

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE  
MANAGEMENT

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March 4, 2020  
Start: 2:06 PM  
Recess: 5:05 PM

HELD AT: Committee Room - City Hall

B E F O R E: ANTONIO REYNOSO  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Justin L. Brannan  
Fernando Cabrera  
Margaret S. Chin  
Andrew Cohen  
Costa G. Constantinides  
Chaim M. Deutsch

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

Kathryn Garcia, Commissioner NYC  
Department of Sanitation

Noah Genel, Commissioner, NYC Business  
Integrity Commission, BIC

David Feldman, Deputy Commissioner of  
Legal Affairs and General Counsel  
NYC Business Integrity Commission, BIC

Alison Bonfoey, Deputy Commissioner of  
Regulatory Compliance and Background  
Investigations, NYC Business Integrity  
Commission, BIC

Cheryl Garcia, Deputy Commissioner of  
Investigations

Cindy Haskins, Assistant Commissioner of  
Finance and Administration

Melissa Iachan, Environmental Justice  
Program, New York Lawyers for the Public  
Interest

Pierre Simmons, Vice President, Yes We Can

Stefanos Culos, Coalition for Progressive  
Waste Management Reform

Chio Valerio Gonzalez, Campaign Director  
at ALIGN

Debbie Lee Cohen, Executive Director and  
Founder of Cafeteria Culture

Bridget Vacenti, Lifelong NYCHA Resident

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2 (microphone check) (pause)

3 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Sergeant, we're

4 good? (background comments/pause) (gavel) Good

5 afternoon and welcome to the Committee on Sanitation

6 and Solid Waste Management hearing on the Fiscal 2021

7 Preliminary Budget, and the Fiscal 2020 Preliminary

8 Mayor's Management Report for the Department of

9 Sanitation and Business Integrity Commission. My

10 name is Antonio Reynoso. I am the Chair of the

11 Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management.

12 Today we will hear testimony from the Department of

13 Sanitation Department of Sanitation on its Expense

14 Budget, Capital Plan and general agency operations.

15 After we hear from DSNY, we will hear from the

16 Business Integrity Commission on its Expense Budget

17 and general agency operations as well. In the

18 Department of Sanitation's Proposal for Fiscal 2021

19 Expense Budget totals \$1.76 billion, and Proposed

20 Capital Commitment Plan totals \$2.1 billion. The

21 committee looks forward to discussing such important

22 topics as: Efforts to align the city with achieving

23 its goal of zero waste by 2030, a status update on

24 key Council Sanitation priorities as well as

25 commercial waste zones, and the various needs

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2 including the Preliminary Plan Preliminary Plan. The  
3 Business Integrity Commission's Proposed Fiscal Year  
4 2021 Expense Budget totals \$9.7 million. The  
5 committee looks forward to hearing the department's  
6 testimony on important topics including enforcement  
7 efforts stopping (sic) unlicensed waste haulers,  
8 agency performance in reviewing applications, and  
9 commercial waste zones. We'll first hear from  
10 Commissioner Garcia from the Department of  
11 Sanitation, and then proceed to hear from  
12 Commissioner Genel of the Business Integrity  
13 Commission. The committee will then hear from  
14 members of the public. We thank you in advance for  
15 your patience. I'd like to thank our committee staff  
16 for all of their help in preparing for today's  
17 hearing. Before we hear from the Commissioner, we  
18 would like to acknowledge my colleagues that are  
19 present: Council Member Cabrera, Council Member  
20 Cohen both from the Bronx. I just want to announce  
21 that this hearing may end early. If you have public  
22 testimony, please pay attention and stay. If you  
23 leave and we shut the hearing down, you're going to  
24 get to speak. We want to just make sure you follow

25

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2 online, follow at home or stay in the hearing at all  
3 times. I guess are going to swear in our panel. (sic)

4 CLERK: Do you affirm to tell the truth,  
5 the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in your  
6 testimony before this committee today?

7 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: I do.

8 CLERK: Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Commissioner Garcia

10 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Good afternoon,  
11 Chairman Reynoso and members of the City Council  
12 Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management. I  
13 am Kathryn Garcia, Commissioner of the New York City  
14 Department of Sanitation. Thank you for the  
15 opportunity to discuss the department's portion of  
16 the Mayor's Fiscal Year 2021 Preliminary Budget, the  
17 Fiscal Year 2020 Preliminary Mayor's Management  
18 Report, and our current programs and operations.  
19 With me this afternoon are Steven Costas, First  
20 Deputy Commissioner for Operations, and Larry  
21 Cipollna, Deputy Commissioner for Administration and  
22 Financial Management. As proposed, the Fiscal Year  
23 2021 Preliminary Budget allocates \$1.76 billion in  
24 expense funds for the department of which \$1.03  
25 billion is for personnel services and .73 billion is

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2 for other than personnel services. Our Fiscal Year  
3 2021 Budget headcount is 10,045 including 7,808 full-  
4 time uniform and 2,237 full time civilian positions.

5 In addition, the department's Proposed Fiscal Year  
6 2021 Capital Budget is approximately \$522.1 million.

7 Of this amount \$326.3 million is allocated to

8 facility construction, and rehabilitation; \$8.8

9 million is for information technology projects, and

10 \$187 million to replace equipment and vehicles. The

11 funding resources under the Proposed Fiscal 21 Budget

12 will ensure that the department can continue to keep

13 New York City healthy, safe and clean. Clean streets

14 and public spaces contribute to a better quality of

15 life that New Yorkers expect and appreciate. The

16 Proposed Fiscal Year 21 Budget continues funding for

17 components of the Mayor's Clean NYC Initiative

18 including expanded Sunday and Holiday litter basket

19 collection service, and targeting cleaning and

20 enforcement efforts in high need areas. In the

21 current fiscal year districts across the city have

22 benefitted from supplemental litter basket collection

23 service funded in partnership with the City Council

24 at budget adoption last June. As a result of these

25 investment the department continues to maintain

2 record high score card cleanliness ratings across the  
3 city. Through January 2020 the department has  
4 achieve the citywide average score card rating of  
5 96.6% of streets rated acceptably clean up from 95.2%  
6 in the year prior. Snow plowing is also a core  
7 component of the department's mission—mission  
8 ensuring safe travel for first responders, residents  
9 and commuters. The Fiscal Year 2021 Preliminary Snow  
10 Budget is \$101.7 million. Our current Modified Snow  
11 Budget for Fiscal 20 is \$111.1 million. The warmer  
12 temperatures so far this year has produced a winter  
13 season that is yet with lower overall snow  
14 accumulations to date than the past two seasons, with  
15 some forecasted snow events transitioning to rain on  
16 or moving entirely away from the city. We have only  
17 activated for seven events to date this season  
18 compared to 18 events by this time last season. Out  
19 snow depth to date for the 2019-2021 winter season  
20 has been warranted. Of course, I've shared the snow  
21 10 inches in March. (sic) We know that the preventing  
22 the accumulation of snow and ice on the roadways  
23 during snow storms is critical to keeping New York  
24 City moving. Last spring we announced the plan to  
25 purchase a new fleet of 10 large and 14 small brines



