

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING
JOINTLY WITH SUBCOMMITTEE ON
CAPITAL BUDGET

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HELD AT: Remote Hearing, Virtual Room 3

B E F O R E: Alicka Ampry-Samuel
Chairperson, Public Housing

Helen K. Rosenthal
Chairperson, Capital Budget

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Alicka Ampry-Samuel
Diana Ayala
Laurie A. Cumbo
Ruben Diaz, Sr.
Oswald Feliz
Vanessa L. Gibson
Mark Gjonaj
Carlos Menchaca
Kevin C. Riley
Rafael Salamanca, Jr.
Mark Treyger
Jimmy Van Bramer

Helen K. Rosenthal
Adrienne E. Adams

Selvena N. Brooks-Powers
Vanessa L. Gibson
Barry Grodenchik
Steven Matteo

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

Aixa Torres

Mary McGee

Karen Blondel

Ramona Ferreyra

Dana Elden

Marquis Jenkins

Steven Lovci
Executive Vice President
NYCHA

Annika Lescott
Executive Vice President of Finance and
Chief Financial Officer
NYCHA

Oliver Osterwind
Vice President for Project Management
NYCHA

Eva Trimble
Executive Vice President for Strategy and
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Brian Honan
Vice President of Intergovernmental
Relations
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Maria Forbes

Beverly MacFarlane

Kevin Lindahl

Joel Kupferman

Joshua Barnett

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1 COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING JOINTLY WITH
2 SUBCOMMITTEE ON CAPITAL BUDGET

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3 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Recording to the
4 computer has begun.

5 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Cloud recording under
6 way.

7 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Thank you. Good
8 afternoon and welcome to today's remote New York City
9 Council hearing for the Committee on Public Housing ,
10 join with the Subcommittee on Capital Budget. At
11 this time would all panelists please turn on their
12 video for verification purposes. And we ask to
13 minimize disruption to please place all electronic
14 devices to vibrate or silent mode. And if you would
15 like to submit testimony, please send via email to
16 testimony@council.nyc.gov. Thank you for your
17 cooperation. Chairs, we are ready to begin.

18 CHAIRPERSON ALICKA AMPRY-SAMUEL: [gavel]
19 Good afternoon and thank you all for attending
20 today's joint hearing of the Committee on Public
21 Housing and the Subcommittee on Capital Budget. I am
22 Council Member Alicka Ampry-Samuel and I am the chair
23 of the council's Committee on Public Housing. Today
24 the committees will be take a closer look at NYCHA's
25 capital spending with particular attention to how
26 NYCHA is spending city-allocated funds. I would like

3 to thank my colleague, Council Member Helen
4 Rosenthal, for cochairing this important hearing with
5 me. And I would also like to take the time to
6 acknowledge that we are joined today by Majority
7 Leader Laurie Cumbo, Minority Leader Matteo, Council
8 Member R. Diaz, Sr., Council Member Gjonaj, Council
9 Member Kevin Riley, Council Member Van Bramer,
10 Council Member Ayala, Council Member Feliz, Council
11 Member Adams, Council Member Brooks-Powers, and
12 Council Member Grodenchik. As I open this hearing I
13 reflect on the many times we have convened over the
14 past four years. I always remind my colleagues,
15 NYCHA residents, and NYCHA executive leadership that
16 the main goal is to improve and increase the level of
17 service delivered to the residents of New York City
18 Housing Authority, New York City's largest landlord.
19 Nearly one year ago on December 30, 2020, NYCHA
20 released its five-year capital plan, which provides
21 7.4 billion dollars in planned commitments to improve
22 NYCHA's infrastructure. The plan includes federal,
23 state, and city capital funding, the latter
24 accounting for about 40% of the total funding. A
25 large swatch of that 40% includes approximately 1.6
billion dollars, which is dedicated to addressing the

3 major issue areas outlined in the 2019 HUD agreement,
4 lead-based paint problems, remediating mold,
5 providing heat, repairing elevators, and eliminating
6 pests. The agreement notwithstanding, even where
7 notable progress has been made, major issues continue
8 to persist in the major pillar areas. Residents
9 continue to be plagued with elevators that have been
10 out of service for weeks on end, long-term gas
11 shutoffs, mold and mold-related sickness, extreme
12 cold in units, lack of groundskeeping, broken locks,
13 safety breaches, and more. Addressing the issues in
14 any meaningful way is costly. They require major,
15 major physical improvements and not just Band-Aids or
16 quick fix solutions. According to NYCHA's 2017
17 physical needs assessment, NYCHA estimates that its
18 projected capital costs are about 31.8 billion
19 dollars over a five-year period and an additional
20 45.2 billion over 20 years. Those are big figures,
21 and whenever issues with heat, mold, lead, elevators
22 and pests are raised with NYCHA the response is just
23 there's a lack of capital to really address all of
24 the problems. But we also don't have a clear
25 understanding of what is being done and what has been
completed. The HUD agreement requires the city to

3 provide funding on top of what NYCHA receives from
4 the federal government to address these issues. As
5 I've mentioned, NYCHA's current five-year plan
6 includes 1.6 billion city dollars with the HUD
7 agreement requiring the city to provide a total of
8 2.2 billion in incremental capital funding over 10
9 years. It may not be enough to address all of
10 NYCHA's capital needs, but it's a major funding
11 source that is available to NYCHA. Oddly, NYCHA's
12 capital commitment rate is low. In fiscal year 2021
13 NYCHA committed just 103.1 million of the 1.6 billion
14 dollars. So when we hear NYCHA say we don't have the
15 money, we don't have the money, what this council is
16 saying here is a significant sum of money, what are
17 you doing with it and why are you not spending it in
18 that certain way to address certain problems. That's
19 the critical question that we hope to hear an answer
20 to today. As always, the point of this hearing is to
21 have a meaningful conversation about capital
22 resources available to NYCHA, how NYCHA is using
23 those resources, and if not why not, and to think
24 about ways that those resources can be used most
25 efficiently to deliver the best possible service to
NYCHA residents. We know that NYCHA's aging housing

3 stock creates a complex dynamic as many buildings are
4 actively falling increasingly worse states of
5 disrepair and we know that the needs are so great
6 that they even overshadow the progress that's being
7 made. Today is one of the last hearings that I will
8 have as the chair of this committee, as we move
9 closer to December 31. And I would be remiss if I
10 didn't again suggest a friendly user capital tracking
11 tool with snapshots at any given point in time that
12 are, you know, that would be extremely important to
13 the residents and the public. I know where we were
14 four years ago and as we get a picture of where we
15 are today it would be ever helpful for my incoming
16 colleagues to be able to obtain this information of
17 where NYCHA is right now and its designations so that
18 everyone can have a better start come January. So
19 with that I will turn it over to my cochair, Council
20 Member Helen Rosenthal, for her opening remarks.

21 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Thank you so
22 much, Chair Ampry-Samuel. Ah, good afternoon. I'm
23 Council Member Helen Rosenthal, chair of the
24 Subcommittee on Capital Budget. Um, Council Member
25 and Chair, ah, Ampry-Samuel laid out the issues so
very well and I don't want to repeat too much. Um,

3 but I do want to reiterate that it's no secret that
4 NYCHA has a tremendous need for capital improves.
5 NYCHA's reports themselves demonstrate that need.
6 The need is billions upon billions of dollars and
7 with every five-year plan those dollar amounts needed
8 increase exponentially while NYCHA may not have at
9 its fingers the total amount of money that it needs,
10 it does have a significant amount of money and NYCHA
11 is not spending that money. Obviously when you don't
12 spend the money things only get worse and the state
13 of disrepair gets worse. So we have to wonder what's
14 going on here. At the last budget hearing Chair Russ
15 said that it's much easier to spend federal and state
16 dollars and therefore NYCHA spends a greater
17 percentage of their allocation of those dollars, but
18 that the city procurement process is just too
19 complicated and too difficult to be able to allow
20 them to spend any city dollars. , you know, the
21 spending rate for other agencies, capital spending
22 rate, while not at 100%, which is where we'd like to
23 see it, is at least at 60-61%. So DEP, DOT, they're,
24 they have the ability, their capital project team has
25 the ability to spend 61% of its city dollars, and I
assume that they are available to the NYCHA capital

3 team to let the NYCHA capital team. Um, you know, I
4 just want to end by saying that, um, as the chair
5 mentioned, NYCHA now has a federal monitor to require
6 NYCHA to spend money to fix certain issues, capital
7 issues. And in May 2021 the monitor signed off on a
8 NYCHA capital spending plan, which included detailed
9 reporting requirements. Remember this is a plan that
10 NYCHA presented to the monitor, so it was their idea,
11 and it articulated exact reporting requirements,
12 which would get, which would get at the transparency
13 and identify where there might be challenges that we
14 could help the NYCHA capital team overcome. The
15 first report was done on October 31 of this year.
16 And I've asked to see the report and have not heard
17 back. Maybe at this hearing NYCHA will present it.
18 But in looking at the website for the monitor I don't
19 see it up there. So I'm looking forward to this
20 hearing, looking forward to hearing about all the
21 good work that NYCHA is doing to expedite spending so
22 we can get at the hellacious, ah, situation that
23 we're in now, ah, in terms of deteriorating capital.
24 Thank you so much, Chair Ampry-Samuel.

25 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Thank you,
Chair Rosenthal. Um, as is customary for the Public

3 Housing Committee we will next hear from a panel of
4 residents themselves before turning to NYCHA and the
5 administration for their testimony. Um, so I will
6 now turn it over to Committee Counsel, Audrey Sun, to
7 go over some procedural items.

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thanks very much,
9 Chair. Um, my name is Audrey Sung. I'm counsel to
10 the City Council's Committee on Public Housing.
11 Before we begin, I want to remind everyone that you
12 will be on mute until you are called on to testify.
13 Please listen for your name to be called and when it
14 is your turn I will call your name and you will be
15 unmuted. We will now hear from an opening panel of
16 NYCHA residents, ah, followed by council member
17 questions, if any. In order to hear from everyone,
18 the clock will be set to two minutes. First we will
19 hear from Aixa Torres and then we will hear from,
20 followed by Mary McGee and followed then by Karen
21 Blondel. Ms. Torres?

22 AIXA TORRES: Good afternoon...

23 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time begins now.

24 AIXA TORRES: ...Chair Ampry-Samuel and
25 Chair Helen Rosenthal, and all the members, and my
colleagues, TA presidents that are on this call. Ah,

3 [inaudible] ah, the president and the president's
4 association [inaudible] but also a steering committee
5 member of Residents to Preserve Public Housing. One
6 of the biggest issues that we are finding is that the
7 964 regulations are not being followed. Had they
8 been followed, NYCHA would probably expect all their
9 money and then some that have been allocated, because
10 that would require that residents are listened to,
11 and I think that no one is, as one of my, ah, board
12 members is always saying, we're on the ground, we,
13 who better than us to assess what our needs are, what
14 needs to get done. And because we're not listened to
15 we get all this constant outsourcing that is
16 unconscionable at this point. Um, we are not
17 listened to most of the time and we are not part of
18 the process. 964 requires that we are part of the
19 process from conception when the thought is being
20 thought. Um, that, sign this contract and this is
21 what you're going to get. I know that the Sandy
22 project in my development has been a total disaster,
23 total, and that's because exactly what I'm saying has
24 happened, even though those were federal funds. On
25 the capital end for the city, they need to sit down
individually with every resident association board,

3 not president board, and speak to us about what are
4 your needs, this is how much money has been allocated
5 and how we do it. We also should be part of the
6 process in terms of who the contractor is and for
7 anyone in procurement I know that you can go with the
8 cheapest, right, that's you're [inaudible].

8 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

9 AIXA TORRES: Just give me one more and
10 I'll finish. However, if work a little bit harder
11 you can get the best and give us quality that we
12 deserve as citizens and as taxpayers. I thank you
13 for your time.

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Ah, we
15 will now hear from Mary McGee, followed by Karen
16 Blondel.

17 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time begins. Your
18 clock is ready.

19 MARY MCGEE: Hello. Um, my name is Mary
20 McGee. I'm a resident of Fulton Houses. I think
21 more needs to be done for our developments. There is
22 a deficit. Everybody knows that. NYCHA needs money.
23 They need more money. But they're not using the
24 money they have to fix issues that can be resolved
25 easily. We matter. The residents of NYCHA matter.

3 NYCHA is doing the [inaudible] program now, so I
4 don't understand why their deficit is still the
5 amount they're saying. It should be going down if
6 they're converting 66,000 units. So where's all this
7 money gonna go that they're saying they need? To the
8 existing developments? Elevators are constantly
9 breaking down. There's no heat, no hot water, but
10 the repairs aren't being done. New York City gives
11 NYCHA so much money, but it's stuck in limbo. But
12 who's paying the price? The residents. The
13 residents pay the price for that funding to be suck
14 in limbo. The residents are paying the price because
15 that red tape and the money can't be used. It takes
16 a few years. You know, everybody depends on Congress
17 to pass the housing, um, you know, funding. It's
18 not happening. Nobody cares about public housing and
19 we need to change that. Everybody deserves quality
20 of life. They need, um, respect, because I feel
21 NYCHA residents aren't respected. They need to be
22 heard. It's not everybody always complaining, oh, I
23 have this, I don't have that, I need this, but we're
24 paying our rent. We deserve that and more. So I'm
25 asking this board to please, please help NYCHA get
that funding out of that red tape and be able to use

3 it to, on those developments that really, really need
4 it. It's shameful that we're in...

5 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

6 MARY MCGEE: ...we're in heat season and
7 developments don't have heat. So, you know, I, I
8 thank you for your time, and we need to find a better
9 solution and help the residents that live in New York
10 City Housing Authority. Thank you very much.

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thanks very much. We
12 will now hear from Karen Blondel.

13 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time begins.

14 KAREN BLONDEL: Good morning. Um, first
15 I'd like to say congratulations to Alicka Ampry-
16 Samuel on becoming the next, you know, administrator
17 for [inaudible] region, um, and thank you for your
18 commitment to the public housing, ah, ah, committee
19 here at City Council. My name is Karen Blondel. I
20 founded the Public Housing Civic Association. It is
21 a 501(c)(3) whose mission is educate public housing
22 around climate change, around their indoor
23 environment, and around the economics involving
24 public housing that we don't get, um, as [inaudible]
25 as one of the resident council leaders in Manhattan
has just, um, testified to. The 964 rules are not

3 being followed and here we are at the last minute
4 being rushed through elections across the city by New
5 York City Housing Authority in respect to the
6 resident councils and the fact that we don't even
7 have bylaws, haven't seen the bylaws, and as we
8 question the nomination committee and the bylaws, ah,
9 we're not getting answers from New York City Housing
10 Authority or the resident engagement. I want to go
11 to the budget that Alicka was talking about. Um,
12 it's not only about being given the money, but
13 spending the money. We have residents who don't have
14 any jobs, especially after this pandemic. We need
15 all the hands on deck. We need to open the, the
16 labor force so that it's competitive with union and
17 nonunion with prevailing wage in order to spend this
18 mo. We're not spending the money because there's a
19 control on labor. We have all of our residents
20 throughout public housing, especially in Red Hook
21 where we have a half a billion dollar job going on
22 right outside my window and those residents do not
23 have access to those jobs and those jobs are not
24 covered by Section 3.

25 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

2 KAREN BLONDEL: Ah, these are things that
3 have to be corrected and, again, I'm Karen Blondel
4 with the Public Housing Civic Association and we're
5 here to make a change in public housing. Thank you.

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Great, thanks very
7 much. Ah, I'll now pass it back to you, Chair Ampry-
8 Samuel, before moving into new testimony from the
9 administration.

10 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: We have also
11 been joined by Council Member Menchaca. I'm not sure
12 if any other members are on, um, but that's what I
13 seen in front of my screen, so apologies if I did not
14 recognize you, but I will recognize you, um, at a
15 later opportunity. Um, and also, Audrey, I just want
16 to make sure that we were able to call on all of the
17 residents before we get started that wanted to speak.

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Sure. I'm checking
19 it, ah, participant panel now. If there are any
20 other NYCHA residents who are available to speak we
21 would love to hear from you at this time. Um, so,
22 yeah, just please use the Zoom raise hand function
23 and we'll call on you in it turn, beginning with
24 Ramona Ferreyra, ah, followed by Dana Elden, and then
25 Marquis Jenkins.

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3 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Thank you,
4 Audrey.

5 RAMONA FERREYRA: Ah, good afternoon.
6 Ah, thank you for having this hearing, which is, ah,
7 extremely, ah, timely. As the council member
8 mentioned in the beginning, I submitted written, um,
9 testimony, so I'm not going to read that. Instead, I
10 am going to highlight a couple points and begin, um,
11 by talking about the 6-year-old boy that passed away
12 in my development at Mitchell Houses, um, last week.
13 Aiden was six years old and was raised in public
14 housing. This fire which burned his father, um, half
15 of his body and killed Aiden through smoke inhalation
16 is something that we have been talking about a lot at
17 Mitchell Houses. Um, I am convinced that NYCHA's
18 inability to properly manage funding and to treat us
19 with dignity and honor our rights as tenants of
20 public housing is responsible for the death of Aiden.
21 And I don't say that because the fire happened that
22 night and they were trapped on the 14th floor. I say
23 it because over the last 15 years NYCHA has failed to
24 properly administer the funding, remove the lead, the
25 asbestos, the mold, the garbage, the rats, and the
roaches that all contributed to Aiden not having

3 fully developed lungs, which is what children in
4 public housing are growing up in every single day. I
5 also want to raise the point that everyone is
6 skirting, which is that public housing has been
7 privatizing itself under the excuse of having
8 obsolete buildings. In Aiden's building there are
9 four burnt-out apartments that have been in that
10 condition for more than six months. That's
11 inexcusable. And the only reason that these
12 apartments are being uncared for and not
13 rehabilitated is so that NYCHA under Greg Russ's
14 leadership, can make the argument that these
15 apartments should be condemned and therefore should
16 qualify for tenant protection vouchers.

16 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

17 RAMONA FERREYRA: At the same time, I'll
18 finish in one second. At the same time Congress
19 under the Build Back Better plan has had the audacity
20 of issuing 1 billion dollars in tenant protection
21 vouchers which would implement the blueprint proposal
22 here in New York City, ignoring what tenants have
23 been saying for the last 18 months. So what I would
24 like to ask the council is to think of the children
25 in public housing, to think of the broken promises

3 that NYCHA has made, and your responsibility as our
4 advocates when these things come to part. Thank you.

5 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. We'll
6 next hear from Dana Elden.

