

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION
AND SOLID WASTE

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December 9, 2025
Start: 10:00 a.m.
Recess: 12:51 p.m.

HELD AT: 250 Broadway - 8th Floor - Hearing
Room 1

B E F O R E: Shaun Abreu
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Chris Banks
David M. Carr
Simcha Felder
James F. Gennaro
Julie Menin
Frank Morano
Sandy Nurse
Vickie Paladino
Rafael Salamanca, Jr.
Sandra Ung
Inna Vernikov
Susan Zhuang

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

Kate Kitchener
Director, Resource Recovery at NYC Department of
Sanitation

Josh Goodman
Deputy Commissioner, Public Affairs & Customer
Experience

Jennifer McDonnell
Deputy Commissioner, Solid Waste Management

Celeste Perez
NYCEJA

Justin Wood
NYLPI

Eric Goldstein
NRDC

Rhonda Keyser

Gustavo Alcocer
Ironbound Community Corporation

Samantha McBride
Baruch College

Lacey Tauber
BK BP

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

Justin Green
Big Reuse

Matthew Civello
SWAB

Mary Ellen Sullivan
SWAB

Dior St. Hillaire
SWAB

Susan Latham
SWAB

Audrey Jenkins
PHD Student at the new school, focused on
organics management

Mary Arnold

Anna Sacks

Clare Mifflin

Christopher Leon Johnson

PSMS46 Harlem 5th grader

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SERGEANT AT ARMS: Testing one, two, one, two.

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Today's date is December 9, 2025, Committee on Solid

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Waste Management being recorded in HR 1 by Keith

5

Polite.

6

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Good morning. Good morning.

7

Welcome to the New York City Council Hearing on the

8

Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management.

9

At this time, please silence all electronics and do

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not approach the dais. Thank you for your

11

cooperation. Chair, you may begin.

12

CHAIRPERSON ABREU: [GAVEL] Good morning

13

everyone. Welcome to the Committee on Sanitation and

14

Solid Waste Management. Thank you to the Members of

15

the Committee and representatives of the

16

Administration for joining us today.

17

I'd also like to thank the members of the public

18

who are here to testify. To minimize disruption,

19

please place electronic devices on vibrate or silent

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mode. I would also like to acknowledge Council

21

Member Carr, who is here with us today.

22

The City of New York has drafted a local Solid

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Waste Management plan for the years 2026 through 2036

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which with the Council's approval will be submitted

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to the state for review prior to the city's adoption

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3 of the plan. The purpose of today's hearing is to
4 examine the draft Solid Waste Management Plan in full
5 to assess its strengths, its gaps and its alignment
6 with the goals the city and state have already
7 committed to. Apart from all waste produced from New
8 York City's private businesses, solid waste from New
9 York City residences, agencies and institutions,
10 amount to nearly 4 million tons each year. That's
11 about the same weight as 11 empire state buildings.

12 The city must have a long term plan for how it
13 will manage this waste, from characterization
14 assessment of the waste stream and waste processing
15 facilities to presentation of methods to increase the
16 amount of material that is reused or recycled instead
17 of wasted. The Solid Waste Management Plan outlines
18 actionable steps and timelines by which the city will
19 manage waste over the coming decade.

20 Through January 16, 2026, at 5:00 p.m., the city
21 is collecting public comments on its Draft Solid
22 Waste Management Plan. To be clear, public testimony
23 presented to the Committee today, will not be
24 recorded as a public comment on the Draft Solid Waste
25 Management Plan. If you wish to submit a comment on
the Draft Solid Waste Management Plan, you may do so

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2 by emailing swmp26comments@dshny.nyc.gov,
3 swmp26comments@dshny.nyc.gov until 5:00 p.m. on
4 January 16, 2026.

5 As part of its next draft of the plan, the city
6 is required to prepare a responsiveness summary of
7 the public comments it receives. We hope to hear
8 from DSHNY today about the Draft Solid Waste
9 Management Plan, which we will refer to as SWMP
10 throughout the entire hearing, its public engagement
11 process and concerns it has heard from the public
12 thus far.

13 I look forward to the dialogue today. I would
14 like to thank everyone on my team for their work on
15 this oversight hearing. I don't see any other
16 Council Members here yet; they're on their way.

17 After our Committee Counsel administers the oath,
18 we will move to testimony by DSHNY, then some time
19 will be spent on dialogue between the Committee and
20 DSHNY followed by testimony from members of the
21 public. I will now turn it over to our Committee
22 Counsel.

23 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Hello, good morning. Uh
24 please raise your right hands. Do you swear to tell
25 the whole truth and nothing but the truth and to

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2 respond to Council Member questions honestly? Thank
3 you, you may begin when ready.

4 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Good morning.

5 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Good morning.

6 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Chair Abreu and members of
7 the Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste
8 Management. I am Jennifer McDonnell, Deputy
9 Commissioner of Solid Waste Management at the New
10 York City Department of Sanitation. I am joined
11 today by Katherine Kitchener, Executive Director of
12 Resource Recovery and by Joshua Goodman, Deputy
13 Commissioner of Public Affairs and Customer
14 Experience. I'd also like to welcome those who are
15 joining us on livestream.

16 It has been close to 20 years since the City of
17 New York last submitted a proposed Solid Waste
18 Management Plan. In that time, DSNY has achieved
19 significant progress on the goals of the 2006 SWMP,
20 the waste stream and industry have noticeably
21 evolved, and the State has clarified and updated the
22 requirements for solid waste management plans.

23 Achieving the goals of the last plan has
24 transformed the solid waste system serving New
25 Yorkers and whether they see it each day or not, the

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3 experience of living in New York City. With the
4 successful conversion of four marine transfer
5 stations to the modern, efficient, fully contained,
6 intermodal export facilities operating reliably and
7 serving the city every day, coupled with a complement
8 of rail-export land-based facilities, a majority of
9 the solid waste exported by DSNY is leaving the city
10 by rail, drastically reducing truck traffic and
11 associated emissions.

12 Another goal achieved is the long-term contract
13 with Sims Municipal Recycling, which resulted in the
14 construction of the metal, glass, plastic, and carton
15 sorting facility in the South Brooklyn Marine
16 Terminal that continues to process residential
17 curbside recycling to this day. And for paper
18 recycling, the Pratt Paper Mill on Staten Island
19 converts much of the residential paper recycling
20 stream to new paper, a true example of the circular
21 economy, right here in New York City.

22 We also advanced transformative programs that
23 were not envisioned in the last SWMP. To divert
24 organic materials that constitutes upwards of 30
25 percent of the residential waste stream, in 2023,
DSNY announced a strategy for citywide, curbside

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3 organics collection. Later that year, the Council
4 passed historic legislation to mandate residential
5 source separation of all food and yard waste. As of
6 October 2024, every New Yorker in all five boroughs
7 can participate in the largest, easiest curbside
8 organics collection program in the nation. Since
9 full citywide implementation, we've seen staggering
10 tonnage increases, including three consecutive weeks
11 this past November, that each set records. Diverting
12 six million pounds of material from the waste stream
13 each week was long derided as impossible and now
14 we've done it back to back. In response, the
15 regional market is adapting and building to meet the
16 demand of the city's leadership on organics.

17 All the while, DSNY continued a commitment to
18 community recycling events, apartment-based
19 collection programs and efforts further up the waste
20 management hierarchy focused on reuse and waste
21 prevention of all types of materials, through
22 partnerships with businesses, nonprofit, and
23 community organizations engaged in reuse, repair, and
24 innovations in materials management. In sum, DSNY
25 has some of the most comprehensive, residential solid
waste programming in the country. From universally

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3 accessible curbside recycling and composting
4 collection to free compost givebacks, safe disposal
5 events, special waste drop-offs, refrigerant
6 collection, and no-cost apartment bin programs for
7 electronics and textile recycling, New Yorkers have a
8 multitude of options to participate in waste
9 reduction and recycling.

10 Before we discuss the proposed SWMP, I would like
11 to emphasize again two points. First, the state DEC
12 regulatory requirements have evolved significantly
13 since 2006, notably requiring a ten year planning
14 period rather than a twenty year planning period.
15 And secondly, that while the SWMP provides a
16 framework for diversion and efficient waste systems,
17 the city can and must pursue specific programs that
18 are not contemplated in the plan. This is, by
19 design, a beginning rather than an end.

20 Our record here speaks for itself. Neither
21 universal curbside organics nor Commercial Waste
22 Zones were laid out in the 2006 SWMP, and yet the
23 city took historic action to move both policies
24 forward in partnership with the City Council. This
25 is particularly relevant to keep in mind as we
discuss SWMP26.

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1 Given DSNY's rich history of evolution,
2 continuous improvement, and innovation, this lays the
3 foundation for this next solid waste management plan
4 that we are proud to put forth, to guide future
5 progress in waste reduction resource recovery over
6 the next decade. With over 24 billion pounds of
7 waste generated by hundreds of thousands of
8 businesses and millions of residents across the five
9 boroughs every year, the 2026 Solid Waste Management
10 Plan is a flexible framework focused on the areas
11 with the greatest potential impact on our existing
12 Solid Waste Management System.
13

14 SWMP26 was designed to meet the regulatory
15 requirements and guidance of DEC, and the program
16 structure follows the stipulations for alternatives
17 analysis that all planning units across the state
18 must consider when developing a SWMP. And this SWMP
19 was developed over the past three years, beginning
20 with an extensive analysis of the current conditions
21 for the Solid Waste Management System here in New
22 York City. The first four chapters of the plan
23 documents in great deal who is generating how much of
24 what materials to the best of our knowledge, where
25 they are going, and what the end of life options are

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3 for managing them. As a result of this data-driven
4 analysis, and with input from best practices
5 worldwide, the draft SWMP includes eight dedicated
6 program areas designed to address the primary focus
7 points needed to achieve continued progress in waste
8 reduction, increased recycling and a path towards
9 zero waste. These programs include waste prevention
10 and reuse, organics diversion and recovery,
11 residential recycling, residential municipal solid
12 waste, commercial waste, construction and demolition
13 waste, special waste and education and outreach.

14 For DSNY, this next SWMP is the beginning of the
15 next chapter in our journey, one that has become more
16 inclusive, more expansive, and more effective. As
17 outlined in the 126 initiatives supporting around 20
18 strategies underneath each program, we have goals and
19 objectives that we will partner with many agencies,
20 offices, and stakeholders to implement. The SWMP is
21 not a rigid blueprint for every possible action over
22 the next decade, rather it provides strategic
23 direction and guiding principles as well as
24 comfortably specific objectives. This enables the
25 Department and the city to continuously adapt our
approach while in pursuit of our goals. It is a plan

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3 that lays the foundation for an ambitious future
4 while providing flexibility that is necessary in our
5 ever-changing world.

6 At the same time, the SWMP is not the only plan
7 guiding DSNY's work, nor all solid waste management
8 efforts throughout the city and there are specific
9 programs and initiatives that it does not
10 contemplate, such as containerization, curbing
11 illegal dumping, or collection operations. DSNY will
12 continue to innovate and plan in those areas and
13 intersect them with SWMP programming as appropriate.

14 We will also continue to support others in their
15 journeys on waste reduction and resource recovery, by
16 serving as a technical expert, a resource for
17 educational materials and programming, and a convener
18 of collaborators in the circular economy.

19 To talk specifically about a few key objectives
20 contained in the SWMP, organics remains a priority.
21 Most importantly, continuing to increase
22 participation and recovery rates. We plan to achieve
23 this through a diverse combination of applied
24 technology, diversification, and experimentation.
25 For example, we will research alternatives to plastic
liners for collection and investigate how we can

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1 leverage new equipment to better separate
2 contamination from collected organics. Commercial
3 waste zones are another priority and an additional
4 focus that was not identified in the last SWMP. DSNY
5 has already committed to full implementation of the
6 zones by 2027, and we are excited about the data
7 quality and diversion improvements that will follow
8 from this thoughtfully designed and rigorous contract
9 driven program.
10

11 Finally, we know very well the responsibility of
12 having a reliable, safe, and resilient system for
13 solid waste export. Yet we look to the future where
14 the next generation of this requirement emerges. To
15 get to that future, we have positioned the Waste
16 Reduction program as the first program, one that will
17 enable recovery of value, reduction of impacts,
18 increased benefits, and better environmental
19 outcomes.

20 This work is undoubtedly the most difficult work,
21 and work that requires each and every one of us to
22 steward the resources we consume. In that way, DSNY
23 is serving as a leader, as this is a comprehensive
24 plan for managing the waste of the entire city of New
25 York.

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3 For that reason, the SWMP includes programs and
4 commitments that are outside of our agencies' direct
5 jurisdiction. However, we are proud to serve as the
6 host for them under the umbrella of a more
7 sustainable city.

8 The future DSNY envisions is one where all the
9 resources in the city are managed responsibly and to
10 the best value. Whether it's advancing textile to
11 textile recovery, turning food scraps from our
12 diverse cuisine into biogas to support a clean energy
13 transition, or developing new ways to reuse materials
14 in future manufacturing industries, the Solid Waste
15 Management Plan is designed to address the full
16 breadth of materials management in a city as complex,
17 diverse, and innovative as ours.

18 Before moving on to your questions, I would like to
19 share details on the public outreach and engagement
20 we have conducted as part of plan development. These
21 statistics are not included in the plan but are a
22 testament to DSNY's desire to make the SWMP a roadmap
23 for all. We began formal outreach for this SWMP last
24 year, starting with city agencies that, in
25 collaboration with DSNY, would have a major role in
implementing SWMP26. These agencies include NYCHA,

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3 Parks, DEP, Public Schools, DCAS, DOT, EDC, DDC, and
4 the Mayor's Offices of Environmental Remediation and
5 Climate Change and Environmental Justice. DSNY
6 conducted 15 meetings with New York City agencies in
7 2024 and 2025. DSNY has also been an active
8 participant on the Clean Construction Executive Order
9 23 Implementation Working Group and the Environmental
10 Justice Interagency Working Group. These engagement
11 efforts identified synergies between many planning
12 efforts including the State's SWMP, the Climate
13 Leadership and Community Protection Act, PlaNYC on
14 Climate, and Food Forward NYC, as well as the EJNYC
15 Plan, the New York City Industrial Plan, and the
16 Urban Forest Plan, also under review. We have
17 included many strategies that commit to this
18 continued agency and office collaboration in the
19 SWMP.

20 DSNY after completing those engagement efforts,
21 began outreach with elected officials, specially this
22 Committee and Borough Presidents. Since the spring,
23 we have met with of you or your staff and welcome you
24 to share information about the proposed SWMP
25 framework with constituents and to solicit feedback.
Additionally, DSNY met with the stakeholder groups

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3 including the Solid Waste Advisory Board, Chairs,
4 Town and Gown's Urban Resource Recovery Working
5 Group, the Regional Planning Association, the New
6 York City Climate Leadership Group, the EJ Advisory
7 Board, and the Transform Don't Trash NYC Coalition.

8 The comments received through these efforts have
9 already shaped the draft plan. For example, a
10 resiliency assessment of key export infrastructure
11 was added after meeting with the citywide EJ Advisory
12 Board.

13 On October 27th of this year, DSNY held a virtual
14 public meeting to share information on SWMP26 and to
15 response to questions from the public. The meeting
16 was recorded and the recording and presentation are
17 posted on DSNY's website. We also heard from
18 advocates and from many of you a desire for more time
19 to review the draft SWMP and provide comments. In
20 response to your request, DSNY was pleased to extend
21 the public comment period an additional 60 days, now
22 concluding on January 16th, as you mentioned Chair,
23 rather than the original public comment conclusion
24 date of November 17th of this year. This more than
25 doubles the legally required 45-day review time.

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3 Additionally, DSNY is grateful to the SWAB's for
4 hosting a series of listening sessions, open to all
5 residents and organizations to gather feedback that
6 will be shared with DSNY incorporated into the plan.
7 We look forward to addressing all comments received,
8 as well as relevant feedback from testimonies
9 received today.

10 Finally, unlike the 2006 SWMP, no new physical
11 infrastructure is proposed in SWMP26. Some may be
12 proposed as part of implementation and as discussed
13 at the public meeting, there would be dedicated
14 engagement around any specific facility, including
15 requisite environmental reviews. This SWMP will be
16 implemented over a ten year period and DSNY will
17 report on implementation every other year in biennial
18 reports to DEC, which are posted on DSNY's website
19 after their approval.

20 While drafting the plan, DSNY identified the need
21 for a minimum of six stakeholder focus groups and
22 nineteen strategies that rely on collaboration with
23 community organizations in composting groups during
24 implementation. These groups will be formed after
25 the plan is formerly approved by both Council and DEC
next year. We welcome you to stay engaged throughout

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3 the implementation process and are glad to be working
4 with all of you to make this plan a reality.

5 Thank you for your interest in the Solid Waste
6 Management Plan, I look forward to answering your
7 questions.

8 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you Commissioner.
9 We've also been joined by Council Members Morano and
10 Nurse.

11 Commissioner, in addition to what was said in
12 your opening statement, what else was realized by the
13 Department regarding the 2006 SWMP?