2 up with spray, a liquid salt solution, which can  
3 prevent snow and ice from sticking in the first  
4 place, and stay ahead of the impact of broken  
5 precipitation on critical roadways. The department  
6 received the first 20 of its brine, pieces of  
7 equipment last fall, and the department has already  
8 begun using brine pre-treatment that's this winter  
9 season and we will continue to evaluate its  
10 performance. Last year the department completed  
11 construction of the new marine transfer stations in  
12 accordance with its new Solid Waste Management Plan  
13 adopted by the City Council and approved by the New  
14 York State Department of Environmental Conservation  
15 in 2006. Today all the MTSSs are fully operational,  
16 and manage waste assembly by shifting waste export  
17 out of the city from long haul trucks to going on  
18 rail to management facilities. The city's Long-Term  
19 Waste Export Program has cut greenhouse gas emissions  
20 associated with waste transport by more than 34,000  
21 tons annually, and has created a more equitable  
22 distribution of waste management infrastructure in  
23 New York City. DSNY is also in the process of  
24 implementing transfer station capacity reductions in  
25 the South Bronx and West Brooklyn and Southeast

2 Queens pursuant to Local Law 152 of 2018, the city's  
3 Waste Equity Law. When these cuts are fully  
4 implemented in September of 2020, we will have  
5 further reduced the concentration of waste management  
6 in infrastructure and capacity in these historically  
7 over-burdened neighborhoods. The commercial waste  
8 sector also plays an important role in achieve our  
9 zero waste goal. In November 2018, the department  
10 released a comprehensive plan for reforming the  
11 private carting industry by proposing the  
12 establishment of commercial waste zones as safe and  
13 effective-efficient collection assistants provide  
14 high quality, low-cost service to New York City  
15 businesses while advancing the city's zero waste and  
16 sustainability goal. The department developed this  
17 plan after years of expensive public outreach and  
18 engagement with a variety of stakeholders including  
19 Chair Reynoso, this Committee and the Council. One  
20 year later in November 2019, enactment of landmarked  
21 legislation was realized when Local Law 199 passed  
22 the City Council and was signed into law by Mayor de  
23 Blasio authorizing the department to create a  
24 commercial waste bin system for New York City. The  
25 department has undertaken several steps to carry out

2 that mandate of Local Law 199. Last month department  
3 published its final rule to create 20 designated  
4 commercial waste zones across New York City and  
5 authorize up to three private carters to operate the  
6 zone. There will be eight zones in Manhattan, three  
7 zones in the Bronx, five zones in Brooklyn, four  
8 zones in Queens, and one zone in Staten Island. This  
9 is the first of several rules that the department  
10 will promulgate in the first half of this year to  
11 implement this program that includes Rule 7 in  
12 Customer Service for commercial establishments,  
13 operational requirements for private carting  
14 companies, health and safety protection measures for  
15 private carting employees and recycling and organic  
16 requirements. By this summer the department will  
17 begin the competitive procurement process to select  
18 up to three private carters to serve as businesses  
19 within each Commercial Waste Zone. The department  
20 anticipates the transition period for the new zone  
21 system to begin in 2021, and last up to two years.  
22 The New Commercial Waste Zone system is expected to  
23 reduce commercial waste truck traffic by more than  
24 50% eliminating millions of miles of truck travel,  
25 cutting air pollution and reducing the time it takes

2 workers to complete their routes. It is also  
3 expected to nearly double commercial diversion rates  
4 for recyclables and organic waste. The scope of this  
5 commercial waste reform is monumental, and the  
6 department wishes to thank the Chair, the Council,  
7 the Business Integrity Commission, our sister  
8 agencies, and all of the business, environmental and  
9 labor advocates for their leadership in the  
10 Transformational Program to modernize the commercial  
11 carting industry. We look forward to you input as we  
12 implement the new system. To support the city's Zero  
13 Waste goal, the proposed budget allocates a total of  
14 \$14.6 million in Fiscal 21 to the department's Bureau  
15 of Recycling and Sustainability for Waste Prevention,  
16 Recycling and Sustainability programs including  
17 outreach and educational programs to residents,  
18 schools, agencies, and NYCHA. New Yorkers are  
19 recycling more than ever, and the Department of  
20 Sanitation collected more recycling material last  
21 year than any year in over a decade. The city's  
22 overall diversion rate has reached 21.1 the highest  
23 rate in nearly two decades, but we know there is more  
24 work to do to increase the city's diversion rates and  
25 to make it easy for everyone to participate in

1 recycling. The department continues to focus on  
2 diverting organics, food scraps, toilet paper and  
3 yard waste from landfills where they generate methane  
4 gas. Curbside organic collection serves 23 districts  
5 in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens and Staten Island.  
6 Buildings in the rest of the Bronx and Manhattan's  
7 main role to receive collections. In addition, more  
8 than 1,200 schools, institutions and agency locations  
9 now receive organic collection service. By the end  
10 of 2019, New Yorkers diverted 50,500 tons of organic,  
11 a 10% increase over the prior year. The department  
12 remains fully funded to continue curbside organic  
13 collection service in existence to this day. We are  
14 actively working to grow the Organics Program in  
15 other ways. In fall 2019, we expanded the number of  
16 schools participating in organics collection by  
17 consorting three existing school truck routes to  
18 organics collections. In addition, we have added 20  
19 city agencies and institutions to existing organics  
20 collection routes as called for by Local Law 22 of  
21 2019. We will also continue to recruit large  
22 apartment buildings to join the program especially in  
23 areas where collection service already exists. We  
24 also continue to establish food service-food scraps  
25