7 SERGEANT AT ARMS: The clock is ready.

8 DANA ELDEN: [inaudible] South Bronx. I,
9 too, am a member of an organization referred to as
10 Residents, ah, to Prevent Public Housing, ah, to
11 Preserve Public Housing. And what I wanted to speak
12 this afternoon with regard to the budget, the capital
13 budget of NYCHA, ah, which I recently found out that
14 monies that were allotted for capital projects was
15 being sat on by NYCHA when I need six new roofs. One
16 roof is so severely damaged that the contractor told
17 me that it felt like he was walking on brownies. Um,
18 and it's not that NYCHA doesn't know about it.
19 They've known about since the time of the damage of
20 the water tank bursting and damaging our roof and the
21 apartments below, where tenants still live in those
22 apartments and are subject to mold, ah, floors where
23 you walk on them and as you step down with your feet
24 waters come up to the tops. Ah, this situation has
25 received in funding and how it still sits in their

3 house when it was supposed to be used during the 2021
4 year is just unacceptable. So I speak to this
5 council to dig deeper and to make NYCHA accountable
6 for every dime that they have and make them use what
7 was allotted for the residents and their repairs.
8 Make them use it. Enough is enough with this we
9 don't have money and we don't have this and we gotta
10 find contractors. They've been haphazard in
11 everything that they've done for the residents in my
12 development and I'm tired of it now. So this is why
13 I'm here today and I thank you for the opportunity to
14 speak.

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Great, thank you very
16 much. And we will next hear from Marquis Jenkins.

17 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time is ready.

18 MARQUIS JENKINS: Good afternoon. Thank
19 you, Council Members Helen Rosenthal and Alicka
20 Ampry-Samuels for holding today's hearing on NYCHA's
21 capital spending for city funding. My name is
22 Marquis Jenkins and I am a NYCHA resident and
23 community organizer. Today I am speaking on behalf
24 of the Residents to Preserve Public Housing. We are
25 concerned with the inadequate amount of funding the
city provides NYCHA for capital operating expenses.

3 According to the city's finance report, the city
4 allocated 248 million to NYCHA in 2021, leaving NYCHA
5 with a predicted deficit of 25 million. NYCHA's
6 Blueprint for Change proposal aims to generate 40
7 billion in 10 years by converting units to Section 8
8 and borrowing money. If the federal, state, and city
9 government adequately funds NYCHA that will eliminate
10 NYCHA's argument for the need to shift to Section 8
11 funding and generating private debt. While the city
12 needs to significantly increase the amount of funding
13 it allocates to NYCHA, we recognize that, we
14 recognize the sad reality that NYCHA, NYCHA has a
15 track record of wasting and mismanaging funds. RPPH
16 urges the city to attach strong conditions onto any
17 and all funding they provide to NYCHA. NYCHA's
18 chairman, Gregory Russ, struggles to manage the funds
19 received for NYCHA's capital and operating expenses.
20 NYCHA's total capital budget was 3.2 million in
21 fiscal year 2020. It was budgeted to be 3.6 million
22 in fiscal year 2021. Of the 3.2 billion budgeted for
23 fiscal year 20 they only spent 1.2 billion, or 37.5%
24 of the amount that was allocated. Chairman Russ
25 continues to work bad contractors. Russ has done,
um, nothing to hold them accountable. I'll fast

3 forward to my closing. RPPH is asking the City
4 Council to allocate 2 billion dollars annually for
5 operating and, ah, capital expenses, 1 billion for
6 resident management. Ah, we want an independent
7 audit. Ah, we want to hold regular meetings with
8 residents, ah, at the table, deciding when and where
9 these meetings are taking place, and of course we
10 want [inaudible]...

11 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time's expired.

12 MARQUIS JENKINS: ...blueprint and remove
13 Gregory Russ as the chairman of NYCHA. Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Well, thank
15 you, everyone. I really appreciate it. And, um, I
16 also want to recognize that we've been joined by
17 Council Member Treyger, and I'm not sure if I
18 mentioned Council Member Ayala in the beginning, but
19 she's also with us. Um, I want to just kind of recap
20 everyone who spoke. Um, Aixa Torres mentioned the
21 need for more resident input regarding all the
22 projects. Um, Mary McGee mentioned, you know,
23 [inaudible] deals and the, the money that's being
24 spent and that there's just too much red tape. Um,
25 Karen Blondel mentioned it's not about being given
money, it's about spending the money, and its

3 connection to labor and employment opportunities, and
4 also Section 3 opportunities. Um, Ramona Ferreyra
5 talked about the death of 6-year-old Aiden in
6 Mitchell Houses and, um, connecting the fact that so
7 much could have been done in order for little Aiden
8 to even be able to breath during the, um, the smoke
9 in the apartment. Dana Elden talked about the need
10 for six new roofs in her development and hopefully
11 understanding where, ah, hopefully during this
12 conversation with NYCHA will be able to understand
13 where her development is on that priority list for
14 new rules. Um, and Marquis Jenkins does what he
15 usually does, you know, come in and, and lay it all
16 out, um, you know, everything about why we are here
17 today. And I really do appreciate you, Mr. Jenkins.
18 Um, um, and you mentioned implementing restrictions
19 on funding and questioned the need for conversions
20 with the funding that's coming in. Um, and so I just
21 wanted to put that all there because that sets the
22 tone of what we're talking about and why we are here.
23 And I, I thank you, residents, for always, you know,
24 showing up and giving your perspective and, um,
25 NYCHA, I just hope the administration, as you're
answering a lot of the questions, you know, you just

3 make sure that you have in mind, um, the voices that
4 we heard, um, at the beginning. So thank you so
5 much, and I'm gonna turn it back over to Audrey.

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you very much,
7 Chair.

8 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: You know what,
9 wait. I want to make sure, um, Chair Rosenthal, did
10 you have any questions at all for the, OK, all right.

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Great. Thank you
12 both. Ah, we will now turn to testimony from the
13 administration. A reminder to council members to
14 please use the Zoom raise hand function Zoom raise
15 hand function if you would like to ask any questions.
16 After the administration gives its testimony, we will
17 hear from the remaining members of the public. I
18 will now administer the oath to the administration,
19 which is reported by Steven Lovci, Annika Lescott,
20 Oliver Osterwind, Eva Trimble, and Brian Honan.
21 After I say the oath please wait for me to call your
22 name and respond one by one. Please raise your right
23 hand. Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole
24 truth, and nothing but the truth before this
25 committee and to respond honestly to council member
questions? Steven Lovci?

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3 STEVEN LOVCI: I do.

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Annika Lescott?

5 ANNIKA LESCOTT: I do.

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Oliver Osterwind?

7 OLIVER OSTERWIND: I do.

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Eva Trimble?

9 EVA TRIMBLE: I do.

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: And Brian Honan.

11 BRIAN HONAN: I do.

12 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. You may
13 begin when ready.

14 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Thank
15 you. Chairs Alicka Ampry-Samuel and Helen Rosenthal,
16 members of the Committee on Public Housing and the
17 Subcommittee on Capital Budget, other distinguished
18 members of the City Council, residents, and the
19 members of the public, good afternoon. My name is
20 Steven Lovci, NYCHA's executive vice president of
21 capital projects. I am pleased to be joined by
22 Annika Lescott, executive vice president and chief
23 financial officer, Eva Trimble, executive vice
24 president for strategy and innovation, Oliver
25 Osterwind, vice president for project management and
capital projects division, Brian Honan, vice

3 president of intergovernmental relations, and other
4 members of NYCHA's team. Thank you for this
5 opportunity to discuss NYCHA's capital program, which
6 is committed to preserving and modernizing public
7 housing for NYCHA residents and the City of New York.
8 Considering the authority's significant capital
9 needs, 40 billion and climbing, we are incredibly
10 grateful for the council's partnership and funding.
11 Without your support many important projects that
12 contribute to the residents' quality of life would
13 not be possible, such as playgrounds, basketball
14 court renovations, new entrances, security cameras,
15 and existing lighting installations, I'm sorry,
16 exterior lighting installations. As the largest
17 public housing authority in the nation, NYCHA manages
18 a vast capital program that preserves and modernizes
19 more than 2200 buildings, housing nearly 400,000
20 residents, residing in over 2400 acres across every
21 borough of the city. However, decades of federal
22 disinvestment has left our buildings needing 40
23 billion worth of major repairs, an astronomical
24 figure that grows at a rate of about a billion a
25 year. To best address the significant needs of our
developments and to protect our investments, NYCHA

3 established a logical building sequence when planning
4 its work. It begins with sealing the building
5 envelope - the roofs, the facades, the windows, and
6 then turning to building systems like heating plants.
7 We can move into interior renovations and grounds.
8 NYCHA's capital projects division is responsible for
9 impingement capital construction projects from
10 planning and design through construction and close-
11 out. Over the past two years CPD had focused on the
12 building sequence and comprehensive design
13 strategies, ah, executing projects with the highest
14 degree of safety and quality. The portfolio includes
15 roof replacement, masonry repairs, heating plant
16 replacement, elevator modernization, infrastructure
17 upgrades, grounds improvements, exterior and interior
18 lighting, lobby entrances, CCTV, to name a few.
19 NYCHA's 10-year, this is 2022 through 2031, city
20 capital plan totals about 4.6 billion. The majority
21 of the funds, or about 4.4 billion, are mayoral.
22 More than half of those funds, 2.8 billion, are
23 allocated for projects addressing the HUD agreement
24 pillar areas, such as heat, elevators, lead, and
25 mold. NYCHA's City Council funding totals about 125
million in the 10-year plan. The discretionary

3 allocations from council members are essential source
4 of funds, from vital quality projects that benefit
5 the residents greatly, such as playgrounds,
6 basketball court renovations, exterior lighting
7 installations, entrances, security enhancements, and
8 community amenities. NYCHA takes responsibility for
9 the frustration around City Council discretionary
10 projects and we are committed to improving our
11 performance through new management and partnerships.
12 For instance, CPD hired a new government liaison in
13 '22 to streamline communication between all parties.
14 We also established a project management team whose
15 assignments involve city discretionary funding
16 projects. This is a significant benefit so that we
17 enhance, ah, we take the staff and they're more
18 knowledgeable about the complexities of the city
19 procurement and the lessons learned. To enhance,
20 enhance transparency, NYCHA recently joined Checkbook
21 New York City and by moving from paper to electronic
22 submission of registration packages for the
23 comptroller's office this year. We are speeding up
24 the contraction registration process, but also
25 providing ready insight into the status of these
packages. And I'd like to thank OMB and comptroller

3 staff, particularly the IT department on helping us
4 with that. As I mentioned, council members are a
5 vital part of the authority, essentially, especially
6 when it comes to identifying projects that will go a
7 long way in improving residents' quality of life.
8 Our partnership with residents is also furthering our
9 work. For example, CPD's Connected Communities
10 Initiative leverages public-private partnerships to
11 enhance residents' quality of life through
12 improvements to outdoor spaces at our development.
13 The initiative also serves as a roadmap for dialogue
14 and engagement with our partners. We know how
15 important it is to engage with the residents, the
16 development staff, the elected officials, and other
17 members of the community in the planning, the design,
18 and the implementation of those projects. Our goals
19 are accountability, transparency, and increased
20 participation with the partners, um, are supported
21 with our new standard procedures stakeholder
22 engagement, which rolled out the training this year.
23 In conclusion, NYCHA strives every day to be good
24 stewards of the funding we received to preserve
25 public housing and to provide a better quality of
life of our residents. However, we know we need to

3 continue to improve the timelines of city
4 discretionary funded projects. I would like to
5 emphasize again that NYCHA's partnership with Council
6 is crucial and we value it highly. From many
7 meetings and conversations I've taken your
8 suggestions to heart and incorporated them into the
9 way we do business. Your support and generosity are
10 critical. We would be able, ah, we wouldn't be able
11 to complete many of the projects that matter most to
12 the residents with federal funding alone. Thank you,
13 and we are grateful for your support, and we are
14 happy to answer any questions that you may have, and
15 we look forward to keeping you updated on the status
16 of the efforts to improve our developments as well as
17 the residents' quality of life.

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Ah, we
19 will now move to questions, ah, from Chair Ampry-
20 Samuel, followed by questions from Chair Rosenthal.

21 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Thank you.
22 Um, I just want to recognize that we've been joined
23 by Council Member Chin as well. And we're gonna do
24 things a little different today. Um, because this is
25 a joint hearing I don't want to ask a bunch of
questions and then get caught up and then turnaround

3 and kick it to Chair Rosenthal, and so we are going
4 to tag team this and ask questions together. Um, it
5 just makes sense I think that it will, we'll have a
6 better conversation and the discussion should flow a
7 lot better, um, with the both of us asking questions.
8 Um, and so I will start with historically NYCHA has
9 had a significantly lower city capital commitment
10 rate when compared to the citywide average. For
11 instance, in fiscal 2021 NYCHA had actual commitments
12 of approximately 103.1 million dollars against a plan
13 of 1.6 billion, or 6.4% of the total planned
14 commitments. The citywide commitment rate for fiscal
15 2021 was approximately 61.7%. So that's 61.7%,
16 compared to NYCHA's 6.4%. And this reminds me of
17 what Karen Blondel said, right, we have money but not
18 spending the money, and so what metrics are used to
19 track NYCHA's spending of city capital dollars and
20 can you explain why the authority is having so much
21 difficulty in committing its city capital funding?

22 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Thank
23 you, Chair, for the question. Um, I'll answer it in
24 a couple of stages. As you know, NYCHA has one of
25 largest capital projects in the city and it is in a
unique position with a large occupied resident

3 portfolio and severely distressed infrastructure.

4 This type of commitment rate in comparison is not
5 apples to apples. NYCHA has spent considerable time
6 collaborating with our federal oversight partners and
7 planning on how best to leverage the capital plan to
8 correct the deficiencies, um, and the problems across
9 the pillar areas of the HUD agreement. The time
10 spent was intentional and purposeful and, more
11 important, um, to us than the commitment rate,
12 because we wanted to make sure that we were spending
13 the dollars wisely, our capital plan, which we, ah,
14 was released in May of 2021, this is the agreement
15 that allows us to move those funds forward, um, and
16 we are now, now that that agreement has hit and we
17 have access to those funds, we're working on
18 implementing the plan and preparing to spend the
19 funds.

20 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK, so, um,
21 you just mentioned that apples to apples. Um, what
22 are, can you just explain what are the exact
23 challenges to spending the capital dollars, and where
24 in that process, if you can to explain to us, where
25 in that process are you experiencing the, um, the
most difficulty? Um, [inaudible].

2 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Yup.

3 So, um...

4 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: And I, I get
5 the actual plans you have, but that's new, and this
6 has been an issue and so I'm just hoping that you
7 can...

8 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Um-hmm.

9 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: ...give us a
10 little more detail.

11 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: No, ah,
12 thank you very much. So although the funds come in
13 every year and we've had three years of funding,
14 those funds have not been accessible to us. And so,
15 ah, it works against the commitment rate if you have
16 three years of funding, almost more than half a
17 billion dollars, it's around 750 million dollars, um,
18 then obviously your percentages don't work because
19 you don't have access to those. This year we worked
20 with OMB to right size our portfolio, um, based
21 against our obligations and expenditures, and those
22 three years shift so that we can actually spend those
23 funds. So as soon as, ah, the action plan was
24 approved we are able to now spend those dollars and

3 then we presented, ah, a strategy in which we could,
4 we could spend the dollars that we're getting.

5 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Can you give
6 us an example of something that has been stalled and
7 that you had a conversation with OMB and now you're
8 ready to move forward because you addressed that
9 specific problem? And [inaudible]...

10 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Yeah.

11 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: ...[inaudible]
12 example from, um, from the testimony this morning, I
13 mean, the testimony earlier, maybe from Dana Elden
14 with the roof repairs. Is that a good example to
15 use?

16 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Um, yes,
17 I mean, I can give you an example of a, a typical,
18 ah, city investment versus a federal and state
19 investment. Is that, I think what you're asking
20 about? Um, one, I just want to say that this is an
21 important move for us in terms of the agreement
22 funds. Um, because we wanted to make sure that we're
23 spending those funds accurately and now that we have
24 an action plan, ah, we actually are working on
25 accelerating a lot of the projects on waste
management. In terms of our roofing program, our

3 roofing program, there was a wonderful, ah, there's a
4 lot of money that was spent to the Housing Authority,
5 um, and we are spending those down. We're actually
6 accelerating that program, ah, and we've been able to
7 work to with OMB to get design fees, ah, in one year
8 and then construction fees in the following year, so
9 that way we can continually be ahead of the game in
10 terms of getting those roofing projects done. And in
11 terms of the roofing program, I think that initiative
12 was about 1.3 billion to replace around 947. The
13 first tranche of all of those roofs, ah, has been
14 completed. The second tranche, all of those roofs,
15 ah, are completed except one that is in construction.
16 It is one of the larger of those developments. The
17 third tranche, um, we're, we're in, ah, in moving
18 those forward, um, in terms of putting those out to
19 bid, in terms of the design, and then, as I
20 mentioned, OMB is allowing us to move forward with
21 the design so that way we can be ahead to put the
22 projects out to bid.

23 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE: And
24 this is Eva Trimble, executive vice president for
25 strategy and innovation. I also want to, um, ah, ah,
that, ah, and Steven you should, you should mention

3 specifically the status of the St. Mary's Project
4 that was raised earlier, since that roof is in
5 progress as well. We recognize that it's severely in
6 need of, of, um, construction and so that St. Mary's
7 Park Houses project is proceeding. Um, we expect
8 construction to start in November of 2022. Ah,
9 we're, ah, awaiting comptroller approval right now on
10 A&E and so things are moving to finally bring a new
11 roof over to St. Mary's Park. But I want to add,
12 Chair, to your question about, ah, delays. Ah, I
13 want to say that the, the capital funding that's tied
14 to the agreement, it's not stuck in any bureaucratic
15 process delays. There's nothing specific there. It
16 was really about a planning process to think about
17 the significant amount of capital that we received
18 that we, we really never received a level of funding
19 like this before and we needed to scale up to, to
20 prepare to spend. And I want to set expectations
21 that spending will, ah, will continue to scale up,
22 but maybe not at the speed that you see with a
23 typical, um, other type of infrastructure
24 construction projects from other agencies, 'cause
25 NYCHA does have very different, ah, issues to deal
with when we're talking about occupied rehab. You

3 heard about stakeholder engagement as a key part of
4 what we want of we want to do. We've heard from
5 residents that they want to stay in the capital
6 project development and so we are looking to engage
7 residents in that capital planning process, and that
8 takes time, but that's not actual capital spending.
9 But it's an important part of our capital project,
10 and that's why we don't look necessarily directly at
11 spending as a metric of how we're doing. We look at
12 our planning process, our engagement process, and
13 other factors. We, let me just...