14 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: We are proud to say that we
15 achieved a majority of the goals that were outlined
16 in the 2006 Solid Waste Management Plan, similar to
17 this plan that had a number of specific goals and
18 objectives and we have reported on them biennially in
19 those DEC reports, so they'll go on the website. So,
20 we've achieved many things rolling out the
21 comprehensive recycling program, we've advanced
22 textiles, we've advanced e-waste, and then sort of at
23 the tail end of that 20 year period, organics and
24 commercial waste zones, as I discussed.

25 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: And what are some of the
commitments made by the city in the 2006 SWMP that

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1 were not realized? And what were the challenges that
2 made this realization difficult?
3

4 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: There are a few that we note
5 were not completed as planned. One would be a
6 transfer station for recyclable, a marine transfer
7 station for recyclable material out of Manhattan and
8 the second would be the use of the DSNY Transfer
9 Stations for Commercial Waste. The first one that I
10 mentioned, we actually through our planning and
11 current operations, have determined that we are not
12 in need of an additional marine transfer station.
13 Our current infrastructure network supports our needs
14 in that way and for the second, the use of the marine
15 transfer stations for commercial waste, we have
16 carried that over into the next SWMP. It's something
17 that we are going to continue to evaluate as the
18 commercial waste zone program is fully rolled out.

19 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Is that in reference - so the
20 second part being the transfer station for commercial
21 waste is supposed to be considered in the 2026.

22 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: It's in this current SWMP
23 year.

24 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Regarding Marine Transfer
25 Stations, I understand that you're saying it wasn't

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3 something that was necessary from your perspective
4 but was there anything that was operationally
5 challenging to bring on new Marine Transfer Stations?

6 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: When we did construct the
7 other Marine Transfer Stations, certainly some of the
8 uhm, difficulties with engineering design,
9 construction siting, the timelines for those types of
10 things are always a challenge with infrastructure in
11 New York City, so uhm, those would certainly be
12 something we would have to consider when building any
13 new solid waste infrastructure.

14 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Has the New York State
15 Department of Environmental Conservation ever
16 expressed concerns that the city has failed or is
17 close to failing to adhere to commitments made in the
18 2006 SWMP?

19 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: No.

20 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Has DSNY received
21 communications from the New York State Department of
22 Environmental Conservation regarding the city's 2005
23 biannual update on the 2006 SWMP?

24 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Yes, so every two years we
25 submit our biannual report to DEC that demonstrates
how we've complied with our last plan and it gives a

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3 recap of tonnages and other information about our
4 programs and every time we submit one of those
5 reports, we usually have a back and forth with DEC.
6 They have some questions. We may make some revisions
7 to the report and then they'll issue a final approval
8 letter for that report and that's when we post it on
9 the website.

10 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Can you describe those
11 communications?

12 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: They generally ask for more
13 information about a specific program, like for
14 example, with the Food Scrap Drop-Off program, they
15 may ask us where all the drop-off points are and we
16 point to resources like the map on our website.

17 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Alright, now pivoting to the
18 2026 SWMP draft. If implemented fully, will the
19 waste reduction and diversion programs proposed in
20 the draft SWMP meet the goals established by the
21 city's zero waste act, diverting 100 percent of
22 recyclables and compostable waste from landfills
23 incineration by 2030?

24 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: DSNY is very confident that
25 if every New Yorker participates in the programs that

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1 we put forth, we can achieve that goal but it does
2 require all of us to participate all the time.
3

4 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: So, if implemented fully, is
5 it your belief that the waste reduction and diversion
6 programs proposed in the draft SWMP would meet the
7 goals established by the city's Zero Waste Act?

8 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Yes, it's my belief. I
9 think it's also important to acknowledge however, and
10 we know this from our waste characterization studies
11 that a quarter of the material in our waste stream is
12 not recoverable currently. So, there's certainly
13 work to do upstream if you will or in material design
14 in order to really achieve the future I think we all
15 hope for.

16 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: What funding does DSNY need
17 to fully implement the waste reduction and equity
18 programs outlined in the draft, the SWMP?

19 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Our plan going in is to do
20 the best we can with the resources that we have. We
21 are not requesting any formal new funding request as
22 part of this plan, however, as mentioned if we do
23 during implementation identify the need for new
24 facilities, new programming, then we would put
25

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2 together a funding request specifically for that, in
3 support of implementing a certain -

4 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: So, you believe you have all
5 the resources you would need to fully implement the
6 waste reduction and equity programs outlined in the
7 draft?

8 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: We do.

9 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Is New York City planning to
10 advocate for state funding via the Sustainable
11 Futures Fund and Extender Producer Responsibility
12 Program or the Cap and Invest Program to help DSNY
13 fulfill the bills of the SWMP?

14 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: DSNY has a good track record
15 of securing a state funding in particular in support
16 of many of our programs. I know for example, the
17 Special Waste programs and our safe events are
18 generally supplemented by state funding every year
19 and certainly we keep an eye on all of those
20 opportunities and do submit applications whenever we
21 meet the criteria. We were successful in a few
22 federal funding boards but of course those are not as
23 available right now.

24 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: But at the moment, there is
25 no anticipatory applications before the state

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3 regarding a request for funding? Are you
4 anticipating any applications?

5 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: We apply for funding with
6 the state every year and it's like an ongoing thing
7 for us, so we always have an active application with
8 them generally.

9 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Okay and are these
10 applications - are they - are you applying in order
11 to come into compliance with the 2026 SWMP plan or
12 this is just independent of that plan?

13 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: A lot of the work that we're
14 applying for is related to things outlined in the
15 2026 SWMP. So, I would say it's related but not
16 specific, no.

17 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Okay. What measures will the
18 city use to hold itself accountable to its upcoming
19 plan for managing solid waste through 2036?

20 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: So, in addition to the
21 biennial reports that we spoke about a little bit, we
22 within DSNY, utilize data on an ongoing basis to
23 monitor how our programs are doing and we will
24 continue to do that. So, we will check in more
25 periodically than the biennial reports, certainly is
just by virtue of our operations, for example, one of

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1 the things that my borough is responsible for is
2 paying all of our bills. So, we see a lot of
3 information about tunnage just in our routine work
4 and that helps us keep an eye on how we are doing
5 with our programs.
6

7 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: To make it clear on the
8 record, what is the latest date that DSNY is eligible
9 to submit its strap SWMP to New York State DEC for
10 initial review?

11 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: So, uhm, I'd like to answer
12 that question in two ways. It's difficult to
13 pinpoint a specific day on the calendar, however,
14 there is a general requirement under DEC regulations
15 that all actions such as this, including things like
16 permit renewals are submitted 180 days in advance of
17 the expiration of the current coverage. And that's
18 related to the Administrative Procedures Act that
19 provides you cover through administrative processes.
20 That said, uhm, the regulations for solid waste
21 management plans also include many variations on how
22 to get to the end point. Many of which include
23 extended review timelines with DEC back and forth 60
24 day review periods, 30 day response periods, etc..
25

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3 So, from DSNY's perspective, to account for any
4 of those scenarios, we believe that it needs to be
5 submitted to DEC, at least the initial draft by the
6 end of January 2026.

7 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: What is DSNY doing to plan
8 for the change in mayoral administration to ensure
9 that individuals at the agency are oriented to the
10 SWMP and aligned on its priorities and values?

11 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: So, DSNY is commencing
12 engagement with the new administration to bring them
13 up to speed on this plan and many of our other
14 activities and we look forward to engaging with the
15 new Council, new Committee in support of that as
16 well.

17 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Can you describe the role of
18 Engine Meter, the engineering firm that was hired to
19 assist in drafting the SWMP?

20 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Most certainly. So, when I
21 joined DSNY it was to help prepare this plan and that
22 was about a little over four years ago and we
23 proceeded with our first step of issuing a
24 competitive procurement, an MWBE solicitation for
25 outside support knowing that this was a discreet
project that would require a supplement to our normal

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1 staffing levels to get it done. So, in that
2 competitive procurement, Engine Meter was selected as
3 a minority women business to support this work.
4

5 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: What was the start date for
6 engineers work on the 2026 SWMP?

7 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: So, after we completed the
8 procurement that I discussed, the commenced work
9 late, summer, early fall of 2022.

10 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: That's about four years.
11 They've been working on it for four years now.

12 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Three, yeah.

13 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: How much money has Engine
14 Meter been paid to date?

15 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Uh in sum, it's been about
16 one million dollars over those three years, so
17 averaging about \$300,000 a year.

18 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Okay, how many virtual or in
19 person meetings are calls, specifically pertaining to
20 information or plans in the 2026 SWMP did DSNY or
21 Engine Meter have with representatives of waste
22 management?

23 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: As part of our work
24 developing the base plan as well as the uhm
25 attachments and appendices; I don't know if you've

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1
2 looked at the entire format of the SWMP but we have
3 some technical attachments that go into detail on
4 certain things and as part of that, Engine Meter in
5 concert with DSNY did survey the regional market
6 players but we didn't have any dedicated meetings to
7 specific providers to develop the plan. We developed
8 the plan.

9 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Okay, so no meetings right,
10 fair to say?

11 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Yes.

12 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: And you wouldn't have the
13 names of the Waste Management Reps who worked on the
14 plan because there were no meetings with them, right?
15 So, I can pass on that. Were there any virtual or in
16 person meetings with Wee World? No, right?

17 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Same, same, same response.

18 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: What are the names of reps
19 and organizations in the New York City Compost
20 network who work with DSNY or Engine Meter on the
21 2026 SWMP?

22 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: So, we did meet with the
23 SWAB Chairs as I mentioned and I do have their names
24 here at least the ones who joined us in a meeting
25 about the SWMP earlier this year.

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3 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Okay, how many times did
4 those meetings -

5 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Do you want me to read their
6 names?

7 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Yeah, if you could read their
8 names, that would be great.

9 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Okay, uhm, Mary Ellen
10 Sullivan from the Brooklyn SWAB, Rhonda Keyser from
11 the Brooklyn SWAB, Dior **St.** Hillaire from the Bronx
12 SWAB, Caroline Busby from the Manhattan SWAB,
13 Matthew Civello from the Manhattan SWAB and we also
14 invited Richard Nunez Lawrence from the Queens SWAB
15 and uhm, we did also meet with the Transform Don't
16 Trash Coalition as mentioned.

17 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Our apologies for the sirens
18 outside everybody. There is a bill that would reduce
19 the decibel levels on emergency vehicles. How many -
20 how frequently, was it like a one time, one off
21 meeting or multiple meetings.

22 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: There was one meeting for
23 all the SWAB Chairs and then we did have a follow up
24 meeting as well.

25 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Okay. Alright, now pivoting
to public comment and public engagement and the

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1 process behind that. There has been major concern
2 about the amount of public engagement that DSNY has
3 done for this draft.
4

5 After you know a letter from Comptroller's
6 Office, as well as Borough President Reynoso in our
7 office. I'm grateful that the public comment period
8 was extended to January as you mentioned in your
9 opening statement but have still only held only one
10 public hearing, which is the minimum required by law.
11 For a plan of this significance, we're digging down
12 on why the outreach has been not as ideal as we would
13 have liked and what communities have not gotten the
14 outreach they deserve given the outside impact Waste
15 Management practices have on them and their
16 neighbors.

17 How many public meetings has DSNY held on the
18 2026 SWMP where you have taken public comment?

19 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: So, we held the public
20 meeting on October 27th and also as I mentioned in my
21 testimony, we did conduct extensive outreach holding
22 33 meetings with city agencies, Council Members and
23 key stakeholder groups as part of getting that
24 feedback. I also think it's important to note that
25 DSNY approaches this planning exercise sort of as an

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1 ongoing part of our work and certainly we take all
2 sorts of feedback that we receive by virtue of
3 everything from 311 comments to testimony at other
4 hearings as part of the information we compile when
5 working on a plan of this size.
6

7 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: there hasn't been a public
8 meeting where everyone can come in and testify or
9 speak to what they would like to see in the plan.
10 This seems more of meetings at a micro level,
11 individual level but not wide range.

12 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: We'd be certainly happy to
13 work with Council to set up something such as that.

14 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Yeah and would you recommend
15 for - in your planning in the transition with Mayor
16 elect Mamdani's team, is DSNY also bringing attention
17 for the need to establish more public meetings so
18 that members of the public can testify?

19 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: That is something we can
20 take under consideration and again, we'd be happy to
21 work with the Council and Mamdani's team on whatever
22 format they -

23 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: The Council and a lot of the
24 stakeholders, we really appreciate public meetings.
25 Uhm, you know especially when we want reach people

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1 and the impact in neighborhoods that this plan is
2 going to impact.
3

4 To date, approximately how many individuals or
5 entities have submitted a comment on DSNY's first
6 draft of the 2026 SWMP?

7 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Uhm, as of now, we have 18
8 formal comments. However, I don't think that equates
9 necessarily to individuals, some were made on behalf
10 of organizations. I also think it's important to
11 note that the comments are not necessarily - we're
12 counting a comment as a submission and one submission
13 may have multiple points raised or items that they're
14 commenting on but we've received 18 discreet packages
15 if you will.

16 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Yeah, I think 18 is
17 incredibly low and I think it speaks to the need for
18 having more of these public meetings. I think that's
19 a testament to the need for that work to continue.
20 What is DSNY's process for reviewing and considering
21 public comments on the 2026 SWMP draft?

22 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Uh, we, our process is to
23 compile them all. We will continue to do that until
24 the public comment period closes in January. Then we
25 will compile responses to each area individually.

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3 This is very similar to how the state responded to
4 comments on the State Wide Solid Waste Management
5 Plan. So, for example, if we receive multiple
6 comments about one topic, we'll respond to the topic.
7 We also plan to incorporate that as an additional
8 appendix to the final draft plan, both the list of
9 comments and responses and then finally, we will
10 obviously utilize the feedback to amend the draft
11 plan. So, we will make changes to the draft plan
12 based on those comments.

13 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: What is your process for
14 incorporating public comment from today's hearing and
15 future hearings to revise your current draft SWMP?

16 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: So, basically, very similar
17 to as I described, I would add that for program
18 strategies or initiatives that we receive comments on
19 that intersect with another stakeholder agency such
20 as DEP, we will take any comments received back to
21 them and ensure that they have the opportunity to you
22 know amend their proposals or take those comments
23 into consideration as well.

24 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Got it, would today's
25 comments from the public be incorporated in or at
least inform the SWMP?

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3 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Chair, as you mentioned,
4 testimony received today does not sort of quality as
5 a formal comment, so we would encourage anyone who is
6 providing testimony today to also submit a written
7 comment but certainly we have folks paying attention,
8 taking notes, as part of this exercise.

9 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Great, does DSNY plan to host
10 any future public meetings regarding the 2026 SWMP?
11 You're saying you're looking into that. It would be
12 great for there to be a schedule of briefings and a
13 public engagement for 2026, especially before we
14 enter the next stage. As many as possible and I'm
15 sure that the folks who are going to be testifying
16 today are going to make suggestions on what's needed
17 and we're looking forward to hearing that and we hope
18 that there's a robust - a public schedule and so, we
19 look forward to hearing from the members of the
20 public on that.

21 We learned that the budget for DSNY to conduct
22 education and outreach about the SWMP was cut
23 significantly. Can you provide a number as to how
24 much of those funds were cut? And can you also
25 please describe the parties to which DSNY has done
outreach with the present funding?

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3 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: The funding for outreach and
4 education at DSNY is not dedicated to the Solid Waste
5 Management Plan. Uhm, we specifically dedicated the
6 funding for our consulting work to a lot of the
7 technical information gathering data analysis. Our
8 overall outreach and education covers our DSNY
9 programming, including the Solid Waste Management
10 Plan, so that's something that we've done internal
11 outreach in order to ensure that staff at the
12 department who are doing that type of outreach are up
13 to speed on the details of the Solid Waste Management
14 Plan, the public comment opportunities, etc.. And
15 Josh, I don't know if you want to add anything there.

16 JOSH GOODMAN: Yeah, thank you very Mr. Chair.
17 I'll just mention that when the initial sort of
18 envisioning of SWMP 2026 took place about four years
19 ago, at that time, it was not yet clear whether this
20 SWMP was going to include new infrastructure
21 projects. There was a discussion of extensive
22 environmental reviews. The possibility that
23 community specific outreach would be necessary. Once
24 it became clear that this plan was not going to call
25 for any new infrastructure, we were really able to
right size the outreach plan. And I'll also just

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1 mention on that topic, we talked about the 18 public
2 comments so far, as you know the comment periods have
3 been extended significantly. There were, I believe,
4 82 people in attendance at that hearing, so I don't
5 want you to think there were just 18 people there.
6 There were 82 people at the meeting and many did not
7 feel the need to submit an individual comment or at
8 least not yet.
9

10 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: I mean 18 people in a city of
11 nine million residents, it's still, it's nothing.

12 JOSH GOODMAN: We can head down any time and ask
13 people on the street; do you have a comment on the
14 Solid Waste Management Plan?

15 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: I mean, that's the thing, is
16 that most people don't know what it is. That's
17 actually the problem is that you can go up to anybody
18 on the street and they don't know what the SWMP is,
19 right? It's only us nerds that know about it, so I
20 think we need to do a little more on that.

21 Uhm, other than the selection process for the
22 vendor that you worked on with Engine Meter, was
23 there any funding put towards community outreach on
24 this?

25

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3 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: No, no dedicated funding and
4 in fact, the funding for the consulting work was
5 actually you know internally self-funded by DSNY.

