounds of compostable material from landfill,
3 an incredible increase of 65 percent from two years
4 before. This is a testament to the value of simple
5 universal programs but we still hear from residents
6 of larger buildings in particular that their
7 landlords are not offering an opportunity to
8 participate in this program. I want to be clear,
9 under Local Law 89 of 2023, this is not optional.
10 All New Yorkers must participate, just as they must
11 separate their metal, glass, plastic, and paper, the
12 law gives DSNY the ability to enforce this mandate
13 starting April 1st but we have written well over
14 20,000 warnings thus far. When enforcement starts, a
15 new 311 service request will also go live, allowing
16 residents to report their buildings for failure to
17 allow participation in curbside composting.
18

19 I can assure you; we will investigate those
20 complaints. We have made participation easy, now
21 it's up to New Yorkers to follow the law or face a
22 summons.

23 Composting has a benefit not just for our
24 environment more broadly but also for NYC gardeners.
25 We give tens of millions of pounds of high quality

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

23

New York City compost away for free during spring, summer and fall but for many years, you had to either catch a pop up event or drive to a site on Staten Island to get it. Last year, we added a second site in Greenpoint Brooklyn, that is accessible by cyclists, pedestrians and public transit and we are working hard to add a third site in Queens before the end of the season. Some of you have asked me whether the success of curbside composting program means popular smart composting bins are going away. These 400 bins where residents can drop off their compostable material 24/7 through an easy to use smartphone app, are complementary to curbside service and will continue to operate.

DSNY would also like to raise the issue of commercial organic separation. As we have done at the last half dozen Council hearings, Local Law 146 of 2013, requires that certain commercial establishments to separate their compostable material, but this law is now substantially out of step with the city's commitment to diversion of compostable waste.

The Commercial Waste Zone system will improve commercial diversion, in that DSNY is requiring

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

24

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2 carters to charge businesses less to collect
3 recyclables and compost than to collect trash. But
4 we were thrilled to see that the Council is also
5 considering a bill to allow DSNY to require source
6 separation at all commercial establishments, in line
7 with the progress made in residential diversion. We
8 look forward to working with you on this proposal.

9 Now that we've mentioned Commercial Waste Zones,
10 I'll provide a fuller update on that program and our
11 implementation of Local Law 199 of 2019.

12 This law was designed to reform the commercial
13 waste hauling system by establishing new safety
14 standards for workers in the commercial carting
15 industry, improving service for businesses,
16 increasing diversion rates, and reducing vehicle
17 miles traveled as well as harmful emissions from
18 waste hauling vehicles.

19 When fully implemented, we are looking at about
20 12 million miles fewer traveled by commercial carting
21 vehicles. And, making good on a promise from when
22 this program was created, businesses will pay less
23 for the collection of recyclables and compostable
24 material than they do for trash at a citywide average
25 of 32 percent less for recycling and 18 percent for

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

25

compostable material. That means businesses will have a meaningful financial incentive to separate their waste properly.

In January, after years of planning and months of outreach, the first of New York City's 20 nonexclusive Commercial Waste Zones came online in Corona, Elmhurst, and Jackson Heights. In the past, advocates had called for DSNY to launch the entire city at once. Having led the roll out of this first zone, I can tell you I'm incredibly thankful we did not do that. This has been a successful launch. Incredibly, not a single one of the 11,000 businesses in the Zone has made a complaint to DSNY of any issues with service or billing, but our Bureau of Commercial Waste learned a tremendous amount during this first of its kind implementation that will be useful for future zones.

We are completing a data analysis that will allow for the start of the next zone or zones later this year, with more details to come at upcoming oversight hearing on this topic.

That said, we are actively enforcing Queens Central on both administrative and safety requirements. We are routinely writing safety

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

26

violations and we are seeing very strong compliance likely due at least in part to the significant fine escalators built into the Commercial Waste Program. With a total of about 200 violations written since the implementation of the zone began in September. The expansion of DSNY quality of life enforcement under the current administration is not restricted to Queens Central Commercial Waste Zone.

Since 2203, Sanitation has been the lead agency on enforcement of the city's laws around street vending. Our Sanitation Police Officers enforce these laws where they focus on cleanliness and pedestrian access and they conduct routine enforcement operations rooted in the belief that all New Yorkers across the neighborhood, in every borough deserve clean, safe sidewalks.

While we take a warnings first approach, often posting dozens of warning signs throughout an area before taking any enforcement actions, we also engage in robust enforcement to protect cleanliness and quality of life, and DSNY issued 3,725 vending related summonses in 2024.

Street vendors are a part of the vibrant neighborhoods, but the rules exist for a reason. So,

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

27

that those neighborhoods can be enjoyed by all and New Yorkers appreciate our enforcement as shown by support of Proposition 2. The expansion of DSNY vending enforcement under the ballot measure is the early implementation stage.

On the same day that DSNY became the lead agency on street vending enforcement, we were also designated to manage the city's graffiti removal program. We brought our operational knowledge to the organization of this program and in the FY25 PMMR, the number of graffiti service requests closed is up to 80 percent.

Recently, DSNY began enforcing the rules around mobile car washes, per a new law sponsored by Council Member Salamanca and passed by this Council. While this work is only beginning, we are encouraged by the early results about the impact this can have on cleanliness and quality of life. We are also continuing our interagency work around ghost cars and abandoned vehicles, through which tens of thousands of abandoned vehicles have been removed from our streets. In addition to the 10,000 more ghost cars since the ghost car task force was launched in September of last year. These unlicensed vehicles

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

28

not only steal public space and toll dollars but are
untraceable if used in crimes.

And like with containerization efforts, getting
this done just helps fight the feeling that the City
doesn't care about your neighborhood. I assure you
we do because it's our neighborhood too.

And with winter now behind us, I'm proud to say
that you weren't forgotten during snow season either.
If you grew up here, you likely remember the old days
of primary, secondary, and tertiary streets. That
kind of division in service level is over. Thanks to
the higher headcount and new technology for internal
monitoring, every street is on a route and every
route can be dispatched at the same time for snow
operations as soon as conditions warrant it, a
practice we call Snow Equity.

In the winter of 2024-2025, DSNY responded to 14
winter weather events and observed 12.5 inches of
accumulating precipitation. Half of these events
were in February alone and sanitation workers were on
12 hour shifts for weeks to address these conditions.

Thanks to their efforts and the administration's
investments, they were able to get the streets open,
even servicing car lanes and bike lanes at the same

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

29

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2 time. I want to take this moment to thank our
3 Sanitation workers for their efforts, for being the
4 heroes with the plow, and for remembering that no
5 matter what anyone says, it absolutely does still
6 snow in New York City.

7 There is so much happening at this agency, so
8 much that New Yorkers will never see. We have not
9 even touched on recent developments like the new DSNY
10 Highway Unit, which provides dedicated staffing to
11 clean the first places seen by visitors to our city,
12 the Targeted Neighborhood Task Force for cleaning
13 long-forgotten corners of neighborhoods and all city
14 owned property, and our plan to increase compliance
15 with mechanical brooms during Alternate Side Parking
16 by pursuing state legislation for automated
17 enforcement.

18 But all career public servants like the people on
19 both sides of this room chose our path not for the
20 credit or glory, but to do right by our communities
21 that have given us so much. A cleaner, more livable
22 city isn't just a job for us, it is a calling, and
23 all of the New York strongest are thankful for your
24 willingness to work to invest in our work.

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COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

30

With that in mind, I will now turn to the proposed 2026 budget. The Preliminary Budget includes \$1.996 billion in expense funds in Fiscal Year 2025 and \$1.93 billion in Fiscal Year 2026, reflecting increases of \$48.3 million and \$711,000 respectively, from the budget adopted last June.

Fiscal Year 2026 budget includes \$1.18 billion for personal services to support a total budgeted headcount of 9,478 full time positions, including 7,846 uniformed positions and 1,632 civilian positions, and \$756.5 million for Other Than Personal Services or OTPS.

DSNY's Fiscal Year 2026 Preliminary Capital Budget includes \$3.54 billion in capital funding in the 10-year plan, \$1.17 billion of which is for garages and facilities, \$2.25 billion for equipment, \$66.12 million for IT and \$53.98 million for solid waste management infrastructure.

The Capital Budget includes funding for several major facilities projects, including: \$487 million in funding for the construction of a new garage for Bronx Districts 9, 10, and 11 with demolition, \$283 million in funding for the construction of a new garage for Queens District 1, which is slated to

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

31

begin design next year. Upgrades to the facility that serves as the home for Bronx District 12 Garage, which has an overall budget of \$55 million and will begin construction next year. And the \$17 million finishing touches of the \$212 million build out for the brand new home for Staten Island District 1 and 3, which is slated to be completed this year. That project along with the new BK3 means we'll be opening three new garages at two buildings this calendar year. A rare milestone for this Department and a sign of this Administrations serious investment in the safety and wellbeing of Sanitation workers and the neighborhoods they serve.

Thank you and we look forward to taking your questions.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you Commissioner. I'd like to recognize Council Members Julie Menin, Sandra Ung, and Selvena Brooks-Powers.

Before we begin the Committee may not get to all questions or you may not have responses to all of our questions so we will definitely follow up with a letter for our unanswered questions. I want to begin with headcount and overtime. The recent Mayoral directive places strict controls on overtime spending

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

32

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2 across city agencies, including DSNY requiring
3 detailed reduction plans, monthly reporting, and
4 oversight from OMB with Sanitation services being
5 essential to public health and cleanliness. It is
6 critical to understand how these restrictions will
7 impact DSNY's workforce, service levels and overall
8 efficiencies.

9 What is DSNY's current staffing level compared to
10 the number of positions budgeted and who does this
11 reflect reliance on overtime?

12 JOSEPH ANTONELLI: Okay so our for FY25, our
13 budgeted headcount for uniformed is 7,955 and our
14 actual for year to date is 8,221. The headcount for
15 civilian personnel for FY25 is 1,632 and the actual
16 was 1,657.

17 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: DSNY is operating 409
18 uniformed positions over budgeted levels but is still
19 overspending on overtime. Can you make sense of that
20 please?

21 JOSEPH ANTONELLI: Okay, so the reason why we
22 spend on overtime for uniformed staff, so there's two
23 things that drive it. One snow events, which is a
24 significant amount. We've spent in excess of \$30
25 million this year just in snow overtime but

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

33

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2 secondarily the big issue is that our staffing levels
3 throughout the year fluctuate based on staff
4 availability. So, in the winter months like now,
5 vacations are lower than they are in the summer
6 months. So, right now we may be running surplus
7 sanitation workers on a daily basis and kind of only
8 have this event driven overtime where in the warmer
9 months, because that's when more people are on
10 vacation and kind of the allotments are maxed out.
11 On those given days, we may be running overtime just
12 to fill our minimum staffing that we need for the day
13 but on the whole, we're staying generally within what
14 our staffing levels allow for.

15 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: My understanding is that when
16 you have more uniformed positions than you're
17 budgeted, you know you would expect that it would be
18 less over time. Do you expect this trend to continue
19 where you're hiring above your budgeted amount?
20 Which should theoretically reduce overtime. Do you
21 think that that trend will continue where you're
22 hiring above your budgeted amount? Which should
23 theoretically reduce overtime. Do you think that
24 that trend will continue?
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COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

34

JOSEPH ANTONELLI: Yeah, I mean I would say in a historical context our overtime is down. Last year was an exceptionally low year and the reason for that is that we - so our hiring, we do it all at the beginning of the fiscal year. Because the main PEG program took place in November. There were a lot of cuts to program that were taken after we had already done our hiring for the year. So, what that actually allowed for was significant surpluses in Sanitation workers throughout the rest of the year which led to an exceptionally low overtime level but if you look at the more recent historicals like FY23, FY22, we're still down significantly from those years.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you. I would also like to recognize Council Member Sandy Nurse who has joined us. What steps is the Department taking to reduce reliance on overtime without compromising essential services such as waste collection, snow removal and street cleaning?

JAVIER LOJAN: So, a lot of times what we call as - we call them as garage utility jobs where we have to transport equipment, a service facility that's under warranty. We try to be more efficient in that and use existing personnel. Sometimes we have to

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

35

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2 push those jobs to another day. Another thing we do
3 is when we have absences, we push some of the
4 recycling routes to the later shift. It's not
5 something we want to you know do in practice
6 generally but that's a way that we try to keep the
7 overtime down and you know not go into overtime
8 costs.

9 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Has DSNY conducted a
10 workforce analysis to the Chairman of hiring
11 additional full time staff would be more cost
12 effective than having to pay overtime?

13 JAVIER LOJAN: No, we haven't done that Chair.

14 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Okay. What challenges has
15 DSNY faced in recruiting and retaining employees and
16 how does this contribute to increased overtime
17 expenditures?

18 JAVIER LOJAN: So, I think on the uniform side
19 recruiting has gone well. Thankfully as I mentioned
20 in my testimony, Sanitation workers do a great job.
21 They're recognized for it, which I think retention
22 and recruitment on that side goes pretty well. On
23 the civilian side, I think the only challenge we
24 have I with our mechanics where some of them are
25 starting to reach you know retirement age but I think

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

36

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2 you know working with the Administration and OMB,
3 they thankfully allowed us to start to backfill some
4 of those positions, so it's getting a lot better.

5 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: How does DSNY track and
6 monitor excessive overtime usage by employees and
7 what safeguards are in place to prevent abuse of
8 overtime pay?

9 JAVIER LOJAN: So, along with the support of
10 Deputy Commissioner Antonelli, we isolate the top
11 overtime earners. So, historically we used to have
12 the top 50, now we expanded to the top 100 and we go
13 line by line every month and some of them are
14 justified. Example, auto mechanics run overtime in
15 order to keep you know up our downrates but we
16 evaluate every position and on top of that, every
17 bureau head is required to get authorization from
18 either myself or DC Antonelli on any overtime related
19 to that. So, that's how we keep track - control with
20 that.

21 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you. Are you finding
22 that those who have been isolated to the highest
23 overtime - have you seen progress in those
24 individuals by and large, those overtimes going down
25 over say the past year or so?

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

37

JAVIER LOJAN: So, with the auto mechanics, which is the majority of them, we haven't seen that as much. Like I mentioned before, working with OMB, we've just in December, we started hiring some of those positions. I believe we were 31 heads below the same period, October 23 headcount, which is when the PEGs began. So, now we're starting to fill some of those positions, so I think when the next few months, once we actually fill them, we're doing hiring pools. We'll start to see some relief in that and also snow season contributes to that because now we're focused on keeping the snow equipment up and also you know the frontline vehicles like collection, dual bins and mechanical booms up at the same time.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: According to the Mayoral directive, DSNY must submit monthly overtime reports and justify any variances from its reduction plan. Where reductions have been achieved so far and what challenges remain in meeting these targets?

JOSEPH ANTONELLI: So, we have monthly calls with OMB to go through the targets and to go through what overtime we spent for the month. What we actually go through is we do a day by day recounting of how many, basically how many sanitation workers we had to

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

38

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2 schedule on overtime for that day and walk through
3 exactly what the events were on each day. You know
4 over the past few months; it's largely been either
5 directly snow or the days after a snow event where
6 we're catching up on collection or it's been for
7 holidays and catching up on collection after the
8 holidays but those have been the drivers and we go
9 through a day by day analysis with OMB.

10 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you. I'm going to now
11 transition to the Manhattan Community District 9
12 Containerization program. Just to temporarily bring
13 smiles to your faces. The New York City Department
14 of Sanitation is launching a pilot program to
15 containerize 100 percent of residential trash in
16 Manhattan's Community District 9. Encompassing
17 neighborhoods such as West Harlem, Hamilton Heights,
18 Manhattanville and Morning Side Heights.

19 This initiative aims to improve street
20 cleanliness and reduce rodent infestations by
21 requiring all residential properties to use
22 designated containers for waste disposal by June 1,
23 2025. In the current pilot program from 143rd to
24 153rd, I believe rat sightings have gone down by
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COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

39

over 60 percent, which is clearly a big victory and really exciting to see.

What is the projected timeline for expanding the containerization program beyond M9 to other community districts in New York City? I believe in your testimony you need authorizing legislation which obviously I think you know I'm supportive of. A lot of Council Members are but assuming that that were to pass will be the timeline to get to other districts.

JAVIER LOJAN: So, I think a lot of that's also contingent on the pilot and the findings of it. So, as you know, in April, right around the corner in a few weeks, we're going to start installing the containers on the 18 schools in the district and then by June 1st, we'll be fully operational. About 1,100 bins will be installed and I think in order for us to get a good sense of what the rollout looks like after that, I think we should evaluate the pilot a lot more and see what works, what doesn't work but I think you know as you mentioned Chair and as I mentioned in the testimony, the legislation is a big part of that because of the funding necessity for it.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you for that. Speaking about it, you know the effectiveness of the pilot,

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

40

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2 what specific criteria and metrics will DSNY use to
3 assess the success of the M9 pilot before deciding on
4 broader implementation?

5 JAVIER LOJAN: So, as you know the 311 rat
6 sightings SRs are a big piece of that. Also, we have
7 created a web form where our employees and building
8 managers will be able to report any issues and I
9 think a big part of that will inform us on you know
10 the findings of the pilot and you know obviously as
11 we go on, we might find things that you know, we're
12 not thinking about now but we can always expand it
13 but I think that's where we'll start off with and
14 take it from there.

15 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you. What is the total
16 budget allocated for the M9 containerization pilot
17 and how are these funds distributed across different
18 components of the program?

19 JOSEPH ANTONELLI: Sure, so this year, the budget
20 is \$3.4 million. So, \$278,000 of it is for the
21 containers themselves. We're employing a leasing
22 model and given that we're starting so late in the
23 year, it only covers the last few months of the year.
24 There's also money for the collection costs. The
25 personnel staffing is \$643,000. This year, we had a

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

41

one-time cost for a mailer of \$1.1 million in support of our outreach efforts. The environmental impact study also this year, a one-time cost of \$750,000. And then we also have some civilian staffing to oversee the program at \$630,000.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Do you expect those costs to be the same year to year? Obviously the mailer program probably won't be needed next year but do you expect the other cost like personnel and container costs? What's going to be the maintenance cost for these containers?

JOSEPH ANTONELLI: So, the cost on the containers, I think it's better to talk about it on a per bin basis. So, the leasing model, which is an all-inclusive, it's the cleaning, it's the maintenance and everything, is \$95.05 a bin per month and that kind of gives us this constant, unless there's some sort of you know catastrophic issue with the bin. This kind of gives us a constant, this is what we expect the bins to cost.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: And based off of the RFP that was you know provided to [INAUDIBLE 00:41:16] last year -

JOSEPH ANTONELLI: Yes.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

42

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: You can use that same RFP for future districts as well for containerization expansion?

JOSEPH ANTONELLI: That's correct.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Assuming that there's authorizing legislation?

JOSEPH ANTONELLI: Yes, so the contract is only registered for the M9 pilot but the way we did the RFP would allow us to amend that contract to add additional districts if we were authorized to do so.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you. Will property owners or residents incur any cost for the implementation and maintenance of the Empire bins and if so, what financial assistance programs are available to them?

JAVIER LOJAN: Chair, are you referring to the M9 pilot?

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Yes sir.

JAVIER LOJAN: No, so thankfully the cost for the pilot was fully funded, so the residents will not incur costs for the on street containers for the pilot.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you sir. If the program expands citywide, what is the estimated cost

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

43

of upgrading the entire DSNY fleet to include
mechanical trucks compatible with Empire bins?

JAVIER LOJAN: So, I think that's something we
have to continue to do an analysis on. The cost for
the side loading truck is \$621,000.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Per truck?

JAVIER LOJAN: Per truck. I think once we get
the legislation passed and we know we're going
citywide, I think we'll have a better sense of the
need because remember part of the legislation has the
10 to 30 unit universe of buildings.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Based on the opt in schedule,
yeah.

JAVIER LOJAN: Right, so the more buildings that
opt in, the more the truck need goes up. So, I think
it's contingent on that.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Obviously, we can't predict
how many property owners from 10 to 30 units will be
able to opt in but assuming that there were
legislation that will go into effect, that would
provide for on street containers for 31 units or
more, what would be the number of sanitation trucks
that would be needed to service those areas?

JAVIER LOJAN: I'll pass it to DC Antonelli.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

44

JOSEPH ANTONELLI: So, the reason why we don't have that estimate right now is we need to see the results of the pilot from - really from a capacity of the truck standpoint. So, right now obviously, our 25 cubic yard trucks, we know exactly how much we can pack in it, how many tons and everything. This truck is an entirely new truck to us. It's a body being imported from Italy. We have what the manufacturer says that the capacity should be. We've done our own compaction testing to kind of come up with estimates of how we can do the routing in M9 but until we have it on the street and we actually start packing these trucks out on a daily basis, we really won't understand how they compare to our current trucks and whether or not it would just be a one for one replacement or if there is actually an additional truck need.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: I mean yeah, we have to start thinking about it and digging into that because obviously I think this Committee has a lot interest in trash containerization and to be able to plan for a full transition to what that would look like, figuring out what those details would look like.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

45

I'd like to transition now to litter basket service. I'd like to recognize Council Members Banks and Paladino for joining us.

Maintaining an appropriate level of litter basket service is crucial in maintaining street cleanliness and reducing waste related complaints across New York City. Despite securing \$22 million in FY23 and \$25 million in FY24 for increased service, these funds were a one-time allocation, requiring the Council to renegotiate for continued funding each year. While expanded service has led to a record decline in 311 litter complaints, overflowing baskets remain a persistent issue, particularly in districts that have not received equal levels of service.

Ensuring baselined funding in FY25 and beyond is critical to maintaining equitable and consistent service citywide. First question is, why does the Administration continue to fund expanded litter basket service on a year to year basis rather than committing to baseline funding in the budget, despite the data showing that this improves cleanliness and reduces public complaints.