14 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: I appreciate
15 that, Eva, um, and I just want to, just, just put a
16 pin right there, um, and just let my chair, my, my
17 cochair know that whenever you want to jump in you
18 totally can because I already know that we've had
19 private conversations about this, Chair Rosenthal,
20 and so you can, um, definitely jump in. But the
21 reason why I mentioned, um, can you give us an
22 example is because I really wanted to get a sense of
23 what went wrong before, give us an example of the
24 work that you're doing with OMB, so that you don't
25 have those same challenges. You can move forward
with spending and if you're saying it's not

3 necessarily about spending, it's about having a, I, I
4 need to understand what that means, because when
5 we're looking at a commitment, ah, a commitment plan,
6 a spend rate of 61% for the entire like city, but
7 we're looking at NYCHA with a 6.4%, you know, that's
8 a significant difference and I'm trying to understand
9 that, and that's why I asked for an example and when
10 Dana Elden spoke about those six roofs I was hoping
11 that you would be able to, because we talked about to
12 kind of put it in, in the realistic terms so that we
13 can all have a, like a visual right now. So that's
14 why I asked for that specific example, and if you
15 can't do that, I was hoping that you can just look at
16 a different project and explain that, 'cause we're
17 gonna, we're gonna be here. We have a whole bunch of
18 other questions related to spending, but I just, I
19 was hoping to get like, you know, start this, this
20 discussion with an example.

21 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Well, I,
22 I was trying to, thank you. Ah, the example that I
23 have is that we've been working with OMB so that we
24 could front those tranches with design fees, right?
25 And then thus when we go to construction, we're that

3 much further rather than a cold start when those
4 fundings come to us directly. So usually it's...

5 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [inaudible]

6 what's really confusing is about that is that always
7 was possible. What, what's changed? You could have
8 always, five years ago you could have done the same
9 thing, where you plan a year ahead and go to OMB.

10 What, what magic has changed now? Um, and I ask

11 because when Chair Ampry-Samuel asked this question
12 before I, I did not understand one word of the

13 answer, and I, I, it is genuinely gobbledy-gook to

14 me. What I see is a historic situation, all the

15 years that you've had to do this right, all the years

16 that you've gotten, maybe a million is different than

17 200 million, but even when you got a million dollars

18 from the city you didn't spending. Oh, I, I should

19 be saying billions, right? My bad. It wasn't spent.

20 So, so what it is about the, ah, I guess federal

21 monitor who came in that has changed this so

22 significantly and I, ah, the only answer I can come

23 up, and I'm eager to hear from you, is that you need

24 more staff to meet demand, right? We're a big city,

25 so in a way you can't, you should try to not listen

to dollar amounts. They're all gonna sound big,

3 right? We're, we're just a big city. I mean, you
4 know, one should think about it, OK, let's see, we
5 were a smaller we would get less money, right? So
6 the quantity sort of doesn't matter. The question is
7 why can't you execute and why couldn't you execute
8 five years ago? And the only answer I can think of
9 is because you don't have enough staff. And if
10 that's the answer then I'm curious why you don't,
11 given that the staff in this division is paid for,
12 right, through bonding, right? So and I, I know that
13 in 2018, someone pointed this out tonight [inaudible]
14 and I know that starting in 2018 you indeed started
15 bonding for these costs, which is great, sorry you
16 didn't do it earlier. Other, you know, I don't even
17 know how to grapple with that. But given the fact
18 that you now know you can, why not just hire twice as
19 many people? You know what the process is. You know
20 it takes a long time. This is not rocket science.
21 I, I really wouldn't ask you to endeavor to explain
22 what's changed with the monitor that has made some
23 sort of difference so magically a year from now there
24 won't be a hearing like this because you've spent
25 100% of your city money. Um, I don't understand. I

3 really don't understand your answer, yeah, so far.

4 Thank you.

5 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE: Sure,
6 thank you. And I'm, I'm sorry if my answer or
7 Steven's answer wasn't, wasn't clear, but I, I can't
8 say what we were doing wrong five years ago. I can
9 say that we, we take responsibility for slow spending
10 on our capital plan. However, we have been focused
11 now on how we change that and how we accelerate
12 spending, but also how we best plan for our capital
13 program. And a lot of capital, a lot of the, the
14 focus of capital is about long-term planning. How do
15 we choose our projects that we're going, that we're
16 going to invest in and where do we invest? And I do
17 think one of the advocates of the HUD agreement was
18 the focus on the pillar areas, heat and elevators,
19 lead and mold, and that provided us some focus to say
20 how do we use our capital specifically to address
21 those deficiencies in those areas. And...

22 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: I guess what I'm
23 saying is that's your job.

24 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE: Yes,
25 and we're saying, we're doing it...

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [inaudible].

3 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE:

4 ...we're doing it now I think better than we have
5 ever done before and are prepared to spend the, the
6 largest capital program we have ever had here at
7 NYCHA.

8 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: You know what?

9 So, so, so with that being said, right, um, let's
10 jump into that, right? Um, according to your
11 website, the Capital Projects Division is responsible
12 for over 1 billion in construction projects funded by
13 the federal, state, and city investments. Can you
14 describe in detail CPD's role in managing the funds
15 received across the three levels of government? I
16 think if you can like start to outline that it'll
17 help us to, to [inaudible] conversation.

18 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Yes,

19 thank you. So Capital Projects Division, CPD, is
20 responsible for the planning and, ah, implementation
21 of, you know, the capital construction projects
22 undertaken by NYCHA across all, all sources of
23 funding. And this starts out with the planning in
24 the anticipation of the funds that are gonna get
25 received, as well as the comprehensive physical needs
assessment process to really support data-driven

3 decision-making, and then the dialogues that happen,
4 ah, in order to build out the five-year capital plan.
5 Once the funds are received and then allocated to CPD
6 the projects, ah, planning, ah, begins in which staff
7 are assigned and schedules are developed and the
8 project is outlined. Um, typically CPD's engagement
9 with numerous stakeholders begins at that moment in
10 time.

11 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK, all right.

12 For the people in the back, you have the physical
13 needs assessment, right, and that's with the, that,
14 that's, that's what you need across the board, and
15 then you get funding based on what's listed in the
16 physical needs assessment, right? And when you get
17 funding, is the funding attached to a certain part of
18 the physical needs assessment or is it just you
19 receive money into NYCHA, CPD, based on the physical
20 needs assessment, and then you then determine who
21 does what? So I'm just trying to get a picture of
22 that...

23 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: So...

24 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: As simply as
25 possible you can say it.

3 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Yup.

4 Um, it depends on the type of funding source. The
5 city-funded sources are allocated so they come to us
6 as a scoped project and the project. So, you know,
7 we appreciate all of the discretionary funds from the
8 council members and the borough presidents. Those
9 come in as a specific project to us, ah, through, um,
10 the, the city system. And then there are the mayoral
11 pieces, which a lot of them are allocated directly to
12 something - a roof, um, a heating plant at a
13 particular development. Many of those lists are
14 generated based on the physical needs of that plant,
15 right, so there's a laundry list of, ah, levels of
16 heating plants, roofs, ah, fives, fours, threes,
17 twos, and ones, and, ah, those funds are allocated.
18 State funds, we work with the state in order to
19 address certain pipelines, ah, that they have
20 allocated to us, and those again are allocated at a
21 particular development and a particular funding
22 source. And then the federal five-year, ah, the
23 federal five-year capital plan we use in order to
24 leverage some of those pieces. Right now 90% of that
25 federal plan is dedicated to areas within the pillar,
so the heating plants, ah, additional funding to the

3 roofs. That, that federal dollars are also helped to
4 support some of the, the city projects in which have,
5 ah, capital eligibility issues, where we support
6 those as well. Did that, I hope that answered your
7 question in terms of city and state are allocated to
8 a particular development and a particular unit, and
9 federal, ah, a five-year capital plan is developed
10 out.

11 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: So, um, is CPD
12 able to match funding with projects that will make
13 the most efficient use of the funds.

14 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Yes.

15 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Um, 'cause I
16 know it because I know you mentioned...

17 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Yeah.

18 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: ...that
19 specific.

20 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Yep,
21 and, and we leverage funds all the time to make
22 projects whole.

23 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: How?

24 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: So I'll
25 give an example of the, the City Plus Heating Plant
program. So this was a generous gift in terms of

3 the, the funds to come in and, and do city heating
4 plants. Um, many of the items within a heating plant
5 program are not capital-eligible, like the temporary
6 boilers. So we leverage federal dollars against
7 those city dollars, so that way we can actually have
8 a temporary boiler when we're putting in the heating
9 plant, or remove electrical, some other items that
10 are not capital-eligible. At the same time period we
11 might leverage, in this case we leverage EPC funds to
12 help with temperature sensors so that way our heating
13 plants are running at their optimum. We also used
14 federal dollars where we had some steam distribution
15 issues, ah, of the underground steam distribution,
16 and so we were able to leverage some of the federal
17 dollars to fix the steam underground, ah,
18 distribution. So in whole we try to create a
19 holistic project, not just from one funding source.
20 The roofing is another good example of that. Most of
21 the time we're that we're doing roofing we want to
22 take care of brickwork as well because we don't want
23 to damage the asset of the roof while we're doing the
24 Local Law 11 work. And so we will use some of the
25 federal funds against the local ones because façade
work is not capital-eligible and so we'll do some of

3 the Local Law 11 work with our federal dollars so
4 that way we can make sure that the asset of the roof
5 and the, and the brickwork are taken together.

6 There's lots and lots of examples, but the capital is
7 constantly leveraging funds in order to make complete
8 projects.

9 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: You know, I
10 understand what you're saying and, and yes, there's
11 complexity there, so, but it, also you can plan for
12 it. So you can plan that you're gonna use the city
13 dollars in one way and the federal dollars in another
14 way, and for the city dollars simply start planning
15 for that six months earlier, or whatever, so
16 everything can be in sync and done expeditiously,
17 right?

18 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: I agree.
19 In fact, ah, just this last couple of years we've
20 looked at this portfolio as an all sources portfolio
21 and we are planning it out as one piece. Um,
22 actually, we've done it more than the last two years.
23 Um, the, you know, I'll just give an example on the
24 discretionary funds. We got the list manually for
25 those discretionary funds for this year and we
immediately started to move on those in terms of

3 writing task orders and getting those ready for their
4 CP approval, so that way when we receive the funds in
5 November and we're able to move the projects forward,
6 we already have the task orders written and that
7 we're able to submit the CPs. And so, ah, we are, we
8 did that this year and we're gonna continue to do
9 that. Um, but yes, you're absolutely right,
10 Chairwoman Rosenthal. Um, we think about this
11 holistically as an all sources budget and then we
12 leverage correctly and then with the discretionary
13 funds, where we only find out, ah, at that funding
14 year we're, we're starting to get ahead of when the
15 funds some in.

16 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Right, and,
17 and do keep in mind that I've allocated money over
18 the last eight years, as I'm sure is the case every
19 other council member will say, and some really only,
20 I think it was 6% of that money had ever been spent,
21 and this year when we looked at it together we
22 realized that we would not be able to spend a lot of
23 it. So, um, and, and the cost on the one project
24 that we're gonna do has doubled. So, um, and that
25 project had been put in the budget back in 2015. So,
so it's a sad state of affairs. I guess the, the

3 mayor's budget, when he allocates for something, it's
4 pretty broad brush, right? So like, um, 2.8 billion
5 on one of the lines for building improvements over 10
6 years. So that's like a pretty fungible line item.
7 Are you able to use that generality to plan ahead of
8 time?

9 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Um, I
10 can let, ah, I'd like to pass it along to Annika.
11 Um, but in terms of the capital portfolio, um, when
12 we talk about the mayor's funds, those are allocated.
13 Um, the action plan is the ones in which there was a
14 dollar amount that we worked diligently with the
15 monitor's team and the city to identify the funds and
16 put them into the different pillars to move those
17 forward and that's the, ah, the agreement and the
18 action plan. But let me...

19 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: No, I'll go on,
20 I'll go on, on the point of the action plan, um, you
21 know, circling back to something I mentioned in my
22 opener, the action plan calls for orderly reporting
23 with detailed, um, great detail, ah, it's on page 20,
24 if anyone wants to look at the action plan, terrific
25 detail about what's going with each project. And,
again, the first report was due October 31 and that

3 report, in other words, not your usual quarterly
4 report, but you're supposed to send to the monitor
5 this report with great detail, which would shed light
6 on what's going on here. It's the report that I have
7 not seen, um, and so I don't know what's happening
8 there at all.

9 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: So
10 you're referring to the quarterly reports. Um, all
11 of those were submitted and...

12 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Nope. In
13 referring to...

14 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: No, I'm
15 sorry, I'm sorry...

16 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: ...the [inaudible]
17 report that is, has, was agreed on at, on May 15, May
18 8 this year, it's the federal monitor approves
19 NYCHA's city capital action plan.

20 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Ah, yes,
21 I'm sorry. Let me rephrase that. The action plan is
22 on the website. The quarterly reports, the reporting
23 piece that you're speaking of, is, is what they to
24 refer to, the monitor's team refers to as the
25 quarterly report. Um, we have submitted those for

3 both the GDA action plan as well as the city action
4 plan.

5 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: It doesn't have
6 the detail that's required on page 20.

7 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: So I
8 don't, I was, I, you know, I'm, we're gonna make sure
9 that you have, ah, a copy of that.

10 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: I have it, and
11 it, ah, Brian sent along, which I appreciate it.

12 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: OK. We
13 work with the monitor's team, ah, on, on that report
14 and the format of the, the report, and we'd have,
15 we'd be happy to hear if there are other items that
16 you would like. Again...

17 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: I, I just want
18 what's on, what, on page 20 you've said that, ah, you
19 would supply. Um, I could start reading off the
20 details, but suffice to say they're just tracking
21 details, a list of tracking details.

22 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE: Yes,
23 and right now many of the projects in the, in the
24 capital action plan are at very stages, so we don't
25 have all of that information. But we are working
with the monitor team to improve our reporting, um,

3 in that quarterly report and as the projects develop
4 we will have more details to share. But right now
5 since many of them are at the very early stages, we
6 didn't have all of those components just yet to
7 include in the report.

8 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Then why did
9 you give yourself a due date of October 31, when...

10 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE: When
11 we would provide a report quarterly on where we at
12 and we wanted to provide something, even if it
13 doesn't have the full level of detail as described in
14 the action plan.

15 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: To, to
16 further explain, I think what Council Member
17 Rosenthal is, is saying is that there's a set of
18 milestones in there and there are milestones that we
19 would not be hitting at this point in time, like
20 construction completion, some of those milestones.
21 So as the project commences there are different
22 milestones that we would, ah, input into that list,
23 and those milestones that are further down the
24 processes, ah, are identified, um, are, are not
25 identified at this point in time because we wouldn't
have gotten to those.

3 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Again, it
4 includes even, there is a milestone called forecast
5 completion, um, and then the next milestone is
6 delays. So have any of those projects, have they
7 been delayed, right, that could have been reported.
8 Look, we don't have to go back and forth, but suffice
9 to say the public has no idea about why this money is
10 not being spent.

11 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: And I, I want
12 to just kind of put it into context for, for the
13 public that don't know what we're talking about right
14 now. Um, the NYCHA submitted a city action plan and
15 it was approved by the federal monitor. And, um, one
16 of the requirements is for a, um, a quarterly report.
17 And, um, the previous discussion was related to, um,
18 the quarterly report that was, that we just received
19 a few minutes ago, um, and what it did not have based
20 on what we thought it would have that was outlined,
21 um, in the action plan. I hope I explained that to
22 those who were possibly confused. So I want to
23 encourage you to look at NYCHA's, um, action plan,
24 capital spending action plan and then look at the
25 monitor's, um, report, and NYCHA's [inaudible].

CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Thank you.

3 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Um, yes.

4 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Um, just one
5 clarification. Um, the capital planning team, the
6 staff who works there, are you able to charge those
7 costs off to debt service to, to bonding?

8 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: So I'm
9 gonna pass this on to, ah, Annika to speak a little
10 bit about the financial, ah, associated to the
11 staffing costs.

12 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Thank you.

13 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LESCOTT: Sure,
14 sure, thank you, Steve. So the city provides
15 financial support to pay for our capital project
16 staff. Many of the staff that work directly on
17 projects, and that's actually done through community
18 development block grant support. And so we are
19 actively charging, um, those staff costs where
20 appropriate. Um, and that helps us tremendously. So
21 we appreciate that.

22 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Um, I'm, I'm
23 so sorry, but I think I asked of it are you able, so
24 if you're able to charge it to, um, the bonding, then
25 the cost gets, ah, woven into the debt service you
pay every year. And...

3 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LESCOTT: Right,
4 so we are not charging anything to the bonding. The
5 city has given us a different pad of funding for our
6 CPD staff and we are charging that. So we are not
7 charging anything to bonding for anything.

8 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: OK. And so the,
9 and so that other pot of money comes from federal
10 funding...

11 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LESCOTT:
12 Correct.

13 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: ...called CB
14 something or other.

15 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LESCOTT: Yes.

16 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: So have you
17 explored the possibility, um, and I'm sorry, but I
18 talked to the finance, the person who was in charge
19 of finance, yesterday who said that he explored the
20 possibility and in fact they had changed, NYCHA had
21 changed, um, I mean, of course use federal funds for
22 anything, that's great. But if you can, if part of
23 the problem is not having enough staff 'cause it's a
24 really big number and you have to do a lot of
25 planning, why not use the tool of charging off the
additional staff?

2 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LESCOTT: So I'm
3 happy to, I'm not sure who you spoke to, um, and if
4 it was on the NYCHA side or the OMB side, but I'm
5 happy to...

6 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: It was the
7 [inaudible] side, it was a NYCHA person who used to
8 work at OMB.

9 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LESCOTT: OK.
10 So I'm happy to have that conversation with OMB and
11 talk it through, but as mentioned, currently we
12 charge all of our staff, most, except really like
13 four or five people, to the federal pot, um, and that
14 provided to us by the city and it has been, um, very
15 instrumental into helping us get this, appropriate
16 staffing.

17 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Right. So...

18 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LESCOTT: I'm
19 happy to look into that.

20 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: ...if you had
21 more staffing funded by whoever, would projects move
22 along faster?

23 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LESCOTT: Steve,
24 do you want to talk to that?

3 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Um, I, I
4 don't know if I would say the projects would move
5 along faster, but, you know, as more money comes
6 available it would assist us with building out, ah,
7 and moving projects. Um, [inaudible] is more...

8 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: So have you
9 had...