2 drop-off sites to provide residents without curbside  
3 service the opportunity to compost their food scraps.  
4 By December 2019, we had established more than 173  
5 sites up from 150 in January. We are also focused on  
6 giving businesses the tools they need to reduce food  
7 waste and save money. In March, 2019, the department  
8 launched the Donate NYC Online Food Donation Portal  
9 to connect businesses interested in donating food to  
10 local organizations that feed hungry people. The  
11 tool created pursuant to Local Law 176 of 2017 is an  
12 innovative food rescue effort designed to improve  
13 connections between potential business donors and  
14 recipients such as food rescue organizations and  
15 pantry, shelters, to new kitchens and other emergency  
16 food programs. By far, about 350 organizations have  
17 registered with half registered as donors and half  
18 recipients. Through the end of December, the Portal  
19 successfully diverted more than 80,000 pounds of  
20 excessive food through the Food Donation Portal. Our  
21 portfolio of textile and e-waste recovery programs  
22 continues to grow both in participation and in  
23 material recovered. In 2019, the department  
24 partnered to recover over 15,500 tons of textiles  
25 through Refashion NYC building drop-off locations and

2 through Donate NYC Partners. In 2019, the department  
3 recycled nearly 8,800 tons of electronics to the East  
4 Side BNYC, (sic) drop-off events and the employment-  
5 based E-waste Collection Program that we expanded  
6 citywide to Queens and the Bronx. The department  
7 also continued its popular waste disposal program  
8 also provides permanent special waste drop-off sites  
9 in 10 boroughwide safe disposal events per year. In  
10 2019, our Safe Program diverted over 630 tons of  
11 household hazards for safe and proper recycling. As  
12 of March 1<sup>st</sup>, plastic carry-out bags are banned in  
13 New York State with limited exemptions. In addition,  
14 Local Law 100 of 2019 enacted pursuant to the state  
15 law by the City Council requires that retail collects  
16 a five-cent fee on every paper bag used in New York  
17 City. Forty percent of these monies will be  
18 reimbursed to the city for the purchase and  
19 distribution of reusable bags from New Yorkers. The  
20 department is taking steps to educate the public  
21 regarding the new requirements that took effect this  
22 week. Since 2016 the department, has distributed  
23 nearly a million reusable bags across the city, and  
24 we continue to work with elected officials to,  
25 community groups and others to distribute reusable

2 bags. Since the beginning of this year the  
3 department has held dozens of reusable bag giveaway  
4 events across the five boroughs. New Yorkers can  
5 receive a free reusable bag by taking a zero-waste  
6 pledge or attending a reusable bag giveaway event.  
7 The department would like to thank this committee and  
8 the Council for its leadership and support in the  
9 enactment of Local Law 100 that will incentivize  
10 individuals to use reusable bags and help us reach  
11 our zero waste goals. We also continue to closely  
12 monitor extended producer responsibility legislation  
13 for products such as packaging, carpets and  
14 mattresses. In closing, I wish to thank Chair  
15 Reynoso and the other members of this committee for  
16 continuing for-of our program and work. You are  
17 critical advocates as we work to keep New York City  
18 healthy, safe and clean. Thank you for this  
19 opportunity to opportunity to testify this afternoon,  
20 and my staff and I are now happy to answer your  
21 questions.

22 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Thank you,  
23 Commissioner. I just want to recognize we've been  
24 joined by Council Member Chin. Let's just start with  
25 waste exports. It seems like the Preliminary Plan



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2 has \$21.5 million added to Fiscal Year 2020 for waste  
3 export. That brings the total budget to \$412.8  
4 million and I just want to know what the additional  
5 funding covers, and why there weren't any additional  
6 monies left from the outyears and also after hearing  
7 your testimony, it seems like we've increased our  
8 work related to organics, textiles to E-waste. Why  
9 is it that we're seeing an increase in the recycling  
10 the diversion that the city of New York is doing, but  
11 having to see an increase in the amount of money  
12 we're spending for exporting of waste.

13 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: So, I think this is  
14 not unanticipated. The increased cost in the export  
15 budget as we brought from marine transfer stations  
16 online. The cost per ton did go up in those long-  
17 term contracts. We are still working with the Office  
18 of Management and Budget on what exactly we are going  
19 to need in the outyears, and so this is really driven  
20 by what the cost per ton is.

21 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: The cost per ton,  
22 but have we seen a reduction I guess in the amount of  
23 trash we're sending to them.

24 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: We were up  
25 slightly-we were up slightly. The overall volume off

2 trash recyclables was up overall, and we were up  
3 slightly on the total trash number. We were up a lot  
4 on the recycling number.

5 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Okay. So, I guess  
6 when it comes to a larger question is zero waste by  
7 2030, and whether or not we're moving towards that  
8 goal. I feel like there's a lot done here in your  
9 testimony again, but none of it seems to be these  
10 bold necessary adjustments that we need to make as  
11 residents or that the city needs to take on to really  
12 help us get to zero waste. It just—I just really  
13 don't see it. At this rate, we're going to leave and  
14 not—not even be close to zero waste zero waste.

15 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: We still do have a  
16 lot of work to do to get to zero waste. It is the  
17 toughest thing to get New Yorkers to change their  
18 habits, and I feel like I continuously make that the  
19 case that we're just dealing with the back end. We  
20 really need people to think about what they are  
21 purchasing on the front end, and we know that  
22 consumer behavior changes once in our waste stream.  
23 We know that we used to have a ton of newspaper. We  
24 have almost no newspaper, but it sort of got  
25 supplanted by the fact that everyone started ordering

2 things for delivery, and so now we have a lot more  
3 cardboard than we ever did in the past. So, are  
4 main, committed to the goal of zero waste. I do  
5 think that we can get there, but it really will take  
6 a recommitment to make sure that we have the policies  
7 and programs in place to get New York City over the  
8 hurdle.

9 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Okay. I just want  
10 to—anyone that—there's a flash there. It's just very  
11 distracting. Yeah. What is that?

12 MALE SPEAKER: (off mic/inaudible)

13 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: What is it?

14 MALE SPEAKER: It's the Flash Program,  
15 and it stays with the Flash Program. (sic)

16 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Okay. So, it's some  
17 body outside. Just as usual, I'm just concerned if  
18 the—what I feel is the lack of initiative we've taken  
19 to really try go get to zero waste. The waste zones  
20 I'm excited, of course, about commercial waste zones  
21 moving forward. I really think we're going to make a  
22 dent on the zero waste goal in the private sector  
23 more—more effectively than we are in the public  
24 sector, but I saw in the Preliminary Plan that we've  
25 only seen an increase of four positions. I wanted to

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2 talk about whether or not you think that's enough of  
3 a headcount increase, and what you're projecting long  
4 term to-to staff and-and manage the commercial waste  
5 zone system here in the city of New York.

6 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Certainly. So, I  
7 mean the four is really the first step. They are  
8 primarily for contract managers as we begin to write  
9 these RFPs and write the contracts that will follow  
10 from them. We are still working on what the final  
11 number is going to be to manage the entire program,  
12 but we're still at least 18 months away from that  
13 actually being necessary. So, this is the down  
14 payment on making sure we can stand up the pieces of  
15 the program that are heavy on contract management and  
16 moving those pieces forward.