JAVIER LOJAN: So, Chair as you know, this is a very creative agency. We'll always try to develop

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

46

new efficient processes but there are some issues when you could really only do more with more. While we understand - I'm sorry. While we understand that this is part of the negotiation process, what I can say is that we just look forward to working with the Council and the Administration on that funding for the outyears. But as you mentioned, this has been - the service has been effective and we will look to making those adjustments where you know you've seen lapses or lower levels of service where they are needed.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Yeah, I mean when I speak to my lawyers in my district, you know I go to events and I tell them, you know we can't take for granted these litter baskets but I feel like our city government you know in most part I think I would say from the Mayor's side hasn't made this a priority for baselined funding but this is something that we have to you know fight for year to year and we take our litter baskets and the servicing of those litter baskets, a lot of us take it for granted because we think that that's something that's just going to appear automatically but the truth is that the budget process doesn't reflect, doesn't reflect that. And

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

47

1 so, that is something that we need to I think
2 prioritize in this year's budget and truly baseline
3 our litter basket service. What would be - what
4 amount would we think would be needed to cover the
5 original intent of this bill right? Which was for
6 twice a week, six day a week service for litter
7 baskets but it was later discovered that the
8 additional funding will not cover that. What is the
9 amount needed to cover this expanded service of twice
10 a day, six day a week service for litter baskets?

11 JAVIER LOJAN: So, I don't have that exact
12 number. Sometimes we don't - there's areas that we
13 don't believe need two time a week service. Two time
14 a day service, sorry. We just believe in equitable
15 service, so those are the areas where we look to make
16 adjustments on and work with you know Council Members
17 and the Committee on making those proper adjustments
18 where necessary.

19 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Yeah, if at the next upcoming
20 hearing, if you could provide us that information or
21 through a letter on what that cost would be, even if
22 the agency doesn't think it would be something we can
23 accomplish. Obviously we want to know what that
24 number is to be able to work towards realizing that.
25

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

48

JAVIER LOJAN: Absolutely.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Second, how does the uncertainty of yearly funding for this impact - how does the uncertainty of yearly funding for this impact DSNY's ability to maintain stable operations and plan for long term service improvements?

JAVIER LOJAN: It doesn't because we do our hiring like DC Antonelli mentioned earlier, we do our frontloading hiring in the summer, so it doesn't impact it.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: If this funding is not included for Fiscal 2026, what impact would it have on litter basket servicing levels, particularly in high foot traffic in underserved areas?

JAVIER LOJAN: So, that would be something we'd have to look at holistically in areas where we feel we'd have to make adjustments. Obviously, we'd get creative like I mentioned, I mean currently right now our refuse collection, house for collection routes are serving those litter baskets. We look to gain some efficiencies there and in any of the existing programs we have like PCI and T&T and try to leverage where we can and not have any lapse of service.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

49

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: It's fair to say it would
have some level of impact?

JAVIER LOJAN: Yeah, I'm sure there will some
level of impact, obviously we want to minimize those
in many areas.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: What is the estimated
population served by expanded litter basket service
and how does DSNY ensure that high density or high
traffic - high foot traffic areas receive adequate
coverage?

JOSHUA GOODMAN: Council Member you know we
believe that every New Yorker obviously is impacted
by an empty litter basket and negatively impacted by
a full litter basket but your question really gets at
the issue with mandating twelve time a week service
at every single one of the 23,000 litter baskets.
Now of them need it and it can only be accomplished
by taking away service from the areas you just
mentioned, high foot traffic in underserved
communities. We try as hard as we can to put our
emphasis on communities with greatest need when it
comes to litter basket service.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: I'm going to now pivot to the
new bin and then after this set of questions I'll ask

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

50

1 - I'll move over to my colleagues to ask some
2 questions. The latest phase of DSNY's
3 containerization initiative has raised serious
4 questions for BIDs, Business Improvement Districts
5 and organizations like ACE, which have long provided
6 supplemental sanitation services to neighborhoods
7 across New York City. Under new regulations, these
8 groups will be fined if they place collected trash
9 bags next to DSNY waste receptacles despite having
10 done so for decades as part of a partnership with the
11 city. With limited alternatives and expensive
12 compliance requirements such as purchasing costly
13 waste containers or operating private garbage trucks,
14 many organizations are now forced to consider cutting
15 services, jeopardizing the cleanliness of business
16 districts and residential areas. What financial
17 systems if any is DSNY providing to BIDs and
18 nonprofit organizations like ACE to help them comply
19 with new containerization requirements?
20

21 JAVIER LOJAN: So, as of now, we're not looking
22 for any financial assistance. What I can say is once
23 the rule was passed, which goes in effect August 1st,
24 we have extended the warning period to run till the
25 end of the year. So, January of 2026 is when we will

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

51

begin enforcement but I will say that when I took over, I made it a point as when I took over as Acting Commissioner, I made it a point of emphasis to have productive conversations with all BIDs. So, out of the 76 BIDs citywide, we've had calls with 63 of them, okay and plus we've met with ACE. We have 27 site visits have been scheduled to date. We've had 50 completed and we'll continue to do those as much as possible. That's my commitment and I think part of that is when we've had these conversations and site walks. We find efficiencies and their initial estimates so a lot of times the challenges they face, we walk through with them and find creative solutions or again, efficiencies to try to get any of those costs down.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: I'd like to recognize Council Member Banks. For how long will there be a grace period or delay in fine implementation?

JAVIER LOJAN: So, until the end of the year, through the end of this calendar year is the warning period. So, we will not issue any fines for the rest of this calendar year.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Do you have any idea if you know if the Administration will be committed to

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

52

1 helping the you know these struggling nonprofits pay
2 for bins? Because at the end of the day, they are an
3 extension right of really what I think the Department
4 should be doing right, which is cleaning up our
5 streets and that you know manual like pickup is
6 what's making our streets cleaner. I see them as a
7 natural extension of really your work and that's
8 really supplementing your work. I think this is
9 something that the Admin ought to look at funding to
10 make it easier for them for compliance. What do you
11 think?
12

13 JAVIER LOJAN: Yeah, so Chair, I'd look forward
14 to working with the Administration and the Council on
15 that but I think what we really need to do is just
16 work together with them and we can find solutions to
17 almost all the BIDs. So, I think as we have more
18 conversations and meetings with them, I think we're
19 going to find that they'll be productive and we'll
20 find ways for them to not incur as much costs.

21 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: I'd like to recognize Council
22 Member Carr. What will be the impact on DSNY's own
23 sanitation resources if organizations like ACE and
24 BIDs are forced to suspend services due to the
25 financial burden of compliance?

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

53

JAVIER LOJAN: Uhm, as of right now, we really don't know what that impact would be. So, hypothetical, since we don't know which bids or groups would not continue to work. So, right now I don't have -

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: I mean, I think the impact would be quite significant. I see Josh nodding his head. Sorry, Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner.

JOSHUA GOODMAN: Mr. Chair, I just want to say this, a lot of misinformation out there about this rule and what it requires. A business, a resident, can't walk down to the street and leave a trash bag behind. If that resident or business, they don't know I'm a nonprofit, they also wouldn't be allowed to leave a trash bag behind. We've had so many productive meetings with these organizations, with the BIDs, with ACE where they go, "Well, yeah, I guess it's not going to cost nearly as much as I thought. Thank you for helping me see that it's not what I thought it was." But there are a lot of people who are still talking about this. By the time that any sort of enforcement begins, it will have been well over a year since this was first brought up. For the smallest BIDs, there are zero cost

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

54

1 solutions. For the largest BIDs, we're working with
2 them closely. They don't need financial assistance.
3 If it turns out that a BID is operating in good faith
4 but can't comply by January 1st, they're not going to
5 receive a summons. They are in close contact with
6 us. The idea that we would say everybody has to get
7 their trash off the street, except these groups.
8 This is trash is allowed to go out on the street
9 still. Clean streets means clean streets for
10 everybody and we are working so closely with these
11 groups. So I really want to emphasize that there's a
12 lot of people who are just as - two years ago, we sat
13 in here and heard, businesses could never get a bin
14 and then they did. Residents could never get a bin
15 and then they did. There is a way to solve this and
16 we are working hand and glove with the BIDs to get
17 this done.
18

19 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: I mean look, I'm not
20 disagreeing that there's no such thing as magic trash
21 or trash that smells better than other trash or trash
22 that's unsightly and other trash that is beautiful to
23 look at right but there is a real fiscal financial
24 burden that these BIDs are facing and so far, I feel
25 like there's no real solution on the table for them.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

55

1 That is my position and I believe that is the
2 position of many of our colleagues here today. I'm
3 now going to turn over to Council Member questions.
4 Council Member Julie Menin.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER JULIE MENIN: Thank you so much
7 Chair and thank you for your testimony today. I have
8 two sets of questions. One on litter baskets, one on
9 rat litigation. Litter baskets that's probably one
10 of the number one complaints I'm receiving in the
11 district of overflowing litter baskets. I'm paying
12 out of my office budget to increase litter basket
13 pickup to four times a day during the week. So, my
14 question is, what can be done to increase the amount
15 of litter basket pickup beyond what we're currently
16 doing and this is obviously a citywide question.

17 JAVIER LOJAN: So, I think that one of the things
18 that I would like to look at is why they're
19 overflowing. A lot of times it's miss use and I
20 think I'd like to look at that before we increase
21 because there's been times we've tried different
22 approaches. Increasing the level of service
23 obviously may solve the problem but the root cause is
24 probably you know illegal drop offs by maybe nearby
25 residents or businesses, so I'd like to know if

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

56

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2 that's areas, specific areas in your district and I'd
3 like to look at that and see what's contributing to
4 that because realistically, litter baskets are meant
5 for paper cups, small things like that. If they're
6 overflowing after four times of a day service, there
7 might be a bigger problem there that I'd look at
8 before increasing that.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER MENIN: Okay, absolutely no, I
10 encourage you to come out and do a walkthrough of the
11 district, that would be incredibly helpful. Also, on
12 litter baskets, are you planning on any kind of
13 changes in service schedules or deployment of
14 additional baskets in response to ongoing demand
15 across the city?

16 JAVIER LOJAN: No, I think what we look at, one of
17 the things that we started was and I'm sure we've
18 said it at previous hearings is trash stash where we
19 bring a borough command every week to headquarters
20 and the borough chief and his or her district
21 superintendents get questioned on 311's stats
22 primarily. One of those stats are overflowing litter
23 baskets. So, when we see an increase whether it's
24 the week to date, 28 day or year today, we question
25 them and ask them what's the cost rate? What do they

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

57

1 think the cost rate is? And that's where I think we
2 do adjustments and make adjustments to routes or any
3 kind of service levels within their existing
4 resources. So, I think that's been very effective
5 and we'll continue to do that.
6

7 COUNCIL MEMBER MENIN: Okay, on rat mitigation,
8 uhm, so obviously appreciate the comments you've made
9 on rat mitigation but I'm still concerned that we are
10 not deploying techniques that other cities are
11 utilizing. We know if you visit other major cities
12 across the country, they simply do not have the level
13 of rats that we have proportionately in New York
14 City. When I first came into office in the Council,
15 our team research, what all other major cities were
16 doing, we found that cities like Boston and San Diago
17 were using a novel technique of carbon monoxide to
18 fumigate the tree pits. We brought in our own
19 exterminator who we are utilizing in my district. We
20 send our exterminator out to any block and they
21 fumigate the tree pits. We've had amazing success
22 with this. It doesn't mean you're never going to see
23 a rat because we know rats are at construction sites
24 and other areas but this technique is cost effective.
25 It works, it's also safer in terms of putting down

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

58

poison visa ve children, pets, etc.. So, can you talk about why the Sanitation department is not utilizing this technique citywide?

JAVIER LOJAN: So, I think some of those techniques would probably be better suited for the Department of Health, but I think that the approaches that we've mentioned about containerization have been the most effective. And again, I'd love to do a site walk with you in your district and see the areas and maybe there's other things that we see. Sometimes what we do see is residents comply when they place out their refuse and containers but then they store them in bags on the side. So, that could be an area that we could look to make improvements on but I'd love to have a walk through and see where you're seeing these rodent sightings and maybe take a different approach.

COUNCIL MEMBER MENIN: Absolutely, no I'd love to do that because obviously and I'm a big supporter of containerization and we know that's going to make a difference but that's only one of the tools in our toolbox. That is not enough to eradicate the rat population in New York City, so we need to be thinking outside the box. I definitely want to show

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

59

you what I've been doing in the last couple years in my district with our own exterminator that we're utilizing and we've had great success with that. Thank you Chair.

JAVIER LOJAN: Great, thank you Council Member.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you Council Member.

Now, Council Member Ung.

COUNCIL MEMBER UNG: Thank you for the testimony Commissioner. I just have a few questions. Intro. 987, Local Law 67, that was from last year. It's about and which is one we worked very hard to pass. It's about the increase. Sorry, the increased fines where repeated violators of the [INAUDIBLE 01:01:24]. Has that program been in implementation?

JOSHUA ANTONELLI: Council Member, we loved working with you on that legislation. I can tell you one thing that has been a huge help is it's gotten right into every one of our Community Board and SEG Association presentations, warning everyone in attendance about the escalating fines. I'm actually not sure on the current status of implementing the fines themselves but we are telling people that they are going to face escalating fines and it's definitely helping.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

60

COUNCIL MEMBER UNG: So, they're not sent to the education part of the program has been implemented but can you get back to me whether or not the actual fines? Because I believe it's supposed to take place 180 days after passage of the law, which is the end of June last year.

JAVIER LOJAN: Uh yeah, my Chief of Staff had actually said it has been implemented so yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER UNG: Great, do you have any numbers on you know like how it's going? What are the fines?

JAVIER LOJAN: We can get back to you on that.

COUNCIL MEMBER UNG: That would be great, thank you and the second set of questions I have is about the street vendor enforcements. Right now, how many of agents are there citywide for street vendors?

JAVIER LOJAN: So, the specific to street vending enforcement. Those are a uniformed headcount of 40 employees.

COUNCIL MEMBER UNG: For the entire city?

JAVIER LOJAN: For the entire city, correct.

COUNCIL MEMBER UNG: Do you think that's sufficient?

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

61

JAVIER LOJAN: Uhm, it's hard to say. I think right now we have areas that we get constant complaints on. I think one of the things that is effective is just reinforcement of our presence there. I think of course having more would be effective. I just think that currently right now, with the areas that we have, it's sufficient enough. If we want to expand beyond that, then I guess we'd love to work with you on expanding that.

COUNCIL MEMBER UNG: Can you just - how about how many do we have for the Borough of Queens?

JAVIER LOJAN: So, that's a citywide unit. So, we move them around as necessary, so it's not specific to any borough.

COUNCIL MEMBER UNG: So, you move them around according to what's needed in the different boroughs?

JAVIER LOJAN: Correct, so again, we go through any 311 complaints, any external complaints and we rotate them around as necessary.

COUNCIL MEMBER UNG: Do you know on average how often they are in the Borough of Queens?

JAVIER LOJAN: I'd have to get back to you on that with those specific numbers.

COUNCIL MEMBER UNG: Okay.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

62

JAVIER LOJAN: Well, just the only thing I could say is that when we were doing the operation on Roosevelt Avenue, we were there virtually every day but there's other areas that you know we've been working on but I can get more specific numbers for you.

COUNCIL MEMBER UNG: That would be great if you could get back to me on the Borough of Queens and I'll just say my district, which is District 20, how often are you there? Thank you.

JAVIER LOJAN: Okay, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Yeah, let's get Council Member Ung what she needs. Council Member Brooks-Powers please.

COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you Chair. Thank you Commissioner. I'm looking forward to hosting you in my district. I think we have that scheduled now.

I want to start with - it's on. You can't hear me? Bless you. Containerization policy change. DSNY's proposed containerization rules could impose significant financial and operational burdens on organizations like ACO and BIDs, potentially jeopardizing the supplemental Sanitation work they

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

63

1
2 provide. What consideration has Sanitation given to
3 this impact policy on these organizations and what
4 are the alternative solutions? And I know this
5 question is reoccurring but I did talk to Deputy
6 Mayor Joshi before she departed and I know things
7 were to be worked out but I never got a conclusion to
8 that conversation in terms of what formerly will be
9 decided to be able to ensure that these organizations
10 are left unharmed?

11 JAVIER LOJAN: Sure, so the first thing we want
12 to do is obviously go through the solution of
13 containerization, right and I know that's probably -
14 I feel that that's the most costly. I think one of
15 the things we want to look at with that is, there are
16 initial estimates. Sometimes their initial estimates
17 might be higher than what the actual need there. So,
18 when we do site visits with them, we look to see any
19 efficiencies there. The sighting of these containers
20 sometimes plays a role in that and again, it depends
21 on how many bags are generated. So, you can go as
22 low as you know \$6,000 for an on street container and
23 some of the bigger ones can be like \$12,000 per
24 container. So, that's just one.

25

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

64

1 The other one are tow trucks, which one cubic
2 yard tow trucks which can hold I believe what was the
3 bags? How many bags? About 20 bags. That's another
4 solution which they can you know obviously it's
5 mobile, it's not fixed on the street. Taking it to
6 our sanitation - designated sanitation garages and
7 then I think also where the other areas where we can
8 get creative is if they have a centralized location
9 that they can bring their bags to and containerize
10 them, we can work with them on - it doesn't have to
11 be an on street container. And then also, maybe
12 adding you know doubling up some corners and making
13 you know, extending that - the need for bagging them
14 up during the day is another way of gaining
15 efficiency. So, I think every BID and every
16 organization is unique. Recognize that, so I'm not
17 going to say one of those will always work but I
18 think when we do the site walks with them, I think we
19 will find other solutions that we're not thinking
20 about now. We're open to any of those.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: So, I have a
22 follow up to that but I'm going to come back just in
23 the interest of time, because I have a few district
24 specific things I wanted to ask on the record.
25

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

65

1 So, one is case closures without cleanup. There
2 have been multiple reports of Sanitation cases being
3 marked as closed without the necessary cleaning
4 services being performed. How does Sanitation track
5 and verify the completion of the cleanup request
6 before cases are closed? And is there an internal
7 review process to ensure accountability when issues
8 are reported as unresolved? And I will say and we
9 have spoken to Antonio a number of times when we get
10 these complaints in. I will literally see the photo
11 before and then after the case is closed. My
12 constituents will go and take a picture and it will
13 be the same if not worse. And so, it had not been
14 cleaned up.
15

16 Another thing is Sanitation, excuse me, response
17 times, many constituents have expressed frustration
18 over the slow or inadequate responses to Sanitation
19 complaints. So, in alignment with Council Member
20 Ung, how does Sanitation prioritize and allocate
21 resources for Sanitation issues? And for me, I'm
22 asking particularly about Southeast Queens and are
23 there plans to improve response times and
24 transparency in case Resolutions? And I got two more
25 questions, so I just want to get it all in my time.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

66

So, the next one is the illegal; three more.

Illegal dumping, what steps is Sanitation taking to address the persistent illegal - issue of illegal dumping in our district? Are there plans to increase enforcement surveillance and/or penalties to deter illegal dumping and I did work very closely with then Commissioner Tisch to be able to get those resources in terms of the cameras and would love to see more investment there. Empty lots, how does Sanitation coordinate with property owners to ensure that vacant lots are properly maintained and do not become hot spots for litter and illegal dumping? You know are there any proactive measures you all are doing with that?

And lastly, waste disposal on a snake road and when you come out to the district, I will introduce you to the infamous snake road and I just want to know what the current plan for waste disposal and cleanup along that strip of roadway is. It's really Brookville Boulevard but locally we call it Snake Road and are there any targeted initiatives in place to prevent illegal waste build up in this area in addition to the cameras that we were able to work together on. Thank you Chair.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

67

JAVIER LOJAN: Okay.

COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: I'll repeat
whatever you need me to.

JAVIER LOJAN: Okay, so the first question I
believe was the unresolved closure of complaints.
So, that is something that is unacceptable and that's
something that we closely look at when we have these
trash stash meetings. So a lot of times we will dig
into these chronic areas and we're able to see the
SR's and the photos that are supplied. If we see a
constant chronic condition calling, the question is
why is this reoccurring and the borough command and
the superintendents have to explain. Sometimes
there's valid reasons for it and the areas that
they're not, I hold them strictly accountable, so if
there are areas that you are finding, I'd be glad to
take those before I walk through and even after
because that's something I take seriously because
it's not something that I take lightly.

I believe the second question was about the
service - the amount of time to closure. So, that's
another thing that we've tracked is the 311 service
level agreement timeline and each 311 SR category has

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

68

different type of timeframes where they're able to
close it.

COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: That's going to be
inaccurate because again we've seen that they have
been closed prematurely.

JAVIER LOJAN: Right.

COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: So, you're going
to see that the time is within that frame you're
looking for.

JAVIER LOJAN: Right.

COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: So like there
needs to be like a qualitative method internally to
make sure that what is being closed is truly
resolved.

JAVIER LOJAN: Right, yeah so that is something
that I'll be glad to take those specific instances
where you're seeing that and I would again action
those right away and see why that's happening because
that should not be happening. We never tell any of
our supervisory personnel to close something out just
in the interest of meeting the SLA. That's something
that's not accepted in its practice, so if it's
happening, it's happening in areas that's not

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

69

authorized but I'd like to get more information on
that when we have time.

I think you also asked about illegal dumping and
what we're doing. So, I think so we've for the
calendar year of 2024, we saw an increase of 18
percent impounds through cameras and then a 40
percent increase on summonses. As you know, the
initial fine is \$4,000 and impounding of the vehicle
and I think it's proven to be effective and I'd love
to continue to work with you on finding areas. I
think one of the things we are seeing, which we are
exploring with our enforcement division, is areas
where we're not seeing as much illegal dumping from
the cameras, may be seen where we can move them
within the district and seeing that that is effective
at all because obviously people get hip to it and
they realize where the cameras are and they're not
going there. So, we're looking to see where we can
move them and how that plays out because that is
something that I have noticed with our enforcement
chief and we are looking to explore that.