10 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI:
11 ...invoices, more project managers, more architects
12 and engineers. Um, I will say that, ah, a few years
13 ago, um, we sat up a program very similar to other
14 agencies as we were reaching out to other agencies
15 to, to discuss with them and see their programs and
16 how they moved projects, ah, faster, so we could
17 learn from them, and one of the things that, that we
18 built into our program was program managers, um,
19 using models by other agencies as well as the
20 recovery and resiliency program. And so we've been
21 able to, ah, forecast when we were looking at getting
22 some of the funds and get those program managers on
23 board that can assist us from everything from, ah, IT
24 support, resident engagement, all the way through
25 project management, architecture, and engineering
consults.

3 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: So given that the
4 amount of money that you have to spend has increased
5 tremendously, has OMB allotted you more, more
6 staffing, money for staffing the capital planning
7 team?

8 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Ah, we
9 haven't been allocated, ah, more money for staffing.

10 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: So quick
11 question. Um, and I know I wanted, ah, we've, we
12 have some colleagues that's had their hands raised
13 for quite some time now and I feel bad that Council
14 Member Chin dropped off. Um, so it's not about the
15 staffing, it's about the approval of the projects
16 themselves and the planning of the projects which is,
17 which causes the delay or causes a, um, a delay in
18 projects being completed or the quote unquote
19 spending for the project? So it's not a staffing
20 issue, it's a, a process issue?

21 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: So, um,
22 again, obviously I'm, I'm gonna concede...

23 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: It's not a
24 thing...

25 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: I'm, I'm
gonna concede that, that, yes, obviously, additional

3 staffing across the board would always help, right?

4 Um, we have, we have thought about this in terms of,

5 of where we want to be, in terms of our obligations

6 and expenditures and, and we're hiring up through our

7 program managers, which was the, the, ah, armature

8 that we have. Um, and then I, I think we've, we've

9 had these conversations, um, many, many times on, you

10 know, capital does an amazing job of obligations and

11 expenditures on the federal dollars. Um, we took

12 this period of time and worked with the monitor to

13 really think about where we need to spend the funds

14 that we received. Um, we wanted to be good stewards,

15 and through that we created the action plan, um, and,

16 you know, now that the action plan was approved

17 we're, we're able to immediately start to, ah, to

18 draw down those funds and get those projects moving

19 forward. Those three years of funding, again, 750

20 million, it's more than a half a billion dollars, sat

21 on our books, um, and we weren't able to, you know,

22 to, to move those projects forward and that's gonna

23 hurt your obligations and expenditures, right. Um,

24 we're constantly working with our partners in order

25 to expedite and speed up the, the processes. Um, and

in, in ways that we can do that to move, ah, our

3 capital pipeline a little bit faster. Federal and
4 state, as you know, we don't have all of the, ah,
5 requirements associated to it as the city bonded
6 money to us. Um, and that tends to add a little bit
7 more time to the processes. I'm not saying it's a
8 bad process, but it adds more time. And if we look
9 at complete city funds, ah, we're looking at about
10 six to eight months, um, in the design phase to hire
11 an architect or engineer on board and then in the
12 procurement phase. So the predesign stays about the
13 same. The design stays about the same. We put it
14 out to bid, that's the same. And the construction
15 durations are the same on federal, state, and city.
16 But through city processes we add about six to eight
17 months, um, for approvals to get those contracts
18 through, and if you have to do that twice, that's,
19 that adds a year into the, the overall process of the
20 program.

21 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Which is why you
22 start a year earlier for the city money, right?

23 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: And
24 so...

25 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [inaudible] know
that, and let's be clear, the federal money, I mean,

3 these past two years, and we can pass it off to
4 COVID, these past two years in terms of your
5 obligations and spending since 2018 have tanked.
6 Even with federal money you're at, um, obligated, I
7 think, 37% of the funds that have been allocated by
8 the federal government. That's the easy money to
9 spend. And 22% you've actually spent. So this is, I
10 mean, the city percentage is, you know, negligible,
11 and that's a real problem. But I, I hope, I, I want
12 to pass it along to my colleagues. I just don't
13 understand how this has been allowed to happen.

14 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Um, I'm gonna
15 stop right there and, Audrey, I'll turn it over to
16 you, because we have a lot more questions, but I want
17 to be mindful of my colleagues.

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Great, thank you. We
19 now to turn to questions from, ah, other council
20 members, beginning with Council Member Grodenchik,
21 followed by Council Member Brooks-Powers. And again
22 a reminder to council members to please use the Zoom
23 hand raise function if you have any questions. Ah,
24 and an additional reminder that the clock will be set
25 to five minutes in interest of time. Thank you.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you,
4 Madam Chairs, and thank you, um, for holding this
5 most important, um, hearing on NYCHA spending, and,
6 ah, I, ah, I don't have any NYCHA properties, ah, in
7 my district in eastern Queens, but I, ah, am a, an
8 alum of NYCHA. I grew up in Pomonok Houses, um,
9 which were very, very well run. Um, complaints were
10 answered almost overnight, ah, no exaggeration there.
11 Um, when the, when the steam pipe in front of my
12 building split open and was belching steam, it wasn't
13 fixed overnight, but I kind of remember within a
14 month or two, ah, NYCHA came in and ripped up the
15 ground and replaced the pipe, um, which at that point
16 I guess was about 20-something years old, and things
17 do fail. Um, having listened to this hearing, ah,
18 since it began and listening to the questions of, ah,
19 my chair, ah, Helen Rosenthal, and Chair, ah, Ampry-
20 Samuel, I can tell you that I really don't have much
21 confidence, um, in what I've been hearing, and I'm,
22 I'm sorry to hear that, um, because there was a time
23 when the New York City Housing Authority was the be-
24 all and end-all of public health authorities across
25 the nation. And I, I would like somebody, and I
don't care who it is, to tell me how you are going to

3 deal with, um, this influx of federal dollars that is
4 gonna be coming our way, um, senators, our senators,
5 led by, ah, Senate Majority Leader Schumer, ah, our
6 congressional delegation has worked very hard, ah,
7 and for the first time in a very long time public
8 funding is gonna to be flowing to NYCHA. And, ah,
9 the people, the testimony that I heard from the
10 residents at the beginning of this hearing, um, was
11 heart wrenching and, and, ah, I don't know what else
12 to say. Um, when Chair Ampry-Samuel, ah, her first
13 hearing was, ah, almost four years ago, and at that
14 time we were talking about massive failures of
15 heating plants across the City of New York during a
16 bitterly cold winter. So, um, I'd like to hear from
17 somebody, ah, what is going to be different going
18 forward, because I don't really think that, um, the
19 two chairs, who have asked questions today, have
20 really gotten their appropriate level of, ah,
21 response from NYCHA, and I, I know you go to work
22 every day and, ah, I know you're trying, but I don't
23 know, um, what it's gonna take to give me the
24 confidence. I'm leaving office at the end of this
25 year. But I'd like to think that we left the city in
a better place than we found it, and I don't believe

3 that's gonna be the case, ah, for the 400,000-plus
4 NYCHA residents, which make up over 5% of the city
5 population. So, ah, I'd love to hear from anybody.

6 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Council Member,
7 thank you so much for that question and, um, I really
8 do appreciate it. Um, I think, um, with all due
9 respect I think, you know, the time that you grew up
10 in Pomonok Houses, ah, which, ah, was always known as
11 the crown jewel of NYCHA, ah...

12 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: I, I just
13 want to say something, Mr. Honan. I have spoken, it
14 was considered a, an excellent place to live and grow
15 up. But I've spoken to my colleague, Daneek Miller,
16 who grew up in the Pink Houses. He had a similar
17 experience. And I have spoken to people who grew up
18 in NYCHA residences all across New York City in the
19 '50s and the '60s, and they're experience generally
20 was very, very similar to what I had. Um, that
21 matters were taken care of, um, and I, I just don't
22 know what has happened over the last 40 years or so
23 that, ah, slowly, um, this is [inaudible]...

24 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Ah, Council
25 Member, I'm sorry, Council Member...

3 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: If this was a
4 [inaudible] landlord we were talking about he'd end
5 up in jail.

6 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: I didn't mean to,
7 I didn't mean to imply that Pomonok was, was
8 different.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: I understand
10 that.

11 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: I just wanted
12 to...

13 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: I get that.
14 But I just wanted to have that on the record.

15 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: [inaudible], um,
16 Pomonok was no different because if you speak to, ah,
17 Ms. Torres, ah, in, in Smith Houses she will tell you
18 that years ago Smith Houses was much better. If you
19 speak to Ms. Elden in that same area, she will tell
20 you that St. Mary's was run a lot better. If it
21 worked it one time, it can work again. However, the
22 biggest difference is more than a generation, and I
23 would even dare to say maybe two generations, of
24 federal disinvestment, both on the operating side and
25 on the capital side. This is not unique to NYCHA.
If you talk to housing authorities in Philadelphia,

3 if you talk to housing authorities in Chicago, if you
4 talk to housing authorities in Los Angeles, they will
5 tell you that they face the same struggle. Their
6 answer to this problem was demolition.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: I understand
8 that.

9 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: In, in New York
10 City...

11 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: It's how we
12 say it.

13 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: In New York City
14 we have done our best to keep, um, public housing
15 going. Um, but it is really, this is an example of
16 governments, they, they call this phrase starving the
17 beast, and so they starve us and they, they give us
18 half a dinner and they say why are you still hungry?
19 Well, for years we've gotten half the dinner.

20 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Right, with all
21 due respect, um, Mr. Honan, and I have so enjoyed
22 working with you over these eight years, you have
23 really been incredibly responsive when I call you.
24 With all due respect, you can say that they've only
25 given us half a dinner, but you haven't spent that
half. You haven't eaten that half.

2 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Yes, I agree.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: And you're
4 saying that you're hungry, but you haven't eaten that
5 half. And so if you can't spend the money you're
6 given I don't know how to process you need a lot
7 more.

8 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Sure.

9 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Of course you
10 need a lot more. But why don't you spend what you
11 have, and that's the point of this hearing.

12 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Yep, yep. And,
13 and Council Member, I, I think I would agree. I, I
14 would think almost all of NYCHA problems are two
15 pronged, right. Start with the spending. Start with
16 the fact that we are, ah, we are definitely
17 underfunded for years. But then we do have a
18 management program, um, and we have for years, and we
19 acknowledged, acknowledged it in the federal
20 agreement that we were forced to sign with HUD, the
21 Southern District, the City of New York. That was
22 not just a, you know, that was, that was an admission
23 that we have a problem both ways. We now at NYCHA
24 have folks who, um, have admitted to the problem and
25 are working on a transformation plan to change the

3 way not only that we're managed in all areas of
4 government. Eva is leading that effort. Um, Eva,
5 maybe you can talk a little about how things are
6 gonna get different and how we're gonna right the
7 ship.

8 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE: Thank
9 you, Brian. And, yes, the, the transformation plan,
10 which is on our website, if you haven't yet looked at
11 it. It was released in March 2021. It, it shows our
12 plan to change our management and operations. It
13 proposes an entirely new business model for NYCHA
14 operations. It's not going to replace the fact that
15 we still need 40 billion. But our goal is that if we
16 say we're gonna show up to fix the problem in your
17 wall, we'll show up to fix the problem in your wall.
18 The underlying cause, the broken, the broken pipe, it
19 may still continue to leak and we may have to come
20 back a month later to refix that wall. But the goal
21 of the transformation plan is an entirely new
22 business model that, that improves our response time
23 to our residents, especially around work orders,
24 cleanliness of buildings and grounds, really the core
25 operational needs. And the, the focus of the HUD
agreement and the six pillars, it, it shows that we,

3 it's, it's given us this focus to improve those,
4 those areas. So you mentioned heating. Um, our
5 heating response time over the last few years has
6 dramatically improved, um, less outages and less, um,
7 length of the outages. And so we are starting to
8 turn that management around, but without the
9 additional capital, and for many years we were eating
10 our entire plate of federal funds. As Steve has
11 mentioned, the city funds have grown substantially
12 over the, the most recent years, but for many, many
13 years our capital program was almost entirely
14 federally based and we did, we did meet all of those
15 federal requirements on spending guidelines. So we
16 have done our best, but, you know, when a building
17 doesn't receive capitalization when it's the same,
18 the same boiler, same pipes that you grew up with 40
19 years ago, there's very little we can do to
20 substantially change the living conditions for our
21 residents.

21 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Just jumping
22 in real quick. Um, I heard Brian say that, um, there
23 was a, you know, a management problem...

24 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Um-hmm.
25

3 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: And then, um,
4 Eva, you talked about, and, and then Brian also
5 mentioned the transformation plan and Eva [inaudible]
6 the transformation plan. Um, can you talk
7 specifically about the change in management real
8 quick? Like what, what changes were made, and like
9 knowing that there's a management problem, you signed
10 the federal agreement, that the federal agreement
11 that there's a management problem. Explain to me
12 what changes were made with management.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Thank you,
14 Chairs.

15 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE: So,
16 um, starting with, with our chair. Chair Russ was
17 brought in. Um, he has more federal housing, ah,
18 public housing experience than any previous chair,
19 and he is, working with him we have restructured the
20 management of, of our property management operations.
21 So we instituted something called the neighborhood
22 model, which reassigns our properties into smaller
23 management clusters called neighborhoods. And this
24 allows Management to have eyes on the ground and
25 really see what's going on with our properties at all
time. Our property managers need a lot of support

3 and a lot of help. The conditions in our building
4 are such that they're constantly putting out fires.
5 They're constantly responding to problems. And they
6 need supports. And we want to better connect the,
7 the properties with the central office so that
8 there's the same sense of urgency that people at our,
9 that workers at our properties feel that our central
10 office has to feel as well. So everything at NYCHA
11 is being redesigned around these neighborhoods to
12 provide our property managers support in serving our
13 residents.

14 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: And it came to...

15 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE: So we
16 now have 30 neighborhoods...

17 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: And, and, but
18 changes were made in, in management to spend the
19 money. So within central office what changes were
20 made to expedite procurement?

21 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE: We
22 brought on a chief procurement officer. Ah, I think
23 he started about a year ago. And he has completely,
24 um, streamlined our, our procurement policies. We
25 instituted a new procurement policies manual last
year. Um, he is also engaging with the supply chain

3 in a whole new way. So we've been meeting with the
4 New York Building Congress. We understand that our
5 capital program, specifically is, is resource
6 intensive. The amount of boilers, the amount of
7 elevators that we're gonna need requires us to reach
8 out to that supply chain in a whole new way. So our,
9 we have a new chief procurement officer that's
10 dealing with those, those big supply chain and
11 capital issues. But down to the micro purchase issue
12 as well, we have a new purchasing and logistics
13 department that's focused on helping property
14 managers quickly access the contracts they need to
15 respond when conditions at the sites demand, whether
16 it's, um, a stoppage and they need plumbers, whether
17 they need, ah, tree removal after a storm.

18 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Is there, thank
19 you for that, apologies for the motorcycle outside my
20 office door. But do you have documentation of that?
21 Because the documentation we're looking at shows a
22 decrease in spending of federal, state, and city
23 money. So what you're saying really sounds rosy. Do
24 you have any document that can show that? What is
25 your new streamlined procurement mechanism? You

3 know, and you can send those over. I'm not expecting
4 you to rattle off the top of your head.

5 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE: Yeah,
6 I will, I will give you to Steven and see what we can
7 share...

8 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: It's, it's hard,
9 the disconnect between what you're saying and what
10 I'm seeing in my deteriorating developments is large.

11 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE: Yeah.
12 I'm not sure what you're seeing. But we are spending
13 faster than we can get from the federal government.
14 We are spending every dollar we get to...

15 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Right. I look
16 forward to, I look forward to seeing that
17 documentation.

18 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Audrey?

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Great. Thank you.
20 Ah, we'll now continue with questions from Council
21 Member Brooks-Powers, followed by Council Member
22 Salamanca. And, ah, before we proceed I would just
23 like to, um, make a quick announcement, ah, to the
24 residents and other members of the public who have
25 joined us today. We thank you very much for taking
the time to come and present before the committees,

3 ah, and we thank you also for your patience. Ah, for
4 those who haven't yet had a chance to speak, we will
5 hear from all of you as soon as the committee members
6 conclude their questions with, with the
7 administration. Council Member Brooks-Powers.

8 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you,
10 and good afternoon, everyone. Thank you to both
11 Chairs Rosenthal and Ampry-Samuels for convening this
12 much-needed and timely hearing today. Thank you to
13 the members of the administration who've come to
14 provide testimony today. As a member of the capital
15 subcommittee and as a council member who represents
16 five NYCHA develops and a RAD development in my
17 district it's a priority that we ensure that NYCHA is
18 using its capital dollars responsibly. So I look
19 forward to hearing about how the department is
20 working to improve long-term quality of life
21 conditions for the residents of our city's public
22 housing. The main concern I would like to address
23 today is how NYCHA is using capital funding to
24 maintain the central services of its building stock,
25 particularly as one of the residents earlier
mentioned, the weather is getting colder and it's

3 especially critical that NYCHA keep its facilities'
4 heating equipment functioning, so that our public
5 housing residents are not left susceptible to
6 electrical outages or cold apartments. In recent
7 weeks as the weather has gotten colder my office has
8 received reports of inactive or malfunctioning
9 heating systems in multiple, in multiple NYCHA
10 facilities. In that light I wanted to ask NYCHA
11 representatives some questions. Before I go there, I
12 also want to take a moment to read, um, an email I
13 received in my office from a Red Fern resident, um,
14 that is requesting attention to their matter, um, and
15 I won't read the whole thing in, in the interest of
16 time, but it says tickets are opened and closed,
17 NYCHA no longer has the responsibility and National
18 Grid doesn't care. There are no trained workers on
19 site. ESD is attempting to resolve residents' total
20 discomfort. 88-year-old seniors are on oxygen,
21 defibrillators, and have asthma. Calling in
22 desperate need of help. So now I go to the
23 questions. How many complaints has NYCHA received
24 regarding malfunctioning heat systems, malfunctioning
25 elevators? How has NYCHA been following up to ensure
that building systems are functional and outages are

3 kept to a minimum? Under the HUD agreement, NYCHA
4 must replace 297 boilers by the end of 2026. Can
5 NYCHA provide a list of all developments citywide
6 that currently do not have permanent boilers
7 installed? How is NYCHA prioritizing facilities for
8 replacement and identifying buildings whose residents
9 have the highest need? And in wake, wake of
10 Hurricane Sandy NYCHA received funding for
11 infrastructure improvements and repairs. How has
12 that funding been used in the years since to protect
13 NYCHA developments from future storm damage? And
14 just to be a bit specific, um, to represent my
15 district on these questions also, the boiler, um,
16 question, Brian, as you know, um, we communicated all
17 through the weekend because I had residents at Red
18 Fern with absolutely no heat. And then in terms of
19 infrastructure, Oceanside Houses, um, has a, a lot of
20 concerns, as well as [inaudible] and Red Fern in
21 terms of commitments that have been made to NYCHA to
22 those developments in terms of the, the [inaudible]
23 from Sandy monies that NYCHA received and the repairs
24 that have not happened as it pertains to their
25 elevators, um, and their heating systems. So I'd

3 like to hear, um, responses from NYCHA on this.