17 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So, are we all  
18 scheduled for full implementation for 2021?

19 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Yep.

20 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So, we are. Okay, I  
21 wanted to talk about just garages in general. We  
22 have some garages that are in disrepair or just been--  
23 we've had them for a long time and are in need of  
24 some TLC. Just what is your projection on capital  
25 costs for rehabilitation or just--just the general

2 care of several of our garages. I have—what is that?  
3 I want to name two specifically. Well, I'll find the  
4 two. I'm pretty sure you know who—which ones they  
5 are, but they are just the ones that don't look like  
6 the ones on the—on the west side.

7 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: No, I mean I—I  
8 would say would that, you know, while we do have the  
9 Superstar on the westside, that is not the average  
10 look of a Sanitation garage, and we've had some  
11 catastrophic failures of our facilities in recent  
12 months particularly in the Bronx, and so, you know,  
13 it's a combination of several things. We have  
14 funding needs. We have got a lot of money in next  
15 year's budget. We're still evaluating. There are  
16 some things that have happened, too, recently to have  
17 good estimates for, but OMB has been very supportive  
18 of making sure that we have the funding to do the  
19 rehabilitation there, but it's also a challenge of  
20 always finding space for us, and getting us through  
21 the process to make sure that there's a long-term  
22 plan for Sanitation facilities. So, we are  
23 continuing to work with OMB to tighten up what our  
24 number is, but there is a substantial amount of money  
25 in next year's Capital Budget.

2 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: And are we—are we  
3 done with the women's bathrooms?

4 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Am I done with  
5 what?

6 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: With the women's  
7 bathrooms facilities?

8 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: No because we  
9 defaulted the contractor. They were not coming to  
10 work. So, we—we have brought their bonding agent in  
11 to—so it's not a money issue. It's a question that  
12 the contractor was incapable of completing. So,  
13 we've brough their bonding agent in and they will  
14 have to provide the finished product.

15 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Do we have a time  
16 line so when we can see that finished product?

17 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: It should be—it  
18 should be relatively soon, and it's all enforced.  
19 It's the—it's—four of them were—were ones where we  
20 had to default the contractor.

21 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: What I have here is  
22 just 13 and 15 in Brooklyn specifically. It seems to  
23 be ones that, could use some—some TLC.

24 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Well, technically  
25 15 isn't a garage, it's a trailer park.

2 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: It's a what? Say  
3 it again.

4 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: I said it's not a  
5 garage. It's a trailer park.

6 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Okay, exactly.

7 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Right and 13 has  
8 serious structural issues. We are working very  
9 closely with DCAS to locate space to build. We had  
10 wanted to build at the National Grid site that became  
11 too costly, but we think we may have located another  
12 site and we're working hard to make sure that we can,  
13 you know, get it through the normal city process,  
14 funding, ULURP, all that good stuff.

15 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So, the—but we  
16 can't build where the facilities are currently or  
17 just rehabilitate them?

18 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Oh, no, no. We  
19 don't say that there's like—there is no place to put  
20 a garage now.

21 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So what about  
22 temporary-temporary work that can be done to upgrade  
23 the facilities so that they are at least something we  
24 can be proud of to put Sanitation workers on?  
25

2 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Oh, no there--  
3 Brooklyn 15 is not the only place where Sanitation  
4 workers are in trailers. This is happening across  
5 the city for us. We are in trailers in the Bronx in  
6 at least two locations. That is our current short-  
7 term fix is to do that. We have the funding in the  
8 budget for rehab So a lot of our slabs, but there is  
9 a tremendous amount of work to do.

10 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: I'm glad that the  
11 money is there. That's a--that's an important issue.  
12 The bike link--bike lane cleaning. We're having  
13 issues with the mandatory width of bike lanes. In the  
14 city of New York have to be wide enough so that you  
15 can fit a street sweeper to it.

16 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Or a plow.

17 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: or a what?

18 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: or a plow.

19 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Yes, sure or  
20 emergency vehicles. A whole bunch of--a whole bunch  
21 of things could fit in there, but they're also--

22 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: I just actually  
23 like to bike in the winter.

24 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: The problem we have  
25 is that vehicles come into the bike lane, and make it



2 dangerous for the cyclists. So, what we're hoping to  
3 do is have a conversation about smaller street  
4 sweepers that can clean either snow or street  
5 sweeping generally and whether or not that can be  
6 done, and it doesn't seem like there's any equipment  
7 within DOT or the Department of Sanitation that can  
8 do street sweeping in a—in a smaller width for these  
9 bike lanes.

10 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: So, we—we—we have—  
11 we have actually experimented with several different  
12 pieces of equipment. We don't have a problem with  
13 doing it. We just need to be funded to buy them. So,  
14 you know, we—we have pieces of equipment we like. We  
15 think they'd be effective at snow removal and at  
16 street cleaning, but we're not funded to buy them at  
17 this point.

18 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Yeah, we would love  
19 to. Do you have an estimate as to how much you think  
20 you would need to—to accommodate the future? The  
21 lanes we have now are the 250 extra lanes that are  
22 supposed to be created in short order by this  
23 administration/

24 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: I mean I'm—I'm  
25 working closely with DOT to figure out what years

2 they're going to be coming into-into action, but we-  
3 we are open to using smaller pieces of equipment, but  
4 it means our fleet size has to get bigger so that we  
5 can do both.

6 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: And-and I think  
7 we'll be open to that. I just think that we're-we  
8 need to talk about safety, and allowing for vehicles  
9 to get into bike lanes really hurts our-our ability  
10 to keep cyclist safety, to keep everyone safe to be  
11 perfectly honest, and for the excuse to be that we  
12 need to put a street sweeper through it. We just  
13 really want to salt for that, I guess.

14 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: But, we-we don't  
15 have a-this is not an issue for us. This is a  
16 question of we're happy to do anything you want as  
17 long as we have the equipment to do it.

18 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Okay. So, I guess  
19 it would come down to like procurement and when your  
20 next round of street sweepers are coming in, and  
21 whether or not we could modify that.

22 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Oh, you won't be  
23 able to modify it. You have to put out a new  
24 procurement to buy these. They're-they're very

2 specialized. They're not anything like what we  
3 currently buy.

4 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Okay.

5 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: So, you have go  
6 through a procurement process so, but I can't—I have  
7 to have both. So, it's—it's you--

8 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: You get a report?