And the last one I -

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

70

COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: Yeah, the last question was uhm the Snake Road, yes but we have some cameras that are there now.

JOSHUA GOODMAN: I'll just say that Council Member, we were very aware of the persistent issues in this area. I think you know Chief Pitts, our Chief of Cleaning Operations.

COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: Yeah he's amazing.

JOSHUA GOODMAN: He basically slept there for a month. Like he was really deep and you know it's a marshy area so forgive me, it was deep in the weeds on it. It's a persistent problem. I think we would be interested in working with other agencies to see whether you know things like fencing might be appropriate in some of those areas but I completely agree with you, the cleaning it over and over again is not a long term solution. Although in the meantime we will do that.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Alright, let's move on to the next set of questions.

COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Council Member Nurse.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Thank you Chair. Good morning.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

71

JAVIER LOGAN: Good morning.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: I'm going to ask about the CWZ. The Curbside and I have some other smaller questions. Do you have a and I'm sorry if you already said this because I know sometimes people come in late and you have to repeat yourself but have you communicated to the Carter's timeline for the next zone or zones coming online?

JAVIER LOGAN: No Council Member, so that's one of the things that we are ready to announce in the next few weeks. I think we can - we have a hearing next month and we can probably talk more about that. I think we're working closely with OMB on making sure we have the adequate resources for the rollout of the next zones and the remaining 19 zones but part of my testimony that I did want to reiterate is that Queens Central was not very successful and one of the things that you know I feel good about is that we have virtually zero complaints from businesses.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Yeah, I read that.

JAVIER LOGAN: So, I think that that was a great thing. So I understand we want to get this thing rolled out and that's definitely one of our priorities.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

72

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: How much - how many - I read your testimony, I understand. What level of resource do you need to bring on a zone? Like for each zone you bring on, what is your communications budget? What is your outreach budget? You know how many staff do you need every time you roll out a zone?

JOSEPH ANTONELLI: I mean at this point right now; we have 17 people who are on staff right now. We have a few hires that are pending with OMB but you know we're confident that we're going to get them and they're going to go through without an issue.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: How many hires are those?

JOSEPH ANTONELLI: So we have three that are pending at OMB right now but we just submitted those, so we don't think there's going to be any issue.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Okay, so with your current capacity, you think you'd be able to bring on another zone?

JOSEPH ANTONELLI: At the current level, yes we could bring on another zone, yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Okay and so do you think you'll be able to bring on another zone this year?

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

73

JAVIER LOJAN: Yeah, I think we'll definitely
bring on another zone.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: It will be one or
multiple?

JAVIER LOJAN: Uh, ideally I'd like to do
multiple but you know again, we're working closely
with OMB on that.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Okay, and can you just
state for the record what kind of data points you're
collecting as you've rolled out this for the first
three months of the year? I know you mentioned in
your testimony; you'll have some sort of analysis
later to provide but could you - do you have anything
initial that you could share? You know what is that
data telling you?

JAVIER LOJAN: So, the biggest thing is you know
any complaints from the businesses as I mentioned. I
think another thing to highlight are you know so a
big part of commercial waste zones was the safety
aspect from the private Carters. So, one of the
things that we looked at; we've issued 156 notice of
violations during the transition period and then
since the implementation period we've issued an
additional 37 NLV's. So, I think - and virtually

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

74

we're seeing almost close to no safety violations by the Carters. We are still seeing some of them but I think that you know the numbers have dropped substantially and I think that's one of the other data points that we're looking at.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Okay, I'm going to turn to curbside. Can you talk about how much money is your communications budget this year as a whole for the whole department?

JOSEPH ANTONELLI: So, I don't have that total. I think the issue with the communications budget is that it's in a lot of different places in the budget but we can certainly get back to you on that. Because we have - it's scheduled out programmatically by the different program areas.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Okay, well can you get specific to the curbside program? How much money do you have dedicated for public education awareness around it? Can you talk about how many education campaigns you've run since the city has been fully on? And what are the specific mediums you're using beyond your social media accounts? Yeah.

JOSHUA GOODMAN: Well, the biggest thing I'll say Council Member is that we have in flight right now,

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

75

so some people have probably already gotten it and some people will get it in the next couple of days, a mailer to every resident about the beginning of enforcement of the fines under Local Law 89 of 2023. So, that's roughly a \$1 million cost to send a citywide mailer and you will probably be interested to know that you're receiving one version in the single and two family homes that just says, don't forget you can get a fine. And if you live in a larger building than that, every resident is getting one that basically says -

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: They're sending out a piece of mail?

JOSHUA GOODMAN: Yes, that says that you can call 311 to report your building not composting.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Okay, what about the communication? I don't need to know what's exactly in it but you're sending out a piece of mail saying enforcements beginning or the morning period is over. So, that's one piece of education campaign beyond your social media. What else are you all doing?

JOSHUA GOODMAN: Visiting every community board.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Okay.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

76

JOSHUA GOODMAN: Civic associations, moving through our list, we're holding info sessions both targeted at the general public and targeted at building maintenance staff and we're waiting to hear back, the Department was awarded \$2 million in federal funding for composting outreach. As you know, a number of federal funding items may be influx at the moment.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Right, you're not sure.

JOSHUA GOODMAN: We have a plan in place to do substantial paid media with that funding if available.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Okay, great. Chair, do you mind, I have two questions?

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Yeah, you go ahead.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: I'll be very fast. One, cameras, how many DSNY cameras are currently uninstalled and in your inventory? And if you don't have it, if you could text somebody while we're here to pull that up.

JAVIER LOJAN: I believe we installed all of the ones that we -

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: You currently have zero uninstalled cameras in your inventory?

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

77

JAVIER LOJAN: Correct, yeah.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Okay and then I just - I do want to say that I know there's going to be a lot of questions about the bids and the supplemental cleaning. I pay for supplemental cleaning in places where we don't have BIDs. In fact, I only have one BID in my district. It just got legislatively done. It's very new, so it would be helpful for you to detail for the record what are solutions for places that don't have a corridor. You're kind of putting onus on these organizations and you know we rely on them so much in areas where we don't have merchant associations that can pay for their own supplemental cleaning.

JAVIER LOJAN: So, I just want to understand your question correctly. You just want me to speak to some of the different avenues they have to be in compliance with the rule? Is that correct?

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: So, if I have an area - I pay for areas that maybe don't even have commercial corridors. They're just these areas that I can't get enough level of service despite \$150,000 or whatever we're paying for mobile, litter patrols because you guys don't have enough trucks in my district on any

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

78

1 given day to go out and take care of dump outs and
2 things like that and just general street cleanliness.
3 So, areas where there might not be enough merchants,
4 there might not be a lot of residents but it's
5 disgusting and there is a lot of foot traffic, we put
6 supplemental cleaning there, so what can we do about
7 these areas that are long? You know it's not like
8 you - it might be uhm, they do ten bags in that area
9 or five bags in that area but then for them to put it
10 in a truck option, take it down to the garage,
11 especially out where we're getting into less dense
12 areas and your garages are more geographically
13 further out, it kind of really - it really eats into
14 the time they have to actually do the actual do the
15 actual clean run?

17 JAVIER LOJAN: Right, I think one of the options
18 that might work are the tow truck options. A tow
19 truck is one cubic yard. It can hold like 20 bags
20 and that's an area I think it might be effective in a
21 circumstance like that, and there might be an area
22 within the district that you know that's central that
23 you know they can put these tow trucks in. We can
24 work together on. Knowing when that schedule is when
25

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

79

they service them and then we would coordinate on servicing you know those bags that they service.

COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Yeah, I will just say I do think that the Administration should consider putting up money for these organizations to do it and necessarily relying on the Council to fill in that gap because I think that's probably what's going to happen, is it's going to get kicked to our pots or kicked to the Council to pick that up. This is your initiative and you should have thought about this. You should have thought about the consequences of it and the recalibration that it was going to take and I think you all should put up the money for it to help people figure it out and help these organizations figure it out because the fact is, we're going to continue to need to use them. There's no universe in which we're not using them.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you Council Member. Council Member Banks. Before that actually I'd like to recognize Council Member Salamanca. Go ahead Banks.

COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Thank you Chair and thank you to the Commissioner. First of all, let me begin with the containerization when we talk about

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

80

1 supplemental services. With the implementation of
2 the city's containerization law requiring
3 organizations including those provide supplemental
4 cleaning to purchase and maintain complaint
5 containers, what fiscal considerations if any were
6 made for small organizations that may not have the
7 capacity to absorb these added costs and the
8 organizations that provide the supplemental cleaning.
9 Obviously it will force them to seize operations to
10 comply with these particular laws. What contingency
11 plans does the department have to prevent these
12 services, these gaps that may come about in these
13 high needed districts where the supplemental services
14 are needed badly. And also too, when it comes to
15 these organizations like ACE and the Employment of
16 Opportunities, do you see any value in these
17 organizations?
18

19 JAVIER LOJAN: Okay uhm, so the first question
20 was the financial impact.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Correct.

22 JAVIER LOJAN: Uhm, so yeah, I think that's part
23 of our conversations with them and then once we set
24 up the site visits, we work with them on seeing what
25 their actual need is. I think sometimes when we do

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

81

the site visits, we find areas where maybe they don't need as much of the containers as they need or sometimes they don't realize about the till trucks or any other methods that we have. So, I think that's one area where I think we work with them.

COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Do you see value in these organizations that provide the supplemental services especially to communities like mine?

JAVIER LOJAN: Yes, of course we do.

COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: You do see, okay. Uhm, and just to echo what my colleague Nurse said, obviously the ownership should be on the Administration to come up with the funding to support these organizations. This is your plan. This is your initiative and to hurt communities like mine, because of the lack of planning in a sense to me is unfair and there's a grave injustice to our community.

When it comes to vendor enforcement, I want to encourage you - I would like to invite you out to my district where we've had major issues with the vendors, especially on the sanitation side, along Fountain and in that particular industrial area and then the 42nd Council District. So, I want to invite

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

82

you out to maybe do a walk through so you can see the condition that has been created by some of these vendors and I know it was stated earlier that there's only 40 enforcement agents throughout the city. Uhm, how many of those agents have been relegated to the 42nd Council District and what's the amount of summonses that have been given?

JAVIER LOJAN: So, the 40 employees that are assigned to the legal vending unit are not defined to one particular area. We move them around citywide and I'd have to get back to you -

COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Well, when you're getting multiple complaints from 311 of a particular area, what's the action plan? I mean, so when it comes to, when you have that degree of amount of complaints, what's the response from Sanitation? Is it an organized effort?

JAVIER LOJAN: Yeah, we send our lieutenants to investigate the area and uhm, we definitely take action. So, if there's areas that you know -

COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Well, are you aware of the particular area I'm talking about where there's been a major influx of vendors since the closing of the Aqueduct?

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

83

JAVIER LOJAN: Uhm, which area was that?

COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: That's in the 42nd Council District. That's like the Fountain area, Workman, Stanley, Colzene.

JAVIER LOJAN: I think that is one of the areas but -

COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Well, if you can do our walk through. If you're not aware, we'd definitely love to show you what's going on back there and hopefully we can develop a strategy to keep that area clean.

When it comes to the street sweepers, and I may -

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Yeah, just 30 more seconds please.

COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: If you may allow me, thank you. When it comes to the street cleaners, some agree that the current street cleaning measures are effective as they believe that trash is usually moved from one side of the block to the other. Has there been any investment or exploration into modernize alternative street sweeping equipment?

JAVIER LOJAN: You mean as far as the current equipment we have?

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

84

COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: The street sweepers that you currently have. Residents are saying that they're not cleaning the streets and I know folks say that may be relegated just because cars are not being removed but when there are - you know when the cars are removed from the streets and the sweepers do come down, I've seen it many of times. The trucks or the sweepers, they're not adequate. They're just throwing trash down to the corner or they're being moved to the other side of the street. Are you exploring any other - is there exploration into modernize alternative street sweeping equipment that can effectively keep the streets clean?

JAVIER LOJAN: I understand. So, we have explored other types of equipment. One of the street sweepers that we've looked into is our three arm mechanical broom which has two segments on the side. One has one on the front but to your point about it going down the block and not sweeping, I think part of the issue that we had which I think we're getting through is some of the older equipment that wasn't relinquished and cycled out, sometimes we see those problems and what we tell operators, you know they have to use water. Sometimes when it's a little too

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

85

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2 cold, they can't use water and that loses the
3 effectiveness on the sweeping but you know I think
4 right now, the fleet of sweepers that we have, we
5 find them to be effective and we're always exploring
6 new ways.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Okay, thank you and just
8 my last question and then I'll wrap it up. When it
9 comes to budget allocations for illegal dumping, we
10 know that there was a state allocation from Senator
11 Roxanne Pacade to put up dumping cameras in my
12 district. I need to know exactly where these cameras
13 have been placed and yeah, where have the cameras
14 been placed and how many have been placed?

15 JOSHUA GOODMAN: Yeah, one thing that I do want
16 to point out, the state hasn't released the money yet
17 for that. You know when City Council allocates
18 money, it's a very quick process. We're able to
19 spend it right away. With the state, it essentially
20 turns into a grant application and it takes a
21 significant amount of time, often years for us to get
22 that money. So, we're I think we're at the final
23 stages of actually getting that money but we don't
24 have it yet.

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COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

86

COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Thank you so much and if we can just get some further information as to when that money is realized. So, if we can have a conversation where those cameras can be placed appropriately. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Council Member Carr.

COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: Thank you Chair. Commissioner, good to see you. I just want to begin by thanking everybody at Sanitation for their hard work, particularly our local operations folks, our bar chiefs, they're phenomenal.

JAVIER LOJAN: Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: I want to begin by talking about the Curbside E-Waste program that used to exist in Staten Island. It did not make it until this current years budget and I've noticed over the last few months a significant uptick in illegal dumping generally and that you know we see a lot of electronic waste in increasing amounts in these dumped areas, so I was wondering if we could get support for this to be returned for this year's budget because as you know in the prior administration, it wasn't supposed to be a Staten Island only program. It was meant to be rolled out

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

87

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2 to the other boroughs as well. Can you comment on
3 that?

4 JOSHUA GOODMAN: Council Member, thank you for
5 raising this program. Obviously it's something that
6 the stops and starts are never productive. One thing
7 that we can share, I think you know is that last
8 year, we or this most recent fiscal year, we almost
9 tripled the number of hours that the special waste
10 sites where you can bring these types of material are
11 open. There's also state legislation that requires
12 takebacks at a wide variety of retailers. We'd be
13 happy to work with you on making sure that people who
14 may think illegal dumping is their only option
15 understand that there's actually more places than
16 ever that they can bring e-waste.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: I appreciate that but
18 they're not always convenient right and they're not
19 always as well know as we'd like them to be and
20 frankly, not all the retailers do so on a consistent
21 basis despite the state mandates. And so, I think we
22 really need to return to the curbside model. That's
23 the most effective way to make sure that these items
24 are retrieved legally and don't end up on the sides
25 of our streets, right?

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

88

1 The whole point of the state ending of
2 landfilling of e-waste was to protect our natural
3 areas. We're not protecting them and we've had a
4 great partnership over the years between our office
5 and your agency and the DA's office combatting
6 illegal dumping and it's just getting worse, so I
7 think we really need to return this program to where
8 it is and then return hopefully to the rollout to the
9 rest of the city. But I want to move on to organics
10 collection. It's been alluded to that next week is
11 the beginning of the enforcement period. I've
12 already received a lot of complaints from
13 constituents who have got the warnings because they
14 didn't put out their brown bin. Even if their home
15 was unoccupied, didn't put out their brown bin
16 because maybe they didn't think there was enough to
17 warrant putting out their brown bin that day, even
18 though they are separating the trash and the
19 organics. So, I'm really concerned that come next
20 Tuesday, a lot of folks are going to be getting fines
21 that don't deserve it.

22 JAVIER LOJAN: No and that's one of the things
23 that uhm we have seen. I can reassure you that once
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COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

89

the fine period begins, we will not issue any of the summonses to areas like that.

So, I think right now what our messaging has been is that if there's no bin out, it's essentially more of the reminder of what is going to happen. I think we've used that as more of like an effective tool to say, hey reminder like starting April 1st, this will be a fine but once April 1st comes, our enforcement personnel are required to look through the trash to ensure that there is in fact a violation. So, that is one of the -

COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: They'll be examining what's been put out.

JAVIER LOJAN: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: And so, is there internal to the department or in conversations with OMB a target for fine generation for the coming fiscal year? Is there any kind of notion of that and is there - or is there an expectation on your part on a dollar figure for that?

JAVIER LOJAN: On an expectation on I'm sorry?

COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: On the dollar figure for the fines you expect to generate in the coming fiscal year.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

90

JAVIER LOJAN: No, I mean our goal is to try to increase diversion. We're not you know looking for revenue on any of this. If we see the compliance shift, so that will be telling once the waits and the reports come in weekly and we see that improving, that's where we're going to see. But as far as revenue generating, that's not something that we're looking for. That's not the goal of this program.

JOSHUA GOODMAN: I just want to add Council Member just because I saw a few reactions to the comment that Sanitation enforcement personnel might be going through the trash for this. That's not a new enforcement tactic right? You've been required by law to separate your metal, glass, plastic and paper for 20 years and that's how that enforcement works. Contact screws, they're not necessarily opening the bag, but contacts screws from the outside of the bag to know what's inside of it.

And as the Commissioner mentioned, the standard will be much stricter for violations than it is for warnings.

COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: I appreciate it. Listen, I have no problem with organics collection. You know as you know, I come from the borough that had the

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

91

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2 biggest landfill and we want to stop landfilling
3 waste as much as we can but I don't want it to be a
4 burden to constituents who you know are doing their
5 best to comply with the new mandate. I appreciate it
6 Chair, thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Just one quick question on
8 that. What's going to be the primary basis for
9 enforcement? Is it going to be the presence of bins
10 primarily at this phase or is it also the sorting?

11 JAVIER LOJAN: No, it's going to be the sorting.
12 That's the only way the violation is valid. If the
13 bin is not there but they are finding another way to
14 maybe they're doing their own composting in the back
15 yard, I don't know.

16 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: And what are you anticipating
17 in terms of enforcement? Like how big is the team
18 going to be? Like, uh,

19 JAVIER LOJAN: So, right now we have 203 sector
20 supervisors that are assigned to areas across the
21 city every day. Those are the same people that
22 monitor the street sweeping and do everything else
23 and they are the only ones that are going to be
24 monitoring this. We don't have any dedicated staff
25 for this. So, but in their travels as they're

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

92

checking the streets. If they find violations, those are the ones that they're going to be issuing summons to.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Salamanca.

COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Thank you Mr. Chair. Good morning Commissioner. I want to start off by just thanking your agency for the good work and relationships throughout the years that we have and being accessible and having that direct access.

Commissioner, I just want to I have not much time so I just want to get answers to these questions really quickly. Ghost cars, I know it was a problem years ago. We have addressed the issue but we still have an issue with some of these ghost cars or our vehicles, at least in my district that do not have license plates.

With the prior Commissioner, I worked with a director with Sanitation. You had an NYPD Enforcement Division. Does that division still exist?

JAVIER LOJAN: Yeah so we have the personnel assigned to this and they report up to us every day with their operation, so that is something that we still have in place.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

93

COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Alright. I'll get more details on that when we do our walkthrough next week. The warm weather is upon us now. There was a bill that was passed about a year and a half ago, two years ago on enforcement of unregistered mobile car washes. Do you have a number of how many mobile car washes you picked up from the streets last year?

JAVIER LOJAN: Sure, so since the enforcement began on August of 2024, we've issued 418 summonses and impounded 153 vehicles.

COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: 418 summonses and how many vehicles?

JAVIER LOJAN: 153 vehicles.

COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: And do you have a breakdown by borough?

JAVIER LOJAN: Uh, no Council Member I'd have to get back to you but I'll get you the information.

COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Alright, one of the biggest issues that I have with my constituents is when the law was changed in terms of containerization of the household trash. Where they would have to go purchase the trash cans. Unfortunately in my community, these trash cans are disappearing. My constituents homeowners mainly are purchasing these

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

94

1 trash cans and they are disappearing. Not too long
2 ago, I had one of my constituents to write a letter
3 to OATH; hopefully that they could be understanding
4 that he received a violation because his trash can
5 wasn't there.
6

7 What programs do you have at all for these
8 situations where these trash cans are basically being
9 stolen from these homeowners?

10 JAVIER LOJAN: So, right now the only mechanism
11 we have is just the process of them reporting it to
12 the local precinct and unfortunately we don't really
13 have anything in place to get them a new bin or
14 anything like that but that's the only thing I could
15 say about that.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Yeah, I imagine it's
17 happening out on the boroughs but I know in the
18 borough of the Bronx, at least in the South Bronx,
19 it's a concern and it's a major issue for us. And
20 then finally, I was talking to my colleague here
21 about illegal - the cameras for illegal dumping. I
22 know that more than half of my - I had a big chunk of
23 my district that's industrial and therefore we're
24 having issues with illegal dumping, especially in the
25 Hunts Point side of the community. We're also seeing

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

95

1 a lot of illegal dumping on BIDs where we have
2 individuals - we have many migrants that are selling
3 produce at what we call end of life produce. If you
4 don't sell it in a day or two, you have to get rid of
5 it and unfortunately, we're having issues in certain
6 parts of BIDs like the 4th Avenue BID where they're
7 finding locations and there literally just dumping
8 their produce that they cannot sell.
9

10 I know that my office in the last four years has
11 allocated \$558,000 to Sanitation for cameras. Can
12 you tell me how many cameras we have in the borough
13 of the Bronx and how many cameras we have in my
14 district?