6 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Yeah, okay. I'm going to ask
7 a few questions then I'm going to let my colleagues
8 ask questions. Will the departments timetable allow
9 sufficient time for the Council to fully engage in
10 discussions with DSNY before the final draft plan is
11 submitted to DEC?

12 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Yes, thank you for asking
13 that question. I hope that many of you continue on
14 this Committee so that we can pick up very early next
15 year and continue our discussions about this plan so
16 that we can meet our timeline.

17 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Has DSNY reviewed the
18 document titled, A People SWMP, published by the
19 Transformed Owned Trash Coalition?

20 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Yes, we have.

21 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: If so, which of the
22 recommendations does DSNY hope to incorporate in its
23 next draft of the 2026 SWMP prior to submitting the
24 draft for state review?

25 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: We were very grateful and
pleasantly uhm, maybe not surprised but we were glad

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1
2 to see a lot that was in the peoples SWMP was also
3 included in our draft. We align on many of the
4 program areas and objectives including commercial
5 waste zones, support for EPR around packaging,
6 expanding textiles and electronics and of course,
7 food and organics recovery. So, some good alignment
8 there.

9 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Aside from the alignment,
10 what are some things that were included in the
11 Transformed Owned Trash's plan that was not included
12 in the original draft by DSNY?

13 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: We did review it and found a
14 couple points that maybe weren't as aligned. One,
15 we've already spoken about today and that is
16 commercial use of the city's infrastructure for solid
17 waste transfer, which we are continuing to include in
18 the next Solid Waste Management Plan, as well as a
19 more accelerated role out of the Commercial Waste
20 Zone Program than we've committed to.

21 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: People's SWMP recommends that
22 the city extend e-waste recycling programs such as E-
23 Cycle NYC and Textile Waste Recycling Program such as
24 Refashion NYC to all residential buildings with ten
25 or more units. Has DSNY considered this and if so,

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1
2 what obstacles have previously prevented the city
3 from implementing this type of expansion and how can
4 the city navigate around those?

5 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: This is certainly something
6 we considered. We alluded to it in the plan, uhm,
7 it's difficult to commit to sort of full citywide
8 expansion of those programs because we are a massive
9 entity and over the time that we've been working on
10 these programs, we've been working to grow the
11 industry alongside with us, so that we are able to
12 service more and more buildings and more and more
13 residents and Director Kitchener may want add
14 something there.

15 KATE KITCHENER: Yeah, I was just going to add
16 that those programs are already available to all
17 buildings over ten units, so it's really just it's a
18 voluntary program, so we really just need all of your
19 help getting the word out to let you know building
20 owners know that they can join.

21 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Are there any challenges to
22 mandating this citywide?

23 JOSH GOODMAN: I'll just say that uh you know
24 we'd have to study capacity. If it's something that
25 you know it's obviously above all of our pay grade as

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1 a policy decision. If it's something that the
2 Council is interested in pursuing, we'd be happy to
3 look at the feasibility from a capacity standpoint.

4 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: I think it is well within
5 your pay grade my friend.

6 JOSH GOODMAN: To say whether it's right or not
7 to do it, that's all you. That's all you Mr. Chair.

8 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Uhm, alright, I'm going to
9 let my colleagues ask questions and we have a lot of
10 questions to get through. The topic areas are going
11 to be Waste Export, Waste Incineration, Commercial
12 Waste, Constructions and Demolition, Recycling Metal,
13 Glass, Plastic, and Paper. Uhm, Co-Digestion,
14 Organic Waste. So, we're going to get through a lot
15 but I'm going to have my colleagues; if they want to
16 ask some questions under that topic area, you can go,
17 feel free as well. So, I'm going to first start with
18 - oh, and I'd also like to recognize we've been
19 joined by Council Members Ung and Banks, and to start
20 with questions I'll start with Carr.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: Thank you Chair. Good to
22 see you all. Thank you for being here to testify
23 about this. I want to start a little bit with
24 process that the Chair was asking about earlier. I
25

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1 second all of his comments from earlier in the
2 hearing and I think that at a minimum you know,
3 public hearings would have to take place physically
4 in each borough in order for this to be a really
5 thorough public review process and I agree that 18
6 number is well, well below what I think it should be
7 even given that there was one public hearing so far.
8 And I want to ask, so you indicated the public
9 comment has been extended to January 16th but you're
10 also looking ideally or I think in view of the state
11 law, to submit something to DEC by the end of that
12 same month. So, you know about two weeks later.

14 So, is there really sufficient time to grapple
15 with all of the comments engaged with the Council,
16 and then submit something in that period and have a
17 meaningful review of what the public says?

18 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: It is quite an aggressive
19 timeline. We acknowledge that. We are also in
20 discussions internally about the best way to meet
21 that deadline with all those competing priorities and
22 demands. One thing I will say is that we have a
23 working relationship with DEC and we are the largest
24 planning unit in the state and our plan is very
25 lengthy, I think as others may have noted. So,

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3 approaching DEC with a draft, perhaps an advance or
4 final version might allow a parallel pathway in order
5 to meet our timelines, so those are the types of
6 things we're considering.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: Understood, thank you. So,
8 in terms of uhm, you know the prior SWMP, the 2006
9 SWMP, folks at that time are grappling with the
10 legacy of Fresh Kills Landfill, the environmental
11 justice aspect, the borough equity aspect, and one of
12 the things that was produced by that SWMP was the
13 notion that each borough takes care of its own trash.
14 Is that something that is being preserved in the
15 current draft or would be - or if not incorporated
16 into a modified draft next year?

17 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Yes, that is included. We
18 are proposing no changes to the trash, the municipal
19 solid waste borough by borough plan of both transfer
20 capacity and eventual export out of the city.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: Okay, that's great to hear.
22 Uhm, in that vein right, currently Staten Island is
23 taking a significant share of the organics collection
24 and that was not as you said, an anticipated part of
25 the 2006 SWMP but I'm assuming that you're tackling
it very much so in the current draft.

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3 What are the plans for distributing the organics
4 collection by borough in the way that you do for
5 solid waste? Sure, as part of DSNY's preparation for
6 the citywide program, we did another competitive
7 procurement. This time it was a bid for transfer and
8 processing capacity for organics. We issued that in
9 2023 and we awarded eight contracts in 2024.

10 As of now, only five of those eight facilities
11 have been activated due to DEC permitting. So, our
12 plan is much similar to the MSW plan to have a
13 diverse network of transfer stations around the city
14 to allow for each borough, each operating area to
15 have a dedicated space for organics transfer. It may
16 not be where all the processing takes place but
17 that's the same for municipal solid waste. We use
18 transfer to move to larger processing infrastructure.
19 And so, we're continuing that model with organics.
20 It's not quite there yet as we are waiting for some
21 permitting but certainly taking the same distributive
22 and resilient approach for that waste stream.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: Sure, so I want to return
24 to one of my favorite topics, which is electronics
25 recycling. As you know, Staten Island had a curbside
program and that program was ended a couple years ago

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2 and I want to know what the - you know what is the
3 SWMP envision for electronic waste pickup? Is it
4 going to continue to be e-cycle for larger,
5 multifamily dwellings and everyone else has to do
6 drop-offs or is there a contemplation of making what
7 was the pilot for Staten Island citywide?

8 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Uhm, we are certainly
9 contemplating alternatives to the programs that exist
10 today that you describe, either the large building or
11 the drop off model. We're considering pickups at
12 smaller buildings similar to the curbside program,
13 maybe not exactly the same. Obviously a single
14 family service is a very high level of service and
15 very high cost. So, we're balancing that desire with
16 funding through programs such as EPR, which does
17 exist for some electronics, but not all and it starts
18 to get pretty complicated about what is covered and
19 what has funding.

20 So, that's something we're going to continue to
21 navigate under the new plan and that's why this
22 framework is the approach that we've taken because it
23 allows us to look at different options and perhaps
24 implement more than one, depending on over time what
25

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3 makes the most sense and it may not be the same, you
4 know in every single instance.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: Okay, thank you. Thank you
6 Chair.

7 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Wow, perfect timing. Council
8 Member Nurse has questions.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Okay, I'll try to be
10 short. Thank you Chair. I just have three or four
11 questions. Uhm, I wanted to know how we are doing on
12 the goal of not sending waste to incinerators by
13 2030. I see from the report, the 2032 contract in
14 2032, the Jersey Contract expires to the incinerator.
15 So, what's DSNY's plan and are we on track to meet
16 that goal?

17 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Certainly, we are tracking
18 the expiration of that contract as well as many
19 others that - and within this planning period because
20 most of them are 20 year contracts and once we
21 implemented the 2006 SWMP, we're going to be coming
22 up on most of them, either at the end of this next
23 planning period or in the beginning of the next, so
24 that's what we lay out as our commitment in this
25 space is understanding what are our options when
those contracts come up? What is the best thing that

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3 we can do both from a value, environmental, you know
4 all the considerations perspectives.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: I don't have much time, so
6 I'm just mostly concerned about where are we at in
7 terms of being on track to not send waste to the
8 incinerators or at least to the one jersey one.

9 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: We are on track to
10 reevaluate that contract when it expires in 2032.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: And I see it says no
12 option for renewal.

13 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Correct, so we will have to
14 do a competitive procurement or a negotiated
15 acquisition, something that would fall under the PPB
16 rules.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: And in your uhm,
18 procurement option, would an incinerator be included
19 in that?

20 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Formal treatment is as the
21 state guides us actually higher up on the waste
22 management hierarchy then disposal.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Right, I understand that
24 but we have a city law that we passed in 2023 that
25 says by 2030, the goal is not to send incinerators,
so the idea that we would put out a procurement bid

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2 for an incinerator and I understand you're calling it
3 thermal you know but it's incineration. Why would we
4 include that if we have this law in the books?

5 JOSH GOODMAN: Council Member, I appreciate your
6 point very much and very quickly, we just have to be
7 careful from the Administration side not to prejudice
8 those procurements. So, I'll just put it another
9 way, we're very aware of the city law and can't make
10 a specific statement about what will or will not be
11 included in those procurements because we don't want
12 to open ourselves up to litigation but very aware of
13 the city's commitment.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Right, I mean you could
15 open yourself up to litigation by violating the law.

16 JOSH GOODMAN: Noted.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Right, okay. Uhm, great,
18 so I see in the testimony you say that in 2027 you
19 anticipate full implementation of the CWZ and I'm
20 just wondering why at the end of 2026, is not a goal
21 for you all and when in 2027 do you fully anticipate
22 those zones being -

23 JOSH GOODMAN: It's like January 3rd. Like, it is
24 end of 2026, it's just the holiday time.

25

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Thank you. Uhm, thank
3 you. Uhm and then uh you know for a while, I've been
4 trying to pass legislation to make available the DSNY
5 Marine Transfer Stations where there is capacity for
6 commercial tipping and we, you know you all
7 essentially refused to do the environmental review
8 for us to vote on the legislation for over a year and
9 we know that opening up these stations for capacity
10 is part of reducing vehicle miles, creating
11 opportunities for trucks to tip their payload, uhm
12 and I just don't - and also to address the
13 environmental justice of trash coming to a certain
14 subset of neighborhoods that are mostly communities
15 of color. So, I just don't understand why you can't
16 commit to do the environmental review in order for us
17 to pass the legislation. It feels like a deep
18 disrespect of the legislative powers that are given
19 to us through the City Charter.

20 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: DSNY can certainly do an
21 environmental review on this. However, we cannot do
22 one until we know the very specific details about
23 which trucks, how often would be interested in
24 utilizing the facility. That is the essence -
25

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3 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: I just disagree. I mean,
4 we -

5 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: I've done a number of
6 environmental reviews and for the Staten Island
7 Compost Facility included and we have hourly truck
8 data that we are required to analyze by type of
9 truck.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: And you all have not - and
11 my understanding is, can you confirm or tell me that
12 you don't have this? Have you ever asked any of the
13 commercial corridors if they would make use of any of
14 those?

15 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: We have and we have that
16 interest from the procurement process. Until they
17 roll out the zones in the areas that would utilize
18 the transfer stations, we will not have robust enough
19 data to pass muster from a seeker perspective on an
20 environmental review.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Okay, you know what
22 capacity is available at those MTS's, right?

23 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: We do.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Right, and so, you can say
25 x-amount of tonnage usually equates to x-amount of
trucks, right?

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3 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: It also depends on the
4 routing and where are the trucks coming and going
5 from, what intersections are they using? It's very
6 specific detailed -

7 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: So, the environmental
8 review would be specific to truck traffic around the
9 station?

10 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Correct.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Okay, so it still to me -
12 it doesn't - to me I'm not understanding the routes
13 piece.

14 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: I'd be happy to sit down and
15 go through with that in more detail.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Well, we did try for a
17 year to sit down with you all. So, I guess what I'm
18 asking on record now is, can you commit to doing it
19 in 2026 when the zones are stood up?

20 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Yes, we can.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Okay.

22 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you Council Member.
23 Council Member Banks.

24 JOSH GOODMAN: Just to clarify, it would be in
25 '27, the very beginning of '27.

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3 COUNCIL MEMBER NURSE: Okay, January 3rd, thank
4 you.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Thank you Mr. Chair. I
6 know that the SWMP 26 emphasizes improving public
7 education and outreach. However, one of my local
8 community boards, Community Board 5 Subcommittee has
9 struggled to get the DSNY to even come to a meeting.
10 Uhm, when we request - I just want to know what's the
11 delay and get into the Subcommittee for Community
12 Board 5 so that they can get any concerns or their
13 questions answered?

14 JOSH GOODMAN: Council Member, with respect, it's
15 not correct. We will have - we have met with -

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: You said it's not correct?
17 Are you going to correct it?

18 JOSH GOODMAN: I don't know who they communicated
19 with. If it was someone on my team, I will take care
20 of it. We make ourselves incredibly available to
21 every Community Board. I'd love to just know
22 specifically who you're hearing from and who you
23 spoke to.

24 I also just need to correct -

25 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: The Chair of the
Subcommittee.

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3 JOSH GOODMAN: And which Subcommittee?

4 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Yeah, the Chair of the
5 Sanitation Subcommittee.

6 JOSH GOODMAN: The Sanitation Subcommittee of
7 3345. Okay, [INAUDIBLE 00:58:06].

8 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Yeah, thank you. How will
9 the DSNY ensure that Community Boards and
10 neighborhood groups receive timely and consistent
11 engagement? Particularly when residents want clarity
12 about new programs, like the Empire Bins,
13 Containerization Initiatives?

14 JOSH GOODMAN: Our team is at community board
15 meetings virtually every night, which is why I'm
16 surprised to hear that one Community Board has been
17 having trouble reaching us.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Community Board 5.

19 JOSH GOODMAN: But to your question about how we
20 will engage in continued outreach. This is an
21 ongoing effort on truly a daily basis. There are
22 people from DSNY at Community Boards every evening.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Well, there's a new year
24 coming, new Administration, there's definitely
25 opportunity to correct that. Uhm, when it comes to
the updated waste infrastructure and what it really

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1 means, SWMP 26 talks about an updated waste
2 infrastructure as a major long term goal. What
3 specific upgrades should communities expect in the
4 upcoming years with new transfer stations, improved
5 local waste facilities, better containerization
6 systems or modern equipment and how will these
7 upgrades directly improve day to day sanitation
8 services for the residents?
9

10 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Thank you for that question
11 Council Member. We are as discussed, not proposing
12 any new infrastructure.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Okay.

14 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: We may apply new
15 technologies at existing infrastructures. Our
16 industry, like many others, is exploring AI in a
17 variety of applications. I had the pleasure this
18 fall of visiting the South Brooklyn Marine Terminal,
19 the material recovery facility and they're using
20 robots to try to pick out recyclables. So, we'll see
21 applications such as that, I think, continue to come
22 into play in our solid waste system but not any new
23 facilities proposed as of now.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Okay and when it comes to
25 illegal dumping and the long term plan and hot spot

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3 strategies, illegal dumping is an ongoing and chronic
4 issue in the 42nd Council district and across the
5 city, it effects cleanliness, public health, and
6 small businesses and overall quality of life. Does
7 the SWMP26 include a long term plan to address
8 illegal dumping, including expanded enforcement,
9 surveillance, clean up, crews, community partnerships
or dedicated hot spots?

10 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: So, illegal dumping falls
11 out of scope of the Solid Waste Management Plan. We
12 are focused on what happens to material generally
13 after it's been collected but Deputy Commissioner
14 Goodman can speak to our programming.

15 JOSH GOODMAN: Council Member, while it is
16 outside the scope of the SWMP, it is a major issue
17 for us. We have deployed in that work of over 300
18 cameras citywide, many funded by members of this
19 Council and we just announced a new way for New
20 Yorkers to - you know it's a \$4,000 fine.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Right.

22 JOSH GOODMAN: New Yorkers to be eligible for a
23 \$2,000 bounty if they submit video of illegal dumping
24 in their communities. You can send that video to
25 illegaldumpingtips@dny.nyc.gov.

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3 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Okay and the last thing, I
4 just want to show a picture of a problematic area in
5 my district where there's constant illegal dumping
6 along Van Sinderen between Dumont and I was driving
7 by there just a couple of days ago and this has been
8 a constant. We've had a constant dumping of illegal
9 garbage there, so we want to work with you to address
10 this issue. We've worked with you in the past to
11 have crews go out there and clean but we want to see
12 how we can uhm, you know have a better approach or
13 strategy.