4 Thank you.

5 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE: Sure,
6 thank you for that. I can start and then hand it off
7 where my colleagues can jump in. Ah, I wanted to
8 start with your, your heating issues. Um, the HUD
9 agreement sets requirements for hw we respond to, to
10 heat complaints. And in anticipation of heat season
11 and in order to get ahead of those, those performance
12 metrics, the NYCHA heat team does tremendous
13 preventative maintenance. They go through all of
14 our, our heating plants and we, we do, um, check
15 throughs of all the boilers. We look for parts. We
16 start stocking the parts that we know fail, like
17 coils and other things in, in our heating plants that
18 we, we know we want to have at the ready at our most,
19 ah, distressed sites. We also instituted a few years
20 ago a new heat desk that's stationed in Long Island
21 City that tracks all the heat complaints coming in so
22 we can faster respond just by seeing, um, increases
23 in complaints. Ah, we dispatch our heat teams right
24 away. We also have, um, building sensors...

25 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

3 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE: ...in
4 many properties now that start to show when, when
5 temperatures are falling, as well as, um, certain
6 alarms on boilers when we can start to predict that
7 things are failing on the heating plant prior to even
8 getting complaints. So we really changed the way
9 we're, we're using data better to respond to heating
10 complaints. Um, I, you know, if you're having
11 specific heating outages definitely, you know, we can
12 coordinate with Brian to follow up on those
13 constituent issues. We also report all of our outage
14 information on our website and you can see all of the
15 current, um, heating, heating outages, water outages,
16 everything is transparent on our website, as we're
17 experiencing them. I can hand it off to Steve to
18 talk about some of the replacement schedules that I
19 think you mentioned and I think, and there was a lot
20 in your questions. So if I missed something please
21 let me know.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: OK, and
23 before we, um, pass the, the question over to your
24 colleague, um, when you say that you're using data
25 better, I would imagine that if you're seeing it
ahead of time that we wouldn't necessarily get as

3 many complaints as we're getting in terms of the lack
4 of heat. So is this something that has been
5 implemented throughout, um, all of the developments?
6 Is it a pilot program, um, because...

7 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE: It's
8 throughout all the developments. And we still want
9 the complaints. That information is really important
10 to us. We encourage residents that are facing any
11 type of complaint and their issue to put in that,
12 that work ticket so that we know about it and we can
13 follow up on it. We don't see work tickets as a bad
14 thing. It gives us feedback on our buildings and
15 what our residents are experiencing. So, you know,
16 if everyone in the building is calling in a heat
17 complaint, that's fine, um, and that gives us
18 information to work off of.

19 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Um,
20 I'll, I'll take, I'll take the next, um, set of
21 questions, and these are in regards to the FEMA-
22 funded projects. Um, you do have five projects, I
23 believe, in your district. Um, all of them are in
24 construction, ah, as we are working on different
25 scopes of generators, heating plants, um, as part of
the FEMA funding.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: Can, can
4 you identify which ones so that I'm on the same page
5 as, as you?

6 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Yup.

7 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: You say there
8 are five...

9 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: So...

10 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: ...in my
11 district?

12 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Yup.

13 So, ah, you have Red Fern, um, which is estimated to
14 be completed in 2022, ah, Quarter 2. You have Beach
15 41 that's in construction as well. Um, and that
16 should be ending its construction in Quarter 1 of
17 2022. Ah, Ocean Bay or Oceanside, ah, that
18 construction had started, ah, and it's anticipated to
19 be completed in Quarter 4 of 2021. Ah, Carlton Manor
20 is also in construction and that's estimated to be
21 completed in Quarter 2 of 22, as well as Hamil, ah,
22 which is estimated to completed in, ah, Quarter 2 of
23 2023. And, um, I also want to thank you very much
24 for the, the funds that you've, you've provided us at
25 Red Fern and Carlton Manor. Um, both of those
projects, the, the playground and the basketball

3 renovations are in construction as well. And, and I
4 thank you for your support.

5 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Steve, can you
6 briefly, um, describe the work that's being done in
7 each of those, those developments or...

8 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Thank you,
9 Brian.

10 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: ...[inaudible]
11 said, yeah, at least we can send the Council Member,
12 ah, a list. But if you could just briefly go into it
13 and then we can, and then I think we should set up
14 something with the TA leaders and the Council Member
15 so this way we're clear on all the work that needs to
16 be done. We can set that up quickly.

17 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Yeah, I,
18 in the, in the matter of time I think if, if, what we
19 can do is we'll set up a meeting and we'll go through
20 all of the scope of the work for all of those
21 developments with you, as well as the residents.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: Please
23 just give me high level to let me know if it's
24 pertaining to the elevators, um, I just want...

25 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: The, the
heating plant...

2 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Wait, just
3 hold on for a second. Um, when Council Member
4 Brooks-Powers asked a question then you answered I
5 had my mic off and I was saying I wish you would just
6 give the details. It's only five developments, and
7 then Brian you jumped and asked him to give the
8 examples, so I appreciate that, because this would
9 help us, right? Because just listing the projects
10 and when they're gonna be completed I can read that
11 on the paper. You know, just to get a sense of what
12 you're doing and the timeline is why we're having
13 this hearing, so.

14 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Chair, I've worked
15 with you there for a little while, so I know what
16 you're looking for.

17 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: So Red
18 Fern...

19 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: [inaudible].

20 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: [laughs]

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you,
22 Madam Chair [laughs].

23 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Um, so
24 Red Fern, ah, we are putting in a heating plant
25 there. Ah, is it above grade, um, as, as part of

3 that program and, and there is some generators
4 associated to that. Um, you have, ah, Ocean Bay,
5 Oceanside, um, where we are also, we've completed
6 with the above-grade heating plant at that, that
7 particular development. There was, ah, some heating,
8 ah, elements associated to the hot water program to
9 that. Carlton Manor is also above-grade heating
10 plant. Um, and that is in construction, as well as
11 Hamil has an above-grade heating plant. And those
12 are the construction projects. We are, we are fully
13 building out a new heating plant. Ah, those are all
14 steam programs, and then we've decoupled in terms of
15 we are, we are, ah, heating up the hot water through
16 steam from those boiler plants.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: So no
18 elevators are listed in any of those capital
19 projects?

20 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Um, not,
21 ah, there are, there are, there's a number of other
22 pieces. Elevators in particular ones, but there's
23 the lighting and the site plans. Um, in terms of
24 elevators, there are no elevators as part of the
25 recovery and resiliency program at those
developments.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: And so
3 there was a commitment from NYCHA, um, on elevators,
4 um, to Red Fern and Beach 41st Houses. So I'd like
5 to know how that fell off the table, and how could a
6 commitment made be changed.

7 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Um, I
8 will look into those particular ones and we will get
9 back to you, um, and we will work out, um, to make
10 sure that, that elevators are, you know, that we have
11 it in our pipeline.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: And one
13 last thing, and, um, Chairs, I appreciate the time
14 that you're providing to me. Um, but, in terms of
15 the complaints that we've been receiving in terms of
16 the malfunctioning heating systems and elevators I
17 request that NYCHA provide in writing to the
18 committee members, um, a full reporting on, um, how
19 many of these are in, in bad shape in terms of the
20 reports of the outages, um, so that we have a good
21 line of site on that. Um, also, again, Red Fern
22 continues to be without heat and as you are all
23 working towards this, um, construction I need to
24 know, NYCHA has, as I'm hearing today, money that's
25 not even being spent. Like, what is NYCHA doing to

3 address it on the short term and then long term, ah,
4 we, we understand, but on the short term to make sure
5 that we are providing New Yorkers with the heat that
6 they need. Um, we should not have seniors and, and
7 families without heat, like when we go to sleep at
8 night we are blessed and fortunate to, to have what I
9 hope is a place with heat, and I have hundreds of
10 residents that for several days when it was extremely
11 cold, and we are on a peninsula, so when it's cold in
12 New York City we're about 10 degrees less than y'all,
13 and they are cold. And, you know, NYCHA is not doing
14 what they need to do, um, to ensure that they have
15 proper heating.

16 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: So, Council
17 Member, it was, um, you know, all weekend long I, I
18 know we were in communication on, on the heating
19 issue at Red Fern and we have had staff there today.
20 There was a part that was, ah, that was missing.
21 It's a fairly new systems, too, at Red Fern, um, too.
22 So it was unusual. It did require a partnership with
23 National Grid, so you're, as, as always, the
24 residents know what's going on, um, and, um, but that
25 problem should be, you know, we should be seeing
improvement, ah, at Red Fern by, you know, by the end

3 of this week and we'll continue to monitor, and
4 please, as always, whether it's 11 o'clock at night
5 or 11 o'clock in the morning you could always reach
6 out to me and I will make sure that the heating team
7 knows in real time. Um, and so, and we can get you
8 the number of, you know, outages so far in your
9 developments, um, for this heat season and if the
10 chair wants that for all committee members we can do
11 that, too, as well.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER BROOKS-POWERS: Thank you
13 so much, Brian. And this evening we have a tenants'
14 meeting with Red Fern. If you or someone from NYCHA
15 is available to join us at 6:00 p.m. you are more
16 than welcome, 'cause I'm gonna have to respond to
17 NYCHA and I would love it if NYCHA can respond to
18 NYCHA. And thank you so much, Chairs, for the time.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Great. Thanks very
20 much. We will now take questions from Council Member
21 Salamanca, followed Council Member Adams.

22 SERGEANT AT ARMS: The clock is ready.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Yes, thank
24 you, um, thank you, Madam Chair for this, um,
25 important hearing, ah, on capital. Um, I just had a
very basic question to, ah, to the capital team here

3 at NYCHA. In 2017 I, my office allocated, um, about
4 3 million dollars, capital dollars, for security
5 upgrades to Merrills Houses. That work has still not
6 gotten done. Can you please give me an update as to
7 what's happening with that funding that I gave you in
8 fiscal year 2017?

9 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Um,
10 thank you, Council Member Salamanca. Um, so the 3,
11 the 3.4 for CTE upgrades at Melrose, that was, ah, we
12 received that in fiscal year 2019 and that was
13 procured. There is a contractor that has been
14 procured. It is now going to OMB, ah, that's a CMA
15 [inaudible] and it should go into construction as
16 soon as we have comptroller registration for that
17 contract.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Ah, let's just
19 go back. That funding was given to you in fiscal
20 year 17. You're saying fiscal year 19. So did you
21 get to it in fiscal year 19? Because it was not 19,
22 it was fiscal year 17.

23 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: I'm, I'm
24 going by our, the city, ah, FMS system. , um, and the
25 FMS system identified that that fiscal came from
26 2019. Ah, it's mayoral commitments. It's for 3,

3 \$3,442,000, and those are the CCTV upgrades at
4 Melrose. But, again, I think those, that is
5 irrelevant. We need to get the CCTV to the residents
6 and we've hired a contractor. Ah, that is going
7 through the OMB comptroller process and, ah, as soon
8 as we have a contract registration on that we will
9 start installing cameras.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: When was it,
11 when was it, when was it sent to the comptroller's
12 office?

13 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: We just
14 got the contractor. That package is getting put
15 together. It will go to the comptroller's office or
16 OMB. It will go to OMB first. It has to go to the
17 CP process first. And once we get a CP then we can
18 go to the comptroller's office.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: How long is
20 that process gonna take?

21 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Um, it,
22 it, it depends. Ah, we average out, ah, we hope that
23 that's a 30-day to 60-day turnaround. Um, but we
24 recognize with our partners that there is a lot of
25 work and right now it's been taking six to eight
months.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: This is why,
4 I'm gonna say this on the record. While I'm staying
5 office, while I'm still the Council Member, I will
6 never have [inaudible] funding in NYCHA. It is a
7 waste of time. You know, to be able to give you
8 funding, and that funding was allocated was in 20,
9 ah, ah, in fiscal year 17. I understand you're
10 saying your resources say fiscal year 19. But it was
11 in 20, in, in fiscal year 17. You know, for this
12 entire, the entirety of time this money has been
13 sitting on your lap and you have done nothing with
14 this funding. And time in and time again all I've
15 heard was excuses. We've had many oversight hearings
16 announced about that money. You said, or you're
17 gonna get back to me. This is the first time that I
18 hear you getting back to me on the record. So Madam
19 Chair, I want to thank you for this hearing and so,
20 so we can really call out the incompetence when it
21 comes to capital dollars at NYCHA. And with that,
22 thank you, Madam Chair.

23 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Well, can I
24 actually just follow up, um, on Council Member
25 Salamanca's question. So let's say he put the money

3 in, some money in 17. Let's say it was fully funded
4 2019, whatever.

5 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: So this
6 is actually 2019...

7 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [inaudible] why
8 didn't the process start in 2019, then?

9 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Um, I
10 can't speak to the 2019. But what I can speak to is
11 what we're doing right now, um, and I...

12 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Can anyone speak
13 to why it didn't happen in 2019? And, again, the
14 reason I'm focusing is because I've now taken out 3
15 million dollars from my NYCHA allocations, um,
16 because they're just not, nothing, I can't seem to
17 allocate to anything that would actually finish. Um,
18 and so I'm now using the money to build a better
19 lunch room for the school next to the NYCHA
20 development, and I feel that's a good use of the
21 money and it's gonna be completed this year. It was
22 sitting in my budget, your budget, for eight years,
23 right? Seven, six, five, whatever it was. So I'm
24 really curious if anyone has the answer to Council
25 Member Salamanca's question. What happened between
2019 and your sudden interest in putting through the

3 CP to OMB. And I know the answer. The sudden
4 interest is because, you know, we want to get stuff
5 done by the end of people's terms or the de Blasio
6 administration. But does anyone know why it didn't
7 get done for two years?

8 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: What
9 I've done is a deep dive into our capital program and
10 we've put into place pieces in which funding, when we
11 receive it, immediately goes into task orders and we
12 start moving it through the process. I don't want
13 projects to sit in Planning, and that's, and that's
14 what we did with our FY22. Those projects
15 immediately, as soon as we got the list, we went
16 into, um, putting task orders so that way as soon as
17 the funding gets released and we can submit CPs in
18 November, ah, we are going that.

19 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: [inaudible]

20 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Um,
21 we're also moving a lot of projects like the CCTV
22 over to, um, CMA and job order contract, so that way
23 we can expedite those faster, ah, than putting them,
24 basically taking out a design phase.

25 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: So the answer
here is you're gonna do better because you now have

3 this task order process that you didn't have before,
4 right? That's what you're saying?

5 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: I can't
6 speak to the past.

7 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: You're gonna
8 do different, you're gonna do something different
9 [inaudible].

10 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: But
11 we're doing it different to make it better so that
12 way we never have these again.

13 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: So, so
14 question. When you, earlier with talked about, um,
15 OMB, right, the, the communications you've been
16 having with OMB and how because of that, um, you were
17 able to, um, show in the, the, the timeframe of
18 projects. So the conversation you had with OMB was,
19 um, Council Member Salamanca's project, included in
20 that, that OMB conversation?

21 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: So we're
22 constantly having conversations with OMB. Um, and
23 trying to streamline the way in which we move our
24 projects through the processes. Um, also with making
25 sure that there's, ah, scoping and financing and the
right information in the CPs so that way there's no

3 back and forth. We want to streamline this so that
4 way it gets to them, they look at it, they can
5 approve it, and move forward. And that's the goal.
6 And it's about a partnership. It's about a
7 partnership with OMB. It's about a partnership with
8 the comptroller. We were able to, with the
9 comptroller's assistance, move everything from
10 electronic filing. That, I think, is really gonna
11 speed up the process by which we get our projects,
12 um, registered. And so those are those conversations
13 that we have regardless.

14 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: You know
15 [inaudible] because the first question that I asked
16 where I started out historically, NYCHA has had
17 significantly lower city capital rate when compared
18 to, that, that was my first question, and in that
19 question we asked specifically about your, your
20 partnership and communication with OMB, and responded
21 by saying that you were doing something different
22 with OMB which is allowing for us to now see a
23 different spend rate. And so that's why I was just,
24 so I was thinking that since you just spoke to
25 Council Member Salamanca about OMB, I was trying to,

3 you know, kind of bring us back to the first
4 question.

5 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Yeah.

6 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: To see if
7 there's been a change, but.

8 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: No, I, I
9 don't want, I don't want, you know, OMB is not about
10 our commitment rate. Our commitment rate is our
11 commitment rate, right? It's our responsibility...

12 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: That's some of
13 the process.

14 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI:
15 ...[inaudible] commitment. And so the, the process I
16 was speaking for before was the right sizing of the,
17 of the portfolio, so that way, as we look at our
18 percentages you have a, a quarter of billion, I'm
19 sorry, you have 750 million dollars that you can't
20 access. You do that as a percentage off of your
21 obligation and expenditure rate 'cause you're not,
22 you're not able to have that, that's just sitting
23 there. Um, that distorts that percentage rate. Now
24 that we've right sized our portfolio as soon as we
25 got those funds, you know, as soon as we got that
agreement and those funds were available to us, we

3 started moving on those projects and then working
4 with OMB to illustrate where we're gonna project out
5 for the entire year. So, again, it's not OMB that's
6 controlling our obligations and expenditures. That's
7 us, that's me. But, um, we're working with OMB so
8 that way we can speed up processes.

9 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Yeah. I guess I
10 still don't understand. Anyway, we should let
11 Council Member Adams speak. But this, um, and maybe
12 we can just work offline. But I genuinely don't
13 understand what has changed and why it couldn't
14 change two years ago, five years ago. And maybe the
15 question, and I'll get back to this, you're under
16 oath, my question to you is do you need more staff to
17 get the work done?

18 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: So we
19 have a program set up that we can use program
20 managers through our federal dollars to allow us to
21 expand and contract staff as needed for those
22 projects, and the tool that we're using is those
23 program managers to staff up to get these projects,
24 ah, executed.

25 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Honestly, I don't
understand what you [inaudible].

3 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: We can
4 always use more staff. I mean, we can always use
5 more staff, but if, if there's not, you know, if
6 there's not blood in the turnip to, to allow for
7 funding to get us more staff, we're also looking at
8 different ways in which we can make sure that we have
9 enough staff to execute all over these projects.

10 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Right, but you
11 don't have enough staff to execute all these
12 projects. It's not on you. It's not on anyone
13 there. But you, you just don't, right? So again,
14 apologies Council Member Adams, I see your hand has
15 been up for a long time.