15 JAVIER LOJAN: I'd have to - just in the interest
16 of time, I'm trying to get that for you but one of
17 the things I do want to say that we can work through
18 is we're exploring the use of the mobile cameras.
19 Right now we have very limited amounts but I think
20 that may work as a deterrent that we can try and see
21 if that works in the area that you mentioned.

22 So, we bring out, it's a mobile camera. The only
23 limitation is the amount of time it could stay up
24 with the power because it's not tied to you know an
25 existing power supply but I think that's one of the

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

96

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2 areas we can look to see if it's effective as a
3 deterrent or maybe finding you know where, whose
4 dumping these materials that you're mentioning. And
5 I'm sorry, I'd have to get back to you on the actual
6 camera breakdown.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Alright, do you have a
8 total number amount of how many cameras you have
9 installed in the entire City of New York?

10 JAVIER LOJAN: Yeah, it's 331.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: 300 and?

12 JAVIER LOJAN: 31.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: And can you at least
14 off the top of your head, do you know how many are in
15 the borough of the Bronx?

16 JOSHUA GOODMAN: Just while we're looking for
17 that Council Member, I just want to say your cameras
18 have been so productive. I think you know that we
19 post social media video from them all the time and
20 it's your - all the time, the enforcement team is
21 sending videos. There from the ones in your
22 district.

23 JAVIER LOJAN: It's 18 installed in your
24 district. In your district, 18 cameras yeah.

25

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

97

COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: 18, okay. We'll talk Monday, I think I should have more than 18 cameras installed in my Council District. Yeah, alright, well, we've allocated almost a half a million dollars for them, I think I should have more than 18 cameras you know installed in my district.

JAVIER LOJAN: Okay we'll confirm that and just reaffirm the numbers.

COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Okay. Thank you Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: No, thank you. Lincoln Restler, Council Member.

COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Thank you very much Chair Abreu. I really appreciate your impressively effective leadership of this Committee. You've done a great job, so thank you very much for championing many of the things that me and my constituents are concerned about and Commissioner, it's good to see you and your team. I really firstly just want to say thank you. Thank you for continuing to lead on containerization. Thank you for the diligent cleaning efforts across District 33. We love partnering with the Department of Sanitation in our Office and are really grateful for you and your teams

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

98

work. I'll just shout out Rebecca in particular.

Whenever we bother her with any issue, she comes up with a solution and puts us in touch with exactly the right person and we really appreciate it.

I do just also want to thank you for one other thing and then I'll start asking questions is at the last time I was at a hearing with the Department of Sanitation, we asked about the feasibility of a 25 gallon bin to help my constituents effectively containerize their garbage and I am immensely grateful that you and your team took that suggestion and have actually tried to make it happen. And so, I know there's you know some final steps you guys are working through but I'm really appreciative that you're willing to hear from us, take our suggestions and try to actual make them happen and I know that my constituents are going to be thrilled when they start to see the 25 gallon bins as an option for them in their homes.

Okay, we've been hearing a lot from ACE and I think I have seven business improvement districts across my district. We fund ACE on five different routes across our district. They all do an essential

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

99

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2 job in supplementing the work of Department of
3 Sanitation.

4 I guess, you know I support containerization of
5 garbage wherever and whenever we can but we also want
6 to make sure that we're not making it impossible for
7 these folks to do their really important work. I've
8 been impressed that your team has been meeting one on
9 one with the BIDs in my district to try and identify
10 solutions and I know you've been in touch with ACE.
11 Do we have a commitment that you're kind of working
12 toward tailored solutions to try and help us
13 containerize garbage wherever we can, whenever we
14 can, kind of on a case by case basis across the city?

15 JAVIER LOJAN: Of course Council Member and
16 again, the last thing I want to do is you know take
17 any of these organizations out of business. You know
18 we want to work closely with them. I'll go out of my
19 way, me and my team, to make sure that they get as
20 many meetings and walk throughs as necessary. So,
21 yeah, that's my commitment to this initiative.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: A couple other things.
23 I'm very jealous of the Chair of the Committee and
24 all of the good containerization work in some ways,
25 not in all ways but in some ways I'm jealous of the

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

100

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2 Chair of the Committee about all of the
3 containerization efforts that are happening in CB9 in
4 Manhattan.

5 How do we expand that work as quickly as possible
6 to CB's 1 and 2 in Brooklyn and across the City of
7 New York?

8 JAVIER LOJAN: So, I think the main thing with
9 that is the legislation with the Rat Act. I think
10 that is the first step and then we can talk about
11 expanding in different areas of the city but I think
12 that's the first step in seeing where we can go
13 citywide with that.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Okay, we'll let's get
15 that done and then we had been getting complaints
16 from constituents about they purchase these new you
17 know city specified bins for containerization and
18 they're getting stolen. What recourse do we have?
19 What advise should we be giving them when their bins
20 are getting stolen? They've spent a healthy amount
21 of money on this to support them?

22 JAVIER LOJAN: So, I think obviously if they get
23 stolen to report it to the local precinct. I think
24 one of the things that I don't see a lot of is some
25 people aren't utilizing the space to write their

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

101

1 address. I think if they can utilize that and make
2 it more prominent and on the bin, it's helpful. You
3 know at some point, if we retrieve it somewhere and
4 we see it, we'd love to return it back to them if we
5 find it but I think that might be a deterrent
6 hopefully. That's really the only thing I can say as
7 far as that.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Do you - you know I was
10 grateful for the legislation that was recently passed
11 to help support moderate income homeowners to get
12 free bins. If somebody reports a stolen bin and you
13 know they can demonstrate that they had purchased the
14 city bin, is there a way that you think we can try to
15 get free bins as replacements?

16 JAVIER LOJAN: Yeah, I think that's part of the
17 challenge. You know making sure that there's no
18 fraud or anything like that come into play because
19 you know obviously that's something that might happen
20 but I think we'd have to work -

21 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: But your vendor has a
22 record of exactly who they provided bins to right?
23 So, you could verify with them to avoid fraud?

24 JAVIER LOJAN: Yeah but if you recall, we made
25 the bins available in Home Depot, so that's one of

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

102

1 the areas where you know people might say they
2 purchased them through.

3
4 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Okay, uhm, and then -

5 JOSHUA GOODMAN: I just might add one more thing
6 about it but it's sort of an ongoing issue. I just
7 think it's good to remember and I've reminded a lot
8 of members of the public this as well. They use bins
9 in Detroit. They use them in Chicago. They use bins
10 in much more dangerous cities than New York and we're
11 hopeful that these isolated incidents are going to
12 settle down as they become just a fact of life in the
13 city the way they are in so many other places.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Can I ask one more
15 question? Thank you very much. Uhm, I am interested
16 if you have any advice from Council Members who are
17 going through large scale rezonings for how we can
18 try to ensure that we get sufficient sanitation
19 resources to meet the needs of growing communities.

20 You know we just approved a big city of yes plan
21 that I was an enthusiastic supporter of but I want to
22 make sure that when we're adding density in a
23 meaningful way, when we're adding 5,000, 8,000,
24 12,000 units of housing in a community, that we're
25 planning for it with the Department of Sanitation and

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

103

1 that you have the person power and the vehicles and
2 the resources to be able to actually step up and meet
3 those needs and keep those streets clean. Any
4 suggestions for us for how we should be better
5 advocates to make sure that sanitation is resourced
6 properly in growing communities?
7

8 JAVIER LOJAN: I think the only thing we can say
9 is just working closely on knowing when these
10 rezonings are happening and working with the
11 Administration and Council on seeing where the right
12 amount of resources are and what would be right. I'd
13 just say we just have close communication and working
14 closely together.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: I think that we often
16 hear that there's like no substantial impact for the
17 Department of Sanitation, for other agencies but I
18 can tell you that's a district that's undergone
19 multiple large scale rezonings. There have been
20 substantial impacts and it's been a process over 15
21 or 20 years of trying to get more sanitation
22 resources dedicated. You don't have additional
23 people that are added when we go through a big
24 rezoning to meet the needs of our community but there
25 should be and there should be more investment that's

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

104

1 given to the agency to you know to be able to support
2 the communities that have greater demand. So, I just
3 hope that's something Chair that we could explore
4 together because I think it's a good issue that you
5 know might be - that Council Members who are going
6 through rezonings would appreciate knowing that
7 there's going to be additional sanitation support for
8 those communities.
9

10 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: I think that's a great idea
11 Council Member. I'm going to respectfully ask the
12 panel to just elevate your voice a little bit and get
13 the mic closer to you because I think we're having
14 some issues hearing you on the livestream. Council
15 Member Paladino.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER PALADINO: Good afternoon and
17 thank you very much being here. You know we are
18 tremendous supporters of the Department of Sanitation
19 over in District 19, so I want to start off always as
20 saying thank you to each and every one of you.

21 JAVIER LOJAN: Thank you.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER PALADINO: We have an area. I
23 want to - let me start first with the August cameras.
24 Now, I have allotted x amount of dollars for August
25 cameras. There's certain areas of my district. One

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

105

1 in particular which is the service road that takes
2 you over to the Throggs Bridge. We have illegal
3 trucks. We have trucks parked there. They stay
4 overnight, their tractor trailers. They change their
5 oil. They leave their mess there whether it be
6 personal mess as well as debris from them working on
7 their vehicles. Now, a lot of these guys are from
8 out of state. So, you know I have consulted with the
9 109 because that's their precinct and yet the poor
10 neighbors who their backyards are actually butt right
11 up against this service road.
12

13 I want to know what I could do to get more
14 enforcement there possibly as many as three and four
15 times a week because those neighbors that live there
16 and the people the sports, it's right there by a
17 park. It's called Harvey Park; they should not have
18 to go through this tremendous amount of tractor
19 trailers and the garbage and debris that's left
20 there. I'm telling you; my borough guy is amazing.
21 I love my Chief. He does a great job and I also, you
22 know I fund sanitation in to the tune of close to
23 \$200,000 out of my own pocket and I also give CEO an
24 additional \$100,000, and to keep my district really
25 spotless. But this is garbage that is rough picking

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

106

1
2 up. I mean CEO cannot be picking up this type of
3 waste. Like I said, I just want to know what we
4 could do about that.

5 JAVIER LOJAN: So, I think sometimes what's been
6 effective in my experience is we have our permanent
7 inspection unit that can go out to an area and maybe
8 do like a focus blitz so to speak for a limited
9 amount of time and see if that's effective so we can
10 try that and see if that has any impact on it because
11 I had some concerns in other areas of Queens.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER PALADINO: They're all over. I
13 mean the big thing is, what do you do? The truck
14 drivers stop. They get in their car and they drive
15 away. They leave their trucks there overnight. They
16 do their business and leave it and then they go and
17 sometimes the same tractor trailers are lined up.
18 You could be six, eight, ten of them and yet they
19 don't come back for two or three days. So, this is
20 really, this is one of the bigger problems because I
21 hear constantly from the people who live in that area
22 and the sports now that is going to start to pick up
23 in spring and our park is going to be packed every
24 weekend.

25

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

107

1 So, that's one of them. I do know that if we
2
3 could get out there, I believe in steeper fines. I
4 believe in steeper fines for my store owners as much
5 as I hate to put the pressure on small business, they
6 really need to take responsibility for their property
7 that is out in front of their stores. There used to
8 be a day where you used to sweep and you used to hose
9 off your property. Now, I'm paying CEO to power wash
10 you know the Whitestone Village, Bayside, Bell
11 Boulevard, which has a BID. I appreciate what my
12 colleague Lincoln Restler said about the container
13 program. I think this is a great idea and I think
14 it's something that the BIDs need to do and maybe
15 make it more accessible and where we could just keep
16 the cost down a little bit. Because the biggest
17 thing here, it always seems to come back to dollar
18 bill. Alright, every time we talk, it's about money.

19 So, now I'm just going to jump off into something
20 else. This composting waste.

21 JAVIER LOJAN: Right.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER PALADINO: Okay, I don't like it.
23 I don't agree with it. I don't think our neighbors
24 should be forced to compost their daily egg shells
25 and chicken bones and stuff like that. I just think

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

108

1 the trucks are - I don't think your trucks are ready
2 for it. That's raw waste and to leave it up to the
3 individuals to do it. Tell me a little bit about my
4 district and if they purchase these little brown
5 pails and they did but they don't have waste every
6 day. David brought this up, David Carr. How are we
7 going to handle the people who do not want to
8 compost? And if you go by this twice a week, certain
9 areas, it's Monday night, Sunday night and to Monday
10 pickup, Thursday pickup. So, let's see you take
11 those Monday and Thursday pickups and you go week by
12 week by week by week by week. One more moment and
13 that's same block did not put out their compost pail.
14 What's going to happen to those people who don't put
15 out their compost pail?

17 JAVIER LOJAN: So, if they don't put it out, I
18 mean that's not a reason for a summons. They have to
19 put out their compost, organics material with the
20 refuse, then they'd be subject to a fine and as far
21 as the - I think in your district, in areas of
22 Eastern Queens are what we call our hybrid routing
23 model, allows us to be more efficient because that
24 same truck is going down the block to collect the
25 refuse and the organics on the recycling day. So, I

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

109

1 think whatever wait shifts over to the other side, I
2 think we're ready for that but just to your point,
3 we're not going to issue a fine for somebody.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER PALADINO: Because that's what I'm
5 concerned about, the elderly. The older people. You
6 know everybody is a creature of habit and they just
7 put their garbage in there, regular garbage that
8 we've been doing and to have recycling for plastic is
9 great. For paper is terrific and just our regular
10 garbage. What is the purpose? I'm dying to know.
11 Why is everybody all caught up with this organic
12 composting? Can you help me with that? I mean
13 really, what's the big deal? I'm not understanding.
14 I mean we have an area in college point that they
15 make out of the waste. People bring it and they
16 compost it.

17 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Keep it down. Keep it down
18 please Committee Room. Thank you guys. Okay ask
19 your question.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER PALADINO: That is my question.
21 What's the purpose of composting?

22 JOSEPH ANTONELLI: Council Member, I'm happy to
23 just talk for the purpose of it quickly. Right now
24 there are three things that can happen to your food
25

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

110

1 waste or your yard waste and remember it's everything
2 from your kitchen and everything from your garden,
3 right? You know you redo your lawn. All that stuff
4 can go and it's compostable waste too. There are
5 three things that can happen to it. It can either
6 become finished compost that we give away for free.
7 You could use it for your garden next year. It can
8 be renewable energy. It keeps our heating costs low
9 because we produce it here in the city. It does
10 help, it's cheaper than gas off the grid for sure it
11 is.
12

13 And then the third thing that it can become is
14 nothing. It can be rat food that sits out at the
15 curb or goes to a landfill and goes to waste. This
16 is just a way for us to take something that has value
17 and say let's put it to work for us. Let's use it to
18 keep our cost down. So, that's the purpose of it and
19 I also just want to mention on your question about
20 enforcement. We talked before about the state camera
21 funding from Senator, you may know there's state
22 camera funding coming in your area as well. Senator
23 Stavisky allocated some, so you're also, whenever the
24 state releases that money getting additional cameras.
25

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

111

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Alright, Council Member
Marmorato.

COUNCIL MEMBER MARMORATO: Thank you Chair. Good
afternoon.

JAVIER LOJAN: Good afternoon.

COUNCIL MEMBER MARMORATO: Very serious crowd
here. You're the only one smiling over there in the
corner. Alright, so when the city is in dire need
for additional sanitation service, workers and
resources, can you kind of rationalize to me why the
budget cuts starting on April 1st are happening and
are these cuts going to workers, trucks or projects?
And specifically, can you give me those numbers that
will effect garage 10 and 11 in the Bronx?

JAVIER LOJAN: Council Member, I don't think we
have any cuts for upcoming April 1st to my knowledge.

COUNCIL MEMBER MARMORATO: Okay but are there
cuts coming?

JAVIER LOJAN: No, not to my knowledge no.

COUNCIL MEMBER MARMORATO: No, you're sure?
Okay, alright. So, it was brought to my attention
that Garage 10 in the Bronx is condemned. That they
don't allow trucks in the building.

JAVIER LOJAN: On the facility itself right?

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

112

COUNCIL MEMBER MARMORATO: Yes, are there any
capital project in the works?

JAVIER LOJAN: Yeah, so that's part of the Zerega
Avenue plan. I think by 2031, it should be completed
and construction should begin what is that? There's
\$487 million allocated to that project.

COUNCIL MEMBER MARMORATO: That's a long time
away.

JAVIER LOJAN: They take a long time
unfortunately.

COUNCIL MEMBER MARMORATO: Yeah and you have the
funding or any allocated to that?

JAVIER LOJAN: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER MARMORATO: Okay now as far as
cameras for dumping in District 13. How many are
there?

JAVIER LOJAN: I'd have to get back to you on
that but just going back to Council Member
Salamanca's question. In the Bronx total there's 70
cameras.

COUNCIL MEMBER MARMORATO: 70 in the Bronx?

JAVIER LOJAN: 70 total in the Bronx and I'd get
back to you - okay, I'm sorry, I'd have to get back
to you on specifics to the numbers.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

113

COUNCIL MEMBER MARMORATO: Okay, how much do
these cameras cost?

JAVIER LOJAN: I'm sorry, \$31,000 per camera.

COUNCIL MEMBER MARMORATO: And they just
sporadically take a picture or when there's like
motion it starts -

JAVIER LOJAN: No, yeah so it has a license plate
reader. It's tied to a power source so it's
constantly taking video and it picks up whatever
video feed in. The license plate reader identifies a
license plate if it's from a vehicle.

COUNCIL MEMBER MARMORATO: Okay so what happens
when because we have trucks all along the cemetery
parked.

JAVIER LOJAN: Right.

COUNCIL MEMBER MARMORATO: In one area of my
district and there's a lot of dumping over there.
How will it pick up and be able to ticket anybody?

JAVIER LOJAN: So, if there's a camera there, our
enforcement, we have a dedicated enforcement unit
that reviews this footage and if we're able to
ascertain that vehicle that dump, then we would go
and find the vehicle and impound it and issue a
summons, which is \$4,000.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

114

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER MARMORATO: Okay and as far as
3 tickets being issued in Council Districts, do you
4 guys have a website or is there any way that we could
5 access that information to see if it's proportional
6 throughout the entire city.

7 JAVIER LOJAN: I believe all that information is
8 on open data but you know if there's a summons that's
9 not on there, I'd be glad to work with you on getting
10 something else.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER MARMORATO: And I just have one
12 final question. Was it you or was it Parks that
13 decided to come up with the pizza box container bins
14 in our parks? As an Italian American I find it very
15 offensive that you guys put a pizza box container in
16 one of my parks. Nobody eats pizza in the park.

17 JAVIER LOJAN: Yeah, that was a parks initiative.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER MARMORATO: Okay alright, thank
19 you. Okay, I'm done thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you Council Member. I
21 have a few set of questions before we turn it over to
22 members of the public to testify.

23 Lot cleaning. DSNY's lot cleaning program has
24 played a critical role in maintaining public health
25 and cleanliness by ensuring that vacant lots do not

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

115

1
2 become hazardous dumping grounds. Despite continued
3 high demand, the number of lots cleaned has declined
4 each year with DSNY attributing this to budget cuts
5 and staffing reductions.

6 As the program faces ongoing funding challenges,
7 it is essential to assess the impact of these
8 reductions and the city's plan to address the growing
9 backlog. With 1,416 lot cleaning requests received
10 in the first four months of FY25, but only 26 lots
11 cleaned in that period, what immediate steps are DSNY
12 taking to address the widening gap between service
13 requests and completed cleanings?

14 JAVIER LOJAN: So Chair, that is something that
15 was impacted by cuts previously. I believe our
16 headcount before the cuts were 76 positions and we're
17 down to 15, so there is an impact there. Wherever we
18 can we try to bridge that gap with some of the
19 resources, whether it's sometimes T&T that are
20 adjacent areas but you know I can't sugarcoat it.
21 There was a cut and there is an impact and we try to
22 prioritize you know areas where we know you know
23 we're seeing either the 80 complaints or bigger
24 complaints so I'd love to work with the
25 Administration and Council on that.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

116

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: What's the headcount at now?

JAVIER LOJAN: 15 positions, 15 sanitation
workers.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: And what's the outstanding
number of lot cleaning requests at the moment?

JAVIER LOJAN: I believe it's a little over
1,900, 1,918 lots.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: And how many have been
completed?

JAVIER LOJAN: Uhm, uhm, I'll get back to you on
that, sorry Chair.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Is it more than the 26 lots
cleaned from the FY-

JAVIER LOJAN: Yeah, I believe it's definitely
more than the 26, I just have to get that number.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Okay, I would definitely like
to have those data points. What operational changes
or efficiencies that are being explored to increase
productivity despite these budget constraints?

JAVIER LOJAN: Our productivity in terms of -
sorry in terms of sorry - just uhm -

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: In terms of being able to
address more of the cleaning requests, how are you

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

117

1 sort of you know operationally dealing with
2 addressing this given the cut in number of headcount.

3
4 JAVIER LOJAN: Right, so depending on what area
5 you're referring to, I think one of the things that
6 we try to do is shift the way our operation, which
7 you're familiar with Chair is you know we shift
8 personnel from District to District, so wherever the
9 need is, that's evaluated on a week to week basis by
10 our cleaning office and the borough chiefs all have
11 you know requests and depending on where the bigger
12 need is we reallocate where necessary, so that's one
13 of the ways where we used to you know bridge some of
14 those areas that we had cuts in.

15 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Does DSOI believe that it's
16 current staffing levels are sufficient to meet the
17 demand?