14 JOSH GOODMAN: We've got to do more. That's
15 somebody's neighborhood, right?

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Alright and I'll get this
17 information to you.

18 JOSH GOODMAN: Thank you.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER BANKS: Thank you.

20 JOSH GOODMAN: Mr. Chair, I apologize, I have to
21 request the opportunity to correct something we said
22 to Council Member Nurse. I was thrown off by the
23 dates being at the end of the year. Two zones coming
24 online at a time, it's '26 and '27 completing like
25 January 3, 2028. So, I apologize, I was thrown off
and if you'd like to ask follow up questions if the

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3 Chair will allow it, that's my fault. It's a two
4 year rollout '26 and '27 for commercial waste zones.
5 End of '27, not beginning of '27.

6 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Okay, let's pivot to the next
7 set of questions. Waste export. DSNY exports a lot
8 of waste, approximately 10,670 tons of DSNY managed
9 waste are exported from the city daily and if 85
10 percent is transported through long distance rail to
11 landfills upstate in Connecticut, Georgia, Kentucky,
12 New Jersey, Ohio, etc., New York, Virginia, and North
13 Carolina's landfills will reach capacity by 2050.

14 Seven of the city's nine municipal waste export
15 contracts will expire before 2036. What is the city
16 doing today to reduce waste export?

17 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: The entire 2026 SWMP is
18 focused on reducing waste export. We are excited
19 about the eight program areas. Each diving into
20 specific waste streams, specific approaches, that
21 will help us reduce waste, reduce reliance on export
22 and all the associated concerns we've been speaking
23 about today. It's important to acknowledge that we
24 must take action in all of those program areas. So,
25 the SWMP really only achieves the goals if we work on

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3 organics, on construction waste, on commercial waste
4 altogether.

5 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: How many of these contracts
6 does DSNY expect to renew and how many will require a
7 new procurement process with outside vendors?

8 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: That will depend on the
9 specifics of each contract, which we will evaluate in
10 enough time, sufficient time in order to take an
11 appropriate procurement action. So, for example, if
12 there is a renewal, we would evaluate whether it's in
13 the city's best interest to exercise that. If it's
14 in the mutual interest of both parties, we would have
15 to consider that negotiation if any. So, it really
16 depends on every contract, but that is the majority
17 of the work that the Borough of Solid Waste
18 Management oversees. So, we have an entire team
19 focused on tracking those dates and making sure that
20 we're ready.

21 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: What factors do you
22 contemplate in determining whether or not to renew?

23 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: We would consider pricing.
24 You know what does the contract say about pricing
25 going forward. We would take a look into the market.
As I mentioned, we have some attachments to a Solid

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1 Waste Management Plan. One of them is about local
2 capacity so we'll continue to use that as a resources
3 as we have to make these decisions. And we will also
4 continue to collaborate with our peers. One of the
5 things I enjoy most about my job is speaking with our
6 colleagues who are also managing solid waste for the
7 region in large cities and understanding how they're
8 approaching some of our shared challenges.
9

10 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: What has the city's relations
11 been like with other US States that are waste export
12 destinations? Have these states or their localities
13 ever expressed intentions to stop accepting New York
14 City's waste?

15 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: In the time that I've been
16 with DSNY, we have not had a specific example around
17 this. I have experienced it in my career.

18 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: You have?

19 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Not at DSNY but I have been
20 working in Solid Waste for about 20 years and this is
21 our challenge. As you mentioned, there may be aren't
22 as many people interested in solid waste as we would
23 all like but the communities who do host some of this
24 infrastructure are certainly some of the primary
25 stakeholders we need to consider when making these

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1 decisions and that is something that we will address
2 as we move into the future of the plan and
3 implementation.
4

5 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Have advocacy groups acting
6 on behalf of residents of US States that are waste
7 export destinations attempted to communicate with New
8 York City about the impact that our waste has on
9 their communities? If so, what have those
10 communications been and what has been the city's
11 response?

12 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: As part of the current
13 public comment period for the SWMP, we have received
14 comments from our neighbors around our solid waste
15 programming and so, we are going to address those
16 comments as described earlier as part of our process.
17 We will document what the specific concerns are and
18 formulate a response as part of the finalization of
19 our plan.

20 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Going back to waste
21 incineration. Some waste is also exported for
22 incineration at We World Essex in Essex New Jersey.
23 However, reduced capacity there will limit the city's
24 future options for waste incineration. DSNY has a 20

25

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3 year contract with We World Essex to incinerate up to
4 985,000 tons of waste annually.

5 The contract expires in 2032, with no renewal
6 option under the draft 2026 plan. DSNY would
7 continue monitoring thermal treatment technologies.
8 The city's contract with We World Essex incineration
9 facility in New Jersey, which receives 12 percent of
10 our waste will end in 2032 with no renewal option.
11 Where would DSNY redirect this waste to when the
12 contract expires?

13 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: This is something we spoke
14 about with Council Member Nurse. I'd also hope that
15 we make progress towards our 2026 SWMP goals by the
16 time we reach 2032, so that the need for disposal
17 capacity is not the same as it is today and that
18 we've reduced our reliance on any type of end of life
19 management for waste that could be diverted. So,
20 that's the first priority.

21 I think the next priority is continuing to
22 monitor developments and alternatives. Right now,
23 the primary alternatives for solid waste management
24 besides recycling and recovery are landfilling and
25 traditional composition. That may change by the time
we are in a position to enter into new contracts and

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3 that is part of our work is knowing what those
4 alternatives are and going through the due diligence
5 of making the right choice for the city.

6 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: I'd like to recognize Council
7 Member Vernikov for joining us. The Draft SWMP
8 mentions "DSNY will prioritize planning for changes
9 to We World Essex incineration capacity." Does this
10 mean that DSNY is planning for reductions from
11 current levels in the quantity of waste sent there
12 for incineration?

13 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: That is essentially the
14 discussion we just had. The more that we can reduce,
15 the less we will need that capacity or any capacity,
16 so-

17 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Is it planning for
18 reductions?

19 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Certainly, if we don't need
20 as much capacity when that time comes, we wouldn't
21 need to enter into an agreement for that higher level
22 of tonnage.

23 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thanks. Since the time of
24 the 2006 SWMP, has the city considered constructing
25 an incinerator in New York City? Just for the
record.

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1 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: No.

2
3 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Okay. Does DSNY have a long
4 term plan to reduce its reliance on waste
5 incineration facilities? If so, will this plan be
6 included in the revised SWMP draft?

7 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Since we use a mix of
8 incineration and landfilling to manage the solid
9 waste at the end of its life, any reductions we have
10 will thereby reduce incineration, so yes.

11 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Regarding commercial waste,
12 concerns have been expressed about the city's lack of
13 data regarding miles currently traveled by commercial
14 waste vehicles, prior to implementation of commercial
15 waste zones leading to difficulty calculating the
16 reductions and vehicles most traveled due to
17 commercial waste zones? Has DSNY considered asking
18 awardees in zones which have not yet been implemented
19 to report their current vehicles miles traveled?

20 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: So, when we initiated the
21 commercial waste zone program, we did complete one of
22 the those lovely environmental reviews and it gave us
23 a baseline picture of truck activity to estimate the
24 reductions we could expect from the program. We
25 don't have the authority to collect the MT Vehicle

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1 mile travel data until a zone has been fully
2 implemented, sort of the similar challenge we were
3 talking about earlier. So, we are really focused on
4 building a system that is efficient and offers us
5 more transparent data into what's happening and
6 making sure that the Carters are operating within the
7 new zone structure and the rules and regulations that
8 apply. So, we will see more data as the program is
9 rolled out.
10

11 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Have you tried asking them
12 for that information even though you're saying you're
13 not legally required to do so.

14 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: We can certainly ask for it
15 as part of the programming, the issue is more that
16 the whole program isn't rolled out at this time.

17 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Got it, I mean having that
18 information will still be very helpful so maybe we
19 should gather our brains around that to figure out
20 how we can collect that information because it would
21 be helpful in real time now.

22 Alright, pivoting now to constructions and
23 demolition waste. Construction and demolition debris
24 and fill must be disposed of separately from other
25 waste streams and account for nearly 50 percent of

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3 New York City's waste. In 2022, the private sector
4 produced approximately \$5.3 million tons of C&D
5 waste.

6 If the SWMP is implemented, C&D diversion rates
7 could increase from 50 percent to 60 percent. The
8 city's commercial waste zones program does not cover
9 construction of demolition waste. Although nearly 50
10 percent of the city's waste stream comes from the C&D
11 Carters. C&D referring to construction demolition
12 for everyone. What can the city do to advance some
13 of the promises of commercial waste zones, such as
14 reduced emissions and incentives for lowering waste
15 production to the C&D waste sector?

16 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Chair, you make an excellent
17 point about C&D waste being such a large percentage
18 of the waste stream and I think it's - uhm, one of
19 the things I love about this Solid Waste Management
20 Plan is it's really the first time that we're
21 standing up. C&D is an area to focus on. In our
22 work, developing the programming under this umbrella,
23 we learned a lot more about this industry in New York
24 City. Looking at the State SWMP, you quoted that
25 about 50 percent of that material is recycled
citywide, which is better than other material

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1 streams. So, we're not starting maybe at the same
2 place with other waste streams but there is certainly
3 room for improvement and I think from the city's
4 perspective, our wheel leverage is in our
5 specifications around how construction happens,
6 whether it's a city project or other entities. The
7 Port Authority has actually led in this way and we
8 are looking to them for some of their success stories
9 on these material streams specifically.
10

11 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: The SWMP mentions the city's
12 Asphalt Millings Bank and Recycle Concrete Aggregate
13 Bank. What happens to the materials from these
14 facilities that are not used?

15 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: So, the New York City
16 Department of Transportation operates these
17 facilities and they are primarily related to their
18 ongoing work maintaining city infrastructure,
19 sidewalks, roads. For the material that they can't
20 use it is actually made available for free to those
21 who would want to use it and we encourage folks who
22 may have a use for it to take advantage of that
23 program.

24 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: What measures - is it only
25 DOT that -

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1 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Operates those facilities.

2 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Yeah.

3 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Yes.

4 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Okay. What measures does -

5 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: That's the only city agency
6 that operates them. There may be commercial entities
7 that operate similar facilities but they're not
8 within the jurisdiction of the city.

9 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thanks for clarifying. What
10 measures does DSNY take to ensure that communities
11 that neighbor these concrete and asphalt recycling
12 facilities are not adversely effected by dust, noise,
13 or other nuisance from the facility?

14 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: What's really unique about
15 transfer stations in New York City is they're dually
16 permitted by both the state and DSNY. So, there are
17 many opportunities to ensure that these facilities
18 are operating you know as required under regulations
19 and certainly as a policy maker, uh there's
20 opportunities to change or address those regulations
21 if they don't - are deemed to be insufficient.

22 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Is there anything that you
23 think is currently deemed insufficient that we should
24 be working on?
25

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3 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: No, I think the rules have
4 been developed over time. Certainly, it's difficult
5 to site facilities such as this in an urban
6 environment and I think that is going to be a
7 continuous challenge for us as we increase resource
8 recovery but that's the nature of living in an urban
9 dense metropolis.

10 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: I haven't heard the word
11 metropolis since college. It's derived from the word
12 police, by the way, which means affairs of the city.
13 It was one of the first things I've learned in uhm,
14 in high school that I think inspiring for public
15 service. So, anyway, that word sticks out.

16 In the SWMP, the DSNY states it will achieve 30
17 percent diversion by 2036, a huge jump from the
18 current roughly 19 percent diversion rate that has
19 held steady for decades. We welcome this ambitious
20 goal. Which categories are voiced? And which
21 specific programs will enable DSNY to achieve this
22 doubling in a diversion rate over ten years?
23 Specifically, what outreach and education programs
24 enforcement, additional legislation and budgetary
25 dollars will be needed to achieve this goal?

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3 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: That question has a lot of
4 parts.

5 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Yeah, sorry about that.

6 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Thank you. Thank you Chair.
7 I'll start by talking about the specific waste
8 streams that DSNY I believes has the most promise to
9 really advance us to the goal and then I'll ask
10 Commissioner Goodman to speak about to speak about
11 some of the outreach and education related to that.

12 Certainly, organics we've talked a lot about
13 today and we know it's about 30 percent of the
14 residential waste stream. Uhm, and we have a huge
15 opportunity to ramp up that program over the next ten
16 years and that can really lead the way on achieving
17 that goal. When you look to our other waste streams
18 that are relatively large portions of the pie, paper
19 and metal, glass and plastic follow. Our capture
20 rate on paper is pretty good. We could do a little
21 bit better on paper. Metal, glass and plastic, we
22 have more opportunity, so those could be areas that
23 we focus on and then some of our special waste
24 streams that we also talked about today, textiles has
25 been growing as a portion of the waste stream, so
it's really important that we continue to develop

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3 that program as we see more and more of that in the
4 residential discards. But do you want to speak about
5 education?

6 JOSH GOODMAN: Yeah, thank you very much Council
7 Member. You're right that this is a really
8 tremendous change and it requires substantial
9 participation increases. I believe we're going to
10 speak more about this later but the uhm combination
11 of traditional outreach and education, with outreach
12 in the form of enforcement is really something that's
13 a relatively new innovation and something that the -
14 for the city to be more comfortable using house to
15 house enforcement as a piece of outreach and
16 education to get people comfortable with this.
17 Although as you know, we always do extensive warning
18 periods, extensive public meetings and in fact, sorry
19 I didn't catch Council Member Banks, but just to get
20 it on the record, I have some updates to one of his
21 questions. We did visit that community board in May
22 of this year and we're happy to go back so you know
23 the outreach will continue to meet all of these
24 goals.
25

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2 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: You have any specific
3 examples of what that outreach and education program
4 is going look like?

5 JOSH GOODMAN: Absolutely, I mean we've talked,
6 for example, about textile programs right and the
7 fact that the e-cycle program is already available
8 and the e-cycle and refashion programs are already
9 available to all buildings with ten or more units.
10 We are planning to do substantial, direct door to
11 door outreach about these programs to help foster
12 participation as part of Local Law 88 of '23. Uhm,
13 and that would be one example of something that's
14 coming up in the year ahead.

15 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Will DSNY leverage, reuse,
16 repair and stop in SWMP events achieve these goals?

17 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Absolutely, yes.

18 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: What are some miles- thank
19 you for that Commissioner. What are some milestones
20 that DSNY must reach in order to reach the 30 percent
21 diversion rate by 2036?

22 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: With the citywide organics
23 program collection rolled out around the city, we've
24 sort of hit a major milestone there. Uhm, we will
25 need to continue the outreach and education that we

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3 spoke about as well as our community recycling events
4 that are part of the plan. Essentially pursuing all
5 of the 126 strategies that we've outlined are part of
6 the way that we're going to get there, so it's not
7 just one thing.

8 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Does DSNY plan on going back
9 to a fining structure for composting?

10 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: I would say that enforcement
11 never stopped as part of the organics program and
12 we've been continuing to do boots on the ground, door
13 knocking outreach to residents in support of getting
14 higher participation rates, everyone familiar with
15 the program. So, that remains part of our approach.

16 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: I thought the fining did
17 stop?

18 JOSH GOODMAN: No Mr. Chair. Fines were
19 refocused on the sort of worst repeat offenders,
20 large buildings that had received multiple warnings.
21 They did continue all through the spring, summer, and
22 fall while moving into a more direct outreach and
23 education phase for smaller buildings, first time
24 offenders, that kind of thing.

25 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Do you have a number on like
how many fines were issued or -

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2 JOSH GOODMAN: Uhm, it's in the dozens. Uhm but
3 can also add that as part of this process, we knocked
4 just shy of 800,000 doors, 797,191, held 83 info
5 sessions, a total of 1,400 in person events that
6 included organics outreach.

7 So, enforcement has continued against the worst
8 offenders while doing substantial work to take at
9 people who just need to learn a little bit more, the
10 access to the information that they need.

11 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: What reporting and granular
12 open data will the DSNY commit to provide, so that
13 the public and the Council can see progress in
14 community groups, can assist in this ambitious goal
15 of 30 percent diversion?

16 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: In addition to the data on
17 open data that we provide for tonnage collected by
18 material stream in each sanitation collection
19 district, which by the way I think is pretty amazing
20 data. Uhm, we produce these reports as mentioned
21 earlier, the biennial reports to DEC. The 2023 and
22 2024 report that was just posted to our website is
23 253 pages of information about our programming. So,
24 we feel proud of the amount of information we share
25

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3 about the work that we're doing. That's where I
4 would start.

5 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: The Department has changed
6 the public facing open data set, DSNY monthly tours
7 data in July of 2025 to report a combined residential
8 collection plus institution of collection tonnage for
9 refuse, MGP paper. Will the Department disaggregate
10 this data as has been requested by a variety of
11 groups including the SWABS?

12 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: We acknowledge that
13 question. It has been submitted to our planning
14 group and to the Department. We have taken the
15 initiative to understand the heart of the question.
16 At the same time, although the SWMP doesn't
17 contemplate collection logistics, it's certainly
18 something the Department is continuously evaluating
19 and looking for efficiencies in.