16 SERGEANT AT ARMS: The clock is running.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER ADAMS: Thank you so much.
18 Um, thank you, both of, of my chairs, um, for having
19 this hearing today. It's so needed. Ah, I've been
20 listening for a while and, um, I'm just gonna preface
21 this by saying that when I ran for City Council, um,
22 in 2017 I promised my constituents at South Jamaica
23 Houses that I would revamp the look for their senior
24 center that's been out of commission for a very long
25 time at the hands of this administration. Ah, fast
forward to a couple of months into office when I

3 brought this project to NYCHA. NYCHA then handed me
4 a 5 million dollar bill and said you do it yourself.
5 Well, anybody that knows how City Council is managed
6 knows that that is our entire budget, ah, for our
7 entire district. So that was an impossibility. So
8 there I was with egg on my face, ah, running on
9 something that I thought was going to be a no-brainer
10 because we care about our constituents at NYCHA. We
11 care about the residents. And, most importantly, we
12 care about our seniors. But this was not the case.
13 I am happy to say that I have been able to secure
14 funding, over a million dollars, ah, with NYCHA to,
15 to upgrade our, our, ah, ah, community center for our
16 children, partnering with Cornerstone, and that has
17 gone very, very well. So I, I wanted to say all that
18 as far as history of was concerned, commiserate with
19 my colleague, ah, Council Member Salamanca. This is
20 such a, a difficult, ah, hill to climb with NYCHA and
21 also with my, my colleague, ah, Council Member
22 Grodenchik. It's very painful to have these, ah, to
23 hear what is still going on to the most
24 disenfranchised of our entire population. These are
25 human beings and the stories that I hear every day,
they're just not treated as such. I have one

3 question after all of that. At South Jamaica House I
4 have noticed that there is storage being used, ah,
5 where children should be playing in their community
6 center areas and certain community center. There is
7 actual storage that is being, there's, there's
8 refrigerators, ah, put in there. There are other,
9 other things that I guess Maintenance is holding onto
10 to move into apartments that need those appliances.
11 Why would this ever be the case that we would take
12 away space for our children and our seniors in our
13 housing developments, that they need so much,
14 especially in the time of the pandemic. Why would
15 these vital spaces be used for storage?

16 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Council Member,
17 is, is that, um, storage, um, in the community
18 center?

19 COUNCIL MEMBER ADAMS: Ah, it is in the
20 family, it's called the family center. I [inaudible].

21 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: In the family
22 center?

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ADAMS: Yeah, yes, but...

24 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: I apologize for
25 not having the answer now, but I, I will make a
commitment to get back to you tomorrow to find out

3 exactly what's going on there and, you know, work
4 with leadership here to see if we can resolve that
5 quickly. Um, as far as funding the senior centers
6 and community centers, um, we agree with you. The
7 federal government in, going all the way back to the
8 Bush administration, the second George Bush, um,
9 stopped funding, ah, community and senior centers,
10 um, you know, so, um, at that time NYCHA tried its
11 best to keep the community centers going with NYCHA
12 staff. Eventually it became too burdensome and we,
13 um, with DYCD and the city's help we were able to
14 have Cornerstone. But if you talk to, you know, many
15 of the long-term residents here years ago they will
16 tell you when NYCHA, you know, was funded fully, you
17 know, with community centers, not only were the
18 conditions better, but also the relationship was much
19 better, too. People tell me who, you know, grew up,
20 is like that community center was not only where we
21 went to summer camp, not only where we went to
22 afterschool, but it was a place that like family and
23 it was a lot different. Um, it is a shame because...

24 COUNCIL MEMBER ADAMS: I hear the same
25 stories, Brian. I, I hear the same stories of...

VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Yeah.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER ADAMS: ...days gone by and
3 how great the times were then. Ah, my issue, just
4 like Barry's, just like, you know, um, Council Member
5 Salamanca, is, um, that we have gotten so far away
6 from humanity when it comes to NYCHA and the
7 residents of NYCHA. Again, these are human beings
8 and for me all of the bureaucracy and red tape that
9 this city puts them through is inexcusable and it's
10 heartbreaking.

11 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: I, I wish, ah,
12 when I go to developments I, I wish I could, I could
13 say, you know, different. But I, I just do think
14 that public housing nationally has been neglected
15 for, for way too long and the camel's back broke.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER ADAMS: Thank you. Thank
17 you, Chairs.

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you very much,
19 Council Member Adams. Ah, if there are no other
20 council members who have questions at this time, um,
21 we will turn back to the chairs for additional
22 questions.

23 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: So I, I want
24 to be able to, um, to, I want to go back to Council
25 Member Salamanca's question, but, um, but just for

3 the record dive into the discretionary city capital
4 additions. The fiscal 2021 adopted budget added
5 about 16.1 million in city capital funds for 51
6 discretionary projects citywide within NYCHA's city
7 capital portfolio. In fiscal 2021 City Council
8 discretionary projects in NYCHA's portfolio received
9 an average of about \$315,000 in funding to address
10 physical improvements at developments citywide. How
11 much of the 6.1 million in city capital funding has
12 been committed, and of the 51 discretionary projects,
13 how many of those projects are completed or expected
14 to be completed in fiscal 2022 because, Steven, you,
15 you mentioned a few times as you're working on
16 projections with OMB. So like if you can just kind
17 of give us a sense overall.

18 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Well,
19 first of all I want to thank you again for your
20 support on the important projects. They contribute a
21 lot towards, they contribute tremendous amounts to
22 the quality of life. Um, so of the 51 the 16.1
23 million, ah, 11 million of that is in design. So 20
24 projects, ah, total are in design. One is actually
25 completed and being closed out. And, um, and we are
moving, there's about two that are, two or three that

3 are being combined with borough, borough president
4 money, [inaudible] so that there is one project, so
5 those projects are actually in design. Um, and so
6 we've moved all of those, but none of them are
7 obligated at this, at this point in time, cause that,
8 that's, they are not obligated until they have a, ah,
9 contract registration.

10 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK. And so
11 based on what we just walking about, what's that
12 timeline for some of them? Is there, can you give us
13 an average timeline for getting to that next step?

14 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Yup. So
15 five of those are, are security projects, right. We
16 can immediately move those into CMA and JOC and
17 that's what we've done, so those are getting CPs to
18 immediately to go out to the residents, ah, and
19 security and the development staff to identify where
20 those lighting pieces are. Nine of those are
21 grounds. Um, we're trying to move those also into a
22 CMA and JOC contract so we can immediately go into
23 design with the residents and skip, ah, the design
24 problem. Um, three of those are...

25 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Is that the
six money skip or?

3 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Yeah,
4 yeah, that's, that's we're trying to skip actually a
5 CP process, right, 'cause we're gonna go right into
6 CMA and job order contracts, so we get to skip the
7 design CP phase. So we save time in, in that, as
8 well as, ah, a project for design is anywhere from
9 six to nine months. We're being able to skip that
10 because of the type of projects. There's, um, so
11 those are immediately going. The community centers,
12 those are all in CPs and those are all, ah, over to
13 OMB to start the design process on those. Those CPs
14 for design. And then there are three compactor
15 projects. Um, as I mentioned, we completed one of
16 those, um, ah, projects and we've already moved that
17 forward.

18 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Chair
19 Rosenthal. I tried to take notes.

20 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: You got it. Um,
21 I appreciate that. I, think we've asked a lot of
22 questions and I think my takeaway thought is that
23 there's a November plan that the mayor is about to
24 give to the City Council and I hope I see in there
25 the necessary staff, um, additional staff that NYCHA
needs for the capital, um, plan team, because we're

3 beyond a crisis and, um, ah, the sooner we can get
4 all these projects moved through and, you know, the
5 money spent, um, I think that would be a good idea.
6 But, um, Chair Ampry-Samuel, I admire your work with
7 NYCHA month after month at these hearings.

8 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Thank you.

9 So, um, I just want to get a couple of questions in
10 for the record that I think would be helpful, um, to
11 my colleagues come January. As part of a budget
12 agreement reached between the mayor and the City
13 Council, the fiscal 2021 adopted budget redirected
14 approximately 537 million from NYPD's capital budget
15 to NYCHA to expand broadband to the community
16 centers. In total 157 million is expected to be
17 invested for broadband expansion in fiscal 2021. What
18 is the current status of the broadband expansion
19 initiative and how much of the 157 million has been
20 spent to date?

21 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE: Thank
22 you, Council Member. NYCHA is partnering with MOCTO
23 to implement their RFP for broadband services, which
24 includes reviewing respondents to the RFP work stream
25 for the use of the city capital funding to expand
broadband infrastructure. MOCTO is the lead agency

2 and can provide more detailed information on the
3 status of the project.

4 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK. Um, and
5 even though they're the lead agency, they're going...

6 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Um, I'm sorry,
7 what agency? MOCTO?

8 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE: The,
9 the Mayor's Office for Chief Technology Officer.
10 Sorry for using the acronym.

11 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: No, that's all
12 right. So you're not in touch with them, so you
13 don't know the answer [inaudible].

14 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE: No, we
15 are in touch. We are partnering. But they are the
16 lead agency controlling the city capital funding. We
17 are...

18 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: But I think the
19 question was given that you're in close contact with
20 them, working with them, what's the timing on
21 spending the money?

22 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE: That's
23 really a question for them to answer.

24 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Why?
25

3 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE: The
4 way we partner with them is that they are respondents
5 to the RFP, some that are using NYCHA, and some that
6 aren't. That RFP and that city capital is for
7 citywide access. So not every respondent to the RFP
8 is proposing the use of NYCHA assets or to serve
9 NYCHA residents. So when there is a respondent that
10 includes NYCHA in their response they have shared
11 that with us and we are working closely with them to
12 review those responses.

13 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: I mean, I haven't
14 seen the fire in your belly to get that done.

15 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE: We
16 are, we have been working closely with MOCTO for over
17 a year now, ah, starting with the RFEI that they put
18 out, I want to say June 2020, where we have six
19 vendors on board right now installing broadband, each
20 across three different developments. So we are
21 instituting the biggest broadband program that NYCHA
22 has ever been involved in through those six vendors
23 in partners with MOCTO. And we have been very
24 committed to expanding broadband access. We've been
25 sharing information about the federal EBB program to

3 reduce, ah, broadband costs for our residents and
4 this is absolutely a priority for us.

5 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: But you don't
6 know the timing from the Office of Technology.

7 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE:
8 Honestly, no, because I know there's a lot for them
9 to review with the, with the use of city capital
10 funding and...

11 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: [inaudible]

12 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE: ...it
13 is, it is an RFP process so I don't want to step on
14 their toes and...

15 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Sure.

16 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE: ...make
17 any problems for the RFP.

18 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Sure. Should we
19 give the Office of Technology more funding,
20 personnel, because of course it's a big project for a
21 big city? Do they need more staff to get this done?
22 Again, we...

23 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE: I
24 can't answer for them. I'll...

25 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: ...[inaudible]
students in NYCHA, kids in NYCHA, who never got to

3 access their course work when stuff was remote, when
4 school was remote for a year and a half and I, I just
5 want to feel that the fire in your belly to fix it
6 because these kids are so far behind.

6 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE:

7 Absolutely. There's tremendous fire in my belly, I
8 promise you that, when it comes to broadband. I
9 spend a lot of my time on the broadband project and
10 very closely involved in monitoring all of our
11 vendors and, and expanding that work. We've talked
12 to all the vendors to expand their portfolio but
13 right now specific to your question the RFPs within
14 MOCTO, and you should definitely follow up with them
15 to find out what they need to expedite that work.

16 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: And so you're
17 working with your current contractors to expand their
18 breadth. Can you tell us a little bit more about
19 that?

20 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE: Yes,
21 we have six, we have six vendors on board right now
22 to install broadband in, um, various developments.
23 They each have about three developments underneath
24 their license agreement right now.

2 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: So that's 18
3 total, got it.

4 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE: and,
5 um, and so we've been working with them. Um, most of
6 them are just getting underway right now in the
7 installation phase of that work. And once they have
8 fully signed up the residents and are, and are
9 stabilized, we will begin talking to them about
10 expanding to additional developments.

11 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: So none of them
12 are up and going?

13 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE: No,
14 some of them are up and, up and running. I don't
15 have it all off the top of my head. But we've, but
16 we've launched, um, with a variety of the vendors.
17 I, I can follow up. I can send you all of the
18 vendors and their locations and what is running and
19 what is still in the implementation phase.

20 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: How many more do
21 you have to go? 18...

22 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE: How
23 many more sites?

24 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Yep.
25

2 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE: Um, I
3 want to say there's probably only three or four sites
4 left that are still, um, in the implementation phase,
5 but I will follow up.

6 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: And after that
7 the ones that don't have, are not even in the
8 beginning phases, how many [inaudible]?

9 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE: I also
10 want to add that all of our buildings right now are
11 wired for either FIOS or Spectrum or both. With this
12 additional, um, service is, is bringing, ah,
13 broadband vendors that we work with in partnership
14 with MOCTO to provide low-cost or free service for
15 our residents.

16 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Got it.

17 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE:
18 However, both...

19 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: How many more
20 [inaudible]...

21 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE:
22 ...[inaudible] and FIOS, ah, and Spectrum offer low-
23 cost programs.

24 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Right. So how
25 many more do you have to go after this 18?

3 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE: We
4 will work with the vendors to see what their capacity
5 is and what they, what they need to expand.

6 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Do you have
7 any plans?

8 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE: We
9 have told them all that once they have successfully
10 achieved installation at their first three
11 developments we will work with them to expand their
12 portfolio.

13 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: So I don't
14 understand. What's the connection with the Mayor's
15 Office of Technology and their [inaudible].

16 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE: So
17 these six vendors came to us through an RFEI that was
18 put out in June of 2020 with MOCTO and EDC as
19 partners. As I said, these six vendors came to us.
20 We are, we also have on top of that the RFP that
21 MOCTO is working on now for additional vendors to
22 come on board.

23 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: And do you
24 have, could you say that you have five in mind that
25 you think should be the next five sites after this
18?

3 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE: I

4 don't. We, we have worked with MOCTO. They, they,
5 in the internet master plan they have maps of, I
6 can't remember exactly what it's called, but like low
7 take-up rates or low subscription rates, um, for
8 certain areas of the city that they, that are, um,
9 you know, that have limited broadband, ah, access.
10 So we, we have looked at those maps as part of, as
11 part of this process. However, some of these groups
12 are using new time types, new types of technology
13 that need to work off each other, so that there,
14 these mesh networks that they need to kind of go from
15 contiguous buildings. So some of it depends on the
16 technology that the vendor is using and how they can
17 expand into additional buildings.

18 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Sounds

19 complicated. Sounds like something that if you had
20 enough staff you could plan for, right, and know what
21 the next set of buildings are. I mean, this is
22 fundamentally what the problem was with capital
23 spending, the lack of planning. And so I'm just
24 wondering if you're doing the planning now on a
25 project that you're working but, Chair Ampry-Samuel,
I'm sorry I interrupted you. I, I, just, it's, it's

2 sort of just screams of not planning again and that's
3 what got us in trouble with the, you know, lack of
4 spending city money. Um, so I just am trying to
5 point out here's an opportunity where you could plan
6 something and as soon as the RFP is ready you know
7 the sites that you could go to. Um, just an idea.

8 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Well, with
9 that, Chair Rosenthal, um, I mean, just ask the next
10 question, ah, about fiscal 2021, adopted budget
11 again. Um, fiscal 2021 adopted budget redirected 22
12 million in capital funds in fiscal 2021 from the NYPD
13 to NYCHA for the renovation of three currently vacant
14 community centers - Monroe Houses in the Bronx,
15 Sheepshead Bay Houses in Brooklyn, and Wagner in
16 Manhattan. Additionally, a fourth NYCHA community
17 center located in Ocean Bay Houses, um, will receive
18 expense funding to support programming to be provided
19 by DYCD. Was the current, what's the current status
20 of the community center renovations and how much of
21 the 22 million has been spent?

22 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Thank
23 you very much for, um, the question. NYCHA has
24 assigned all of these important projects to our
25 program management to support. Um, and we've already

3 started the surveying of the existing conditions and
4 we've been going out to, ah, meetings with the center
5 sponsors, tenant associations, and project managers
6 to define the exact, exact scope as we are building
7 out those A&E services. Um, and then we, and then we
8 move into the, ah, design phase of getting those
9 architects and engineers on board. The target date
10 for, ah, construction start in the Sheepshead Bay is,
11 um, well, the doing for all, all of them, ah,
12 Sheepshead Bay, Monroe, and Wagner is spring 2020.
13 Um, we hope to see that fall, ah, procurement in 2022
14 and then start of construction for those three in
15 spring of 2023. Now, the Ocean Bay...

16 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Say it one
17 more time.

18 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: I'm
19 sorry?

20 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Just one
21 moment.

22 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Yeah, I,
23 um, I have a mask on. So, ah, Sheepshead Bay,
24 Monroe, and Wagner, the design is, should be going
25 out, it should be starting in spring of 2020...

CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: 2020?

3 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: 2021,
4 excuse me. 2021, the procurement...

5 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: We're in
6 [inaudible], we're in fall 2021. We done passed the
7 spring. We passed the spring of 2020 and the spring
8 of 2021.

9 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: I'm
10 sorry. Um, I, I'm reading my notes incorrectly. Um,
11 Sheepshead Bay, Monroe, and Wagner, the design
12 started in, is in the process of starting. We've
13 already gone out to those, um, sponsors as we're
14 building out the scope of those projects and design
15 starts in this spring, which would be 2022. So I
16 apologize. We then hope to get these out in the fall
17 as we're gonna accelerate the design phase of that.
18 This design is six to nine months. And construction
19 start is anticipated in 2023.

20 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK, and how do
21 you accelerate design phase, one more time.

22 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Yup. So
23 we've, we've been doing this recently successfully,
24 ah, on a lot of our projects, where we are pulling
25 the designers together and they're building out, ah,
standards so that way we can execute those design

3 projects quicker. Um, we want to do the stakeholder
4 engagement and make sure that the, the sponsors and
5 the resident association have the items in that scope
6 that we can, we can do. And then by simplifying the
7 design, creating standards, so that way the drawings
8 are, are simplified, ah, we meet with the Department
9 of Buildings so that way they know of the pipeline
10 that's coming and then they can be prepared for that.
11 That's how we streamline that. And, you know, we've
12 been, we've been doing that successfully on the
13 heating plant pipeline. We did it successfully on
14 the roofing program, and we've been recently
15 successful in doing that on some of the design build
16 and, ah, as we're building out the waste management
17 program.

18 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK. Going
19 back to Ms. Torres', um, comments during her
20 testimony, at what point are you incorporating the
21 residents?