18 JAVIER LOJAN: We can always do more with more.
19 I think right now with our current headcount, uhm you
20 know we're addressing the areas that are in greatest
21 need but would love to work with Council on you know
22 wherever that need is, where we need to increase
23 that.

24 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: And you may not be able to
25 say it but it sounds like you know the headcount

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

118

1 going from 75 to 15 is not enough to address the
2 outstanding request for cleaning service requests.
3 So, it sounds like it's not enough to meet the demand
4 based off of at least the numbers we have in front of
5 us. Without a full restoration of the program, what
6 alternative measures does DSNY considering to prevent
7 vacant lots from becoming public health hazards?
8

9 JAVIER LOJAN: So, I think in areas that are
10 becoming really public health hazards, I think we
11 utilize some of our T&T resources and that's where we
12 try to mitigate some areas. And we have the 15
13 positions that we shift around as well.

14 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Does DSNY have an estimate of
15 how much additional funding would be required to
16 restore the program to precut levels and eliminate
17 the backlog of lot cleaning requests?

18 JAVIER LOJAN: Approximately \$9.5 million.

19 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: \$9.5 mill?

20 JAVIER LOJAN: \$9.5 million.

21 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Okay, so expect to hear that
22 number a lot in this budget cycle. In terms of
23 federal funding risks, in the Fiscal 2025 adopted and
24 preliminary plans, DSNY received approximately \$200
25 million in federal funding supporting key operations

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

119

1 and initiatives. However, with the new
2 administration prioritizing federal funding freezes
3 and government efficiencies or inefficiencies, it is
4 critical to assess how DSNY plans to manage these
5 funds and what contingency plans are in place if this
6 funding is reduced or eliminated?
7

8 What specific programs and services does the \$200
9 million in federal funding support and how critical
10 is this funding to DSNY's overall budget?

11 JOSEPH ANTONELLI: Okay, so the \$200 million that
12 we have in the budget this year, so first and
13 foremost, that was all for spending that happened
14 prior to the start of the new year, so prior to
15 December 31st. That money has already been spent.
16 \$196 million of it was the American Rescue plans
17 funding for waste export. So, that's all done and
18 also there was some money for basket service,
19 approximately \$4 million but there's no risk or
20 anything. That's all done. No ongoing federal
21 funding to support -

22 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Did the preliminary plan
23 account for another \$200 million to come in?

24 JOSEPH ANTONELLI: No.
25

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

120

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: So, it is as of it doesn't
exist?

JOSEPH ANTONELLI: No, it's just that the \$200
million was in the budget for this year. No changes
have been made to the budget but the spending already
occurred, so we're not depending on additional money
or anything going forward. So, it's all done and it
was prior to the start of this calendar year.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: What percentage of DSNY's
total budget relies on federal funding and how does
this compare to previous years?

JOSEPH ANTONELLI: So, in this particular year,
so the \$200 million would represent approximately 10
percent of our budget but in the outyears and
baseline, we don't have regular federal funding.
This is all one time stuff.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Okay. I just want to get
back quickly to the commercial waste zones. It
sounds as though you would have more information on
the upcoming hearing on this. A bit of a ballpark,
how many commercial waste zones will be up by the end
of the year?

JAVIER LOJAN: I mean I think it's safe to say we
can roll out an additional zone. I think we'd like

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

121

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2 to do obviously more but with the adequate resources
3 and just making sure that we're rolling out the zones
4 carefully, like we did Queens Central. But I think
5 I'd love to discuss that more.

6 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Would Queen Central pilot be
7 enough to learn in order to implement that full
8 zones?

9 JAVIER LOGAN: Yeah, we were informed a lot. I
10 mean, as you know every geographical area has its own
11 unique challenges, so I'm sure we're going to learn
12 more from other zones.

13 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Is there a budget ask that
14 would help enhance the implementation of more zones
15 or all the zones in the next you know whatever months
16 ahead?

17 JOSEPH ANTONELLI: No, we're just working with
18 OMB to you know work within our existing budget level
19 just to make sure we have the adequate resources.

20 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: I think you said earlier 17
21 hires, right?

22 JOSEPH ANTONELLI: No, so we have 17 people on
23 staff right now.

24 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Okay and you think that's
25 enough to implement the full zones?

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

122

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2 JOSEPH ANTONELLI: No, we would need some
3 additional hires if we wanted to do more than one
4 zone at a time and we're just working with OMB you
5 know to do that within our existing budget level.
6 So, there's no specific budget ask for it.

7 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: It would be helpful for the
8 Council to know what the cost would be in order to
9 implement you know the cost per zone, so that if we
10 need to make a push for this budget cycle that we
11 know what the cost associated with that will be.

12 JAVIER LOGAN: Okay.

13 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: In terms of waste equity,
14 what efforts are the city making to open marine
15 transfer stations to collect commercial waste, as
16 planned in the now 20 year old solid waste management
17 plan? If any environmental reviews require, what
18 steps is the city taking to conduct this review?

19 JOSHUA GOODMAN: So, Council Member I think the
20 key point of that is that it was part of a 20 year
21 analysis. Opening our transfer stations to
22 commercial waste, no commercial corridor would find
23 that to be financially viable. The cost per ton to
24 use them would be much higher than what they get at
25

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

123

commercial transfer stations and so, that's why
there's no plan to move forward with that.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Has capacity at marine
transfer stations been offered to designated private
haulers slated to serve in the commercial waste zones
under Local Law 199?

JOSHUA GOODMAN: We've discussed it. I believe
both formerly and informally and just found there's
no interest.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Alright, I am done with my
set of questions. This panel is hereby excused.
Thank you.

JAVIER LOJAN: Thank you Chair. [02:12:31]-
[02:12:52]

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: We will be transitioning now
for testimony from members of the public. Just give
us a minute here and we're going to transition
starting with the kids. I'm very excited to hear
from you guys. [02:13:08]- [02:14:19]

I now open the hearing for public testimony. I
remind members of the public that this is a
government proceeding and that decorum shall be
observed at all times. As such, members of the
public shall remain silent at all times. The witness

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

124

1 table is reserved for people who wish to testify. No
2 video recording or photography is allowed from the
3 witness table. Further, members of the public may
4 not present audio or video recordings as testimony
5 but may submit transcripts of such recordings to the
6 Sergeant at Arms for inclusion in the hearing record.
7

8 If you wish to speak at today's hearing, please
9 fill out an appearance card with the Sergeant at Arms
10 and wait to be recognized. When recognized, you will
11 have two minutes to speak on today's hearing topic.
12 DSNY Preliminary Budget or any of the legislation on
13 our agenda today.

14 If you have a written statement or additional
15 written testimony you wish to submit for the record,
16 please provide a copy of that testimony to the
17 Sergeant at Arms. You may also email written
18 testimony to testimony@council.nyc.gov within 72
19 hours of this hearing. Audio and video recordings
20 will not be accepted. I am now calling the first
21 panel. Our first panel will be Rhonda Keyser,
22 Janmairo Ortiz, Amy Vargas Santos, Amaya Colbert.

23 PS MS/46 ARTHUR TAPPAN PANEL: Good morning.
24 Thank you Council Member Abreu and the Sanitation
25 Committee for giving us this chance to speak today.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

125

We are fourth graders from the Junior Student Council and we represent students from PS MS/46 Arthur Tappan in Harlem. We are here to talk about how we reduced food waste with real, local solutions for our community.

We figured out how to handle our school's food waste right in our own neighborhood. We started with a waste audit with Cafeteria Culture to measure how much food we were throwing away every day in our cafeteria and we found that 80 percent of our cafeteria food waste was completely untouched. That means that kids were getting food that they didn't even want, they were not even taking a single bite, and then just throwing it away.

We know that food waste is a problem for the climate but we learned that wasted food is also wasted energy, water, and resources that go into making it. And instead of being made into compost, food that they've put into the trash gets trucked miles away to landfills or incinerators.

We learned that even food that goes to the brown bin uses trucks a lot in its journey, and people who live near the landfills and incinerators have to breathe polluted air. For instance, where most of

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

126

the Manhattan garbage goes to in Newark, New Jersey,
1 in 4 kids has asthma.

We decided to reduce our food waste at the source
in our cafeteria. We asked the kitchen staff to let
students choose what we eat based on USDA rules
instead of getting a full tray of food we didn't even
ask for. And it worked! After a few days of
practicing, we reduced the number of untouched food
items in our school by over 50 percent. That's a
huge difference! But we knew we could do more.

Domingo at Compost Power taught us a workshop and
invited us to his composting site at the NYCHA houses
next door to our school. So, we brought 60 pounds of
our cafeteria food scraps from all lunch periods to
NYCHA to compost it locally. It is amazing to watch
our food scraps turning into something useful instead
of being trucked away to another neighborhood. We
can't wait to see our food scraps become compost. We
feel so lucky that Domingo's site is so close to us
and that we get to be a part of the solution. Now we
can teach our families about composting, even though
many of us don't have brown bins at home like we do
at school.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

127

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2 Local composting gives us a place to take our
3 food scraps and a way to teach our families and our
4 neighbors about composting. We want to keep leading
5 the way to make these changes permanent in our own
6 school, and we think other schools who are neighbors
7 with the local compost site should get to compost
8 their own cafeteria food waste too.

9 We learned that the City Council is funding local
10 composting organizations. Thank you. Because of
11 local composting, we can take climate action right in
12 our own neighborhood! I hope more kids can do what
13 we did so we can all make our soil, our own air, our
14 own neighbors, and our own communities healthier with
15 local composting all over New York City!

16 Thank you for listening.

17 APPLAUSE [02:20:55]

18 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: I just want to tell you guys
19 how proud I am of you. You know last year, when the
20 Mayor cut composting, the Council fought back to
21 restore it to \$6.6 million and as part of that, we
22 funded \$500,000 to cafeteria cultures so that you
23 guys can learn about what composting means and so you
24 can make a difference in your own neighborhoods, and
25 you guys are already making a difference. You should

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

128

1 be very, very proud of yourselves okay. Thank you
2 very much. You are excused.

3
4 PANEL: Okay thank you. I also wanted to say
5 that we shouldn't be throwing out the produce, we
6 should be putting into compost.

7 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: That's right. Well, you guys
8 can now tell everybody that you testified at the City
9 Council today and that you really uplifted our
10 spirits and you're making a difference not only for
11 your neighborhoods but for the entire city. Thank
12 you so much.

13 PANEL: Thank you. We're very proud of our
14 selves.

15 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Alright, we're inviting the
16 next panel. Is there anyone else from PS 46 that
17 hasn't testified? That's it, okay. Alright, we're
18 now moving to PS188. We got is it Camila? Camila
19 Piron, Scarlet Zapata, Mamadou Sy, and Deborah.

20 Are you guys doing testimony individually or is
21 as a group again? As a group, okay, eight minutes.
22 Alright, alright. You can start on this side first
23 or however you guys prefer.

24 PANEL OF PS/MS 188: Good morning, we want to
25 thank Council Member Abreu and the Sanitation

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

129

1 Committee for this opportunity to speak. We are 7th
2 graders from PS/MS 188 and we've been learning with
3 Cafeteria Culture about how waste affects our
4 communities and what we can do to reduce it. We
5 learned that there is no "away." The trash from our
6 school doesn't just disappear. It gets trucked all
7 the way to Newark, New Jersey, where it's burned in
8 an incinerator. And that's not even the end of it.
9 The ash from the incinerator gets trucked again to a
10 landfill. That means our waste pollutes multiple
11 communities throughout the journey before it gets to
12 its final resting place.
13

14 We actually took a field trip to see the
15 incinerator in Newark. The smell was awful, and the
16 people who live there breathe in toxic air every
17 single day because of our trash. People in Newark
18 have been fighting for environmental justice for
19 decades. We know that 1 in 4 kids in Newark has
20 asthma because of pollution. The incinerator has
21 over 800 air permit violations on record, but it's
22 still running. This is not fair. No one should have
23 to suffer just because we throw things away. New
24 York City students reduced waste by starting the
25 first Plastic Free Lunch Day, where school lunch is

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

130

served without any single-use plastic packaging.

With Plastic Free Lunch Day, our school reduced school lunch plastic waste at the source by over 95 percent. We also found a way to reduce food waste at the source. With Cafeteria Culture's Mindful Choice Meals, we reduced our untouched food waste by 64 percent in just one week.

Of course, we all use the brown bins in the cafeteria at our school, and we know that does help. But the brown bin food scraps get trucked multiple times before their final destinations. First, they get trucked to get turned into slurry, then they get trucked to a digester, and after that, all of the leftover solids get trucked again to an incinerator or a landfill or other destinations. That's a lot of trucking. Polluting our air, harming our health and warming our planet. Instead of truck and food waste all over the place, we could compost it locally, right in our neighborhoods because our families who live in NYCHA buildings do not have access to the brown bins.

Less trucking means less pollution, less waste going to incinerators and landfills! Composting improves soil, so we get: healthier plants, stronger

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

131

1 roots, and better stormwater absorption to reduce
2 flooding. And the best part? Local composting hurts
3 no one! Local composting is a simple solution that
4 benefits everyone and we can start making it happen
5 now.
6

7 We know this because they're doing it at Wagner
8 Houses. We visited Compost Power's composting site
9 there and we were so excited to see that it's
10 possible to make your own healthy soil that helps
11 grow your own healthy vegetables right on a NYCHA
12 property.

13 Our school is right next to a NYCHA property:
14 Lillian Wald Houses. We want to build a compost site
15 there to compost our food scraps from the cafeteria.
16 We learned about composting in the classroom, but
17 when we visited the composting site at Wagner, we
18 really understood that our food scraps have a value
19 that benefits the whole community. We learned that
20 the City Council supports local composting. We hope
21 you keep supporting it so that more youth like us get
22 to learn and be a part of the solutions! Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Wow.

24 APPLAUSE [02:26:54]
25

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

132

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: I am at a loss of words. I just want you to know again, the City Council is very proud of you and this partnership, certainly I'm committed to making sure that we continue to partner with cafeteria culture, with Domingo Morales, with folks of the you know Save Our Compost Coalition, so that you can keep making a difference in your neighborhoods. Again, you should be very proud of yourselves. Thank you. You are excused.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Alright we have - if you could just be quiet on your way out please. Thank you. We now have Cayla Burser and Kayla Kirson and we also have Ellington White and Gabriel Girson. You guys speaking as a group again or individually?

PANEL: Separately.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Individually? Alright, you have two minutes and press the button. Thank you. Oh and please state your name before you speak. Thank you.

GABRIEL GILSON: Yes my name is Gabriel Gilson. I support the Urban Assembly New York Harbor School. Sorry about that. My name is Gabriel Gilson, I am with the Urban Assembly New York Harbor School. Should I get started with my speech? Great, alright.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

133

1 Councilman Abreu and members of the Committee on
2 Sanitation and Solid Waste, in the past, we recognize
3 that this Committee has done lots of work maintaining
4 funding for community composting projects and we are
5 incredibly thankful for that. However, community
6 composting projects are still at great risk.

7
8 Many myths are spread about composting and one
9 such myth is that composting just isn't for urban
10 dwellers such as yourselves. This is actually false
11 and the fact is that community composting is for
12 urban communities because people in communities rely
13 on each other and so, community composting creates a
14 sustainable loop in which people in communities can
15 trade their organic matter for compost which goes
16 back into the community as fertilizer for places like
17 community gardens and urban farms.

18 In my own experience, my apartment building
19 community in Hell's Kitchen has little access to
20 community composting and the only options we really
21 have are the municipal composting orange bins which
22 are fairly difficult to use or two community
23 composting sites at Hudson River Park and Matthews
24 Palmer Playground on 46th Street and therefore a lot
25

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

134

of food is wasted that could be put back into the community.

So, if we had more of the community composting sites in our community, a lot more waste would be put back into the environment as compost, improving the health and quality of soil, allowing for more food to be grown in our community.

Some ways that we can fix this issue are to encourage people within communities to give their compostable materials to whatever community composting sites may be in their area, as well as raising funding for community composting organizations so they can actually get composting operations underway.

Now I can speak from experience because at Harbor School we work a lot on composting, especially within the [INAUDIBLE 02:30:47] program. We take food scraps from our mess hall and tumble them in composting bins and we work closely with -

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: You have another 20 seconds or so.

GABRIEL GILSON: Yeah another 20 seconds should be fine.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

135

1
2 We work closely with Earth Matter, a community
3 composting organization in our area. This makes our
4 school more sustainable because our food scraps go
5 back into the community as compost for gardens and
6 urban farms in our area. So, I'd like to reiterate
7 that we are thankful for the work that has been done
8 to keep community composting afloat but it is crucial
9 for the environment in New York that we continue to
10 fund community composting projects.

11 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you. Next. Just state
12 your name people.

13 ELLINGTON WHITE: Okay, uhm, I'm Ellington White
14 and I'm with the New York Harbor School. City
15 Council Members, thank you for funding the New York
16 City Community Composting. This money is extremely
17 important and should be included again in the next
18 budget. However, are you aware that most people
19 don't associate composting with the city. Many
20 individuals wrongly judge composting, believing that
21 it cannot be successful in an urban environment.
22 Since people are unaware of composting in urban
23 areas, they aren't participating in the compost
24 around them. This means that a large portion of food
25

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

136

waste is getting thrown in the trash and ending up in
landfills instead of correctly getting composted.

Contrary to popular belief, there are many
opportunities to compost in New York City. You can
drop food waste off at a Farmers Market or you can
get it picked up through the BK RAW program.

Unfortunately, people have not been utilizing the
accessibility of composting. It's not out of
laziness or carelessness, it's mainly because they
don't know.

In order to fix this stereotyping of only
suburban composting, you have to work on advertising
where and how to compost. A simple public
announcement or a few posters could do so much to
encourage people to compost. So many community
composting organizations around the city are working
very hard to provide accessibility to composting and
they deserve recognition.

The community compost drop off sites and
organizations should be highlighted. Once New
Yorkers become aware of how convenient it is to
compost, less food waste will be sent to landfills,
making the environment better.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

137

I've lived in parks of Brooklyn my whole life. Not once in those 15 years was I made aware that there is a drop off composting site around my neighborhood. The 615 Green Community Garden is a public composting drop off site. I've gotten to the garden before since it's located by the middle school I went to, even after visiting the site myself, I didn't know it was a compost drop off site. I'm sure this applies to many others in my community as well. These sites must be made well known to inform people that they have the option of compost. I feel guilty for having had this option of compost and not using it all.

Another common misconception is that the waste from the municipal composting bins - okay is actually being turned into compost. This is not true considering that it gets brought to facilities or gets converted to energy not compost. Although the renewable energy is still ecofriendly, it is not composting and shouldn't be labeled as. Community composting is what is actually turning the waste to compost and should be known for that instead of municipal composting, which is an entirely different thing. Many people think they're composting by

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

138

1
2 adding their food waste to the brown bins around
3 their neighborhood. It is important that they become
4 educated so that they can decide to use community
5 composting, which is what they think they are using
6 in the first place. And then, thank you again I
7 guess because -

8 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you.

9 KAYLA KYLONI KIRTSON: Hi, I'm Kayla Kyloni
10 Kirtson and I am a senior at New York Harbor School
11 and this is my testimony. So they're showing you.
12 Look around you. Did you hear about the rise of
13 climate change? How does this impact you, me and the
14 environment? Do you ever wonder what actions you
15 could take to help prevent climate change? Two years
16 ago, Mayor Adams proposed to cut funds from community
17 compost organizations, which includes nonprofit
18 organizations such as Earth Matter. I would like to
19 give thanks to those who helped these organizations
20 resume funding. Your efforts helped support
21 community composters and help more people get access
22 to community composting.

23 The Route school, we are talking importance of
24 composting, breaking down organic waste that goes
25 back to our environment. This promotes health to

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

139

1 soil as well as reduces waste. The city practices
2 different types of composting such as organic waste
3 management and community composting. Meanwhile
4 municipal organic waste management includes anerobic
5 digestion in New Town Creek that breaks down organic
6 waste in order to produce methane, a type of
7 greenhouse gas traps heat and carbon dioxide, dioxide
8 in the atmosphere. This contributes to climate
9 change. Community composting differs from this as it
10 practices breaking down materials that safely goes
11 back into communities and the earth.
12

13 Nevertheless, it provides sustainable ways to
14 give back to our environment. As the city works to
15 bring back funding for community compost
16 organizations, this benefits the education of
17 sustainable composting of different communities. The
18 city needs to continue funding these organizations as
19 they practice breaking down - community composters
20 practice breaking down organic waste that goes back
21 to the environment.

22 As the city continues to support these
23 organizations, we need to do more to ensure that
24 people - more people are being educated about the
25 importance of community composting.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

140

1
2 Providing communities with more brown bins can
3 encourage people to engage in proper waste sorting.
4 All that could help promote the city to compost, many
5 people have found misinformation that could impact
6 their choices. Oh it's too long.

7 By continuing to fund -

8 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: You got 15 more seconds okay.

9 KAYLA KYLONI KIRTSON: Okay uhm, the people of
10 New York deserve a sustainable environment. Our
11 plants and animals deserve to thrive in a healthy
12 environment. As climate change rises, it is our turn
13 to do our part. Let's come together as a city to
14 support community composting, increase compost
15 management. This would ensure that more options are
16 open.

17 Thank you for bringing back funding to these
18 organizations and I hope you consider my stance and
19 ensure that the funding is continued. With your
20 support, you and community composting will continue
21 to impact the city positively.

22 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you for your testimony.

23 LAYLA BURSER: Hi, I'm Layla Burser, I'm a senior
24 in the Marina Fairs program at New York Harbor
25 School.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

141

1 So, I first learned about composting from Earth
2 Matter, the community composting site. Ever since
3 then, my family and I have been collecting our food
4 scraps and putting them into the new brown bin that
5 my building is required to have. My family,
6 especially my mom, have gotten very, very into
7 composting and love that it is cutting down on the
8 amount of food waste in landfills. However, my mom
9 was devastated when I told her that her prize compost
10 bin was not actually becoming compost. The only
11 reason my mom even considered separating her food
12 waste is community composting.