9 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: I don't—I don't—  
10 it's not a one for—my overall fleet has to get bigger  
11 in order for me to do different jobs in different  
12 areas.

13 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Understood and we-  
14 we want to have that conversation so even outside of  
15 this we—we really want to start thinking about it in  
16 a—in a meaningful way. I have two more questions  
17 because I want to allow for my colleagues to ask some  
18 questions, and I want to acknowledge that we've been  
19 joined by Council Member Brannan from Brooklyn. The  
20 NYCHA recycling. It seems like DSNY at one point was  
21 partnering with NYCA non-profit and civic  
22 organizations to do recycling work or recycling  
23 programs. From what I understood from those  
24 residents it was very successful, but it doesn't seem  
25 like there's any more funding provided by DSNY. Why

2 would we start a pilot to encourage NYCHA residents  
3 to recycle and then cut it off especially what I see  
4 if a motivated tenants, NYCHA tenants?

5 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: So, I mean I think  
6 that you're looking at just one small aspect of what  
7 has been the overall NYCHA program. We did an  
8 innovation grant in Brownsville for one person. We  
9 have determined that that isn't scalable, but we are  
10 also doing a lot of outreach with-through Grow NYC in  
11 over 11 NYCHA developments. We re-tooled their  
12 programs, and we're actually starting to see  
13 material. One of them is actually converting one of  
14 their containers to paper because we aren't getting  
15 that much material. So, we think that using the  
16 grill model is the most effective.

17 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Okay, I just want  
18 to-look, we're encouraging folks. I think a big part  
19 of it is like changing culture, and making sure that  
20 we-we educate and inform people and-and reward them  
21 for-for helping us recycle and so forth, and the  
22 scalability. I would love to have a conversation  
23 about that, but it's working somewhere why stop it  
24 from happening I guess. Unless you get a thing for  
25 recycling--

2 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: If it's not working  
3 it's not enough material—I'm not getting enough  
4 material. So, it's yes working, but I'm—it's not like  
5 I'm getting huge amounts of volume.

6 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: But you—so you were  
7 tracking-?

8 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: I'm looking for  
9 tonnage.

10 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: You were tracking  
11 the success of the program in—in outcomes?

12 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Yeah, like how  
13 many, how much material am I getting?

14 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: I just want to say  
15 these types of things take time.

16 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: I'm aware of that  
17 but we're doing better with the other program in  
18 terms of tonnage.

19 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So, I want to speak  
20 about the other program. Is the organic drop-off  
21 sites--

22 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Oh, yes.

23 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: --and just organics  
24 in general. DSNY also had contracts with local  
25 community organizations to do a lot of the work

2 related to drop-offs, and it seems like those are  
3 being modified. I just want to know what is the—where  
4 were they let's say two years ago or last year and  
5 what are they now when it comes to the work that  
6 DSNYT is doing for organic drop-off sites outside of—  
7 outside of DSNY's work?

8 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: So, so as I said in  
9 my testimony, we have a very large number of  
10 community organizations that we work with for drop-  
11 off sites. I think you're specifically talking about  
12 those that are funded through the Compost Project.  
13 That budget has not changed in years. They have in  
14 years past had rollover money. They didn't spend  
15 their whole volume, and one fiscal year rolled to  
16 another. They just—there isn't any rollover money  
17 this year. So, but the budget it did not change.

18 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So, the budget and  
19 the work that DSNY is asking them to—to do is still  
20 the same?

21 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: It's the same. The  
22 only expansion we did is that Grow NYC had been doing  
23 the Compost on the Go, up in Upper Manhattan, which  
24 is wildly successful. So, there is money that we had  
25

2 to expend for that, and that's mainly just because we  
3 are getting so much participation.

4 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Are we concerned  
5 about the drop-off sites being reduced? I hear that  
6 they're being--

7 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: They are not  
8 reduced.

9 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: --the Lower East  
10 Side Ecology Center.

11 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: The Lower East Side  
12 Ecology Center they may not necessarily--the drop-off  
13 site is primarily in Union Square. I mean they do  
14 have a drop-off, and you can drop off in the park,  
15 but their biggest site is the Union Square site where  
16 they work. So, I have not talked to Christine  
17 recently, but I didn't think she had any intention of  
18 not participating in that. There is a lot of  
19 pressure on the Lower East Side Ecology Center from  
20 the Coastal Resilient Project, and so, you know we  
21 continue to be very supportive of what she's done  
22 over the last 20 years, and what we hope she will  
23 continue to do as we move forward.

24 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: And there's also a  
25 Queens site. I don't know exactly where.

2 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Degrees is Queens  
3 and there is the Queens. It's a fabulous site.

4 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: And that's one that  
5 is contracted with the city as well or is working  
6 with the city.

7 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Degrees (sic) is  
8 one of our compost project partners, yes.

9 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: And they—are they  
10 long-term do they have viability in that site?

11 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: There is a  
12 challenge with—that being Parks property as well. So,  
13 I don't have control of it, but we are working with  
14 the Parks Department in terms of whether or not they  
15 should be there because I think that they do an  
16 enormous amount of work for the Parks Department in  
17 terms of both taking a lot of material from the parks  
18 that are near there, and giving them back compost in  
19 the spring. So, I view them as a huge benefit to the  
20 Parks Department, but those are ongoing  
21 conversations.

22 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So, I see those as  
23 two important sites and both of them have questions—  
24 you know, there are questions in both sites on  
25



2 whether or not there's long term viability there, and  
3 I just want—I would rather just resolve that.

4 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: I would like to as  
5 well. I'm not the actual decision maker on it.

6 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So, the Parks  
7 Department would be the decision maker on that.

8 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: The Parks  
9 Department is the one who controls it.

10 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: But should that not  
11 happen to the Department of Sanitation. I guess my  
12 problem here is organics is something we want to do.  
13 We want to talk about it citywide. We want to  
14 mandate it eventually, and it doesn't seem like we  
15 have—do we have a plan locally to allow for these  
16 places to continue to exist so they can help us with  
17 the tonnage that we're supposed to be receiving from  
18 them?

19 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: No, we are—we are  
20 actively working with the Lower East Side Ecology  
21 Center to see if we can find another location for  
22 them that's not on Parks' property.

23 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: And the Queens site  
24 I think is something else that we should look at.

2 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Yes, we have to  
3 work on that one as well.

4 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So, I would love to  
5 follow on that, and now just because for-for time  
6 reasons I want to make sure I give an opportunity to  
7 any of my colleagues should they have questions?