20 Based on our investigations, it appears that our
21 collection operations have changed such that the data
22 sets we previously reported are no longer collected.
23 So, it's not necessarily the decision not to share
24 data, it's a decision based on our change in
25 operations but the exact same data sets are no longer
available but we are going to respond in writing to

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1 this question since it has come up a couple times as
2 you noted.
3

4 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Is there an operational
5 challenge to disaggregating the data you already
6 have?

7 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: It's more about the way the
8 trucks are running and what routes are being combined
9 and what material types are being combined on one
10 truck.

11 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Alright, are there materials
12 that are presently designated recyclable materials
13 that the city has trouble with repurposing or
14 selling? If so, which materials?

15 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Our contracts that require
16 the eventual recycling of material collected, put the
17 onus on that market access and marketing of materials
18 on the vendor. So, it's not directly DSNY's
19 jurisdiction, however, we work closely with Sims
20 Municipal Recycling that handles the bulk of material
21 and certainly they share with us challenges around
22 film. You know we collect a lot of our materials in
23 plastic bags and that can be a more difficult
24 material to find and users for.
25

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3 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Any other materials that come
4 to mind like that?

5 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: That's the primary one.
6 Some of the different plastic polymers, uhm are less
7 reliable to market then say milk jugs and water
8 bottles, which have a pretty steady demand.

9 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you. What efforts will
10 the Department take to assess and measure if
11 containerization is negatively impacting diversion in
12 their full recycling or organic participation rates?

13 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: In order to effectively
14 monitor the impact of containerization on diversions,
15 we must rely on the Waste Characterization Study.
16 The last one was from 2023 and we have another one
17 that we're gearing up for. Thanks to the Council
18 bill this year. Yes, yeah, 2024. So, we will use
19 that information to - and we may even be able to
20 study the areas where containerization is being
21 piloted and lay on some specific sorts to better
22 answer that question. Certainly now, we can use
23 citywide averages to see how that is performing in
24 those districts but it would obviously be even more
25 informative if we had very specific data to those
areas.

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3 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Is DSNY considering a
4 commercial waste recycling enforcement program?

5 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: We have a commercial
6 recycling enforcement program already but I'll let
7 Deputy Commissioner speak more about that.

8 JOSH GOODMAN: Thank you very much. We do
9 enforce commercial waste recycling now. One of the
10 great features of the Commercial Waste Zone program
11 though is that for the first time ever it will cost a
12 business less to dispose of their recyclables than it
13 does to dispose of their trash. It won't just be the
14 stick anymore; there will be a carrot as well that
15 they will save meaningful amounts of money by
16 properly recycling.

17 With that that, we do right summonses for failure
18 to properly sort commercial recyclables and it's a
19 good opportunity to mention as we've done at eight or
20 ten hearings or so, that the city's law about
21 commercial organics enforcement is woefully out of
22 date. Local Law 146 of 2013 is a relic of another
23 time that is completely out of step with the
24 successful residential organics program. So, we
25 would once again plead with the Council, please give
us the ability to enforce more commercial recycling.

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3 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: And as it relates to that
4 piece of legislation, we would also emphasize the
5 importance of prioritizing donation of edible food
6 from commercial establishments as a preferred end of
7 life management to recycling that as compost or
8 digesting it.

9 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: The SWMP highlights community
10 led reuse and recycling events. What are some
11 current examples of these events that New York City
12 residents can make use of and where do they take
13 place?

14 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: We have a program of
15 community events, one in each district. Kate, would
16 you like to share more about those?

17 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Each Council District?

18 KATE KITCHENER: Yeah.

19 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Community district?

20 KATE KITCHENER: So, in compliance with Local Law
21 88 of 2023, we offer 59 community recycling events,
22 one in each district. We had a couple of events just
23 this past weekend. One at College of Staten Island,
24 one at Park Slope. We have a number of events coming
25 up in January. You can go to our website at
nyc.gov/recyclingevents to see the full list.

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3 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: And that's another data set
4 in our biennial reports where we share where each of
5 those events happened.

6 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you Commissioner.
7 Pilot programs for repair and reuse events - oh I
8 think I already asked that question. My apologies.
9 In the absence of state level extended producer
10 responsibility, has the city explored a mattress
11 reuse or mattress donation program? What are some
12 obstacles presented by this type of programming and
13 what are some of the ways the city can address these
14 concerns?

15 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: DSNY has worked with NYCHA
16 on a program that they initiated for a mattress
17 recycling pilot. Logistically, the program has been
18 very successful and we've discussed both with NYCHA
19 and the company that's providing the service of
20 recycling about how we can look to expand that
21 program. Certainly, a program such as statewide EPR
22 would really help that move forward because the cost
23 of managing the mattresses outside of the regular
24 solid waste system are exponentially higher.
25

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3 So, we need to justify an alternative approach to
4 this material and certainly having funding from an
5 external source would help.

6 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: And my apologies if this was
7 already covered by they 2026 draft plan but does the
8 Department, is the Department willing to expand its
9 mattress reuse or mattress donation program as part
10 of the next plan?

11 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Certainly, we would like to
12 expand it. We'd have to receive funding or otherwise
13 find alternative vendors who have a lower cost option
14 for recycling these outside of the solid waste
15 system.

16 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: For purposes of enforcement,
17 how does DSNY determine whether a business is
18 required to recycle its textile waste? What does
19 this enforcement look like?

20 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: This is something that we've
21 identified as an area we would like to dig into
22 further as part of the next SWMP, and it's one of our
23 specific commitments under the commercial program.
24 Understanding what percentage of a waste stream,
25 again is a waste characterization study, and what's
challenging is the time period over which you sample

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3 and analyze that data. Certainly, you can't do it on
4 a real time, all the time basis and a waste stream
5 from an industry may fluctuate over time, so we've
6 identified this as an area where we can improve our
7 methodology and therefore the diversion of textiles
8 from the commercial sector.

9 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: What obstacles has the city
10 experienced when advocating in Albany for broader,
11 extended producer responsibility of batteries?

12 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Certainly, rechargeable
13 batteries and lithium ion batteries in particular
14 have become a real challenge for our industry and it
15 permeates every waste stream because we find these
16 batteries in so many products, even greeting cards.
17 So, we've been uh hit by that challenge of just there
18 in every waste stream, so how do we come up with a
19 system and a program that addresses their
20 pervasiveness throughout our solid waste system?

21 We have a number of options available to
22 residents for the safe takeback and the statewide
23 program does cover some but not all rechargeable
24 batteries. In fact, there is a bill that was sent to
25 the governor today for her signature to expand that

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1 legislation to include e-bike batteries, which are
2 not currently covered in the EPR program.

3
4 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Did she sign it? We don't
5 know.

6 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Not as far as we know.

7 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Maybe as long as I run for
8 governor next. I'm kidding. Uhm, Garver Recycling
9 program; what is the current practice for recycling
10 carpets?

11 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Oh carpet, yes. This is
12 another EPR extended producer responsibility program
13 that was passed at the state level. So, this is
14 rolling out around the state as we speak. DSNY is
15 engaged in the implementation as a major stakeholder
16 and we're - Kate Kitchener here is representing us
17 and helping to develop what we call a convenient
18 standard for the city. So, how do we make a program
19 that's accessible and convenient for all New Yorkers?
20 In this case, statewide to help recover carpet.

21 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: What are the safety
22 precautions in place to contain any harmful material
23 that may be generated during the carpet recycling
24 process?

25

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3 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: We may need to get back to
4 you on that.

5 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: I'm not sure I know the
6 answer to that.

7 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: This is a new program for
8 the state. As far as I understand, most of the
9 recycling may not be happening in state. The
10 aggregation, right, the collection aggregation will
11 be happening as part of the EPR program. I don't
12 believe the EPR directs the recycling to happen in
13 state. So, it could be in another jurisdiction and
14 we would need to understand where that is and gain
15 more information to adequately answer that question.

16 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you. Has the city
17 identified potential sites for a public venue
18 container reuse program?

19 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: We have not identified
20 specific sites but we have identified that that's
21 something that we'd like to try and we've included it
22 in the next SWMP.

23 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: That's great. Alright, now
24 moving on to organic waste. I told you we have a lot
25 of questions. The SWMP highlights plans to
collaborate with community organizations to operate a

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1 composting facility on DSNY property in Gowanus. Can
2 you please give us some additional details about this
3 plan?
4

5 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: This is a facility that was
6 constructed by virtue of some other city uhm
7 projects. Uhm, we had a salt pile, DEP was doing
8 some stormwater infrastructure, so we were able to
9 also develop a small - a midsized compost facility on
10 this site in Gowanus in Brooklyn and we'll be working
11 with Big Reuse to start operations on this facility
12 hopefully next year to compost right there.

13 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: That's great and what is the
14 expected capacity for this facility?

15 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: 200 tons per year. I
16 believe it will be a registered facility with the
17 Department of Environmental Conservation, not a
18 permitted facility.

19 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: And you said it will be
20 operational by next year?

21 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: We hope. We have to - they
22 have to finalize the registration. We have to
23 finalize some agreements between the city and the
24 operating partner.
25

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3 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Has the city identified other
4 sites for this similar type of collaboration?

5 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: We have not identified
6 specific sites, although again, in the Solid Waste
7 Management Plan, we've made a commitment to convene a
8 group of stakeholders on this to look at organics
9 processing capacity overall, not just composting.

10 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: We'd love to see more of
11 this. What percentage of source separator organics
12 collected by DSNY must be landfilled due to
13 contamination?

14 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: That really depends on the
15 time of year and the area where the material is being
16 collected. Right now, is our high leaf season, so
17 our contamination rate goes down is the percentage of
18 overall collections. On average, over the year,
19 across all of our contracts and locations, it's on
20 par with other urban programs, around 20, 25 percent.

21 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thanks for answering that
22 question. What engagement is DSNY doing or planning
23 to do to bridge the gap between tenants in
24 multifamily buildings and building owners regarding
25 residential organic waste recycling?

JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Josh will -

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1 JOSH GOODMAN: Yeah, thank you Mr. Chair. We've
2 done really substantial outreach around this program
3 including uh when it first started rolling out in
4 Queens at the end of 2022 and continuing really up to
5 the present. We're in the next couple weeks going to
6 hit 800,000 doors knocked. We've held 83 info
7 sessions on this. We gave away 190,000 free brown
8 bins. We've issued over 40,000 warnings and also,
9 you know created the uh first ever 311 service
10 request for tenants whose buildings are not providing
11 access to compost as required by law. So, you can
12 call us, you can let us know, hey I live in an
13 apartment. I want to compost; they're not letting
14 me. DSNY enforcement agents will come by and pay
15 special attention to that building.

17 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Are you seeing that
18 compliance is higher in buildings with tenants versus

19 -

20 JOSH GOODMAN: You know interestingly the highest
21 performing districts do have a large number of single
22 family homes. Actually, Staten Island does
23 incredibly well on a per capita basis but we're
24 seeing growing compliance in participation in multi-

25

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1 family buildings. In particular in Manhattan and
2 Northern Brooklyn.
3

4 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: I'm sure the advocates will
5 have their piece to share on that very shortly. I'm
6 looking forward to hearing from them on what we
7 believe the city needs to do with that.

8 When will DSNY restart residential enforcement of
9 source separator organics? I know you mentioned
10 earlier that -

11 JOSH GOODMAN: It never fully stopped.

12 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: But how do we get to the full
13 implement - is there an intention to implement
14 against everyone?

15 JOSH GOODMAN: There is. Uhm, as you know
16 recycling has been mandatory for about 20, 25 years
17 in the city and there was a similar learning period.
18 In fact, I think that the organics enforcement period
19 has been handled much better than recycling
20 enforcement was in the late 90's when the program
21 stopped entirely. It came back, went, left and all
22 this stuff. I also would note ahead of talking about
23 enforcement that we just hit three weeks in a row of
24 record breaking tonnage, right? What we're doing now
25 is working. Looking forward to hearing more

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3 certainly from the Council and the advocates about
4 what to do to improve those numbers. But three weeks
5 in a row of the highest participation ever in this
6 program. With that said, we have uh expressed
7 previously that the legal requirement to source
8 separate compost to a material is likely to go back
9 into effect citywide at the start of the new year.

10 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: How much - I'm going now to
11 co-digestion of organic waste at waste water resource
12 recovery facilities. How much money has DSNY and DEP
13 spent to date on building or expanding co-digestion
14 sites outside of New Town Creek?

15 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: I think it's important to
16 talk through the steps required for co-digestion to
17 begin to answer that question. So, unlike a compost
18 facility where it's typical that the actions to
19 complete the beneficial use are contained in one
20 site. With co-digestion, the material may need to
21 make multiple stops to be able to be prepared for co-
22 digestion.

23 So, for example, in the program we are running
24 now with DEP, the material goes to the Varick Avenue
25 Transfer Station that's owned and operated by Waste
Management. That's where it is made into a slurry we

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3 call it, smoothy maybe if you will. It's a pumpable
4 form of the organics that are then delivered to New
5 Town Creek and inserted into the digestors at the
6 Waste Water Resource Recovery Facility.

7 In order to do that, there needs to be
8 infrastructure on site at the Waste Water facility as
9 well as infrastructure to utilize the biogas that is
10 produced. So, the investments made to enable the
11 current program were largely made by the private
12 sector and by DEP. So, questions about expanding the
13 program would likely go to DEP.

14 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: So, you don't have any
15 insights on how much money has been spent?

16 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: I do not.

17 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Okay, I would like to say
18 we've been joined by future Council Member Justin
19 Sanchez from the Bronx. He is in the back. I'm
20 excited for his involvement on sanitation issues in
21 the next term. He cares deeply about the issue.

22 And what further spending is planned over the
23 next five to ten years? Is that also a question for
24 DEP?

25 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: It is, yes.

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3 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: The SWMP mentions the city's
4 earlier assessment of a waste water resource recovery
5 facility on Rikers Island. What is the expected
6 timeline for the establishment of this facility?

7 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Certainly, that timeline is
8 dependent on the closure of Rikers Island, which is
9 something that will be addressed by the next
10 Administration.

11 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Approximately, how many tons
12 of organic waste could this facility process each
13 day?

14 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: The proposed facility at
15 Rikers Island has not been developed to that level of
16 specificity. At this time, I believe it's a concept
17 of how the island could be repurposed as a new
18 benefit of infrastructure to the city.

19 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Is it the Departments hope
20 that this facility is followed through on?

21 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Certainly, the opportunity
22 to find space for new infrastructure is a unique
23 opportunity. So, I think the Department would
24 welcome any opportunity to consider underutilized
25 space in the city for resource recovery
infrastructure.

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3 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Now, I'm moving on to
4 transfer stations. The Transformed Owned Trash
5 Coalition published a report, which stated that
6 approximately 75 percent of privately managed waste
7 is still trucked in and out of just five of the
8 city's 59 community districts. What programs or
9 facilities will the Administration focus on to more
10 fairly distribute the burden felt by these five
11 community districts to other areas around the city?

12 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: So, these areas were
13 addressed in Local Law 152 of 2018, also known as the
14 Waste Equity Law, which reduced the permitted
15 capacity at transfer stations in these districts.
16 Uh, and these reductions have been fully implemented
17 uhm for example, the permitted capacity in Brooklyn
18 Community District 1 was reduced by 50 percent, in
19 Queens Community District 12 in Bronx Community
20 Districts, 1 and 2 by 33 percent. And we really are
21 looking at the commercial waste zone program
22 implementation as a way to reduce the commercial
23 waste truck traffic by an estimated additional 50
24 percent citywide, we fully implanted. We've talked a
25 lot about that program today.

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3 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: As part of the 2006 SWMP, the
4 city prepared an environmental assessment to allow
5 commercial waste to be tipped at DSNY Marine Transfer
6 Stations. However, DSNY has maintained that too much
7 time has passed to rely on that environmental
8 assessment for present considerations of this type of
9 policy. Does DSNY plan to start accepting commercial
10 waste at marine and rail based transfer stations
11 overnight to reduce diesel truck traffic in
12 overburdened communities?

13 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: We've spoken about this
14 opportunity a couple of times today. The only thing
15 I'd add to what DSNY has previously shared, is a
16 little more information about the pricing and this is
17 one of the key elements we will need to poke at as we
18 understand the viability of this opportunity. Right
19 now, we believe that private sector tipping fees as
20 we call them at transfer stations are say \$100, maybe
21 \$120 a ton whereas to deliver waste to the marine
22 transfer stations would cost \$200 or more dollars a
23 ton. So, the question is going to be, will there be
24 private entities willing, able, interested in paying
25 a tip fee at that level for the use of the transfer
stations?

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3 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: And I think you already
4 answered no to this before but just for the record
5 again, does DSNY have any sites in mind for the
6 construction of new marine transfer stations?

7 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: No, we do not.

8 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Is there an alternate plan to
9 barge recyclable waste from Manhattan since
10 Gansevoort was not used as planned?

11 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: There is not an alternate
12 plan. Although we do consider to export all of the
13 paper from Manhattan through the West 59th Street
14 Marine Transfer Station.

15 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: The SWMP states that the city
16 will consider siting renewable energy facilities at
17 Fresh Kills and Edgemere Landfills. Can you
18 elaborate more on those, on what those sites might
19 look like and when they might take form.

20 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: The first example of this is
21 the solar feasibility study that is underway right
22 now on the Edgemere Landfill, which is you know the
23 Rockaways in Queens that we are conducting in
24 coordination with DCAS and NYPA to see what the
25 viability is of installing solar panels on that
26 facility. From there, we will look at opportunities

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3 at Fresh Kills in the context of the larger long term
4 plans to make that - repurpose that facility to
5 benefit New Yorkers.