13 At the New York Harbor School, I worked closely
14 with Earth Matter. I learned what composting is, how
15 it is done and the numerous factors involved and I
16 shared this knowledge with my family. With Earth
17 Matter, I have aided in the many steps of composting.
18 I have sorted waste from any noncompostable
19 contaminants, turned the piles into - turned the
20 piles to provide oxygen and worked to apply the
21 product to an urban farm.

22 I have done these same steps on a much smaller
23 scale at our school urban farm which mimics a
24 community composting program. I've learned the
25

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

142

countless benefits of composting and separating food waste from other waste. Separating food scraps reduces the volume of waste in landfills and the amount of garbage that needs to be transported out of the city into these landfills.

Although it is often assumed that organic waste in landfills decomposes and compost independently, this is untrue. When organic matter decomposes without proper aeration, it become methane. A harmful greenhouse gas. This process is called anerobic digestion, which breaks down organic matter without oxygen. Anerobic digestion is being harnessed in New Town Creek digestive bags, which process much of the waste collected in the city's brown bins, orange bins, smart bins and DOE schools.

The consequential methane is then used as biofuel. While this process reduces the effect of the city's food waste, it lacks many of the benefits of composting. Through my experience composting at school, I have learned that although it can be labor intensive and space consuming, composting is an irreplaceable tool that does so much more than just reducing waste.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

143

Community composting is helping people understand these benefits through educational opportunities. Continuing to fund community composting will help more people understand where their waste is going rather than incorrectly assuming it is being composted. The food collection in the city, such as brown bins and smart bins are called curbside composting and are labeled as composting although they are not. Community composting programs would help to provide much needed education on organic waste.

Additionally, these organizations provide the city with the countless benefits of composting, such as decreasing runoff, increasing water retention, increasing soil health, reducing soil erosion, boosting biodiversity and creating a closed loop system. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you so much. You guys, trust me the first time I testified, it's hard to get it all in in two minutes, so I understand the challenge there but you guys did a great job. Thank you so much. Have a good one.

APPLAUSE [02:40:01]

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

144

1 The first, I have to say that the first
2
3 processing site that I visited was Earth Matters, so
4 it definitely had an impact on me and the way I view
5 the composting ecosystem.

6 Next up to testify, I have Stevie Masonet, Emily
7 Farrell, Jenille Scott, Eric Goldstein. If I
8 butchered your name, I'm so sorry.

9 I'm going to try to keep you guys to the two
10 minutes because we have like 50 people that want to
11 testify, so thank you guys.

12 STEVIE MASONET: In solid waste management -
13 thank you. My name is Stevie and I am a senior in
14 the Marina Fairs program at New York Harbor School.
15 As you may recall, I was here the previous year to
16 testify against the community compost funding cuts.
17 Hearing that funding has been restored is incredible
18 news and is something I and everyone else testifying
19 today are extremely grateful for. However, it is
20 important to ensure that this community compost
21 funding continues to combat waste in New York City.
22 Having a combination of municipal waste management in
23 community composting will effectively manage solid
24 waste through our city. For example, municipal waste
25

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

145

management is not accessible to all areas of the five boroughs.

In the lower east side of Manhattan specifically, there are barely any composting facilities or drop off sites available. Additionally, wooden NYCHA apartment complexes, brown bins and smart bins are not available. There are usually heaps of garbage lying about unmanaged, unsorted and vastly unsustainable. The USDA's initiative to create a greener space for NYCHA housing is under effect that's certainly not enough and with Trump's cuts especially with climate change in the environment, this may be next. So the question is really, how would we as a city combat that?

While I'm sure community composting and municipal waste management could be a healthy start. Smart bins and brown bins can help reduce waste and can tackle waste management on a city level but there needs to be a balance of education and outreach and stewardship. This is where community composting can come in. Smaller scale community based sites that can easily be placed in various areas that are accessible to all.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

146

Specifically, this could be extremely beneficially to NYCHA residents like myself who do not have access to the educational resources on how to effectively compost and sort our waste. This is something that many places throughout the city, such as the upper west side and Fort Greene have plenty of access to. It's what we on the lower east side and beyond deserve. Thank you for all that you've done but this is just the beginning. Thank you so much for listening to my testimony and I look forward to hearing from you.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you.

EMILY FERRELL: My name is Emily Ferrell and I'm from the New York Harbor School. Dear Committee, first and foremost, Gale Brewer is my Council Member and I thank her and the rest of the Committee greatly for all they have done so far. Though their efforts have impacted my community positively, there is still so much more that could be done. Many people have altered or untrue perceptions of composting that lead to the influence of whether they decide to compost or not. The true facts of composting should be spread whether it's in school or their news article to make sure people aren't influenced by these rumors.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

147

Contrary to many peoples knowledge, community and municipal composting are very different. Community composting is the only type that actually gets turned into compost. These organizations like Earth Matter and BK Rott take this waste and mix it with other organic matter to create compost.

Municipal composting isn't composting at all. Composting is important as it reduces the reliance on synthetic fertilizers and pesticides, improve soil health and reduces landfill waste and carbon emission. Composting also reduces the pests breaking into trash cans searching for food. Not only this but composting builds community. When people come together to compost, they build friendships through teamwork and activity.

The municipality takes this waste and brings it to New Town Creek to go into an egg and mix with waste water. Both are important but it's important for these perceptions of each do not overlap. All my life, my mom has brought our compost to the Farmers Market by our house every Sunday. My dad would always get annoyed with the compost because he didn't understand what the benefit of this was. If he had known the facts from the start, he would have been

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

148

1 way more supportive of this. Community composting
2 organizations should have access to resources that
3 will spread this information not only to people
4 looking for it but also people who aren't. The LES
5 Ecology Centers, currently the longest running
6 compost organization in NYC. Their website is highly
7 educational for anyone looking to learn about
8 composting or where to drop off their food waste.
9

10 The only issue is the average person wouldn't
11 know how to look for this website. Resources are
12 useless if people don't know they exist. LES Ecology
13 Center and other similar websites should be
14 normalized for people outside the loop of composting
15 knowledge. There are countless composting events and
16 drop off areas planned but these events need to be
17 promoted on more than just a website in order for a
18 large number of people to know they exist.

19 Through my school, the New York Harbor School,
20 I've been given the opportunity to spend lots of time
21 at a composting organization called Earth Matter, in
22 order to fully understand the composting process and
23 how important it is.

24 Before Harbor School, I never even heard of Earth
25 Matter, much less know what it's about. Through

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

149

community composting, it is up and running, there are lots of things that can happen to keep this increase going. Community composting bins should be distributed through the city more frequently so it's more normalized for people to throw away food waste in these bins. There should be an option in restaurants as well as restaurants have a lot of food waste. If these steps are taken community composting will no longer seem like an out of the ordinary thing to do but instead be normalized and implemented well.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you so much.

ERIC GOLDSTEIN: Good afternoon Chair. Eric Goldstein from the Natural Resources Defense Council. I'll summarize my written testimony. We appreciate the hard work of the men and women that the Sanitation Department does every day to enhance our quality of life and protect public health in New York City.

Two issue areas, the first is organics collection. As the Council knows, it's a big problem. Composting is the answer. We've still got a long way to go despite the Council's excellent work in this area. NRDC recommends that the Council continue to fund the almost two dozen nonprofit

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

150

1 organizations that are implementing community
2 composting in all five boroughs, to accommodate
3 additional groups who deserve to be included in this
4 program and to have the existing groups expand their
5 operations. We recommend the Council provide \$10.5
6 million in funding for community composting in FY96.
7 In addition, we urge the Council to ensure that DSNY
8 has sufficient funds identified in its budget for the
9 Departments own public education efforts, which so
10 far have been anemic. They need to include
11 additional mailings, a second opportunity for
12 homeowners to request organic bins, and to publicize
13 the program in a way so that New Yorkers know exactly
14 what the program is and how to participate.
15

16 And third, we recommend that DSNY commit
17 sufficient funds to repair the failing roof of the
18 composting facility on Rikers Island. As curbside
19 composting grows, the Rikers facility is ideally
20 suited to provide organics processing capacity to
21 sustainably dispose more food scraps and yard waste.

22 Final topic for NRDC's budget priorities before
23 this committee, we urge the Council to implement -
24 provide sufficient funds for the successful
25 implementation of the commercial waste zoning reform

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

151

consistent with the Council's landmark legislation.

We urge the Council to secure assurances from DSNY

that it has sufficient funds to fully implement,

monitor and enforce the commercial waste zone program

in every zone across the city by the end of FY26.

We're not saying do it all at one time. We're saying

phase it in over the year and that's six years after

the passage of the law and a little focus on VMT

reduction, public safety, environmental benefits of

the program would also be useful. We of course want

this program to be effective in serving the customers

but there were other objectives that led the Council

to pass this bill and we want to see those achieved.

Finally, we urge the Council to ensure that no

funds be expanded in FY96 beyond what's already

committed to Hunts Point and New Town Creek for any

other advancing of co-digestion of organic waste in

the city's waste water treatment plants. That's not

the way to deal with collected organics. The way to

deal with collected organics is actual composting by

community groups and by the city establishing local

and midscale composting facilities throughout the

city. We thank you for your attention.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you and go Yankees.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

152

JENILLE SCOTT: Thank you to Chair Abreu for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Jenille Scott and I am the Climate Director at Align and a member of the Transform Don't Trash Coalition. This coalition is dedicated to transforming New York City's commercial waste industry by reducing waste pollution, fostering clean and healthy communities for all New Yorkers and creating better working conditions for our states workers. Central to our work is the commercial waste zone law, Local Law 199 of 2019 and even though we were pleased to see that the first zone was launched in January of this year and are eager to see the results that DSNY has collected. This excitement does not negate that this law has been significantly delayed in its implementation.

Uhm, this law was never intended to be a pilot program because it was developed bearing in mind the daily impacts that communities and workers face and this varies from various forms of pollution tied truck traffic as well as unsafe working conditions and numerous safety hazards that plague both pedestrians and workers.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

153

1
2 The inclusion of the commercial waste zone, as a
3 form of revenue raiser does encourage us and kind of
4 let's us know that DSNY is thinking of the commercial
5 waste zone law at top of mind but it doesn't provide
6 a clear launch fund or any indication of when the
7 remaining 19 zones will be launched.

8 In addition to this, the implementation of the
9 waste zones also means having sufficient capacity to
10 support waste collection and to this end, we remain
11 supportive of Council Member Nurse's Intro. 55 bill
12 and that essentially requires DSNY to accept solid
13 waste at city owned and operated marine transfer
14 stations as well as rail transfer stations.

15 So, thank you so much for the opportunity to be
16 here today to raise our coalitions concerns and we
17 appreciate the ongoing partnership with the Committee
18 as well noting that there is a Local Law 199 hearing
19 that's happening next month. So, thank you so much
20 and we look forward to working together to ensure the
21 highest possible environmental safety and consumer
22 protection standards across this new system.

23 Right on the two.

24 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Right on time. Alright this
25 panel is hereby excused. Thank you so much. Next up

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

154

1 we have Justin Wood, Andrea Lieske, Lou Reyes and
2 Clare Mifflin and I'd like to recognize Council Member
3 Vernikov.
4

5 JUSTIN WOOD: Good afternoon Chair Abreu and
6 members of the Committee staff and Council. Thank
7 you so much for the opportunity to testify. My name
8 is Justin Wood, I am the Director of Policy at New
9 York Lawyers for the Public Interest and like my last
10 two colleagues were also founding member of the
11 Transform Don't Trash New York City Campaign. We'll
12 submit detailed written testimony via email. I just
13 wanted to respond to some of what we heard drawn out
14 through the questions. Thank you for the thoughtful
15 questions for DSNY today. I think you know the
16 students on the first few panels made the case
17 compellingly. We don't need to put all the science
18 in front of this Committee. Climate change is a
19 worst case scenario. It's happening to New Yorkers.
20 It's happening to people across the world as we speak
21 and we have a federal government that seems
22 determined to withdraw every possible federal dollar
23 from solutions. It's also 12 percent of New York
24 States greenhouse gas emissions. So, it's a serious
25 chunk of what we as a huge state economy and city

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

155

economy put into the air in terms of climate change.

The good news is this solid waste management is accepted. It remains firmly in local and municipal control and the solutions have already been invented.

Again, we've heard about composting. We've heard about efficiency. We've heard about recycling and waste reduction at the source. I think what we are worried about in this budget is that DSNY is not as aggressively as necessary even requesting the funds to implement the good works of this committee and this Council going back years and even decades. So, Local Law 199, you know it sounds like we're off to a good start with 1/20th of the law being implemented and some good results, at least from a customer perspective. We don't see a reason to wait with the urgency of climate change and worker justice and inequities in how that waste is being handled.

Similarly, you know the solid waste management plan is expiring. This is a 20 year plan that DSNY needs to renew, so we would like to see the department aggressively going after the funds with the Council necessary to start accepting waste at marine transfer stations that we've already invested in. We've also gotten entire pieces of

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

156

1
2 infrastructure like the Gansevoort Marine Transfer
3 Station that have just been quietly abandoned by the
4 Department and it doesn't even put in funding
5 requests for this anymore. So, these are things we
6 hope to revisit in the Local Law 199 oversight
7 hearing with you and throughout this budget cycle
8 working together. Thank you so much.

9 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you Justin. Next.

10 ANDREA LIESKA: Hi, my name is Andrea Lieska. I
11 am a long time community composter. I started
12 composting in my community garden in Harlem on St.
13 Nicholas Avenue on 117th Street. That experience set
14 me on a path to work in composting and compost
15 education and currently I'm working with Earth Matter
16 but today I am here as myself, representing myself
17 only.

18 I'm here to ask as everybody I guess to continue
19 the fight for funding community composting. The need
20 to educate New Yorkers on the importance of compost,
21 the compost process, and how to participate is
22 tremendous as we have even heard from our council
23 member. I live in a 56th unit building. That's an
24 example, our building produces barely one bin of
25 compost, which is equivalent to about three

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

157

households. That means besides my family, there may be two other families that are composting.

So, the city really needs to put compost education up front and center and from my knowledge as a professional, one of the most effective ways to teach people on all aspects of composting is experiencing it.

Coming to a compost site, seeing the operation, getting the hints in compost activities and basically witnessing the transformation of what most people consider garbage into beautiful black gold is just irreplaceable.

It is not enough to just make compost bins available as we just heard from the Commissioner in order for people to participate continuous education is not negotiable. New York City has dismissal, recycling and composting waste and implementing fines. Obviously just looking at recycling rates will not be working. If you look at cities that have successful recycling and compost rates, they have focused extensively on community engagement. So, I want to thank you again for all the work that you have done so far and please continue funding and expanding community composting.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

158

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you for your testimony.

LOU REYES: Thank you. My name is Lou Reyes, I'm the Compost Project Manager at the Queens Botanical Garden and we're actually one of the first sites of composting in New York City 31 years ago and I'm really appreciative of the \$450,000 that you allocated so that we can continue operating which is unfortunately the only site in Queens right now after they reused that site, which was something very unfortunate.

We were able to have a three staff lines as well as several internships thanks to this funding. We're participating in the master composter which has had a participation similar to those of when it was funded by DSNY. We - I'm sorry. Uhm, this year even though we started late because of the funding, we actually have managed to service all 15 districts which is not an easy task given the size of Queens but we service them by either distributing material, doing workshops on obviously by servicing various drop off sites in Queens. Most of the drop off sites in Queens are serviced by us.

So, we be clear in our request a 23 percent increase it would get them to \$550,000 and that would

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

159

1
2 allow us to increase our master composter workshops
3 and we would also like have the ability to do more
4 organic intake. Sorry, I'll yeah, thank you so much.

5 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you for your testimony.
6 Clare.

7 CLARE MIFLIN: Thank you. I'm Clare Miflin from
8 the Center of Zero Waste Design. I'm going to talk
9 first about containerization, which I fully support
10 but I just think the way it's moving forward is very
11 problematic and it needs to be slowed down and some
12 things reconsidered. It's bad for zero waste goals.
13 Why require just containers for trash? Even though
14 it's food waste that brings rats. Why invest in
15 trash only infrastructure? Which will reduce the
16 already low diversion rate. We know this from older
17 buildings that just have a trash shoot on every floor
18 and recycling of food scraps in the basement. They
19 have bad diversion rates, so why go citywide with
20 trash only infrastructure? It's bad for labor.
21 Building staff in Sanitation workers are still
22 needing to lug these 50 pound bags around, something
23 not allowed in the European countries and it's bad
24 for public space.

25

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

160

1 Sidewalks are overflowing with bins. They block
2 storefronts. You know they may have ten bins in
3 front of the storefront, the walk ups above and the
4 retail. That's not the solution for our retail
5 corridors and the enclosures for the bags that
6 they're asking BIDs to use makes sidewalks dirty
7 because you have to drag bags into them and they were
8 deemed impractical in DSNY's own future of trash
9 report.
10

11 Intro. 1123 is mandating citywide worldwide of
12 bins before they have even been piloted or evaluated
13 before environmental review. Why not pilot multiple
14 options, compare them and then move forward. CB9
15 doesn't include any buildings over 80 units, whereas
16 a quarter of units in Manhattan are in buildings with
17 300 or more units. They would require eight 8-20
18 Empire bins per building. There's better options
19 that take up less curbside space temporarily and
20 require no lifting of bags. The stuff could just
21 wheel out wheel bins. No maintenance of on street
22 containers. Pilot these solutions. 60 percent of
23 their large buildings wanted to pilot them.

24 And lastly, community composting. I want to
25 thank you so much for your support of that. I know

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

161

1
2 you know how important it is. City Council has been
3 amazing. I'd like it to be further tied into storm
4 water goals so it can be applied to parks and green
5 spaces citywide to restore the health of soil
6 citywide, reducing flooding and increasing health of
7 trees in communities. Thank you so much.

8 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you for your testimony.
9 This panel is hereby excused. We now have Kenny
10 Burgos, Christine Datz Romero, Justin Green and
11 Marisa De Dominicis. Sorry, I pronounced your name
12 Dominicis, sorry. Twice in a week Christine.

13 CHRISTINE DATZ ROMERO: Yes, thank you and nice
14 to see everybody here at the Council and my name is
15 Christine Datz Romero. I'm at the Lower East Side
16 Ecology Center and I just really want to thank the
17 Council for making this funding available last year.
18 We very proudly put the New York City Community
19 Composting Network, a citywide effort together. It
20 was quite an undertaking after really being unfunded
21 for half a year to bring everybody back up to speed
22 and I really sincerely hope that they will continue
23 to receive funding this fiscal year to because we're
24 just starting with our services, including supporting
25 curbside education and sometimes I think there is a

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

162

1 perception that community composting is not needed
2 anymore because we have curbside collection now. And
3 that's really not true because as you heard from many
4 people, we are really on the ground educating people
5 about composting to really enlighten and encourage
6 them to participate at the level that is fit for
7 different people.
8

9 So, we did a lot of food scrap drop offs and
10 local processing is part of what community composting
11 does to really feed community gardens and to also
12 make green infrastructure more effective. This year,
13 the Lower East Side Ecology Center has a special ask
14 to not only continue our programming support but also
15 to really getting the buildout of the Canarsie
16 Compost site over the finishing line.

17 This site was planned three years ago. There was
18 a lot of investment in this site already made and we
19 would really like to see that happening. It will
20 bring resources to Brooklyn to an often times
21 overlooked neighborhood and it will really allow
22 compost education to go to Canarsie, East New York
23 and other neighborhoods. Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Justin.
25

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

163

JUSTIN GREEN: Hey. Thank you. I'm Justin Green, I'm the Executive Director of Big Reuse. We're also here to express a lot of gratitude towards Council Member and the City Council for continuing funding. When the Mayor cut funding for community composting groups across the city. Your funding allows 14 groups doing amazing projects all over the city from Urban farms to midscale composting sites, to master composter classes, to classes with kids. Amazing kids speaking today about how compost education has effected them and inspired them. And I think that community composting work is just a small fraction of what the city spends on sanitation but it's really essential. It's what built the support for curbside. It's what continues to educate New York City residents about composting and the value of composting. There's a lot of behavior change that has to happen. It's going to take a long time to make that change and our groups have shown how important it is and how successful and impactful we are at getting people on board. And so I think it's really a key for the success of curbside but it also provides the real sustainable alternative to the path the city is taking and so the ideal ecological

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

164

standpoint, a lot of the students from Harbor School really got into the details and science and they're right on and I think - So, what we're doing is local. It builds community. It's more sustainable. It's more ecological and it creates you know green networks and green attitudes in the city that have a much bigger impact beyond the actual projects we're working on. So, thank you again for restoring funding. Appreciate it.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you Justin. Kenny.

KENNY BURGOS: Thank you Mr. Chair and thank you to the members of the Committee today. My name is Kenny Burgos, I'm the Chief Executive Officer of the New York Apartment Association, also known as NYAA representing thousands of housing providers throughout the City of New York.

Today, I want to focus specifically on the impact of the Organic Materials Composting program, whose penalty provisions go into effect next week. When buildings do not separate compostable waste from other trash, they will face fines for as much as \$300 per violation. NYAA does support the initiative to reduce waste and increase recycling and composting efforts but we urge you to reconsider the impact of

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

165

1 assessing penalties now. Especially in light of the
2 difficulties, property managers continue to face and
3 gaining tenants cooperation with existing recycling
4 mandates and city goals.
5

6 Overall curbside and containerized recycle
7 tonnage collected, still falls far short of city
8 targets and curbside and containerized recycling
9 diversion rates are flat to down from earlier fiscal
10 years. Residential curbside organic capture rates
11 are low and since the program expanded rates are even
12 lower. Despite the broader reach under the law,
13 total tonnage is collected and capture rates have
14 declined. The law places ultimate responsibility in
15 the housing providers for tenant activity. The law
16 requires tenants to separate food scraps, yard waste
17 and compostable paper materials from other waste.
18 However, tenants in multifamily buildings may lack
19 space to do so or motivation due to a sense of
20 anonymity and the knowledge to properly comply with
21 these rules.