22 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: So we
23 started a standard procedure. As soon as we get the
24 funding we're reaching out to the sponsors, the
25 elected official, and the residents to inform that we
received the funding. We are writing right now into

3 our program management software a way in which we can
4 immediately send a letter out to all of those
5 individuals, so that way they know exactly when the
6 funds hit our, ah, our system. And then we
7 continually, in terms of this program, this would be
8 a stakeholder engagement where we're wanting the
9 feedback, ah, regularly and working as a team to get
10 through, ah, to get the design that we want
11 differently from, let's say for instance, a roof
12 which would be completely focused on a spec that we
13 have. The residents then are helping us make the
14 determination on the scope through the design
15 process. We're informing everyone when those designs
16 are done and that they have schedule, so that way we
17 inform everyone when it's going out to procurement as
18 well. Our funder...

18 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Who
19 [inaudible] there the survey of the conditions? So
20 you have the signed commitment and you have survey of
21 conditions and they wanted to find out the scope. So
22 the, the survey of the conditions, is that like
23 walking around...

24 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Yup.
25

3 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: ...the
4 development and...

5 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Yeah, so
6 what happens is we're trying to fund these, so we're
7 getting staff to go out, pull all the drawings, ah,
8 pull the work ticket reports, meet with the
9 residents, meet with the sponsor, meet with the
10 development staff, understanding the existing
11 conditions so that way we can build a task order, so
12 that way the designers don't have to spend too much
13 time doing pre-design, trying to front that, so that
14 way the designers have the scope of work that they
15 have to do and then we can continue to do stakeholder
16 engagement, ah, for us to be able to, um, you know,
17 as we get through a design process, schematic design,
18 design development, construction documents.

19 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK, but the
20 residents are a part of the survey, surveying of the
21 conditions process as well?

22 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Um, the,
23 the surveying of the conditions is a lot about
24 pulling the work order tickets, pulling the drawings.
25 Um, we're informing the residents of the funding, but
they, they are not part of, they have not been part

3 of the, ah, pulling of the work order tickets and
4 pulling of the drawings. Um, we start to, when, when
5 we're going out to the development we're, we're
6 setting up the meeting to have the dialogue with the
7 residents and the development staff. That on these
8 two projects has not started yet in terms of going to
9 the site and meeting with the residents and the
10 development staff.

11 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK. Thank
12 you. Um, I want to just keep rolling. You good,
13 Chair Rosenthal?

14 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Yeah, I have
15 one more, I was gonna ask the energy question, or are
16 you going on to...

17 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: [inaudible] go
18 ahead, go ahead.

19 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK, yep, you
20 for helping us get back on track. Um, asking about
21 the physical needs assessment and the energy audit,
22 um, so the physical needs assessment is required to
23 determine capital and management improvement needs,
24 um, and, and these are, ah, required every five to
25 six years. So for NYCHA's next, um, physical needs
assessment how will coordination between an energy

3 auditor and a PNA provider, um, be, ah, which is
4 important for energy efficiency and capital upgrade
5 decision-making, and what, if any, impact do you
6 think it will have on NYCHA's stabilization plan and
7 pipeline?

8 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Thank
9 you, Chair Rosenthal. That's a great, it's a great
10 question. Um, the physical needs assessment, ah, we
11 are currently going out in an RFP for the needs,
12 physical needs assessment. Um, we know that the last
13 physical needs assessment was very robust in
14 comparisons to the previous one, and so we're adding
15 into this physical needs assessment, um, more, ah,
16 information in regards to, um, building information
17 science, building science, as well as those things
18 like energy, um, and, and how much energy that we're
19 using. Um, we have on call a, which is the IDIQ, ah,
20 energy consultants that we use regularly as we define
21 out what the next heating pipeline will be, what the
22 next electrical needs to be. Um, and we now have
23 that in a map, ah, that allows individuals to see
24 kind of where we want to be in terms of our, ah,
25 energy and electrification portfolio.

3 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK. That's a
4 perfect segue into the last two questions, um, and
5 clearly I want to have a conversation about the Build
6 Back Better plan, the Build Back Better bill, um, as
7 well as where you now with your Blueprint for Change.
8 Um, so with that, um, we know that you are, well, we
9 don't know, but possibly you'll be receiving
10 additional federal funding through the infrastructure
11 legislation known as the Build Back Better bill,
12 which is currently being considered. Um, if enacted,
13 how much is NYCHA, from what you've been hearing,
14 expected to receive in capital funding, and how would
15 such funding be allocated through the authority's
16 portfolio, and will the increase in additional
17 funding mean that city spending will be, um,
18 prioritized in a different way? And do you
19 anticipate a deadline for those federal funds? And
20 as you're answering that, I want you to then, you
21 know, start to just talk about the Blueprint for
22 Change that you've talking about for a very long
23 time, and where it is in the state legislature and
24 look at those plans versus what you would be
25 receiving, um, under the Build Back Better bill. Um,
and it reminds me of Marquis Jenkins during his

3 testimony. He mentioned, you know, would there be a
4 need for these conversions if you have this, um, you
5 know, infusion of funding and looking at your spend
6 plan. And we've been joined by Council Member
7 Gibson.

8 VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: So thank you so
9 much, and this is really timely 'cause, ah, there is
10 rumors that, ah, the House may pass the, ah, Build
11 Back Better bill tonight, their version. Um, the
12 Senate still does not have language in their version.
13 So we, what we know is that public housing is, um,
14 right now a priority, um, both, in, in both houses,
15 but we do not have the final, ah, dollar amount of
16 what we, you know, what we are going to get. Um, I
17 can tell you, though, that we are already planning
18 and that we are, ah, not only planning on our on, but
19 we're also planning with the, um, with the, ah, C-
20 com. Um, and we have an agreement with them that,
21 you know, with the finding that we're gonna get here,
22 rather than, um, the way NYCHA has traditionally
23 spent money, where we've spent money on roofs in one
24 development, spent money on boilers in another
25 development, and spread the money around, we're gonna
look to do comprehensive modernization. Um, that

3 means we will go into a development and take care of
4 from the roof, inside people's apartments, um, take
5 care of the plumbing, all the way down into we have,
6 ah, the boilers. We, the agreement with the C-com
7 goes as far as naming the priority developments that
8 need, um, the investment and this is based on, um,
9 years of capital needs, um, the PNA, um, and also
10 work order tickets, um, that, you know, are
11 associated with the developments. This is a historic
12 agreement with, where tenants and NYCHA sat down for,
13 for months to hammer this out, to have a plan, and so
14 we are ready to go when, when that funding is
15 received. As far as how this related to the trust, I
16 just want to say that this, the federal funding that
17 we get, we are really grateful to the delegation who
18 have been a national leader here to make sure that
19 public housing is not forgotten in Washington in the
20 infrastructure bill. This is only capital dollars,
21 right? So we have an issue both on the capital side
22 and the expense side, right. The trust is a little
23 bit different. The trust, you know, would be able
24 to, you know, have money that we could spend on both
25 capital and operating. So we will see improvements
on the capital side, um, depending on how much money

3 we get, but we will still have an operating issue
4 that we'll have to, um, we'll have to deal with. Um,
5 until we have a final dollar amount, um, we, that
6 will also determine, you know, next course, ah, on
7 the trust. I do not want to make a commitment now,
8 um, because, you know, I, I, I would never want to
9 have a read my lips moment, um, but, um, you know, if
10 we are able to, you know, fund, fund these
11 developments it's a very, you know, totally with the,
12 ah, that would be a very different conversation that
13 we were having earlier in the year, um, when the
14 trust was our only avenue, um, to bring in capital
15 and operating dollars. So the next few weeks should
16 be interesting. We talk to, um, leadership in both
17 houses, um, all the time, um, literally daily. Um,
18 and we are, you know, we're, we're ready to go also
19 to with a plan to spend these dollars.

19 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Thank you, I
20 appreciate that. Um, I don't have any follow-up
21 questions related to that. I want to make sure that
22 my cochair, OK. All right. So, um, we'll be waiting
23 and clearly we'll have a conversation once that bill
24 is passed and the money comes down. My final
25 question is just for clarification, because people

3 talk about the federal monitor all the time, um, and
4 so I just want, again for clarification, what is the
5 federal monitor's role based on your interaction when
6 it comes to the spend of city capital dollars as it
7 relates to the HUD agreement and the city capital
8 action plan. So what's the monitor, the federal
9 monitor's, actual role, and I, I ask that question
10 because, um, you know, some people, you know, have
11 that conversation around should the federal monitor
12 even be invited to City Council hearings and what
13 would that look like. And so what is the federal
14 monitor's role as it relates to?

15 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE: Sure,
16 thank, thank you Chair. The, ah, the federal monitor
17 has a role in, in monitoring some portion of our city
18 capital plan. It is not our entire city capital
19 budget that is under their purview. It's a very
20 specific amount detailed in the HUD agreement that
21 are meant to be spent on the pillar areas in order to
22 improve our performance in areas that were deemed
23 deficient and noncompliant through the HUD agreement.
24 Through that role and what does it mean to really be
25 a monitor, it means that we are required to submit
the action plan to lay out collaboratively how we

3 plan to spend that money. We have to provide those
4 quarterly reports. But we have a very collaborative,
5 ah, relationship with the monitor. You know through
6 our work on this, the AC, they, we have, ah, regular
7 meetings with them to talk about our progress on the
8 capital, to talk about ideas on how to improve
9 capital efficiency. So we are working closely with
10 them. They are looking at our spending, our
11 planning, everything that goes into the capital
12 projects that are under their purview of the
13 agreement, and that's laid out in the city capital
14 action plan.

15 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Can I just ask on
16 that, in that interaction, do they ever ask you to
17 change things or clarify things? I mean, is it a
18 dialogue or is it, and what changes have you made
19 that, what have they asked you to make and what have
20 you made?

21 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE: They
22 have given us, um, some helpful feedback in our, in
23 our planning process as we, you know, for example, as
24 we've gone through design build for the first time
25 they've brought some expertise there, and so we work
with them, you know, really on a very regular basis

2 as collaborators to, to, so they give us feedback on
3 management decisions, on, um, implementation of the
4 projects. Um, but it is, it is a give and take. It
5 is a debate. We don't take every idea that they give
6 us. We have difference of opinions on some things.

7 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Can you...

8 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE: So
9 work together on that.

10 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Can you get, yep,
11 can you give one example of a management, ah,
12 suggestion they made that you took?

13 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT TRIMBLE:
14 Specifically on capital? Ah, like on the capital
15 project implementation? Steve, I don't know if you
16 have anything that comes to mind. I'd have to think
17 about it a little bit more.

18 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Or any that you
19 rejected? I mean, they give you management
20 suggestions, like what?

21 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT LOVCI: Um,
22 well, in terms of the capital portfolio the majority
23 of the relationships that we've been having are going
24 through the projects, um, and we meet month, ah, we
25 meet basically regularly. Um, they have access to

3 all of our systems, and so, um, it's a dialogue that
4 we are working through. Um, everything from
5 stakeholder engagement as well as, excuse me, um, ah,
6 outreach to our vendors, um, and, and how some of the
7 schedules are. A lot of those changes, you know,
8 we're, we're working with them. It's, it's kind of,
9 and sometimes, ah, a connection. Um, in terms of the
10 design build, ah, RFP as Eva had mentioned, um, they
11 edited through, ah, all of those RFQs, RFPs, ah, and
12 there were a number of different things that we, we
13 worked through, um, in terms of making it a better
14 RFQ and RFP.

15 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Ah, again, you
16 know, um, public money is being spent on the monitor.
17 NYCHA is funded through public money. These answers
18 are very general. I wish you could have said, yeah,
19 they said we had, you know, if you look at the
20 process there's three stages and they said we have
21 too many people at stage one and not enough at stage
22 two, and then you made that change. I'm making this
23 up, right? I, I don't know what happens in these
24 meetings. I don't know, I don't, I have never looked
25 at, you know, your, all your internal workings. But
I wish you could give the public, um, an example of,

3 of what has come out of those hearings. But, you
4 know, I also say we belabored all of this so much and
5 I see the residents waiting to speak and I appreciate
6 them so much. Um, it shouldn't have to be like
7 pulling teeth like this. It just shouldn't have to
8 be. Um, anyway.

9 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Thank you,
10 Chair Rosenthal. Um, that is, that completes my line
11 of questioning for today for NYCHA. Um, again, I
12 was, you know, we started off with residents, um, who
13 transferred and, and kind of let us know what
14 questions we should ask, and, you know, I always try
15 to bring it back to what the residents said, um, to
16 make it make sense and to have a, a visual. And so,
17 um, you know, clearly we're gonna have to continue
18 these conversations and just hoping that this allows
19 for the incoming council members to get a sense of
20 what's happening and the questions that they should
21 be asking and continuing on this dialogue. So with
22 that, that ends my questions for NYCHA. Um, however,
23 we have with us, um, residents, Maria Forbes, who
24 came right at the tail end of the resident testimony
25 earlier and so, um, I want to make sure that we go
right back to, um, to the residents and making sure

3 that we give, you know, time in here, um, what Maria
4 Forbes has to say and share, um, as we did earlier
5 before you leave. So I'll stop there and kick it
6 back over to Audrey.

7 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Great, thanks so
8 much. Um, as Chair Ampry-Samuel said we will now be
9 turning to testimony from the remaining members of
10 the public. We thank you again for your patience.
11 Um, please listen for your name. I will call you one
12 by one and we'll periodically announce the person who
13 is next. Once your name is called, a member of our
14 staff will unmute you and the Sergeant at Arms will
15 set the timer at two minutes, ah, and announce that
16 you may begin. So we will, ah, begin with Maria
17 Forbes, followed by Beverly MacFarlane.

18 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

19 MARIA FORBES: [inaudible] can you hear
20 me?

21 SERGEANT AT ARMS: We hear you.

22 MARIA FORBES: Good evening to all. I
23 would just like to say on the behalf of the citywide
24 council of President Danny Barber I, he yield his
25 time to me. That's why I came in so late so I do ask
that I be given, ah, granted a little bit more time

3 and I'm asking that of both of the chairs at some
4 point. Um, my name is Maria Forbes. I'm a New York
5 City Housing Authority tenant association president
6 at a development called Claremont Consolidated.
7 There's over 750 units here. Um, I just became hired
8 for New York City Housing Authority my time hours of
9 four hours a day so there's no conflict of interest
10 here. Myself and Danny Barber, the citywide chair,
11 have been working very closely since July to discover
12 the overwhelming, enormous bureaucracy that the
13 capital department has. In 2019 Danny Barber was
14 able to bring up the elevator team, the roofing team,
15 and the boiling team to Bronx south district and we
16 discussed the repairs of the developments said to
17 whatever extent that was going to be done.
18 Unfortunately, that meeting was held in November and
19 the pandemic hit us right in January. So which
20 everything was brought to a halt. But and knowing
21 where I'm at, I'm working at Morris Houses. But I
22 want to start with Danny Barber's development, which
23 is Jackson. He is in cold, the cold. He literally
24 has a cold right now and his family member, whom he
25 is [inaudible] has a cold. So there's a lack of
heating going on there and if I can say that I'm at

3 Morris Houses and that contractor started two years
4 ago and they will there another two years, I'm more
5 than sure that that is the same for Danny, and that
6 is the same for the roofing contractor for Morris and
7 Jackson Houses, that it is just unbelievable that you
8 have the roofers saying now that they have to kind of
9 stop because they only have a certain amount of
10 material and that...

11 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

12 MARIA FORBES: ...they're running out of
13 material. Madam Chair, you extending me the courtesy
14 to finish on Danny Barber's time?

15 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Please do,
16 please do, please do.

17 MARIA FORBES: OK. So some contractors
18 are saying because of the shortage of material and
19 stuff they cannot even begin to move forward. I want
20 to say that in May an emergency happened here at
21 Claremont Consolidated in which a fire escape
22 contractor was expedited, expedited, and the funding
23 was moved forward from May and the contract started
24 in September. So for this capital department to say
25 the bureaucracy in the comptroller's office to the
bureaucracy anywhere else. I've been down to the

3 United Nations and to learn in 2016 of the new urban
4 agenda which has 17 sustainable goals for human
5 beings, for human beings, and that they would be a
6 plan from 2016 to 2030 and that NYCHA still does not
7 have anything together yet. It's still un, it's just
8 uncalled for because if they say they got one plan
9 online that people should be reading and it was out
10 since March 2021, a transitional plan to the capital
11 action plan. You can plan for so much, but you're
12 not planning enough for the residents and I'll say
13 that because if you go to these developments, um,
14 Alicka, it is inhumane and deplorable at Morris
15 Houses. You have the contractors for the boiler and
16 the roofers, who have dug up the entire development
17 and the rats on the development. Let me just finish.
18 The rats on the development, and I had requested a
19 meeting, when people came before me and as well as
20 Danny Barber, that I had to bring him because how
21 could NYCHA hire 10 subcontractors to the contractor
22 and they ran circles around the tenant association
23 president, who cannot even begin to negotiate no
24 services and if you say that you're here for the
25 residents, let's get to Article Section number 44,
page 5 or Section 3, these developers, contractors,

3 whoever they may be, come in the development and
4 offer no economic development for the residents
5 whatsoever. None. And Danny is having the problem
6 that, um, Ms. Grady at Morris House is having, that
7 no residents was hired for either of the contractors,
8 whether it be the roofers or the boiler contractor.
9 But there are too many to have a contractor who's
10 hired by NYCHA say to me NYCHA inspectors didn't know
11 what they was doing, that's why they hired me from
12 outside anyway. But you have close to 10
13 subcontractors, 38 million dollars at Morris Houses
14 is being wasted because, why, you take 10 people,
15 give them \$100,000, that's a million dollars on the
16 contract right there. Where did NYCHA sit down and
17 scope out the work as to what they supposed to be
18 doing, and let me explain that because I've heard a
19 lot out of a lot of people and saying residents was
20 being displaced for the roof contractors. 16
21 residents had to be relocated on the weekend in the
22 middle of COVID. Now where were they going on a
23 Saturday and Sunday with no place to go? There was
24 no courtesy location made for them whatsoever. But
25 here people do shopping, cooking, cleaning, and
arranging for their selves to be doing their weekend

3 duties and they said you have to turn that off, that
4 they arranging to do weekend services for their own
5 families but a contractor is displacing them with no
6 courtesy room, no nothing, unheard of, until I got
7 there to see. No, let me call the Department of
8 Transportation. Because if NYCHA scopes out these
9 contracts and see what they're doing to the
10 residents, the digging up of the property, all of
11 this fencing, no garbage being collected, it is
12 unbelievable that I had to negotiate with the Bronx
13 office of DOT to have the permit for it to be
14 arranged on a weekday. Why? People go to work, go
15 to school, ain't nobody home. But when you taking
16 families out of their household on the weekend to do
17 all of what you want to do that is inconsiderate.
18 That is very inconsiderate. Let me just add on
19 another couple of points that this, that the capital
20 department has no consideration for, they don't even
21 have no courtesy professionalism and respect. So let
22 alone the human lives of people who've been suffering
23 public housing for some time. I contacted, I'm a
24 just say this about I contacted the NYCHA staff here
25 and they said they had been there and it looked like
the garbage had been behind the fence for two years.