6 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: My last set of questions are
7 on education and outreach. So, I'm assuming this if
8 for you Commissioner Goodman. Uhm, the SWMP
9 highlights ongoing efforts and upcoming plans to
10 leverage enforcement as a form of education and
11 outreach. Can you provide information about the past
12 successes or failures of similar efforts?

13 JOSH GOODMAN: Absolutely, thank you Mr. Chair.
14 Certainly, we think that the use of enforcement as an
15 education tool around organics has been very
16 successful. We're hitting breaking tonnages, seeing
17 massive participation, because we're partnering
18 traditional outreach programs and education programs
19 with enforcement where uh people are really held
20 accountable for failure to participate in necessary
21 zero waste programs.

22 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Can you speak to the
23 successes or failures?

24 JOSH GOODMAN: Well, I think it is very
25 successful and that it's you know led to these record
breaking tonnages.

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3 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: What about the failures?

4 JOSH GOODMAN: Failures, I mean, you know
5 failures of enforcement, I don't know that there have
6 been any obviously. We think that uhm, you need to
7 use every tool at your disposal to get the word out
8 there and know that you know this is a law and order
9 focused Council that's been very interested in
10 providing us with the tools that we need to - the
11 SWMP does not focus on collection operations but to
12 get the bags off the street, to continue to support
13 diversion and also, to sort of bold this into design
14 best practices. You know we removed a lot of the
15 barriers to entry when it comes to organic separation
16 in this version of the program and when you talked
17 about diversion related to the Empire bins earlier,
18 right, the bins are sized based on trash set out.
19 So, repeated overflowing is something that would
20 trigger an enforcement investigation and potential
21 action beyond that.

22 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: The SWMP mentions ongoing
23 efforts to conduct neighborhood walkthroughs with
24 community partners and elected officials to observe
25 area conditions and applied targeted outreach. How

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1 many of these neighborhood walkthroughs has DSNY
2 conducted to date?

3
4 JOSH GOODMAN: Yeah, appreciate that. I know
5 this is uh - I believe it's an issue of 124 of 126,
6 so back at the back of the SWMP. SWMP is a
7 commitment about what we will do over the next ten
8 year period, however, we do conduct walkthroughs more
9 than one per week on average at the request of
10 Council Members, community groups, and community
11 boards as well as individual residents. They're
12 happening on a near constant basis at community
13 request. We don't pick the neighborhoods. You
14 request that we come in.

15 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: So, it's on a request basis,
16 not on a proactive basis?

17 JOSH GOODMAN: We will go out and do walk
18 throughs if we think that there's something that we
19 need to see but generally speaking, the instigation
20 for a walkthrough is that someone says like, you know
21 Council Member Banks said I have this site that has a
22 lot of illegal dumping, right? So, one of the things
23 we would do about that report is arrange a
24 walkthrough.

25

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3 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: I'll say that anytime
4 requested a tour, I mean, you all have done that but
5 the question is, if it's proactive versus you know in
6 reaction to the requests, so.

7 JOSH GOODMAN: And I guess I'll just clarify -

8 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: I'd like to see a more
9 proactive side to things.

10 JOSH GOODMAN: I think that's very reasonable.

11 We, when we talk about a walkthrough, we're generally
12 talking about something done by our civilian policy
13 staff or engagement staff. We also - we wouldn't
14 think of it as a walkthrough but I think this gets at
15 what you're asking. Our sanitation supervisors,
16 which there are hundreds working a day, have an
17 assigned area where they're supposed to observe and
18 report conditions.

19 So, we wouldn't - when we wrote Initiative 124
20 about walkthroughs, we weren't thinking about that
21 but I do think that gets at what you're asking about
22 and certainly we can talk about ways to tie those
23 together more closely.

24 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: For the record, can you speak
25 to which neighborhoods were visited and how these

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1 neighborhoods were chosen, and also which
2 neighborhoods are being prioritized in the future?

3 JOSH GOODMAN: Well, on just general all topics,
4 we conduct neighborhood walkthroughs absolutely
5 everywhere. I mean I've been on them with dozens of
6 Council Members in just the last year or so and uh, I
7 don't think that there's neighborhood prioritization
8 at all. It's a tactic we use citywide.

9 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Are there any upcoming
10 walkthroughs that we should be aware of?

11 JOSH GOODMAN: I could take a look at my calendar
12 and see what we got coming up this week. Uh, we have
13 I mean I see one in Brooklyn CB13. I see one in
14 Brooklyn CB2. I see one uh at PS7 on 120th Street.
15 So, they continue in an ongoing way wherever
16 necessary.

17 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Okay, I would like to see
18 more of a proactive engagement then like just -
19 because you know a lot of times elected officials and
20 community groups, they can be very, very busy. It
21 doesn't mean that they should be you know not being -
22 it still means that they should still be getting
23 those walkthroughs regardless, so. As long as
24

25

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3 there's a systematic approach to this, I think that
4 that would be very helpful.

5 In terms of legislation enforcement, in the draft
6 plan there is the following statement in Attachment B
7 regarding the impact of legislative solutions on
8 waste reductions and diversion. In Attachment A
9 Local Laws relevant to waste management, New York
10 City's Department of Sanitation capacity to enforce
11 those laws is limited. Will the Department consider
12 expanding on this by providing analysis specifically
13 to the degree it can and cannot enforce each of the
14 legislative solutions listed in Attachment A and why?

15 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Certainly, we took an
16 inclusive approach to the legislation listed in that
17 attachment and some of it is actually not at our
18 jurisdiction, meaning it could be state legislation
19 that we're referencing such as the plastic bag bin,
20 some of the EPR programs that we've talked about.
21 So, in those cases, we are not the enforcement
22 action. At the same time, for those that are under
23 our jurisdiction, certainly there are some that are
24 more difficult for us to enforce such as the Skip
25 That Stuff Bill that the Council has passed. Where

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3 it relies on reporting by folks whose stuff wasn't
4 skipped to let us know so we can investigate.

5 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: And will the Department
6 consider this is an area requiring attention before
7 submitting the draft to DEC?

8 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: No, I think it's reasonable
9 and understanding that each of us has our own
10 jurisdiction and limited resources to conduct
11 enforcement.

12 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Alright, this panel is hereby
13 excused. Thank you very much.

14 JENNIFER MCDONNELL: Thank you Chair. Thank you
15 Council.

16 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: We're going to be taking a
17 two minute break as I have to run to the restroom.
18 [BREAK 01:52:09-01:54:16]. I now open the hearing
19 for public testimony. I remind members of the public
20 that this is a government proceeding and that decorum
21 shall be observed at all times. As such, members of
22 the public shall remain silent at all times.

23 The witness table is reserved for people who wish
24 to testify. No video recording or photography is
25 allowed from the witness table. Further, members of
the public may not present audio or video recordings

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1 of testimony but may submit transcripts of such
2 recording to the Sergeant at Arms for inclusion in
3 the hearing record.
4

5 If you wish to speak at today's hearing, please
6 fill out an acceptance card with the Sergeant at Arms
7 and wait to be recognized. When recognized, you will
8 have two minutes to speak on today's hearing topic.
9 Engagement for the city's 2026 Solid Waste Management
10 plan. If you have a written statement or additional
11 written testimony you wish to submit for the record,
12 please provide a copy of that testimony to the
13 Sergeant at Arms.

14 You may also email written testimony to
15 testimony@council.nyc.gov within 72 hours of this
16 hearing. Audio and video recordings will not be
17 accepted.

18 I will now call the first panel, Celeste Perez,
19 Justin Wood, Eric Goldstein, and Rhonda Keyser. You
20 may begin.

21 CELESTE PEREZ: Okay, is it working? Okay, yeah,
22 okay. Uhm, good morning. My name is Celeste Perez.
23 I'm with the New York City Environmental Justice
24 Alliance. Uhm, we also go by NYCEJA. NYCEJA is a
25 citywide membership network linking grassroots

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1 organizations from low income neighborhoods and
2 communities of color in the struggle for
3 environmental justice. NYCEJA is also a founding
4 member of the Transformed Owned Trash Coalition, a
5 long standing coalition of environmental justice,
6 labor and climate organizations working to transform
7 our city's sprawling Solid Waste Management System.
8

9 In New York City, while the total amount of waste
10 handled at private transfer stations has decreased
11 since Local Law 152, the current solid waste
12 management system is still an ongoing environmental
13 injustice, in which five community districts handle
14 nearly 24 waste facilities, while there are 45
15 community districts that have no waste facilities at
16 all. These communities have historically had the
17 highest rates of asthma, such as North Brooklyn, the
18 South Bronx, which is where I'm from and also suffer
19 from asthma and the Southeast Queens according to the
20 city's compliance, City Comptrollers Audit report on
21 Fair Share Compliance.

22 The Solid Waste Management plan for 2026 should
23 commit the city to move forward with the unfulfilled
24 strategy of the last SWMP of using municipal marine
25 transfer stations to accept commercial waste, which

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1 environmental justice communities have long advocated
2 for. DSNY reports have estimated that fully
3 implementing the Marine Transfer Stations would
4 decrease truck traffic associated with commercial
5 waste collection by 50 percent citywide as measured
6 in vehicle miles traveled, reducing both the number
7 of trips and the length of collection routes or
8 commercial waste.
9

10 An Environmental impact statement for the 2006
11 SWMP was conducted to evaluate plans to accept 3,772
12 tons of commercial waste collected by private haulers
13 at four distinguished marine transfer stations during
14 overnight hours.

15 However, the Permit and Tonnage Data Release has
16 shown that several marine transfer stations still
17 handle way less than their permits allow ultimately
18 delaying the relief to environmental justice
19 communities. Thank you.

20 JUSTIN WOOD: Good morning Chair Abreu. Thank
21 you Committee Council and Members of the Committee.
22 We want to thank you not only for holding this
23 hearing but for all the work you've done to advance
24 waste reduction and equity and climate justice over
25 the last four years. It's been a pleasure.

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3 My name is Justin Wood. I'm the Director of
4 Policy at New York Lawyers for the Public Interest,
5 also a member of the Transformed Don't Trash New York
6 City Coalition. We'll be submitting detailed
7 comments prior to the January deadline on the 2026
8 SWMP. So, just wanted to highlight a few themes that
9 will inform our comments.

10 Similar to Celeste's comment, we'd really like to
11 see this SWMP fulfill the unfulfilled promises of the
12 current SWMP in terms of waste equity. The
13 Environmental Impact Study for accepting commercial
14 waste at marine facilities was already completed 20
15 years ago. It's on the record. Uhm, we'd also
16 suggest that a further study is legally necessary
17 that it be completed as commercial waste zones are
18 rolled out and note that there are two zones that
19 either contain or are adjacent to marine transfer
20 facilities, rolling out over the next two months.
21 So, we think there's a real opportunity to make these
22 improvements and pilot this program as this critical
23 program is rolling out.

24 Similar to members of the Council, we'd like to
25 see a faster timeline for commercial waste zone
rollout. We heard today it won't be completed until

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1 2028. We think this is a critical foundation for
2 waste reduction, safety, worker justice. It's a
3 highly successful program and its huge potential, so
4 we'd like to see this timeline accelerated now that
5 DSNY has it down and is rolling these zones out one
6 by one.
7

8 Another thing we'd like to stress is the need in
9 the SWMP for long term and stable funding sources for
10 all of the waste reduction, recycling, composting
11 programs, that we support in the proposed SWMP and
12 you know too often over the last 20 years, we've seen
13 the huge damage that sort of year by year budget cuts
14 and increases and fluctuations do to public behavior
15 and New Yorkers learn behaviors around recycling.

16 So, we'd like to see uh, the next, the incoming
17 Mamdani Administration, the City Council, the entire
18 city's state legislative delegation and DSNY really
19 aggressively advocate for funding sources from the
20 state, especially as the federal government has
21 completely advocated its responsibility to fund
22 renewable energy and infrastructure. There's a huge
23 opportunity for Governor Hochul and the state to step
24 in with funding streams like the long overdue Cap and
25 Invest program that was mentioned today. Like

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3 extended producer responsibility programs and in the
4 immediate future, the Sustainable Futures Fund that
5 legislators are talking about.

6 So, we'll detail all this and more and thank you
7 very much for the opportunity to testify today.

8 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you. Sergeants, can
9 you add - can we get three minutes instead? And if
10 anybody wants to add anything else, you may add
11 another minute.

12 ERIC GOLDSTEIN: Good afternoon Chair Abreu,
13 unheralded Council Staff. Eric Goldstein from the
14 Natural Resources Defense Council and the Transformed
15 Owned Trash Coalition. We appreciate your leadership
16 in calling this important hearing. We're going to
17 summarize our written testimony. There's much that
18 is welcome in this Draft Solid Waste Management Plan.
19 It contains a wealth of data and information
20 presented in one place and giving a comprehensive
21 picture of the city's waste handling system. It
22 embraces the states waste management hierarchy, which
23 places waste prevention at the top and it includes
24 more than a handful of ideas, which if fully
25 implemented could make New York City's waste disposal
system more sustainable.

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3 So, we acknowledge the good work that Jenn
4 McDonnell and Kate Kitchener and the DSNY staff have
5 done on this but in the first Council session
6 focusing on the Draft SWMP, NRDC offers three
7 preliminary thoughts on how the city can obtain
8 maximum benefit from this once in a decade
9 opportunity to make New York Solid Waste Policy more
10 sustainable, more cost effective and more supportive
11 of the residents and neighborhoods throughout all
12 five boroughs. First, it makes sense to ensure a
13 broad and fair and far reaching process for
14 participation, review, and submission of this draft
15 plan to the DEC as required by state law.

16 We want to emphasize the importance of providing
17 the public and the members of the Council with
18 sufficient opportunity to comment on the draft and
19 have their ideas incorporated into the final plan.
20 Such an approach is mandated by state law, which
21 requires that local SWABS shall, "address to the
22 maximum extent practicable, the comments and views
23 expressed by concerned governmental, environmental,
24 commercial and industrial interests and the public on
25 waste prevention, recycling, reuse, and disposal
alternatives.

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3 We think it will be impossible to submit a final
4 plan by the end of January to the state and we don't
5 believe that that's required by law.

6 Second, we're concerned that the draft plan in
7 its current form, while comprehensive in the
8 subjects it includes has a commitment problem. It
9 mentions many of the appropriate issue areas but
10 fails to provide the necessary departmental
11 commitments to make change happen. Too often, the
12 action items that are set forth in the draft schedule
13 use words like, study, explore, collaborate, or
14 consider. This is not the fault of DSNY staff
15 necessarily that prepared the draft but presumably by
16 decisions made by administration officials to prepare
17 a plan that keeps in too many instances the
18 Department options wide open. But the purpose of a
19 SWMP is to drive policy forward and provide
20 definitive action items that will achieve the goals
21 of the state's hierarchy, the mandates of the city's
22 zero waste law and other mandatory, statutory and
23 sensible objectives that have been set forth by the
24 City Council over the years.

25 Third, a word about the role the Council should
play to ensure that the final draft SWMP achieves its

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1 full potential. To accomplish that objectives, we
2 hope the Council will hold a substantive hearing on
3 the details of the DSNY Draft in early 2006. After
4 the 2026, after the members of the public and the
5 Council staff have had sufficient staff time to
6 review the draft. We believe that such a Council
7 hearing will illicit valuable suggestions for
8 sharpening and tightening the final product.
9

10 We hope that the Council will then be given
11 sufficient time to review these comments and
12 incorporate the best of them as amendments to the
13 final plan. That's exactly what the process that was
14 followed in 2006. We hope that there are elements of
15 the 2006 plan that still need to be enforced but we
16 know the Council has this authority and we believe it
17 should use it. I can't let the earlier composting
18 testimony stand without saying three quick things.
19 There are three major problems with what we've heard
20 today. One, a weakened and odd approach to
21 enforcement. Two, the fade to advance sufficient in
22 city composting capacity. And three, a wrong headed
23 and deceptive practice of organic code digestion with
24 sewage slush. We'll talk about those more in our
25 written comments.

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3 And finally, we hope that you Council Member
4 Abreu, will continue as Chair to play a vital role in
5 the development of the final SWMP but regardless of
6 whether you do or not, we want to thank you for your
7 leadership on SWMP, on community composting,
8 commercial waste zones, litter clean up, waste equity
9 and containerization. You've done a great job and we
10 hope it continues. Thank you for your attention.

11 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: You're too kind Eric. We
12 don't know what the future holds but certainly, I've
13 had an incredible time working with all of you and
14 we've done some good things and whether it's me or
15 someone else, we'll see. We want to keep on the
16 important work that you guys are carrying out.
17 Rhonda.