22 In buildings with hundreds of units it's become a
23 logistical nightmare. Responsibility fall on the
24 housing provider and to date the city has engaged in
25 the less than robust education campaign during its

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

166

1
2 implementation phase. Initiating fines now will
3 cause undue burdens on building operations and
4 finances.

5 No building wants to pay penalties or fines but
6 multifamily buildings face significant challenges in
7 implementing trash separation mandates. Buildings
8 devote enumerable staff hours to meeting the sorting
9 requirements of paper, plastic and cardboard already.
10 This new requirement means building service workers
11 now will have to open trash hold bags and riffle
12 through tenants refuse to scoop out coffee grinds,
13 vegetable peels and other food waste. Obviously not
14 a pleasant task and I will just to the end of my
15 testimony will say we hope to meet these goals. We
16 would just ask for a delay in this enforcement and
17 push for more tenant education and our own education
18 as well.

19 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Yeah, I would also like to
20 mention that the admin testified that they'll begin
21 sifting, looking through the trash next week. The
22 fines won't be implemented until early next year but
23 just want to give you that for background. Thank you
24 for your testimony.

25 KENNY BURGOS: Appreciate it.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

167

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Next up.

MARISA DE DOMINICIS: Good afternoon Council Member Abreu and I wanted to start by just thanking the City Council for not only keeping our community composting initiatives alive and not having that dismantled but to provide the opportunity for all these youth to be able to have a voice, which I believe will be fundamental in their moving forward and impact, not only their lives but many of the people in this room, in the city, and wherever they may roam.

So, thank you again for giving this opportunity, this democratic opportunity for them to be able to really harness their thoughts and their feelings so that as they go on into the world, they can also help educate building owners, their own families, their classmates, and other people that they will encounter as they grow into adulthood.

I just wanted to again thank the City Council for allowing us not only to be able to keep our infrastructure but to be able to grow our network of community partners and this year has been phenomenal with feeling that just like the soil underneath the ground is communicating with each other, all the

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

168

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2 microorganisms. We have now been able to leverage
3 through that funding the ability to grow our networks
4 and to be able to support each other.

5 So, I just wanted to say the work that you have
6 done is not lost. Not only on earth matter and our
7 ability to do the processing work but how we are able
8 to continue to feel supported, to be able to reach
9 out and continue the work that will support all of
10 the buildings in New York City. So, again, I wanted
11 to thank everyone who supports the community
12 composting and our goal is to be able to reach
13 everyone in the city.

14 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you so much for your
15 testimony. Right on time. This panel is hereby
16 excused. Next panel, Domingo Morales, Rhonda Keyser,
17 Matthew Qevello(SP?) and is that Rosarie Clarke or
18 Clarke, last name Clarke. Matthew Servello. My
19 apologies Matt. I know you Matt. Domingo.

20 DOMINGO MORALES: How are you doing?

21 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Nice to see you man. I'd
22 love to see the partnership with you and cafeteria
23 but -

24 DOMINGO MORALES: I want to thank you for having
25 me at this hearing and I want to thank City Council

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

169

1 because we didn't know what was going to happen to a
2 lot of the community compost programming last year
3 and when the Mayor made the announcement to cut city
4 composting, we were stressed and City Council kind of
5 said no, community is composting. Composting is
6 community and you all took a stand and because of
7 that we have a group of amazing organizations doing
8 work that spans beyond decades in New York City and I
9 think it's just amazing that you all took that stance
10 and we want you to know that we appreciate it and we
11 take it very seriously. And because of that, you've
12 seen partnerships and cross pollination between these
13 organizations such as compost power, cafeteria
14 culture, Big Reuse, Queens Botanical Garden. I feel
15 like we're all working together to try and create a
16 big picture composting system in New York City where
17 we have Department of Sanitation working alongside
18 those medium scale composters who are working
19 alongside those medium scale composters who are
20 working alongside the small scale composters. And I
21 think what you did last year was you gave us a chance
22 to create a very meaningful mycelial network in New
23 York City where we can start to cycle nutrients and
24 resources and figure out how we can keep this
25

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

170

1 community going. So, I want to thank you for that
2 and I think someone asked a question earlier of why
3 composting is important and I think that was a big
4 one for me. I think composting is in the center of
5 all things sustainable. Not only that, we hate rats
6 in New York City and composters don't like rats
7 either. So, compost power worked.

8
9 Thanks to the City Council we created the rodent
10 reduction rubric that we can actually use as menu for
11 anyone trying to start a new composting site or
12 trying to get rid of rodents in a composting site in
13 New York City and I think with this funding, with
14 this continued support of these community
15 organizations, we can continue to show why we compost
16 in New York City and show that it is feasible and it
17 can be efficient and it can create funding in the
18 future.

19 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you. I certainly love
20 the work that you're doing.

21 RHONDA KEYSER: Thanks. It's hard to follow
22 Domingo but I'm going to try. Thank you so much
23 Council Member Abreu and members of the Sanitation
24 Committee. Thank you for this opportunity for all of
25 us to speak today. I'm Rhonda Keyser, I'm Program

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

171

and Policy Director for the Environmental Education Organization Cafeteria Culture. You heard from our students today. They become climate leaders by taking action in their own cafeterias and their own city halls and this year, thanks to City Council funding, we were able to expand our programs beyond the plastic reduction in the cafeteria to composting cafeteria food waste at nearby sites run by compost power with our students leading the way.

In the classroom, we teach about the concept of composting but onsite when our students discover worms, chop their own food scraps, add in their browns and turn the tumblers themselves, suddenly composting isn't an abstract idea. It's real, it's local and it's something they have access to and they can do right now, right here in their community.

Local composting programs don't just process food scraps, as you've heard today from a lot of people. They build climate literacy. They grow community ownership and they spark lifelong habits. We envision every community composting site, all of whom are here today that they can partner with nearby schools to build on this model that we're piloting

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

172

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2 this year, to not just learn about composting but
3 actually compost their own food scraps.

4 We're committed to advancing our cafeteria food
5 waste reduction program and expanding the local food
6 scraps processing across multiple school settings.
7 Our goal is to identify the most effective
8 infrastructure and systemic solutions for scaling up
9 local composting in schools. By placing students at
10 the center, we're not only diverting waste but
11 building a replicable model for our long term
12 community driven action.

13 So, we thank the City Council for funding this
14 year. We urge you to expand it for local composting
15 and compost education, not only for building this
16 important infrastructure but also for the education
17 that makes the work lasting and inclusive.

18 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you. Next.

19 MAGGIE CLARK: I'm Maggie Clark, PHD and thank
20 you for having this hearing. I'm a long time member
21 since 1988 of the Manhattan SWAB Committee Chair,
22 past Chair. The Council approved waste
23 characterization studies to tell us how much and
24 where the recyclables and organics are generated in
25 the city so that you site and size infrastructure

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

173

1 properly, which is great. We support it but the city
2 is not - their studies have never been designed to
3 develop a municipal waste prevention and reuse
4 program and they're falling down miserably in that
5 area. We need to have that kind of program with
6 curbside collection of reusables and repair
7 infrastructure.
8

9 We've got all of this outlined in writing, which
10 we can send you. EPA's solid waste higher Archy has
11 prevention reuse as the highest priority above
12 recycling and composting. According to World
13 Resources Institute, reducing generation of goods and
14 food is 70 times as beneficial for the environment
15 and the climate compared to reducing export to
16 landfills and incinerators with recycling. So, to
17 comply with the city's new zero waste laws and the
18 states climate law, we must understand reuse and
19 prevention potential here in the city.

20 Therefore, we urge the Council to develop and
21 fund reuse and prevention characterization studies of
22 the types, distribution, quantity, condition, and
23 repaired value of reusable and repairable consumer
24 goods, like clothing, furniture, appliances,
25 electronics, books and toys as well as types of

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

174

unrecyclable packaging like fused paper, plastic
and/or metal packaging that would be candidates for a
legislative ban.

Calculating the potential value per ton of
reusable items and prevention would make clear how
much we could save versus export costs and losing
that embedded value to incinerators and landfills.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you very much.

MATTHEW SERVELLO: Hi, I'm Matthew Serello, Chair
of the Manhattan Sound Waste Advisory Board and I am
delivering this testimony on behalf of all four solid
waste advisory boards. Chair Abreu and members of
this Committee, thank you for holding today's
hearing.

The budget hearing, this budget hearing comes at
a propitious moment as we transition from the city's
2006 to the 2027 solid waste management plan. We
would stress how important it is that public input
into this plan be taken seriously and that this plan
is properly funded. After three decades of diversion
efforts, the takeaway is clear. It is not just how
much we spend but how we decide to spend it. Today,
80 percent of the roughly 2.8 million tons of
residential waste is exported to landfill and

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

175

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2 incineration annually at a projected 2026 cost of
3 \$500 million. Organics make up about 40 percent of
4 exported waste after the 4 percent that we've
5 captured for diversion.

6 Local Law 85 mandates source separation but we
7 must fund New York City's Community Composting
8 Network and give Intro. 696 serious consideration to
9 realize composts full environmental, social and
10 fiscal benefits because food scraps separated and
11 collected are not compost until they are composted.
12 Textile are five percent of exported waste and Intro.
13 256 would have studied the recycling mandate to
14 expand local textile reuse and recycling
15 infrastructure. If we solve for organics and
16 textiles, we are 50 percent closer to zero waste to
17 landfill and incineration.

18 Recently enacted Intro. 697 that requires the
19 DSNY to continue waste characterization studies over
20 the next five years should include pilot data, reuse
21 and prevention, testing and monitoring drinking water
22 for the presence of microplastics. An idea proposed
23 in Intro. 797 of 2022, requires a revisit. The data
24 would help manage one of the most troublesome parts
25 of our waste stream. All of this hinges on funding,

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

176

1 outreach, education, ensuring residents fully
2 participate in recycling and composting so we can
3 reduce our reliance on waste export as called for in
4 the city's 2006 Solid Waste Management Plan. You
5 will hear more testimony today from other SWAB
6 members, I suspect online providing more detail on
7 some of these ideas. Once again, thank you for the
8 opportunity to provide this testimony to you today.

9
10 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you Matt. This panel
11 is excused. Thank you. Next up, by a show of hands,
12 how many of you all are feeling a little hot or you
13 guys are fine? Alright, Jimmy Martin from ACE, Shawn
14 Campbell, Lacey Tauber, and Julia Werner.

15 You may proceed.

16 JIM MARTIN: Good afternoon Chair Abreu and
17 members of the Committee. My name is Jim Martin and
18 I am the Executive Director of ACE New York. I'm
19 here to express ACE's strong opposition to the
20 proposed DSNY rule prohibiting Sanitation providers
21 like ACE from placing collective garbage bags next to
22 DSNY public waste receptacles.

23 ACE partners with the City Council each year to
24 provide sanitation service in over 40 Council
25 Districts. We are moving in excess of one million

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

177

garbage bags a year from city streets. This rule will require ACE to purchase anywhere from 200 to 230 containers. If you include the mandated cost of purchasing, shipping, installing, ensuring and maintaining these containers, the cost would adhere to the new rule near \$4 million to \$5 million.

DSNY has suggested that the cost of purchasing these containers should be either ACE's or the responsibility of the City Council, the New York City Council, New York City Cleanup Fund.

ACE is simply unable to afford these expenses. The burden of which would result in ACE closing its doors after nearly 33 years of service to New York City. Should the cost of these containers be passed on to our Council partners, it will leave almost nothing to fund our work, resulting in the discontinuation of ACE Sanitation Services in most Council Districts, meaning the 165 ACE employees who are outside today who provide these services will lose their job.

For example, our estimate that we will need roughly four containers in your district Chair Abreu would cost about \$80,000, which is half of what you generously fund us last fiscal year. That means our

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

178

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2 actual sanitation services in your district will be
3 cut in half and about two full time employees will be
4 laid off.

5 The men and women who serve us have overcome
6 homelessness, incarceration and addiction and this
7 job has been a lifeline for them as they begin their
8 journey towards economic independence. Though
9 unintended, this is a real and incredibly cruel
10 consequence of DSNY's containerization policy. It is
11 clear to me today that DSNY is shifting its
12 responsibility to adherence of containerization
13 mandate onto nonprofits like ACE without providing
14 necessary resources that cover those related costs.

15 We still have no idea what this will cost us. I
16 met with DSNY in calls and in person. No one has an
17 answer for me on how I'm supposed to pay for this.
18 The clock is ticking on my employees on ACE. We need
19 help. Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Do you know what you
21 anticipate the cost would be for - because we're in
22 the budget process right now and you know I'm making
23 a push to get say you pay for bins, I would like to
24 know you know what would be the cost that would be
25 helpful for us to push for.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

179

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2 JIM MARTIN: So, and I appreciate the question
3 and the feedback. So, the issue was understanding
4 the entirety of the problem and the lack of
5 information coming to me. We had an initial count
6 from the Department of Sanitation that we would
7 require 230 containers through our five boroughs.
8 There's a lot of unknowns in this count. DSNY
9 suggests you don't need that many containers. That
10 means our employees need to carry bags farther
11 distances, right? So, that's less sweeping, more
12 walking.

13 Two, once I purchase these containers Councilman,
14 Chair, I have to ensure them. I'm placing an object
15 on purchasing on a city street that needs to be
16 ensured against damage, theft, destruction. Okay
17 those costs are unknown. I have three brokers
18 currently searching and trying to get quotes for what
19 that insurance will cost. I still don't have an
20 answer. They also need to maintain weekly. It needs
21 to be painted, cleaned, you're talking about
22 maintaining painting and cleaning over 200 containers
23 across all five boroughs. I don't know what that's
24 going to cost. I know those containers start at
25 \$15,000 apiece. I know they need to be put on

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

180

1 plywood, where they put on city streets, they need to
2 be put on plywood, they need to be shipped and
3 installed. Those prices are still unknown to me. We
4 run a very tight ship. We are a very small
5 nonprofit. You've been very generous with us; we
6 just are terrified and my employees who have had
7 nothing in their lives have fought so hard and come
8 so far and have done so much for this city. I ask
9 that you please consider funding the mandate because
10 otherwise after 33 years of doing what we do, it
11 might be gone.
12

13 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: I hear that and we certainly
14 need you. We need you to succeed and we need you to
15 operate with the resources you need. And so, I'm
16 going to continue - this is an obligation for the
17 Mayor's Office to be picking up the tab and so let's
18 - I'm going to keep pushing. Next up.

19 JIM MARTIN: Thank you.

20 SHAWN CAMPBELL: Yes that and good afternoon
21 Chair Abreu and members of the Committee. I'm Shawn
22 Campbell, I'm the District Manager of Brooklyn
23 Community Board 14 that Central Brooklyn, Flatbush,
24 Midwood. My board recently submitted its letter of
25 comment in response to agency responses to our budget

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

181

1 priorities. DSNY responded to our priority requests
2 that there couldn't be accommodated enough stuff to
3 remove those requests. Bizarre.

4
5 The first priority is one that we have been
6 asking for since the days of the COVID epidemic and
7 that is for the restoration of manual litter patrol
8 MLP in the baseline budget.

9 Rather than reading testimony that I've submitted
10 to you in writing, I'm going to tell you a little bit
11 about my district. My 2.9 square miles of Central
12 Brooklyn has 54 dead ends, 20 road bridges, 12
13 trussells which are the sidewalks underneath the
14 elevated brightened line. We have five Council
15 Members, one of whom Rita Joseph gives DSNY an
16 allocation for cleaning. The other four do not and
17 that's okay because this is supposed to be
18 supplemental funding, not supplanting baseline
19 services from DSNY. Yet the Council is very generous
20 when it comes to DSNY. You all gave them about \$87
21 million in the last fiscal year budget. This is on
22 top of their \$1.8 billion budget. So, I am concerned
23 about how resets are being managed if the agency
24 needs another \$87 million in supplemental funds and
25

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

182

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2 still cannot provide MLP equitably and efficiently in
3 my district.

4 Uhm, we wrote about vendor enforcement and DSNY
5 enforcement practice in general. We made some
6 comments about DSNY's policy on containerization.
7 I'd also note that some of these supplemental
8 fundings coming from Council should be going to
9 organizations such as ACE for the supplemental
10 cleaning and I hope that you will consider the need
11 for restoring MLP to the baseline budget since it's a
12 baseline service. Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you for your testimony.
14 Next.

15 LACEY TAUBER: Good afternoon. My name is Lacey
16 Tauber. I'm here representing Brooklyn Borough
17 President Antonio Reynoso. I have five things I want
18 to touch on so I'm going to summarize and submit
19 longer testimony written. The first one, the biggest
20 priority for the borough president is commercial
21 waste zones. I want to lift up everything you've
22 heard from the advocates today and just say, I think
23 we all agree that you know the true efficacy of this
24 program is going to be when it's rolled out to all 20
25 zones citywide and thank you so much for your

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

183

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2 questions today. I think they were exactly on point
3 because we all know that that's going to require more
4 funding for outreach, more funding for enforcement,
5 more civilian headcount and I really hope that
6 Sanitation gets back to you with those numbers so
7 that we can all be on the same page about what we
8 need to advocate for to get this done in the next
9 fiscal year.

10 The second thing is containerization, especially
11 lifting up what you heard from Clare earlier, just
12 about how you know we all support containerization.
13 We just want to see it done right and the BP has been
14 on record many times talking about wanting to fast
15 track the on street shared containers, making sure
16 that we're including recycling and organics and you
17 know just making sure that we're doing this also
18 correctly but also quickly so that you know we get
19 these bags off our streets.

20 The third thing is community composting. Thank
21 you so much to the Council for restoring that
22 funding. BP just wants to reiterate his support for
23 their ask for this budget year and including the
24 ecology centers ask for a new home in Brooklyn.

25

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

184

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2 And the fourth thing is the solid waste
3 management plan. You've heard some folks talk about
4 that. Given that Sanitation brought it in house,
5 it's a little unclear what resources are being
6 devoted to it. It's such an important document and
7 we want to see it - the outreach and engagement start
8 and it's concerning that it hasn't.

9 Finally, just want to put in a plug for the
10 district 13 and 15 garages. They are among the worst
11 of [INAUDIBLE 03:30:55] plant and DSNY's inventory.
12 And so, every year we advocate for them to have new
13 homes and so I just want to just say that again.
14 Thank you so much.

15 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you. Next.

16 JULIA WERNER: Hi Council. My name is Julia
17 Werner. I am a resident of Bedstuy. I'm not
18 representing anybody. Thank you for the amazing
19 students and advocates who spoken before and often
20 [INAUDIBLE 03:31:19]. I just wanted to say thank you
21 so much for recognize the significant community and
22 environmental value of community composting and for
23 restoring funding to New York City's programs after
24 they were asked from the budget. After that
25 happened, I mean I was just despondent. You know my

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

185

1 partner was just what's wrong you know? And I was
2 like I just feel like I don't even want to be here
3 anymore. Like nothing really matters but seeing that
4 you picked that up was transformative and so thank
5 you for continuing to fund that.
6

7 We're in a window of criticality in terms of
8 climate action and resiliency at the local and state
9 levels, particularly as federal supports wanes due to
10 EPA cuts and climate change denial. It's impossible
11 to support grassroots initiative without composting
12 services.

13 Community composting is the literal biological
14 grassroots part of this effort. Thank you for
15 ensuring that these essential resources continue to
16 be available. Some suggestions that I have is, you
17 know like I was - this weekend actually literally I
18 was getting ready to sign up for the master composter
19 class and it felt more important to me than
20 certifications from my own job. I work in tech; I
21 work in cyber security so very far removed from the
22 groups that we have here.

23 But it feels more important to understand how to
24 do this correctly and realizing that that could go
25 away. I would just really love to see it continue

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

186

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2 and also just some opportunity for more education in
3 the neighborhoods. I compost. My building composts
4 but I'm constantly picking bottle caps and tinfoil
5 out of our composting bin and I try to talk to my
6 neighbors but we've recently gotten some new banners
7 down Malcom X and they're about not using scooters on
8 the sidewalks, which is very important. But I think
9 that maybe an opportunity is composting banners and
10 just signs so that local residents who don't partake
11 in these will know more. Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thanks for what you do when
13 no one's watching. That's really admirable. Next up
14 please. Next panel. Brandon, Julie Stein, Lauren
15 Collins, and Evan Sweet. Also, since Brandon left,
16 I'll have Francesca come up and join this panel. Is
17 Francesca here? Alright, she is.

18 Alright, alright. You can start.

19 Hi, good afternoon Chair Abreu and members of the
20 Sanitation Committee. My name is Julie Stein and I
21 am the Executive Director of Union Square
22 Partnership. The business improvement district for
23 Union Square in 14th Street. I appreciate the
24 opportunity to testify today about the Department of
25 Sanitations new rules on waste containerization and

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

187

1 the cost of implementation. As you know BIDs play a
2 critical role in maintaining the cleanliness of the
3 sidewalks and public spaces. We share the city's
4 goals of creating clean, livable and vibrant streets,
5 however this transition requires resources. Right
6 now, there's no dedicated funding to support BIDs and
7 meeting the new waste containerization requirement
8 for the public trash that we bag even though doing so
9 comes with significant upfront costs.

11 For us to purchase the recommended city bins or
12 metro store containers and the container protection
13 elements for our district, we estimate an upfront
14 cost of at least \$100,000. This is a substantial
15 cost for our organization, a medium size bid and we
16 know many other medium and small bids face similar
17 financial hurdles.