8 MALE SPEAKER: Council Member Chin.

9 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: I want to start off  
10 with Council Member Chin, and we have been joined by  
11 Council Member Constantinides.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you, Chair.  
13 Thanks, Commissioner for your testimony.

14 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Thank you.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: First I wanted to  
16 really thank you department for the implementation of  
17 the bags giveaway. I think it's been--

18 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Oh, my goodness,  
19 I've given away so many bags.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Yeah, it's been  
21 quite successful. I mean I had one giveaway where  
22 there were lines before we were able to set up, and  
23 within an hour we gave out a thousand bags, and  
24 people were mad at us that came late. (laughs) So, we  
25 got to continue to do that, and they're so colorful.

2 People love it, and I see people carrying it around  
3 it around with them--

4 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Uh-hm.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: --to shop. So  
6 that--

7 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: I had to do a lot  
8 of - Here, let me show you how to squeeze it into  
9 the-

10 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Yes.

11 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: --the little  
12 strawberry sides.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Oh, and--and the  
14 kids love it. So, I--and I saw one Sanitation  
15 Department employee going out. I think it was during  
16 lunch hour and he had one of those little bags. So,  
17 it's like good. Organic collection, right?

18 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Uh-hm.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: I represent Lower  
20 Manhattan--

21 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Uh-hm.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: --and I'm inundated  
23 with garbage especially in the Financial District  
24 because it's a--it's become a growing residential  
25 population, and every day when it's garbage time the

2 garbage comes out very early. Around 6:00 something,  
3 5 O'clock you see them putting out the garbage lining  
4 all the sidewalk. When they do recycling, it's  
5 taller than me. It's just so much. So, the question  
6 is I-I recycle, right. Is there a way that we can  
7 mandate that they really have to collapse the boxes,  
8 and--because I see like bags of just covered box.

9 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Uh-hm.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: They're not, you  
11 know, they didn't like tie them up, right. That's  
12 one thing. Is there a way that we can mandate that?  
13 Do we need legislation?

14 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: No, I can do that.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: To do that because  
16 there are--I mean yesterday I was walking on John  
17 Street, and this was a commercial area. So, all  
18 these boxes on the sidewalk. It takes up a lot of  
19 space, and they never bother to collapse it.

20 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Uh-hm.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: So, that's one  
22 thing. The other thing is that relating to organic  
23 there's so much garbage, and I think a lot of it in  
24 there is food--

25 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Uh-hm.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: --or like, you know  
3 the food waste product--

4 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Uh-hm.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: --and that cause  
6 the rats, you know like especially in the summer, and  
7 we still couldn't work out an agreement, you know,  
8 with the--the Mayor's Rat Mitigation Program to get  
9 people to put out trash later. There's some issues  
10 with union and so that program still haven't gotten  
11 started, but I just see piles and piles of garbage  
12 and especially in the Financial District, the  
13 sidewalks are very narrow. So, you have no place to  
14 walk with those garbage, and so I'm just looking at  
15 is there a way to really work with the Business  
16 Improvement District down there and work with this  
17 building to get them to start doing the organic  
18 collection, and that will, you know, minimize some of  
19 the garbage. Otherwise, I meant the other option is  
20 to do more pickup because every time they put out the  
21 garbage it's a whole, you know, block long. That's  
22 not cost effective and I really think that there's a  
23 way to start the organic program in those big  
24 buildings. But the Business Improvement District,

2 the Downtown Alliance, they actually are starting to  
3 organic collection, you know, on the street.

4 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Uh-hm.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: I think they're  
6 implementing it very soon for people who sort of buy  
7 food and eat it outside in the park to be able to do  
8 their part, right, and that might be a way to do some  
9 drop off.

10 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Uh-hm.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: But like some of my  
12 neighbors are very environmentally conscious and they  
13 put it in the freezer and they bring to the Farmer's  
14 Market at Bowling Green, you know, once a week.

15 That's great, but I think if we can work our program  
16 where we can make it accessible, and some of these  
17 big buildings they have space. They just need to--  
18 somehow we need to kind of push them to start doing  
19 that because otherwise like we're inundated with  
20 garbage, and I know the--the people who live in those  
21 buildings are upset about it and there's this whole  
22 Hi-five, you know, neighborhood group they want, you  
23 know to solve, you know a solution, and I think with  
24 this is that we can also get them engaged and say  
25 hey we could work on this problem, but this is

2 something your building and your neighbors can do  
3 and the city can—can help support it. So, going  
4 forward do you think that could be, you know,  
5 possible for us to work on that?

6 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: So, absolutely and  
7 there are a couple, one you do three-day weeks  
8 collection of garbage, which is pretty, you know more  
9 than a lot of other places, but you're very dense.  
10 You have very good recycling rates. So, we do think  
11 that—that food waste is a challenge. I think that at  
12 this point in time I'm very excited about what the  
13 Downtown Alliance is doing in terms of their unmanned  
14 drop-off program, which I'm hoping to see kick off.  
15 They had some customs issues in the late spring. We  
16 would have to look at the resources for additional  
17 collection or organic separately, and what that would  
18 cost because I'm not currently funded to expand. It  
19 may make more sense to look at more drop-offs unless  
20 we are in a situation where it's mandated because I'm  
21 not sure I'll get enough material in those buildings  
22 to make it worthwhile to send a truck.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: But is that some  
24 kind of phase-in? I mean like okay, we start off  
25 with drop-off, Chair, and then we could work on a

2 timeline that hey, you know, just like letting people  
3 know about plastic--no more plastic bags. You got to  
4 start bringing your own bag or pay for a paper bag--

5 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Uh-hm.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: --to give people  
7 enough time to say start doing this. You know, you  
8 could drop off, but it's going to come to your  
9 building and you got to take care of it--

10 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Uh-hm.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: --in your own  
12 building, and every building should do their part--

13 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: uh-hm.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: --because it's  
15 just--it's just unmanageable with to so much garbage.

16 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: It's a lot.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: I mean I have  
18 plenty of pictures to share with you.

19 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: No, no. I know--I  
20 know what it looks like--

21 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: --right?

22 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: I know what it  
23 looks like.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: So that's--that's  
25 definitely something that we can work on, and--



2 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Uh-hm.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: --maybe start with  
4 Downtown Alliance and see how the drop-off thing can  
5 help because we heard that in Battery Park City they  
6 started similar things and

7 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Uh-hm.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: --and it's working.

9 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Yeah.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: So, that's the  
11 point we could do some high lid or maybe even have  
12 some building voluntarily start doing that.

13 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: It's-it's-right I  
14 just-I-

15 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: There has to be  
16 some kind of coordination.