18 RHONDA KEYSER: Uhm, hello Chair Abreu. Thank
19 you so much for this opportunity to testify today.
20 Uhm, I, of course you know I'm Rhonda Keyser and I'm
21 here today speaking on behalf of cafeteria culture as
22 program and policy director and just to remind
23 everybody, we are an environmental education
24 organization and our students become climate leaders
25 in their own school cafeterias by taking action there
and they've sparked systemwide change that scales

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1 quickly across New York City, the largest school
2 district in the country and to other districts, uhm
3 school districts. So, we help to catalyze - we
4 helped in the past to catalyze the elimination of
5 Styrofoam trays in schools and also we started
6 monthly plastic free lunch day, which because of
7 their students work around plastic free lunch day,
8 school lunch service on regular days have reduced
9 from 5.7 pieces per student to 1.8 pieces per student
10 in just two years of plastic free lunch day, so it's
11 really changing procurement and it's changing daily
12 practices.
13

14 So, that's the kind of scaling that we like to do
15 and now we're scaling, piloting systemic food waste
16 reduction. We've uhm, in five pilots, we've reduced
17 overall food waste by 50 percent but increased
18 student consumption by 15 to 46 percent. Uhm, just
19 by allowing students to choose what they want to eat
20 within the USDA guidelines. These numbers show that
21 it's not about scarcity or austerity, it's about
22 agency. Uhm, and uhm so as we looked at food waste,
23 our students mapped the journey of trash and also the
24 journey of the brown bin that was going to co-
25 digestion. And after considering the truck traffic

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1 and other environmental harms for each of these waste
2 streams, our students wanted to disrupt these systems
3 and so they now, our community composting one day a
4 week in their cafeterias by taking their food scraps
5 to compost powers polo grounds site and it's about 50
6 to 100 pounds a week. So, we're measuring that now.

7
8 We walk that over Tamere(SP?) is here, our new
9 environmental justice fellow, thanks to NYSERDA and
10 uh he walks it over and our students participate in
11 breaking down the food scraps in different phases of
12 the process. And we're noticing a reduction in
13 contamination of organic stream on other days in the
14 cafeteria as students have gained more agency in
15 their food scraps processing.

16 So, we hope to continue piloting local composting
17 for schools in other parts of the city to once again
18 scale this waste reduction and the harms of
19 processing organic waste and we urge the Council to
20 pass, Councilwoman Nurse's Intro. 696. That
21 prioritizes composting over co-digestion and we hope
22 that DSNY will consider community composting as a
23 viable option and not just a little boutique
24 community effort but an actual way to process food
25 waste.

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3 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Well, thank you all for your
4 testimony. It is my hope and expectation that there
5 will be more public hearings like this so that we can
6 keep you know raising the alarm on this issue. And
7 to Eric's point to, right the non-committal language
8 that we're seeing, you know may versus do, may versus
9 shall. As an attorney, I'll tell you those are big
10 differences and may as permissive and shallow
11 requires right? So, we need more shallow language
12 for the things that we do need and so, appreciate
13 this panel for testifying. Whatever those gaps are
14 that we want to see you know filled in this plan does
15 make it a big priority; I keep making it a big
16 priority. When you submit your testimony, please let
17 us know. We're going to read it. We believe very
18 much in the Transformed Owned Trash Coalition, so
19 thank you very much.

20 On the next panel, we have Gustavo, Dr. Samantha
21 McBride, Lacey Tauber, and Justin Green. Dr.
22 McBride, I saw you nodding your head or in
23 disappointment the whole time. Looking forward to
24 hearing about it?

25 Alright, we'll start off on this side.

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3 GUSTAVO ALCOCER: Thank you so much. Good
4 afternoon and I just before I wanted to start by
5 saying thank you for the questions that you've been
6 asking because I think that it's been reflecting a
7 lot of what I am here to also highlight, so I wanted
8 to just show appreciation for that first.

9 Good afternoon. My name is Gustavo Alcocer and I
10 am here on behalf of the Ironbound Community
11 Corporation. This is a community based nonprofit,
12 based in Newark New Jersey with more than 50 years of
13 environmental justice leadership.

14 Ironbound Community Corporation strongly urges
15 the Solid Waste Management Plan to commit the New
16 York City Department of Sanitation to true waste
17 diversion. New Yorkers need and deserve a waste
18 system that prioritizes recycling, composting,
19 organics, separation and waste prevention.

20 At the same time, DSNY must move away from
21 contracting within cinerators outside New York City
22 especially We World in Newark Ironbound Community.
23 Export New York City trash to environmental justice
24 neighborhoods is not a solution, it's an injustice.

25 I'm going to talk briefly about the Ironbound,
which is already one of the most over polluted

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3 communities in New Jersey. Every day, our residents
4 breath the air shaped by the communitive impacts of
5 the east coast largest waste water treatment plant,
6 hazardous waste facilities, heavy industry, airports,
7 port operations, diesel truck traffic, and more than
8 100 bound field sites. And at the center of this
9 pollution, burden sits at We World Essex, New
10 Jersey's largest garbage incinerator [INAUDIBLE
11 02:13:37] peoples homes.

12 This specific incinerator is one of the highest
13 of mid air of toxic pollutants in the entire state
14 and has logged over 800 air permit violations since
15 2005, including burning and authorized medical waste
16 that send pink and purple smoke into our
17 neighborhood.

18 When this incinerator burns trash and this
19 include Manhattan's trash, toxic chemicals like
20 dioxins are released into the air our families
21 breath. Manhattan sends 100 percent of its refuse to
22 incineration and 66 percent of that goes through We
23 World Essex. This displacement of bad managed waste
24 to the incinerator located in the Ironbound must
25 stop. That is environmental injustice and
environmental waysism. DSNY's current contract

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1 guarantees more than half a million tons of waste a
2 year to this facility through 2032. That number must
3 go down not up and the city must plan to phase out
4 and end, not renew this contract in 2033. We demand
5 a clear plan to do this and for it to be communicated
6 to effected communities.
7

8 New York City has an enormous potential for waste
9 diversion, the recycling captured rate is under 20
10 percent. Curbside composting participation remains
11 low, even though it is already collected on the
12 cycling base. Enforcement of existing law is
13 minimum. These mean more waste and being burned in
14 the air Ironbound. Waste that could be composted,
15 recycled, or prevented entirely. ICCR just ask DSNY
16 to follow the leadership of the transformed owned
17 trash in New York City coalition and adopt the people
18 SWMP, including stronger investments, widespread
19 education, better enforcement, expanded diversion
20 programs, and a clear commitment to phasing down
21 incineration and landfilling.

22 And when I say clear commitment, the Ironbound
23 demands the DSNY to show us their plan to do this.
24 The SWMP 2026 is an opportunity for the DSNY to do
25 better. To reduce waste that it's sourced to rely

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1 less incineration. To rely less on incineration and
2 to ensure that no community on either side of the
3 Hudson River is forced to sacrifice itself for New
4 York City's waste system. Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you. Dr. Samantha
6 McBride.

7 DR. SAMANTHA MCBRIDE: Samantha McBride from
8 Baruch College. The Draft SWMP succeeds as a system
9 description and it is to the credit of Deputy
10 Commissioner McDonnell and Director Kitchener that it
11 outlines what our waste management system looks like
12 probably better than any plan before it. But the
13 plan does not address at all how diversion is going
14 to be improved specifically in the area of recycling
15 and even more important in organics.

16 Residing a litany of numbers of doors knocked,
17 mailers sent or meetings held is a 30 year old
18 talking point of the Department of Sanitation. What
19 is needed is an actual plan, a plan that looks at the
20 number of field outreach staff that are needed. The
21 specific plans to go into specific community
22 districts and neighborhoods and conduct building
23 level outreach that is going to address the
24 challenges of multiunit buildings. To have metrics
25

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3 that can be tracked over time in terms of funding, as
4 you were talking about, as well as staffing capacity.
5 What I have heard today is more of the same. More of
6 ad hoc, vague, kind of statements about outreach and
7 education.

8 The stakes could not be higher. Specifically for
9 organics and recycling. We are sending 1.8 million
10 tons of otherwise valuable material to landfilling or
11 disposal. We're paying to do that. We're paying to
12 trash materials that we are also paying a lot of
13 money to collect and process.

14 The low hanging fruit in New York City is
15 recycling and organics and in no way are organics
16 participation rates currently breaking records or
17 soaring and as soon as the reduced utility dataset
18 for this month is complete, I will be able to
19 evaluate these claims of weekly record breaking and
20 put them in accurate context.

21 This kind of braggadocio in place of actual
22 planning and statistics tracking is not helping
23 anyone and you do have the capacity within sanitation
24 already. You have highly skilled analytic staff, as
25 well as Director Kitchener and Deputy Commissioner
McDonnell are people that actually care about

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3 sustainability. They care about communities. They
4 care about social justice. They are operating I
5 think, they haven't said anything to me, within
6 constraints from others in the department that are
7 preventing real progressive ideas from actually being
8 implemented. I'll stop there.

9 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: If you would like to add on
10 another 30 second you can.

11 DR. SAMANTHA MCBRIDE: Uhm, well just one
12 factoid. Uhm, last year, we sent 275,000 tons of
13 paper, one of the highest valued commodities to
14 landfills or incinerators. Despite having long term
15 contracts and weekly collection routes and that paper
16 by the departments own numbers, valued over \$3
17 million in market value. Now that's, I know that
18 that's chump change for the Department of Sanitation,
19 but that amount of chump change was cut for community
20 composting. And that's just one example of how
21 fiscally wasteful, under participation in recycling
22 and organics is in addition to not being sustainable
23 and leading to the problems that my colleague has
24 talked about among others.

25 LACEY TAUBER: Alright hi, my name is Lacey
Tauber, I'm the Legislative Director for Brooklyn

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1
2 Borough President Antonio Reynoso, former Chair of
3 this Committee and I think the best use of time for
4 me right now is just to go through; I've submitted
5 like as a draft of what we want to submit to
6 Sanitation but you know we want to hear more from
7 folks. And I want to thank the Council and the SWABS
8 for stepping up where sanitation has failed to make
9 this space for us to hear each other's comments and
10 you know talk this through because yeah, we echo your
11 calls for way more engagement but in the meantime,
12 just want to kind of run through our outline and what
13 we're including. And invite folks to reach out if
14 there's things that you think we missed.

15 The first two things are waste equity and
16 commercial waste zones. These are legacy programs
17 for the borough president and he's obviously
18 extremely invested in their continued success. But
19 as was pointed out, you know in terms of waste
20 equity, we really need to be sending the commercial
21 waste to the Marine Transfer Stations. We have some
22 concerns about the waste equity impacts of sending a
23 lot of our organics to be processed at New Town Creek
24 in terms of the amount of trucks it's putting on the
25 road in Community District 1 in Brooklyn. We have a

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3 number of other concerns about that that we outlined
4 in the report earlier this year making the case for
5 passing Intro. 696 that we will share as an addendum
6 to our comments and uh in terms of commercial waste
7 zones, really wanting to see it rolled out more
8 quickly as has been mentioned many times today.

9 And also encouraging the new administration to
10 look at their - the way that the waiting happened in
11 the choices that they made and make sure that you
12 know the folks are good actors and they're being held
13 accountable through this process.

14 The last part is really all about waste diversion
15 and really trying to get to the goal of zero waste to
16 landfills by 2030 that was outlined by the previous
17 administration enforcement of the Corp act,
18 containerization that incorporates both organics and
19 recycling. NYCHA, bringing meaningful opportunities
20 for organics diversion to NYCHA, uhm, reduction of
21 plastics. Building what they've done in cafeteria
22 culture, C&D waste, actually put in an idea in here I
23 got from you Justin about possibly requiring zero
24 waste plans for building. Uhm and then uh finally of
25 course supporting community compost. So, that's all
I've got in here for now. If there's other stuff

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3 that you all want to see, please reach out and we'll
4 continue talking. Thanks so much.

5 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you Lacey. Justin.

6 JUSTIN GREEN: Thanks for having me Chair Abreu.
7 Things have been great working with you and City
8 Council. You guys have really you know made so much
9 progress and helped push DSNY on sustainability
10 issues over the last over a year, so really
11 appreciate working with you.

12 I wanted to second so much of what's been said by
13 the advocates. Ban on incineration, extending the
14 input on the Solid Waste Management plan, pushing the
15 Solid Waste Management plan to actually commit to the
16 highest sustainability practices, more EPR, which you
17 brought up in your questions and C&D waste. Like a
18 focus on C&D waste.

19 Uhm, the topic I want to talk about and we'll put
20 more in in our testimony but is particularly what we
21 are doing with the organic waste that we're
22 collecting, the curbside composting.

23 As you know, most of it is going to co-digestion,
24 which is problematic. There are a lot of concerns
25 with the biosolid application - land application of
26 biosolids from the co-digestion and if we're not land

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1 applying it, the climate accounting sort of tips back
2 towards composting. You know and so this is what I
3 think part of the climate accounting uhm, efforts is
4 to push the co-digestion over composting by doing
5 land application but land application has a number of
6 concerns. [INAUDIBLE 02:24:49], high microplastics,
7 high in hundreds of other chemicals have been poured
8 down drains around the city and flush into the sewer.
9 So, we want to ideally continue what New York City
10 has been a leader on which is local composting, Fresh
11 Kills, DSNY is doing an amazing job at Fresh Kills
12 with composting in Staten Island. All the community
13 composting groups that have been out there modeling
14 hyperlocal community based composting. Our sites
15 that we're about to open in Gowanus, which you asked
16 about. Uhm, midscale site, we're opening up a site
17 in Central Park. We'd like to have you come out and
18 look at for helping the park compost their
19 landscaping waste and so kind of using that approach.
20 I know the SWABS been working on and you guys have
21 been working on a plan for local composting in which
22 we would really like to see the Solid Waste
23 Management plan focus on that.
24
25

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3 Certainly, over incineration but co-digestion is
4 not the best use of our food scraps and something we
5 should really look at. So, appreciate that thank
6 you.

7 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: How's the planning going for
8 the Gowanus site?

9 JUSTIN GREEN: So, it's been a - it's a
10 complicated construction project, so it's taking a
11 while for it to happen, some tariff interference to
12 maybe on steel but we're almost ready to open up
13 again, which is exciting.

14 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Looking forward to that.

15 JUSTIN GREEN: Yeah, we'll have you out too.

16 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you.

17 JUSTIN GREEN: Great and Central Park; I want to
18 get you out to see that.

19 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: I would love to visit Central
20 Park; the Central Park work too. You got it. Thank
21 you guys. Next panel, Matthew, Danielle, Mary Ellen,
22 and Susan.

23 MATTHEW CIVELLO: This is on right? Yeah, okay.
24 I'm Matthew Civello, Chair of the Manhattan Solid
25 Waste Advisory Board and I'd like to thank you Chair

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1 Abreu for holding this meeting today and giving this
2 opportunity to speak.

3
4 Uhm, now that the SWABS have time to review the
5 Draft 2006 Solid Waste Management plan, we believe
6 that the gaps we have identified cannot be adequately
7 addressed by the middle of January of 2026.

8 DANIELLE: After reviewing past and current
9 SWMPS, waste characterization studies, and decades of
10 related laws and plans, our preliminary assessment is
11 that the draft lacks the continuity and historical
12 context needed to demonstrate alignment with City
13 Council laws or with prior efforts to increase
14 capture and diversion.

15 MARY ELLEN SULLIVAN: Hello, I'm Mary Ellen
16 Sullivan and despite nearly 35 years of work, the
17 city has not meaningfully improved recycling
18 outcomes. Research shows that roughly two-thirds of
19 New York City's waste stream is recyclable or
20 compostable through curbside programs that already
21 exist citywide. Yet today, we're capturing only
22 about half of potential recyclables and just seven
23 percent of organics.

24 As a result, more than 1.6 million tons of
25 valuable material are still sent each year to

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3 landfill and incinerators despite weekly collection,
4 processing contracts, and decades stated policy
5 commitments.

6 At the same time, most of the strategies proposed
7 to reach the SWMP's 30.5 percent diversion rate by
8 2036, such as textiles, reuse and repair programs,
9 organic pilots and community composting are not new.
10 Many date back to the 1980's and 1990's and only a
11 small number of these laws enacted to support
12 diversion have shown measurable results.

13 DSNY itself acknowledges its limited capacity to
14 enforce many of these requirements.

15 DIOR ST. HILLAIRE: Good morning Chair. My name
16 is Dior St. Hillaire and I Chair the Bronx Solid
17 Waste Advisory Board. So, our review also makes it
18 clear that DSNY is not structured to drive
19 sustainability. It strengths by an operations
20 collection rooting personal management and
21 enforcement, which are critical for implementation
22 but not for a system transformation.

23 I just want to make it very clear that a lot of
24 times as you've seen Justin kind of came into the
25 room, the Bronx is also left out of the conversation

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1 when we're talking about these diversion numbers and
2 when we're talking about equity.

3
4 So, I think it's important that when we're
5 talking about a plan, we're actually we have to
6 remind them to include the environmental justice at
7 the end of the slide when they gave it to us. It is
8 important to understand that we have to be working
9 directly with the organizations that are affected by
10 these issues. There in the clear plan that says
11 that, so I just want to emphasize that as we are
12 including spaces for our constituents to weigh in on
13 this plan, that we actually weigh that contribution
14 and know that we have to support a lot of the folks
15 that are affected by it.

16 SUSAN LATHAM: And hi, Susan Latham. I'm the
17 Chair of the Queens Solid Waste Advisory Board. As
18 part of our review, the SWABS hosted public sessions
19 and hearings to hear directly from communities
20 disproportionately affected by New York City's waste
21 exports. We heard compelling testimony about the
22 economic, environmental and health impacts borne by
23 communities referred to in the draft simply as
24 accessible capacity.