3 So that's very inhumane and deplorable. So, moving
4 on, the money is being wasted under this capital
5 situation. Um, IG needs to be called in to
6 investigate the investigators 'cause I don't see that
7 the monitor has done anything. From when that
8 monitor came on I stayed up several nights, several
9 nights, to bring myself from 1990 to 2018, 19, when
10 he got there until 4:00 a.m. writing the notes. You
11 know what he told me? He said we don't answer you.
12 You'll get some information when I do my quarterly,
13 quarterly report. He needs an inspector to watch
14 him. But inspectors need to be there to watch what
15 is really going on 'cause all you hear is I'm a
16 project manager. It's seven project managers to
17 eight project managers on the boiler contract at
18 Morris and at Jackson. You just can't make that up
19 of a wasteful amount of dollars that are being spent.
20 Um, somebody needs to oversee residents being removed
21 from their home on the weekend. And I just, I, I
22 would have to end because it's, it's deplorable. The
23 rats, so I was able to organize it and I'll end with
24 that. I was able to organize it somewhere. All in,
25 all of 15 to 25 sub, sub, sub, subcontractors, I
don't know why the waste of money is being spent

3 there with their project managers, like everybody was
4 partnering with someone and say bring your
5 exterminators to the table. All three exterminators
6 need to come to the table. Get [inaudible] to come
7 to the table. Everybody needs to give a weekly
8 report as to what is being done at these
9 developments. So now Danny has a cold. His brother,
10 who's very ill, we all know that, that his brother is
11 catching the Flushing. But then Morris Houses
12 community center don't even have no heat and they're
13 servicing our children and replacing whatever. That
14 to Verizon L, whatever they want to call that, what
15 is that internet service called? FIOS, FIOS. I went
16 to a board meeting with NYCHA back in 2014 to hear
17 that NYCHA was giving Verizon another 5 million
18 dollars. You talk about your broadband services, let
19 me tell you what happened to our intercom services
20 that we have not gotten restored since NYCHA went
21 into the bed with Verizon back when. But they still
22 continue to give the, go to those board meetings
23 whoever the residents hear on the phone and you will
24 see that NYCHA continues to spend 5 million dollars
25 with Verizon on a regular basis and we still don't
have intercoms. But the capital money is being

3 wasted. I don't know the [inaudible] because that
4 Build Back Better situation, if I help out to wait
5 for Build Back Better thinking that my buildings
6 would be repaired and [inaudible] to going into
7 [inaudible] I'm gonna be sorry mistaken, because the
8 physical needs assessment is beyond the 80 billion
9 dollars that we've been looking for. Once they
10 targeted the 3 to 4 billions that they gonna utilize
11 first it's almost a tear-down situation and build it
12 back up. But I'm scared to say that because you know
13 what I knew when Bush was getting ready to talk about
14 he, he was closing public housing, that the people
15 [inaudible] will always need 100,000 poor people.
16 Why? So that they cousin, uncle, sister, brother,
17 father, and they daughters could have a job. But
18 we're still not being servicing in the manner in
19 which we need to be servicing it and this is it
20 effort portion emergency. New York City, if we was
21 the epic center of the virus we are the epic center
22 of housing. Housing needs to be addressed here first
23 and foremost. Thank you so much for allowing me to
24 [inaudible].

25 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Thank you so
much, Ms. Forbes. Thank you. And I want to tell

3 everyone I did receive a text message from, um,
4 [inaudible] president chair Danny Barber and I do
5 wish him well, and he did ask if we could, um, make
6 sure that, um, you provided some words from him. So
7 thank you so much for that.

8 MARIA FORBES: Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Thank you.

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you very much.

11 We will now hear from Beverly MacFarlane, followed by
12 Kevin Lindall.

13 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

14 BEVERLY MACFARLANE: Good evening,
15 everyone. My name is Beverly MacFarlane. I am the,
16 ah, resident, ah, association president for Senator
17 Robert A. Taft Houses. I'm here tonight to also
18 testify on the negligence of NYCHA and, ah, and their
19 protocols. I sit on the, ah, every two weeks in a
20 meeting for the key, key performance indicators, that
21 is data that NYCHA on given, um, that gives to, um,
22 recourse for the chair, I mean, for the federal
23 monitor. I hear tonight everyone, um, talking, um,
24 NYCHA's back talking about what they don't know and
25 what they do not know. I don't understand when
there's a dashboard available to them that's called

3 Under the Key, um, Performance Indicators, that they
4 can see everything that's happening because they give
5 that information to the federal monitor. So why
6 wouldn't they be able to answer any of the questions
7 that were brought to them by if they have statistic
8 and they have a data dashboard that has, that they
9 have to put this in for the, for the monitor. Also,
10 here at Taft four, four days in a row we had no
11 water, no water, period. Thank you, Brian, for, um,
12 expediting it. But this is a, a continuous, um,
13 problem here at Taft and they are not, they are not,
14 this, this model, this neighborhood model tract that
15 they talking about, it is, it is not working. It is
16 not working for any of these developments. It is the
17 same people that they just shift around and, and it's
18 the same management, it's shift around to different
19 developments and we getting the same results. And
20 also the, the, the, ah, Blueprint for Change, they
21 are trying to bunch them together, the Blueprint for
22 Change along with the transitional plan, the
23 transition plan. They are two separate entity and
24 they do, should not be on NYCHA's, um, website...

25 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

2 BEVERLY MACFARLANE: ...as one entity.
3 They are, they, so I am requesting that they take the
4 Blueprint for Change down off they website because
5 that has not been approved by the, for, from HUD.
6 Thank you very much.

7 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thanks so much. We
8 will now hear from Kevin Lindahl, followed by Joel
9 Kupferman, and then Joshua Barnett.

10 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

11 KEVIN LINDAHL: OK. Um, I'd like to talk
12 a little bit about housing first and, um, there's
13 these background checks for the homeless where they
14 like to see what the misdemeanor record is, the
15 criminal record, people, ah, in the background
16 accused of trespassing, drug abuse, um, selling
17 drugs, in some cases shoplifting. But all this stems
18 from the belief was in Finland in this Housing First
19 Program was that this stems from the incredible
20 stress of being homeless. All the energy that the
21 homeless have to use just to try to survive, they
22 don't know where they're gonna sleep at night. They
23 don't know how they're gonna make it through the
24 winter. Um, so instead of having this, this
25 background check that looks at the background and

3 says well, do they have a misdemeanor, do they have a
4 criminal background. They said what if the stress of
5 trying to survive is what's causing them to engage
6 in, you know, drug use, selling drugs, trying to make
7 money, trespassing. And so what they did is they
8 said in Finland let's do housing first. Let's get
9 these homeless into homes, off the streets, relieve
10 that stress, and see what happens to these other
11 issues. And suddenly the other issues began to melt
12 away. Um, shoplifting and misdemeanor offenses were
13 reduced by over 80% when we said you know what,
14 forget about your background, we're getting you a
15 place to sleep, a place to shower, a place where you
16 can reorganize yourself, get back into the workforce.
17 Shoplifting and misdemeanors dropped by 80%, drug use
18 by 60%, and trespassing all but became nonexistent
19 because now these people had a place to stay. So I'm
20 asking the council of New York City to consider
21 leading from the heart and implementing housing
22 first. It worked in Finland where we say, you know,
23 of course a homeless person's gonna have an imperfect
24 background. Look at how many more homeless people we
25 have now with COVID, people who have never been
homeless in their lives, freezing out there in the

2 streets. Let's ignore the background, first get them
3 into housing and you're gonna see these criminal
4 misdemeanor issue. If Finland is a model for this,
5 all but...

6 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

7 KEVIN LINDAHL: ...[inaudible] because
8 it's the stress of being homeless that's causing
9 these other problems. If we get them into homes and
10 eliminate the red tape and these background checks,
11 watch these other problems actually disappear. It's
12 called Housing First and it's out of Finland, and I
13 think we should implement it here in New York City
14 and if we lead by the heart this could save a lot of
15 people. Thank you.

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thanks so much. We
17 will now hear from Joel Kupferman, followed by Joshua
18 Barnett.

19 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

20 JOEL KUPFERMAN: I'm having a little
21 trouble here.

22 SERGEANT AT ARMS: We hear you, Joel.

23 JOEL KUPFERMAN: OK. Um, thank you very
24 much. I am counsel to Alfred E. Smith Resident
25 Association, St. Nick's, and resident to preserve

3 public housing. I think it's important to point out
4 that public housing residents died from the
5 coronavirus at a rate for nearly twice their share of
6 the city's population according to a recent DOH
7 study. A Harvard study has also showed a slight
8 increase in PM2.5, that's the dust exposure causes a
9 large increase in COVID mortality. NYCHA is totally
10 a vulnerable population with asthmatics, elderly
11 people, and 9/11 victims. What we're facing here at
12 the capital construction is haphazard construction,
13 unfettered, unaccountable, and fatal to many, many
14 residents. Um, not only to the residents, and to the
15 trees. New York City has 2400 acres of, of open
16 space, 1400 acres, um, of tree space in NYCHA,
17 capital construction, um, rebuild plans that actually
18 cut into those trees. The contractors have not been
19 held accountable. We're losing more trees and going
20 in and yet despite all the evidence that we're
21 presenting we're not getting any type of, um, payback
22 or accountability of those, of those people. New
23 York City and New York State had a bad actor policy.
24 NYCHA keeps on hiring bad contractors, doesn't hold
25 them accountable. There's ways that you should weed
them out and not hire the, the bad people. Natural

2 resource [inaudible] like I said continues. At Smith
3 they're building storm barriers that are ADA
4 violation. Not only are they bad ADA evaluation but
5 the Justice Department is gonna require NYCHA to
6 rebuild those. We should look at all the capital
7 construction and make sure that it's ADA, um,
8 acceptable and not...

9 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

10 JOEL KUPFERMAN: ...[inaudible]. I just
11 want to say this. There's plenty, you know, we've
12 been working this for a long time, but also one more
13 thing I want to say about the Public Housing
14 Preservation Trust, the way the bill stands now it
15 exempts that whole change from any type of
16 environmental review. It is totally wrong, illegal,
17 and not only that in the face of rising, um, tide and
18 climate change you cannot transfer and take out in
19 all of these NYCHA properties and environmental
20 review and say it's OK, and say [inaudible] to the
21 health and the safety of all those NYCHA residents.
22 Thank you. And I'm open to questions. And there's
23 also more testimony that we're, I really want to say
24 is that, that all the information we brought on
25 contractor malfeasance has just been disregard by

3 capital division. There, there should be more
4 specifications in those contracts and we've brought
5 in federal agencies offering technical help to NYCHA
6 Capital which has been refused or ignored. There's a
7 lot of resources that could be, um, that have made
8 available and I believe that NYCHA, um, should be
9 pushed and the City Council should make sure that
10 those are reviewed.

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. We will
12 now hear from Joshua Barnett.

13 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

14 JOSHUA BARNETT: OK, hi, sorry. Um,
15 yeah, my name is Joshua Barnett, um, with Local 375
16 DC37. I'm a delegate and shop steward. I'm also an
17 architect in the NYCHA design department. I've been
18 here since 1999. I would definitely want to signify
19 what all the residents have said in terms of the
20 conditions that they face, not having a voice at the
21 table, also being really terrified of NYCHA's
22 commitment to privatization, both under RAD, um, and
23 the blueprint, especially because I think both have
24 strong union-busting aspects. But in terms of what
25 this [inaudible], um, and that the main problem we're
facing is 40 years of chronic under-funding from HUD

3 and from the feds and at levels of government. But
4 what this hearing is about is NYCHA making the worst
5 of a bad situation. Council Member Rosenthal kept on
6 saying how staff has been cut. When I started
7 housing in '99 there were 445 people under technical
8 titles. We're down to 245. Now we were down to 200
9 at one point. And a lot of that isn't the result of
10 current NYCHA policy. Again, that's underfunding,
11 but what Management doesn't talk about, that they
12 never talk about, is their shadow army of consultants
13 that cause twice as much as we do, and somehow
14 there's money for them, for the staff augmenters, for
15 outsourcing. The bureaucracy is incredibly top
16 heavy. We don't need more project managers. We need
17 more people to do the work. I've never seen an
18 organization like this where there's more people
19 invested in watching people work than actually
20 executing the work. One resident said NYCHA is top
21 heavy it's a wonder it doesn't topple over. So I
22 know I'm running out of time, but the one thing that
23 I would really urge this committee to do is do a full
24 audit of NYCHA, how they spend their money on
25 consultants, making sure they do get the best of
every dollar, and making sure that you really hear

3 from the staff and the residents, getting past the
4 people who speak for us and speak to us directly
5 'cause we really know how bad NYCHA is tripping over
6 itself. There's no reason why there should be any
7 money left not spend. We have the expertise to do
8 it, but we're not being given the opportunity. So
9 thank you.

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thanks very much.

11 Um, this concludes the public testimony portion of
12 the hearing. If we have inadvertently forgotten to
13 call on anyone to testify please use the Zoom hand
14 raise function now and we will try to hear from you.
15 Ah, I believe that we've heard from all present.

16 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: I just want to
17 make sure that Ramona Ferreyra, I know she testified.
18 I just want to make sure that her hand is not raised.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Sure. Chair, ah,
20 would you want to hear from her, um, again at this
21 point?

22 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: I just want to
23 make sure, OK.

24 RAMONA FERREYRA: Yeah. Ah, thank you
25 for, I don't know if you want to set the time.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

3 RAMONA FERREYRA: It should be short. So
4 I, listening to NYCHA's really, um, disappointing
5 responses a couple questions came to my mind that I
6 didn't hear asked. One of them was has NYCHA
7 adjusted its operating, um, budget to reflect the
8 decline in funding from Congress. The second one is
9 the transformation plan which you are touting as the
10 answer to our issues and your obstacles to succeed at
11 your jobs is the implementation plan for the
12 blueprint, which we have clearly rejected, so when
13 will you be delivering a new operational plan that
14 keeps us in Section 9? The next question is what
15 spending have you actually done on the blueprint plan
16 itself? I know that there's a contract item for a
17 consultant, like Josh just mentioned, for \$250,000,
18 but it's really difficult to search for your spending
19 according to category. Um, I can provide that to the
20 council. And then regarding the community centers'
21 funding and turning to Cornerstones, we still receive
22 \$25 per household. Is that correct? But you take a
23 portion of that. What is that portion and what do
24 you do with the portion that you take out of tenant
25 association funding? And finally, the recent storms
have made it very clear that you are not being a good

3 steward of our lands, and we don't have an arborist
4 on staff at NYCHA, although you are one of the
5 biggest land owners in New York City. When will you
6 stop subcontracting arborists and when will you
7 actually hire one? And what pocket of funding will
8 that come from? I gotta walk my dog. So I don't if
9 they have these answers, but I really have to run.

10 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: I appreciate
11 you and we will make sure that, um, we respond to
12 those questions.

13 RAMONA FERREYRA: I, I want to thank you
14 both for putting this together, and really appreciate
15 Chair Rosenthal's facial expressions 'cause they
16 match mine a lot of times.

17 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

18 RAMONA FERREYRA: Alicka, I wish you the
19 best and I know that we'll definitely, you know,
20 continue to see you do great things for us, um, and,
21 you know, thanks so much for putting this together
22 before the year ended.

23 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Yeah, I'm not
24 very good at poker.

25 RAMONA FERREYRA: [laughs] I suck at
poker. So does my dog.

2 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: But I, too,
3 appreciate Chair Ampry-Samuel, um, Biden is so lucky
4 to get her. NYCHA residents are so lucky to get her,
5 um, for the record.

6 JOEL KUPFERMAN: And Helen, if I could
7 just add in terms of the arborist and the, the tree
8 situation we'll definitely give plenty of information
9 to the, to, ah, to your committee.

10 UNIDENTIFIED: Thank you. That's a major
11 problem at Smith. Ah, it's actually probably
12 millions of dollars worth of damage across the whole
13 city at NYCHA.

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: OK. Thanks, thanks
15 everyone for your testimony. Ah, I believe that this
16 now concludes the time of public testimony, as we've
17 heard from all present. Ah, we thank you again for
18 your patience and for, ah, coming to testify. Um, I
19 will now turn it back over to Chairs Ampry-Samuel and
20 Rosenthal to close the hearing.

21 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: We have one
22 more hand. I see Ms. Forbes' hand, and we'll close
23 with Ms. Forbes.

24 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: OK.

25 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: We'll close.

2 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

3 MARIA FORBES: And what I was [inaudible]
4 what I would also like to add, I'm really glad that
5 the gentleman brought up, when I tell you that I see
6 the dust, the asbestos and the mold to the
7 developments that these contractors have come to stir
8 up there's no consideration for our health at all
9 whatsoever, and that needs to be addressed. Thank
10 you.

11 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Thank you so
12 much, um, and thank you for everyone for sticking
13 around and participating and showing up and, um, like
14 just telling us your truth, and adding to the
15 discussion. As I said earlier, the purpose was for
16 us for to be able to get a, a understanding of how
17 you are spending your funding and what you're going
18 to do, you know, as we move towards, um, the future,
19 um, knowing that and anticipating and, ah, a great
20 amount of funding coming in from the federal
21 government. So, um, with that I look forward to our
22 conversations in the next couple of weeks depending
23 on what comes down from the federal government and
24 I'll kick it over to Chair Rosenthal.

2 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: Ah, I think
3 you've covered all the bases, Chair Ampry-Samuel.
4 It's always a pleasure to have a hearing with you.

5 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: [laughs] OK.

6 CHAIRPERSON ROSENTHAL: And be in
7 [inaudible] with you.

8 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: Thank you, I
9 appreciate you, too. Um, and with that I want to
10 thank Audrey Son, Jose Conde, Ricky Charla, my deputy
11 sitting right here, Naomi, um, as well as [inaudible]
12 and the amazing, amazing, um, um, Sergeant at Arms
13 that we have that are doing so much work in the
14 background. I thank you and appreciate you for all
15 the work that you do, and I look forward to, um,
16 being, staying in the chambers so we can see each
17 other face to face. So shout out to the Sergeant at
18 Arms. And thanks everyone for putting this together,
19 and Audrey I am, I'm good?

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes.

21 SERGEANT AT ARMS: So we'll end the live
22 stream right now?

23 CHAIRPERSON AMPRY-SAMUEL: OK. With that
24 we will end this hearing on capital spending with
25 NYCHA. Thank you so much. [gavel]

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING JOINTLY
WITH THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON CAPITAL BUDGET

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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 December 4, 2021