17 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: I-I will look at it  
18 but I'm currently not funded to expand the Organics  
19 Program.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: But you should let  
21 us know. I mean this is the budget time.

22 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Yeah, so that's-  
23 that's

24 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Let us know what-  
25 what you-how much you would need to get an Organic

2 Program expanded. I think I would like to know. I  
3 think that, you know, the Chair would like to know  
4 that, too, so that at least we could plan ahead if  
5 the is the amount of money that you need to really  
6 expand that program, and the other thing I guess is  
7 the issue of getting people to--

8 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: to do it.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: --to do that, but  
10 also the--the thing with the recycling with the car.

11 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: I said that that  
12 that thing can go. (sic)

13 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Everybody is  
14 getting delivery and we have--

15 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Yes.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: --we have a  
17 delivery site on the corner of the street--

18 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Yeah, no I--

19 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: There's so many  
20 boxes every single day--

21 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Yes.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: --and like it's--I  
23 hope that the city is making money back from these  
24 cardboard boxes.

2 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Not right now. The  
3 paper markets are pretty terrible, but we—but they  
4 should be breaking down their cardboard, and we can  
5 look at that to make sure that it's clear in our  
6 rules what the requirement is because that is fully  
7 within our control.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Because if they—if  
9 they don't do it, and it's--

10 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: It's a lot of  
11 space. It's more space.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Yeah, and one of  
13 the things that the Downtown Alliance suggested was  
14 that we might be able to mandate that they have some  
15 kind of machine.

16 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: A baler.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: A baler. If we  
18 need to do that, we'll—we'll do that. Then--

19 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Yes,

20 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: --then this way  
21 we'll help them do their part. So, I mean I'm happy  
22 to work with you--

23 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Yes, that would be  
24 great.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: --on legislation  
3 to--to sort of mandate that--

4 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Yes.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: --if it's possible--

6 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Yeah.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: --going forward.

8 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: No, that would be  
9 good.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you. Thank  
11 you, Chair.

12 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Thank you, Council  
13 Member. Council Member Constantinides.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: Thank  
15 you, Council Member Reynoso. Commissioner, good to  
16 see you.

17 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Good to see you.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: So, a  
19 couple of questions. First, last year passed Local  
20 Law 97, which mandates a reduction in emissions from  
21 city buildings. I'm pretty much assuming the  
22 Sanitation Department buildings are part of that.  
23 So, what allocations were made during last year's  
24 budget or in this year's budget towards reducing or  
25

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2 retrofitting your buildings that are run or rented by  
3 Sanitation to comply with Local Law 97?

4 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: So, we do a lot of  
5 work with the DCAS Office of Energy Management with  
6 Anthony Fiore in terms of doing upgrades around  
7 lightings or rapid roll-up doors, and then in any of  
8 our new construction, and I don't know if you were  
9 here when I mentioned that most of my buildings it's  
10 like I don't have something that they meet all of the  
11 newest requirements to meet the mandates of those  
12 laws and energy efficiency.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: Great.  
14 So, I mean any new buildings that were built let say  
15 if there was a Sanitation garage in Western Queens  
16 that was built?

17 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: If it's built, yes  
18 it will be beautiful, and it will be very efficient.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: And--and it  
20 would be compliant with Local Law 97 and all of the  
21 other--

22 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Uh-hm.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: --  
24 legislation that we've passed in the city --

25 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Yep.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: --over  
3 the last few years?

4 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Yep.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: How are  
6 things—I think we're going through a siting process  
7 now.

8 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: We are. We are in  
9 the middle of ULURP, and so we have gone through the  
10 Land Use Committee at the Community Board as well as  
11 the full Community Board and now it goes to the  
12 Borough President.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: Yes.

14 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: So, I'm excited.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: As am I,  
16 and think that we have to have a—a discussion and—and  
17 you know my concerns.

18 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Uh-hm.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: Right. We  
20 want to make sure that's what—and I think that's less  
21 having to do with the Department of Sanitation. I do  
22 believe the moving the garage is a—is an  
23 Environmental Justice issue--

24 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Yes.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: --and we  
3 have to make sure we move it.

4 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Oh, it's in a  
5 terrible place.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: It's in a  
7 terrible--and it's been next to the Ravenswood Houses  
8 for decades and it's not--

9 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: I'm not sure which  
10 came first.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: (laughs)  
12 Yes.

13 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: They may have moved  
14 in with us not we moved in with them.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: But it's  
16 been there a long time.

17 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Yeah.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: So, it's  
19 time for it to move, and it's not in good condition,  
20 correct?

21 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Oh, it's in  
22 terrible condition.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: So, but  
24 what happens on those--on that lot we need to make  
25 sure that it's for public use, it's-it's

2 affordability, and that we're not giving it away,  
3 correct?

4 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Yeah, I'm-I-well  
5 I've done-I will turn it over to DCAS, but I believe  
6 that-I think that in this process particularly  
7 through the ULURP process that we should be making  
8 clear that we are taking what you and the community  
9 want into sort of drafting those requirements. And I  
10 mean it's perfect place for affordable housing.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: I agree.  
12 We need to make sure that it's really affordable now  
13 and not somewhat we-we delve into these AMIs that are  
14 not truly affordable. So, is DCAS in the room?

15 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: No.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: Okay. I  
17 well, I got my shot (laughs) but someone should send  
18 them the message that it has to be truly affordable  
19 for-for residents that are representative of that  
20 part of the community--

21 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Uh-hm.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: --that it  
23 has-it can't be, you know, at 125 AMI or something  
24 that just makes it unaffordable. It has to be to-to  
25 make sure we do this garage effectively it has, you



2 know, the replacement of this garage is going to have  
3 a huge impact on the community positive or negative,  
4 and we have to make sure that it's a positive impact  
5 for the long term.

6 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: uh-hm.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: And then  
8 lastly, I'll ask about electric-electric trucks. I  
9 thought you were going to get away.

10 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: No, we can talk  
11 about electric trucks.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: The Mayor  
13 announced in January that all city vehicles were  
14 going to be electric by 2040. So, that's 20 years  
15 from now including garbage trucks.

16 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Uh-hm.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: So, I  
18 guess you can—can you give me an update onto what  
19 we're thinking around technology to make sure that  
20 they're reliable, but that they're clean?