25

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3 New Yorkers deserve a plan that makes clear that
4 most trash is unnecessary, that practical
5 alternatives exist, and that real progress is
6 achievable. For these reasons, the SWABS recommend
7 that at least six additional months are needed to
8 adequately assess and respond to this plan.

9 We thank you for the opportunity to testify and
10 look forward to providing further public comment in
11 2026.

12 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you. We will next have
13 Audrey Jenkins to testify.

14 AUDREY JENKINS: Good morning. Thank you for
15 having me this morning. My name is Audrey Jenkins;
16 I'm a doctoral candidate at the new school. We're a
17 research public empowerment, an urban social
18 ecological policy, and I'm currently focused on
19 organics management in New York City.

20 I'm testifying today to highlight how valuable
21 the Solid Waste Management plan is for addressing
22 inequities that are growing in our city.

23 Although I'm not here representing my employer,
24 I'm currently a research associate at the Center for
25 New York City Affairs, where our most recent economic
and fiscal findings highlight that New York City

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1 metro area has been most racially inequitable economy
2 among the top metro city areas in the country.
3

4 We have the largest gap between White and Black
5 unemployment for example with Black workers
6 experiencing 8.6 unemployment rate as of this current
7 quarter.

8 That rate has increased dramatically along with
9 other cities. We've seen a dramatic increase over
10 the past year with federal defunding and economic
11 uncertainties. Designing a waste system that centers
12 equity is critical. This matters both for the
13 distribution of waste impacts and recycling
14 opportunities but is also important in the
15 distribution of investments.

16 The Institute for Local Self-Reliance has found
17 that per 10,000 tons of organic materials, community
18 composting generates 6.2 jobs compared to only one or
19 two jobs in industrial or organic processing. We
20 know from decades of practice here in New York City
21 that these community composting jobs are quality and
22 impactful jobs. Community composters are community
23 builders, so they are never just collecting and
24 processing and distributing organics, they are also
25 teachers, social connectors, innovators,

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3 environmental stewards, often also directly involved
4 in urban agriculture and local food system
5 sovereignty and resilience and highly effective
6 promoters of organic waste separation and
7 participation.

8 Additionally, community composting provides a
9 rich set of professional, technical and social skills
10 building that are particularly accessible to youth
11 workers as they start to enter our workforce. A
12 population that is facing the highest rate of
13 unemployment currently at 11.4 percent.

14 Hyper local and publicly funded community
15 composting in short is an incredibly simple way to
16 help address multiple complex city problems from
17 social isolation to environmental stewardship, while
18 also offering an opportunity to invest directly in
19 our neighborhoods in the form of livable jobs.

20 The Solid Waste Management Plan currently
21 highlights the layered economic potentials for
22 textile and other resource recovery streams but the
23 same should be included for organics. But more
24 critically, the Management Plan should center
25 economic equity.

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3 Uhm, the plan currently highlights inequities and
4 waste and pollution exposure and the importance of
5 meeting the requirements of the waste equity law.

6 The plan should ensure that neighborhoods with
7 particularly high volatility and sensitivity to
8 political and economic conditions, historically Black
9 and Latinx communities in New York are able to retain
10 resources like organic materials in their
11 neighborhoods and receive investments for managing
12 those resources, for the many economic, social, and
13 ecological benefits that they offer.

14 The city administration currently spends \$215
15 million on exporting of units and \$21 million on
16 organic separation and processing. The City Council,
17 thankfully, has currently invested a little over
18 \$6.25 million for community composting.

19 What is needed is a serious increase in community
20 based organics management. Because funding has not
21 been intentionally allocated for equity in the most
22 economically impacted communities. The Solid Waste
23 Management Plan is an opportunity to take a strong
24 stance in favor of making organics and other waste
25 stream investments equitable by maximizing the use of
these raw materials for local community use including

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1 ensuring that land access for processing and good
2 jobs are distributed explicitly in terms of economic
3 equity. And with an intentional effort to promote
4 the multi-impact outcomes of community based
5 management. Thank you so much.

6
7 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you so much for your
8 testimony. Alright, I believe we have some folks
9 online ready to testify. Okay, give us one second,
10 we're moving on to Zoom testimony shortly.

11 Mary Arnold, are you ready to testify? Are you
12 ready to begin?

13 MARY ARNOLD: Yes, I am sir.

14 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Alright, please proceed.

15 MARY ARNOLD: Thank you. Thank you Chair Abreu
16 for this opportunity to testify. I'm a Co-Founder
17 and Board member of Civic United for Railroad
18 Environmental Solutions, which was founded in Queens
19 in 2009 to advocate for modernization of freight rail
20 in the MTA's right of way. [INAUDIBLE 02:37:39] of
21 DSNY Bureau of Long Term Exports set up the city's
22 waste by rail contracts. This new industry has grown
23 exponentially and attracted to international
24 investors, notably McQuerry(SP?).

25

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3 Today's city and private haulers waste by rail
4 tonnage comprises more than one-third of all rail
5 freight traffic on Long Island. The 2026 Draft SWMP
6 in this morning's testimony brag about DSNY's waste
7 by rail export or the actual impacts on residents as
8 a result of using rail.

9 First of all, changing export transport modes
10 from truck to rail doesn't do anything to reduce the
11 tonnage or toxicity of waste exported or adverse
12 impacts on residents in communities where waste is
13 hauled, processed, incinerated and landfilled. As
14 noted by speakers today, the 2026 Draft SWMP's vague
15 language does not set forth plans to mitigate these
16 problems.

17 Second, while waste by rail does eliminate trucks
18 that export waste from the city, waste is always
19 brought to waste by rail transfer station by trucks.
20 So, in every place where there is a waste by rail
21 transfer station or diesel trucks coming and going.
22 Also, noisy, high polluting 1970's locomotives are
23 used to haul waste by rail.

24 In addition, even when rail is used, the last
25 mile also can be by truck, such as the We World
incinerator in Chester Pennsylvania. Other

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3 communities burdens include rail cars hauling cans of
4 municipal solid waste that can stink up neighborhoods
5 and attract vectors. Waste characterization study
6 show that one third of this could be eliminated.
7 It's organics. Rail cars without solid covers on top
8 and with drains on the bottoms to the rail cars are
9 used to haul crushed construction demolition debris
10 that New York State assumes contains toxics, such as
11 asbestos, pesticides, volatile and semi-volatile
12 organic compounds and heavy metals. There is no
13 reason why the public should continue to be harmed by
14 these uncovered rail cars.

15 Since the New York State Law went into effect in
16 January 2024, that requires solid covers on rail cars
17 of C&D. However, the industry has decided to fight
18 about state law mandating covers in federal court.
19 The southern district of New York and Judge Ronnie
20 Abram says that the trial will take place in 2026.

21 The plan needs to be rewritten to include
22 specific plans and a timetable for increasing the
23 capture and diversion of organics as well as specific
24 plans to accurately track C&D and recycle it. For
25 example, by diverting gypsum wallboard construction
debris from waste by rail to landfill.

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3 Thank you so much again. There's just - this is
4 a huge plan and there just hasn't been enough time or
5 engagement allowed. We just are so grateful to the
6 City Council and please continue this dialogue in the
7 coming months. Thank you very much.

8 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you for your testimony.
9 We're now moving on to Anna Sacks.

10 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

11 ANNA SACKS: Hi everyone. Thank you for having
12 me. I would like to echo that I think we need more
13 time for this, specifically to get more people
14 commenting, more people aware that this is even
15 happening. This is going to last for a long time and
16 so, I think it deserves a lot of attention from the
17 public and a lot of public input.

18 Regarding the waste prevention and reuse program,
19 I feel like they get lost within DSNY. It's not core
20 to their mission and it feels like there's not enough
21 people devoted to these issues about prevention and
22 reuse, which is the top of the hierarchy. They don't
23 have enough resources, not enough money and also, it
24 doesn't feel like they have enough agency to make the
25 changes that they know are necessary to actually take
a meaningful bite out of the waste, our waste issues.

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3 And then finally, they're subject to budget cuts
4 a lot. Again, because I feel like this is not core
5 to DSNY's mission. So, I would like to propose that
6 the waste prevention and reuse gets carved out from
7 DSNY. DSNY just focuses on operations and it comes
8 its own office or department of circularity. So,
9 that it would be people devoted, people with agency,
10 people with budget, and not subject to future budget
11 cuts.

12 So, this could work across schools, corporations,
13 residents, and within the government and it would
14 also shift the language from may or study to actually
15 doing the things that are necessary. So, really I
16 would like to see its own office, its own department
17 and not within DSNY. Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you Anna. Clare
19 Mifflin, you're up next.

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

21 CLARE MIFLIN: Hi, thank you Council Member and
22 for everything you've done as Chair.

23 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Nice to see you Clare, thank
24 you.

25 CLARE MIFLIN: I just want to point out that
building an infrastructure and the collections

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1 methods are critical for diversion and you need to
2 incentivize the right set up in buildings, like
3 currently, it's difficult for your underpaid porter
4 to do the right thing. He has to start - he or she
5 has to store trash just a couple of days but
6 recycling an organic waste all week and in a large
7 building, storing that organic waste all week is
8 really tough.

9
10 There's no financial incentive for building
11 owners. It's not like Local Law 97 and trash only
12 containerization just continues that dis-
13 incentivization. Many residents in small buildings,
14 they don't have access to recycling organic bins,
15 maybe there's a trash bin on the sidewalk. So, you
16 could fix that through shared on street containers
17 for trash recycling and organics and getting bins off
18 the sidewalks.

19 I really think what needs to be done is kind of
20 piloting solutions that really work for buildings in
21 a neighborhood and like Samantha said, go in with a
22 lot of engagement, pilot better, incentives, and
23 infrastructure and see if you can get like way above
24 the 50 percent capture rates. Can you get - how high

25

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1 can you get? And then roll it out further. I think
2 there needs to be this kind of systemwide approach.
3

4 I also would like to see financial support for
5 parks and NYCHA who have a lot of yard waste to work
6 with community composters to compost onsite and then
7 use it to improve stormwater management and talk with
8 DEP about how it can be part of stormwater goals.

9 I'd like to see baselined and increased support
10 for community composting within DSNY's budget, even
11 though it's great you've been doing it, it shouldn't
12 be something that has to be rethought every year.

13 I'd like to see for food scraps, then target
14 large generators first like, when McDonalds or Hunts
15 Point Produce Market don't separate food scraps,
16 should we be fining a little mom and pop for not
17 doing it? Let's make the big generators do it first.

18 Commercial waste zoning has reverse incentives.
19 From the whole point of view, they're going to charge
20 less for compostables but it costs them more, so they
21 don't help the businesses separate. That needs to be
22 fixed, and also the businesses have to have a
23 container. They often have it inside, so they have a
24 trash bin on the street. They don't want to have an
25 organics bin as well.

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3 So, that disincentivizes them. So, commercial
4 waste zone is not surprising that it didn't increase
5 the diversion rates in Queens because that's
6 disincentivizing, happening. I think waste
7 prevention and reuse is great but there needs to be a
8 lot of collaboration. What if libraries could share
9 way more than books? Collaboration with DOE.
10 There's got to be a lot of collaboration with other
11 entities in the city. Uhm, C&D waste as well, I
12 think you know they need to have more certified C&D
13 facilities and a requirement for them to be used for
14 city projects.

15 Those are facilities that actually -

16 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Thank you. Time expired.

17 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Clare, you can finish. You
18 can add if you need to Clare.

19 CLARE MIFLIN: That's all and then the data, I
20 fully support Samantha's. We need data. We need to
21 have proper evaluation of the pilots, like the
22 containerization pilot beyond reduced 311 rat data.
23 I haven't heard any real evaluation. If we're going
24 to do pilots, let's evaluate them fully. Thank you.

25 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you Clare, you raised
great ideas. Next, we have Christopher Leon Johnson.

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1 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

2
3 CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: Yeah, yeah hello. My
4 name is Christopher Leon Johnson. Thank you Shaun
5 for having this hearing. Like bro, like don't worry
6 about anything man, like you're going to be still the
7 Chair and the Committee next year and you're voting
8 for Julie Menin to be Speaker. Like, she's not
9 removing you as Chair, so there's nothing to worry
10 about you being removed as Chair for the next term.

11 But I want to make this clear that the City
12 Council needs to make it where that uh - I know that
13 the City Council allocated \$5 million into the BID's
14 for the containerization program because uhm, I think
15 they were scared about a lawsuit or them losing votes
16 but I hope in 2026 or the FY27 budget that there's
17 people and going on where that the City Council
18 allocates more money and millions of dollars into the
19 containerization program. Because like I said many
20 times and I'll say it till I die, that the
21 containerization program is an unfair program and why
22 that you had to have like one - you have to buy one
23 container. I think that the city - I know you can't
24 change what's going on with the containerization
25 where you - but the BID's, the BID's need a lot of

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1 help but I hope that very soon, the people that make
2 low income get the same amount of help too when it
3 comes to the program and uh with the City Council. I
4 think the City Council needs to make it where that if
5 a person makes a certain amount of money per year,
6 they will get a free bin with the help of the City
7 Council. They get vouchers and stuff like that
8 through the City Council. And uh, so, that's all I
9 got to say. I got to go to events; I got to go to
10 train but thank you Shaun. You did a great job as
11 the Chair for the past four years and I think you'll
12 be able to keep your term; you'll get another term.
13 So, take care brother, enjoy.

15 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you Mr. Leon Johnson.
16 I know you're sometimes a lot busier than all of us.
17 You're always everywhere. Take care.

18 CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: Thank you. Thank you
19 brother. Thank you, thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: You got it. So, now we're
21 going to just wait for the kids to testify. They're
22 ready, alright. These are the students of Cafeteria
23 Culture?

24 STUDENTS: Yes.

25

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3 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Okay, look at this. Well,
4 I'm excited for you guys. Let's see, how many do we
5 have? We have one, two, three, four, five, six,
6 seven, eight, nine, ten. Give them 30 minutes sir.
7 Uhm, you may start whenever you're ready okay. We're
8 all hearing you and paying attention.

9 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You guys may begin.

10 PSMS46 HARLEM 5TH GRADERS: Good morning. Thank
11 you Chair Abreu and the Sanitation Committee for
12 giving us this chance to speak today. We are 5th
13 graders from PSMS46 in Harlem.

14 The ten year Solid Waste Management Plan is very
15 important to us, because in ten years we'll be
16 adults. We'll be responsible for the problems that
17 are being created now. We live in an Environmental
18 Justice Zone in Harlem with a lot of truck traffic.
19 Garbage trucks come through our neighborhood on their
20 way to incinerators and landfills.

21 Cafeteria Culture taught us that there is no
22 "away" for our trash. We learned that when our trash
23 leaves our homes or our school, it goes to a nearby
24 waste transfer station, then to Staten Island, then
25 to Newark, New Jersey, and then finally, it goes on a
train to Niagara or Delaware to be burned in an

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1 incinerator. The leftover ashes go to a final
2 landfill somewhere else. All of that transportation
3 creates pollution and the incinerators create
4 pollution, and the landfills make greenhouse gases.
5

6 This hurts the planet and the people who live
7 nearby. One in four kids has asthma in Newark or New
8 Jersey because of the incinerator there. Kids just
9 like us get asthma for life because of something out
10 of their control. This cannot go for another ten
11 years. We have to disrupt this harmful system.

12 The other option we have is the brown bin, which
13 is better than trash bins, but there are still are
14 many trucks taking the food waste to a lot of places.
15 And we don't even have brown bins at NYCHA houses.
16 With Cafeteria Culture and Compost Power we take our
17 food waste out of this system and we compost it
18 locally at NYCHA Polo Grounds. It's less than one
19 block away and...NO TRUCKS!

20 Compost Power at Polo Grounds makes compost out
21 of our food scraps. And they hire our neighbors to
22 work there and we think everybody should be able to
23 compost their food scraps in their communities too.
24 The Solid Waste Management Plan needs to include
25 local composting across New York City to make healthy

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3 soil, to grow food, and cut down on all pollution for
4 all communities. Thank you for listening.

5 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Wow, let's give them a round
6 of applause.

7 [APPLAUSE]

8 Well listen, you guys should be very, very proud
9 of yourselves. You - are you ready to take my job?
10 You ready to be the next Council Member?

11 PSMS46 HARLEM 5TH GRADERS: Yes.

12 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: I think you guys are ready
13 and look, this is why we invest in Cafeteria Culture.
14 I remember when we're fighting to expand the
15 composting initiative, you know Eric Goldstein and
16 Anna Sacks approached us and said, "you know what
17 Cafeteria Culture. Let's put them as part of the
18 initiative." And we spent \$500,000 in making sure
19 that we're educating our young people and boy, I
20 think you know more about composting than I do at
21 this point.

22 And so, this is an example of why it's so
23 important that the city needs to keep investing in
24 our kids and I'm very proud of you all. I hope to
25 meet you all one day. I would love to visit your
class and so, we'll set that up with Rhonda, okay?

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1 Thank you everybody. Now, go back to class okay.

2 Take care.

3 PSMS46 HARLEM 5TH GRADERS: Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON ABREU: Thank you. Bye, bye. This
5 is by far my favorite hearing I've ever had just
6 seeing those kids. They really made me melt, thank
7 you. And with that, we have adjourned today's
8 hearing. Thank you all so much for coming.
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C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date January 7, 2026