18 BIDs operate within fixed budgets and can't
19 simply increase our assessment to cover one time
20 expenses like this. In fact, we cannot increase our
21 assessment at all without a legislative process that
22 can take up to two years. With the rule only
23 finalized at the beginning of March 2025 for
24 implementation in August, just five months later or
25 even at the end of this calendar year, these new

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

188

costs for the recommended city bins or metro store
containers do not conform with our funding process.

That means that the city is asking us to play a
zero sum game, cutting funding for other critical
services that we provide in order to make this
investment in the recommended waste containers. The
only relatively budget friendly option for my
organization is to by tilt bins or tilt trucks, which
are not the state of the art management solution that
any of us are seeking. The Council has already
acknowledged the hardship of waste containerization
to property owners with the passage of Council Member
Salaam's bill to provide funding for containers with
secured lids for small residential buildings. While
we are called a business improvement district, the
members who pay our assessment also include
residential property owners like the ones that
Council considers worthy of financial relief related
to these rules.

To ensure the continued ability for BIDs to
provide the range of services specified in our
district plans, we ask for the Council or the
Administration to include funding in this year's

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

189

budget to support BIDs acquiring the recommended
waste containers. Thanks so much.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you. Next.

LAUREN COLLINS: Hello, good afternoon Council
Member. Hi, my name is Lauren Collins, I'm the
Executive Director of the Church Flatbush Community
Alliance, formerly the Church Avenue BID and the
Flatbush Avenue BID. We are business improvement
district. I'm going away from my prepared notes
because I was pretty inspired by a lot of what was
said. I was really happy to see the Committee ask
such careful questions about Sanitation. This
mandate, this unfunded mandate would cause such
hardship for a lot of BIDs like mine. We are a small
to medium size BID. Our total budget is \$589,000.
42 percent of that goes to Sanitation. We spent
\$255,000 on sanitation, which you'll find is very
typical of a lot of the BIDs as far as percentage.

For that money, we have a crew of three people
plus ACE. I think one person from ACE usually
cleaning more than 2.7 miles in Flatbush. Flatbush
is not very clean. There's a lot of trash to pick
up. We have about 55 bags a day of public litter

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

190

1 plus about 35 bags on average that are just dumped
2 there throughout the day illegally.

3
4 30 percent of BID staff time is also spent on
5 sanitation monitoring and addressing issues. We get
6 funding from discretionary through Council Member
7 Rita Joseph that entirely goes to staff time because
8 of all the time we have to spend.

9 We did do clean curbs. We have three containers
10 through DSNY a few years ago. We have three funded
11 containers. Great program. We have to pay for
12 maintenance. We just spent \$1,300 for one that was
13 broken but that is a fair way to have us use
14 containers and to get bags off the street. To begin,
15 for us to begin to comply with this, it would cost us
16 a little over \$40,000 for just four bins. We already
17 did a site visit with DSNY. We do not have the money
18 to pay for this and I think you will hear that I'm
19 sure when you see the submitted testimony from many
20 of the bids, the money just isn't there and as
21 Council Member Nurse I believe said earlier, this is
22 DSNY's initiative. They should fund it and not force
23 other organizations, nonprofits to do that. Thank
24 you so much.

25 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you. Next.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

191

Good afternoon Council Members and my name is Evan Sweet; I'm the Director of Neighborhood Operations for the meat packing business improvement district. Thank you for your time and the opportunity to testify today. I'm here to ask the City Council to allocate additional funding to support BIDs, Neighborhood Associations and other community groups as we attempt to comply with the Administrations new burdensome public waste containerization rule. Without Council funding this rule will become an unfunded mandate that penalizes not-for-profit organizations that work tirelessly to supplement city agencies keeping streets clean. The Meat Packing District is New York City's premier live, work, play cultural district on Manhattan's west side and central to our BIDs mission is managing a public refuse and ensuring neighborhood cleanliness. The BID allocates one-third of our operating budget each year to sanitation services and through our partnership with ACE employs 12 hardworking full time sanitation staffers.

These individuals service 100 waste receptacles. We have 92 block bases and set out between 150 and 400 bags of public trash for DSNY collection every

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

192

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2 day. As a result of their hard work, over 60 percent
3 of public survey respondents site cleanliness as a
4 key positive feature of the meat packing district.

5 We believe trash containerization is good policy
6 and have even piloted new management practices in the
7 neighborhood. However, this rule and the lack of
8 funding to support the acquisition of containers,
9 collection vehicles, and other equipment creates an
10 undue burden on budget lines as cost for labor and
11 goods continue to rise.

12 Unlike household containerization which might
13 require a homeowner to purchase one to two \$40
14 containers. BIDs service large areas of the city
15 require multiple specially constructive containers.
16 In the meat packing district, it will cost over
17 \$100,000 to acquire the necessary totter storage
18 containers and additional equipment needed to comply.
19 In addition to these capital costs, our operating
20 budget will also need to be increased to reflect the
21 additional work that BID staff has undertaken to
22 manage this new program and the ongoing maintenance
23 necessary to upkeep these assets.

24 During the meat making process, the meat packing
25 district highlighted five concrete issues that needed

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

193

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2 to be addressed before implementation. Unfortunately
3 none of them were addressed and the new rule is now
4 in effect.

5 As a result, partners will be challenged at
6 keeping our Council Districts clean and the others
7 are worried about their ability to provide effective
8 supplemental sanitation services and in some cases,
9 are worried about being able to continue at all.

10 Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you Evan. Next.

12 FRANCESCA FERNANDEZ BRUCE: Hi, thank you so much
13 Chair Abreu for being here. My name is Francesca
14 Fernandez Bruce. I represent the Grand Street BID,
15 which is a small bid with a strapped budget in
16 Brooklyn, surveying in my community and I'm here to
17 speak about the containerization.

18 I want to first say I appreciate Frank and our
19 local DSNY Chiefs. I've worked in a city agency
20 myself and I have the upmost respect for public
21 servants. Though I wish they could have been here
22 for such compelling testimony today, can you call
23 this a hearing if no one hears? Maybe it's because
24 they didn't design this mandate to the extent that
25 it's been designed at all. They didn't hear us at

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

194

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2 the last hearing either and they continue to ignore
3 our feedback.

4 Throughout this process, DSNY has said that they
5 are working with us on tailored solutions but we all
6 know perfectly well there's no such thing as
7 solutions without funding. When pressed the agency
8 acts like funding will just materialize as they're
9 saying it will make it so. First, they have said it
10 will come from grants. Grants that we depend on to
11 serve our low income communities. Taking money out
12 of the mouths of our struggling mom and pops. Then
13 they say it could come from discretionary funding
14 from City Council, which as you know are already
15 facing unprecedented demand.

16 They also have responded to our repeated pleas by
17 claiming we have artificially inflated the cost of
18 this project and we are happy to submit detailed,
19 realistic packages to assure you that we are not.
20 Our upfront capital cost at our small bid would be
21 over \$25,000, not including maintenance and we are
22 one of 76 BIDs. We are already directing the bulk of
23 our budgets to make up for shortfalls in street
24 cleaning services for the city, even while districts
25

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

195

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2 like mine struggle to make ends meet and serve our
3 communities.

4 If funding doesn't come through in my district,
5 like many others, will have to end service to our
6 corridor. This will choke our businesses with litter
7 and rats, put folks out of work, and would be wildly
8 counterproductive. They are forcing us to make a
9 choice and our communities deserve better. The fact
10 that no one is here to hear testimony from our
11 communities is deeply disappointing. Thank you sir.

12 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you so much. This
13 panel is hereby excused. I have Noah Sheroff.

14 NOAH SHEROFF: Thank you. Good afternoon New
15 York City Council Sanitation Committee. Thank you so
16 much for providing me with the opportunity to once
17 again testify before you. My name is Noah Sheroff
18 and I represent the small business improvement
19 district in northeast Queens, the Bayside Village
20 BID.

21 While I certainly appreciate DSNY's willingness
22 to communicate and prompt response to any issues
23 reported, I must express a deep concern for the cost
24 of containerization. The BID relies on an
25 assessment, which will increase in fiscal year 2026,

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

196

to cover costs associated with community events,
supplemental sanitation services, holiday lights and
decorations and the general rising cost of what seems
to be just about everything. In addition, my board
of directors has voted to increase the number of
receptacles with the district, placing an additional
can next to 16 current cans spread throughout Bell
Boulevard and 41st Avenue. We are doing this because
we rely on vehicles in the district with few options
for public transit. Two bus lines, one of which we
fought to keep on Bell in a LIRR station. The loss
of additional parking spaces will likely mean
hyperbole aside, the closure of a small business. We
have one sanitation worker caring for the entire BID
and having him lug bags to a particular destination
is particularly strenuous. There is a \$16,837.60
cost of 16 cans and since we are only able to
purchase certain cans, a \$4,209.40 cost of tariffs
since they will be shipped from Canada. The cans
will be shipped to a nearby garage, so a friend of
the BID must then be paid for pickup since this is
cheaper than freight. Our sanitation worker cleans
the BID six days per week. The cost of our
supplemental sanitation service provider to haul bags

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

197

1 to the same garage would cost \$145 per day, that is
2 over \$40,000 per year. That's on top of the already
3 \$70,000 that we paid for service as is. So the
4 combined total would mean that we would spend one-
5 third of our assessment for Fiscal Year 2026 on
6 services. Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you so much.
9 Christopher Leon Johnson. Got here right on time.

10 CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: Yup. Yeah, hello my
11 name is Christopher Leon Johnson. Thanks for having
12 the hearing Mr. Abreu. I am calling on the City
13 Council and the Mayor's Office to indefinitely
14 postpone the June 26th mandate for the auto
15 containers.

16 That bill, that was done by the City Council, is
17 a real co-op initiative. Why do we have to put only
18 one container instead of just buy any other container
19 that we want to buy? Why is it we have to buy one
20 container. If we don't, we get fine \$100, then \$50.
21 That's not right for anybody. I understand that you
22 guys gave the developer the contract but that was not
23 right for anybody at all. I don't think that none of
24 the organizations agree with this. None of the BIDs,
25 none of the nonprofits like ACE, none of the

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

198

1 nonprofits that agree with this stuff. This needed
2 to be postponed, definitely postponed, Eric Adams is
3 on his way out. If he really did the right thing on
4 his way out, he would postpone this law to make sure
5 that nobody - we could just use any container we
6 want. I understand we got rat issues in the City of
7 New York. We got a trash issue. We got a combust
8 issue but make it everybody going to buy containers
9 is not going to solve anything.
10

11 And we saw the posts that that container wasn't
12 doing anything. Like the rat completely ate through
13 the container, so that container is not even a viable
14 container. So, that's all and yeah, we got to save
15 all these nonprofits in the City Council that deal
16 with sanitation, preserve all these nonprofits, make
17 sure they fund especially ACE. ACE does great work
18 in the community, in my district intact. The DOE
19 Fund, Ready, Willing and Able, all these
20 organizations, they do the right thing.

21 But Mr. Abreu, I know you're backing Adams but to
22 do the right thing, he has to indefinitely postpone
23 this law. This is - just take that money and give it
24 to these nonprofits that were out here today that
25

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

199

want their money for the budget this cycle. So,
thank you so much and have a good day.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you. Are there any
other individuals who are here testifying in person?
Seeing none, we'll move on to remote testimony on
Zoom. We'll begin with am Joyce Bialik.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Alright, not seeing Joyce on
Zoom. I will now go to Mary Arnold.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

MARY ARNOLD: About what is needed for New York
City's new Solid Waste Management Plan. Most
fundamentally, the Solid Waste Management Plan should
be structured with enough actions, commitments, and
budget in each year of the plan to fulfill existing
city and state laws, including the City's Zero Waste,
Waste Equity, and Commercial Waste Zone laws, as well
as the New York State Climate Leadership and
Community Protection Act.

Zero Waste, Greenhouse Gas Reduction, Waste
Equity, and Environmental Justice can only be
achieved through a Solid Waste Management Plan that
includes how these laws will be fulfilled. Also
needed is crucial input from the City Council's and

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

200

Borough Presidents Offices' internal experts, like Lacey Tauber and the SWABs and a handful of people working in isolation will not yield the most effective results.

In addition, the new Solid Waste Management Plan needs to have a Sustainable Materials Management orientation. The requirements of Sustainable Plans include:

1. Establish goals, such as 90 percent diversion rate within 10 years via prevention, reuse, recycling, and local composting.

2. Lay out sufficient planned actions and commitments in each year of the plan, covering all discards, to reach the goals on time.

3. Conduct product-based characterization studies and tie the results to annual planned actions and commitments.

4. Design education and outreach to reach and motivate all segments of the population, maximizing the participation rate.

5. Establish and enforce sufficient incentives and disincentives to increase motivation to participate.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

201

6. Commit sufficient budget and staff to
accomplish the annual planned actions and
commitments.

Thanks to the City Council and New York State
Legislature, some laws to Sustainably avoid and
manage discards are in place. The new Solid Waste
Management Plan needs to be the city's blueprint for
achieving them.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time is expired. Thank
you.

MARY ARNOLD: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you Mary. Next up we
have Mohammad Attia.

MOHAMED ATTIA: Good afternoon, Chair Abreu and
members of the Committee. My name is Mohamed Attia,
I'm the Managing Director of the Street Vendor
Project. Thanks for the opportunity to testify
today.

The Street Vendor Project is a membership-based
organization with over 3,000 street vendor members.
As the only organization in New York City dedicated
to serving the street vendor population in the five
boroughs, SVP is the centralized hub for street
vendors to access resources and receive essential

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

202

services as the smallest businesses in our city. We respectfully request support from the City Council to expand our Community Outreach and Education Program along with the Small Business Consultations Program for street vendors.

The demand for street vendor education and services continues to grow. It is really important to highlight how resources are being allocated in our city. As you are probably aware, the Office of Street Vendor Enforcement is housed under Sanitation Police, and their budget is increasing. It ranges from \$3.7 million to almost \$5 million over the fiscal years.

And that is really not including the NYPD, DOHMH, Parks and other agencies that are conducting enforcement on the street vendors. Now we look at the city's allocation to pretty much you know the education of street vendors, there is no city agency that provides support. There is no city agency, Sanitation, DCWP, SBS, nobody is going out to educate the vendors, only SVP, such a small nonprofit that receive roughly around \$200,000 from the speakers initiative and all the individual council members support that we receive.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

203

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2 When you look at the numbers Council Member, it
3 is a scale of 25 to 1. For every dollar the city is
4 spending on education and support to the vendors, it
5 spends \$25 on enforcement and our small team, as you
6 probably know, we conduct the outreach and education
7 program in seven different languages. We really need
8 the resources. We need to expand the work because
9 the demand is skyrocketing right now and we really
10 try our best to meet that demand and be in every
11 neighborhood and every district.

12 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time is expired. Thank
13 you.

14 MOHAMED ATTIA: Thank you so much for the
15 opportunity.

16 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you Mohamed. We now
17 have Pedro Suarez.

18 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

19 PEDRO SUAREZ: Can you hear me? Okay sorry, I
20 accidentally unmuted. Alright, so I am the Executive
21 Director of the Third Avenue Business Improvement
22 District in the South Bronx neighborhoods of Mott
23 Haven and Melrose, which is one of the oldest and
24 most heavily trafficked commercial districts in the
25 entire city. We have and continue to take steps

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

204

towards implementing containerization and making additional investments in our supplemental sanitation program, but it will take time to get to where I think my BID needs to be.

Additionally, I want to thank DSNY's sanitation workers on the ground, including the Bronx Chiefs, for working closely with my BID to address trash issues. My district continues to navigate challenges with severe quality of life issues like illegal dumping, littering, homeless encampments, and medical waste and especially syringes.

As the city moves towards containerization in BIDs, I'd like to advocate that the DSNY budget include additional investments in the following:
Allocating more funding to local garages, like Bronx 1, for more frequent litter basket collections in the HUB and addressing severe illegal dumping and littering situations.

Allocating more funding for DSNY cameras to address illegal dumping issues in District 17.
Allocating more funding for DSNY enforcement to hire additional personnel and conduct additional operations related to unlicensed vending, illegal dumping, and sidewalk obstructions.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

205

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2 Currently, 40 DSNY enforcement personnel for 5
3 boroughs, which includes 76 commercial districts, is
4 not enough to address quality of life issues and hold
5 bad actors accountable on a consistent basis. The
6 creation of a fund to assist smaller BIDs with the
7 purchase of containers, especially as many BIDs need
8 customized solutions to meet the unique needs of
9 their districts. There is no one size fits all
10 strategy for BIDs.

11 Allocating funding to the priority areas above
12 would help ensure that economic centers, especially
13 in low-income communities, have the resources needed
14 to remain clean, safe, and vibrant for all New
15 Yorkers. Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you for your testimony.
17 We now have Corazon Valient.

18 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

19 CORAZON VALIENTE: Hi, good day. Thank you CM
20 Abreu and the Committee for this opportunity to
21 speak.

22 My name is Corazon Valiente and I am from and
23 still live in Flatbush, Brooklyn 11226. Composting
24 is physical health, how many members of council have
25 participated in a compost build day at any of the

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

206

botanical gardens, the composting partners around the city or your local community garden. That's work and cardio.

Composting is mental health and wellness. It creates an outlet for frenetic energy, calms the mind and soothes the soul. It keeps tons of food waste from the landfill which reduces the amount of methane going into our ozone that otherwise endanger our lungs, affects our minds and environment. Community composting builds jobs. Many have turned volunteering at a local community garden into a paying job not just in this city but in different parts of this country. Composting builds intergenerational community ties. Watching children and young people work with elders and learn from each other is a beautiful thing and adds pride to our neighborhoods.

The health of our communities and neighbors should never fear being the first on the chopping block by the city of New York. Should some of the paychecks of those in the mayor's office and council be on the chopping block?

Composting is not just a suburban issue, as some of the students said earlier, this is an Earth issue,

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

207

Urban, suburban, and rural. Please continue to fight on our behalf to not only continue funding community composting but also increase its funding. Thank you for your time, your attention and your support to this matter.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you. Appreciate you. We now have Camilia Tepelus.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

CAMILIA TEPELUS: Oh hello. My name is Camelia Tepelus, I am the Executive Director of the Morris Park BID in the East Bronx. Firstly I want start by thanking DSNY staff on the ground for the open of centers of open centers to our issues. I have on TV to put it that way.

So, I want to focus on the issue of the cost. I want to focus on the issue of the guarantee of this new regulation asking BIDs to stop the usage of bags and containerization.

I as manager, I do not have the right to place on the sidewalk in front of a persons property, no type of container. I do not have this right. it is illegal for the city to ask me to do this without explanation of that property owner or of that business and I [03:58:17] that the form that is on

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

208

1 the DSNY program for bins, that put on top bin logo
2 and the property owner, the BID decided to place
3 trash in front of somebody's private property. It's
4 not true. If DSNY is contradicting this, it should
5 be their logo or the DOT logo on the notification for
6 the property owner. Yeah, we decided to place a
7 bunch of trash from 20 blocks in front of your
8 business or in front of your residential building
9 because if [03:58:51]. Because I do not make that
10 decision. They should sue DSNY and the DOT that are
11 imposing this on him. The solution, a lot of city's
12 have this. New York City is like a European City, I
13 suggest to read the report by that lady that
14 testified in the red sweater, her organization is the
15 Center for Zero Waste Design.
16

17 Page 31, we suggest that DSNY through
18 collaboration -

19 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time is expired. Thank
20 you.

21 CAMELIA TEPELUS: Okay, I will submit. Thank you
22 so much.

23 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you, yeah please submit
24 your written testimony online within 72 hours.
25

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

209

CAMELIA TEPELUS: Thank you because it's a lot of substance that could be used. Smart things, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you and be safe on the road. We'll next have Anna Sachs.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

ANNA SACHS: Hi, my name is Anna Sachs, I'm with the Save our Compost Coalition. We're asking for \$11.4 billion for community composting organization, which includes the Lower East Ecology Center, Earth Matter, Big Reuse, Compost Power, Cafeteria Culture, Queens Botanic Gardens, BK Rott, Snug Harbor, Green Theme Organics, Brotherhood Sister Sole, Red Hook Initiative, East New York Farms, New York Botanical Garden, Bronx Urban Alliance, Center for Zero Waste, Astoria Pug, and Uptown Health Project.

So, this increase in amount that we're adding, additional groups are requesting funding and the groups that are already funded are requesting additional funding, so that they can expand the scope of the work they do. And so that the Lower East Ecology Center can build out a physical site in Canarsie. We would like to make this more permanent, a more permanent future of New York City's waste

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

210

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2 landscape so that it's less of a fight each year or
3 up in the air and one of the ways to do this is to
4 build up these community composting sites so that
5 DSNY can pay for this physical infrastructure similar
6 to the way that they pay for recurring contracts to
7 waste management for the anerobic co-digestion and
8 Denali for the fresh hills composting sites.

9 So, we're hoping that with more community
10 composting sites processing more material that this
11 can be something that DSNY views as like an ongoing
12 recurring waste disposal expense and it's also
13 important to view this as an ongoing education cost,
14 especially as we try to get the capture rate up for
15 organics, which right now is around 4 percent, which
16 is very low.

17 So, we would like the Council to consider
18 increasing funding to \$11.4 million for all these
19 groups and the good work that they do and to use this
20 as an investment in processing and processing food
21 scraps and in ongoing education, especially education
22 for our school kids and especially education about
23 the curbside organic program.

24 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time is expired. Thank
25 you.

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID
WASTE MANAGEMENT

211

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you Anna for all that
you do. Raul Rivera.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Seeing that he is not online.
One more time, Raul Rivera? Seeing that he is not
online. This hearing is hereby adjourned. [GAVEL]

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 May 5, 2025