21 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: So, we have been  
22 working with our vendor Matt Volvo and they have been  
23 prototyping an electric garbage truck. It was briefly  
24 in city. They need to do some more work on the  
25 battery power of it. It has not—we look forward to

2 putting it through its paces. It has not been put  
3 through its paces yet. We don't yet know whether  
4 it's going to work—how it's going to work from a  
5 capacity point of view and any of that, but it is a  
6 full electric. One of the things that I would say in  
7 the interim is '24 is a long time from now, and  
8 between then and now (1) The technology on trucks has  
9 got to get better, and I—and I do think that it will,  
10 but the other challenge is we have electrical  
11 constraints at every single one of our facilities. I  
12 couldn't put another charger in anywhere. I just do  
13 not have the power, but there are things that we can  
14 do now, right. There is start/stop technology for  
15 garbage trucks that will basically cut their  
16 emissions by a third. We got some of them funded in  
17 this budget round, happily, but obviously that's  
18 something that something that we know works. It's  
19 here today, that we would start to use. (sic)

20 COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: What—what  
21 is the—run through that technology really quickly.

22 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: It's called  
23 Stop/Start Technology--

24 COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES:  
25 Stop/Start. Okay

2 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: --by Sanko and  
3 really what it is, is it sort of turns off when you  
4 get to a light or if you're at a stop.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: Okay.

6 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: And so it-it would-  
7 we have seen-well the ones that we have is that we're  
8 using a third less fuel.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: Okay.

10 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: So, I feel like we  
11 want to make sure that we are doing the R&B for full  
12 electric.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: Uh-hm.

14 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: They're very quiet.  
15 We've seen them demoed. We may have to make them  
16 make noise. We want people to see us coming, but-but  
17 there other thing I feel like but if-that we're not.  
18 We didn't go 20 years out. There are things I think  
19 we could do now to really push the-the limit with the  
20 technology we have.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: And as far  
22 as the-the commercial waste zones and thinking about  
23 environmental concerns relating to trucks, how are we  
24 thinking that's going to be in the RFP, and-and--

2 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: So--there--there are  
3 some minimums that they will have to meet in terms of  
4 how cleanly they are, and then they will get extra  
5 points for going above and beyond and being cleaner,  
6 and making investments both in their fleet, and if  
7 they are going to clear facilities like final use, if  
8 they're going to move the material out by rail or  
9 barge rather than by truck that's scores more points.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER CONSTANTINIDES: Okay. Mr.  
11 Chair, I'll hand it back to over to you. Thank you  
12 very much.

13 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Thank you, and I'm  
14 going to follow up with a couple of questions by both  
15 Council Members. Containerized trash--containerized  
16 trash, and curbside containerized trash, most large  
17 cities or some large cities do this work. It helps  
18 with rat reduction. It also allows for the trash to  
19 be in a--in a stored location outside of the middle of  
20 the streets. There is practically a war on--a war on  
21 sidewalks for pedestrians. We use our sidewalks for  
22 everything, and at some point, we have to think  
23 outside the box as to how the future of our walkable,  
24 livable city is going to be, and we don't want to be  
25 trash New York right? We want to make sure that we

1 could handle that we could handle that more  
2 appropriately. Do you think containerized curbside  
3 trash-containerizing trash curbside makes sense, and  
4 especially in the private industry? So, when we're  
5 talking about trash in commercial BIDs, or do they  
6 make more sense in smaller areas where maybe our  
7 residential garbage trucks don't need to stop every  
8 five seconds. Instead, they could stop on corners of  
9 the streets and so forth. Just the idea of  
10 containerized trash, curbside containerized trash.  
11 Whether or not that's something that you've thought  
12 of, and it's something you would be willing to  
13 explore.

15 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Yeah, no, no, we're  
16 definitely thinking about it. I think that it's not  
17 inexpensive in terms of the infrastructure around it.  
18 The other challenge is that sort of the two models  
19 that are used elsewhere either sit in the parking  
20 lane or sit under the street. Under the street is  
21 going to be really challenging just because of how  
22 much else is already there, and then, you know, we're  
23 going to have to think very carefully through, you  
24 know, where is it being located. You know, I'm not  
25 sure that everyone is going to want their-to be the

2 house where the whole block comes to put their  
3 garbage. I could be wrong. I want to be open minded  
4 about it, but I think that that may be a hurdle in  
5 terms of moving forward. The other challenge is as  
6 Council Member Chin, it's a lot of material. Like,  
7 you know, if you think about putting the material  
8 she's talking about from basically one building in a  
9 container, it's--there is no more parking like that  
10 there's--it's still a whole block long, and that's  
11 just--there are some things we're also thinking about  
12 on the residential side for future buildings, but  
13 we're definitely open to it. We think that there are  
14 some challenges, but we're definitely open to looking  
15 at how this could work both in BIDs as well as in the  
16 residential side.

17 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: I definitely think  
18 it's up to worth exploring in smaller residential  
19 blocks of one or two-family homes where, you know, we  
20 won't take up the too many parking spots, but also  
21 see if it makes sense on the underground. If we want  
22 to solve right, I think we want to want--

23 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: You're always going  
24 to have trouble underground. You have to remember  
25 that even in the single family world you have a water

2 connection and a sewer connection coming out of every  
3 single building every about 20 feet. So, it's not a  
4 lot. It's not a huge amount of room.

5 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So, I'm like  
6 solution oriented. So, I don't see problems. I-I see  
7 the problems. I want to get to solving them, but if  
8 we don't explore it, you know, we're not going to--

9 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: I'm-I'm totally  
10 open to-to exploring it.

11 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: I think it would-  
12 and also when it comes to actual rat mitigation,  
13 we've done a lot of things in this city whether it's  
14 dry ice, poison, rat soup, all of it to try to find  
15 solutions to-to reducing rats, and the one tried and  
16 true-tried method that makes sense is containerizing  
17 waste. That is the way to solve it, and if we want  
18 to be serious about it, then we should talk about  
19 containerized waste in a more-more openly and  
20 publicly, but if it doesn't happen in just a policy,  
21 in just general conversation, I'm looking forward to  
22 putting legislation forward so that we could have a  
23 more substantial conversation.

24 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: We'll have it. We  
25 would like to talk more.

2 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Okay, the  
3 legislation is coming anyway. So, we're going to  
4 have to talk. It's just that I'd like to talk.

5 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: There's a-by the  
6 way, on a very funny story. In prepping for this I  
7 was at an event in Williamsburg. I was going over  
8 the Williamsburg Bridge, and all of a sudden, rats  
9 started jumping out a container. Not mine.  
10 Apparently, they did not want to go to Manhattan.  
11 They were trying to get back to Brooklyn. So, this--  
12 it was not my sight. I saw it. (sic)

13 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: There's more food  
14 in Manhattan. If they were smart, they would have  
15 stayed there.

16 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: They would have  
17 stayed in Manhattan, they would have--

18 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Yeah,

19 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: I was just like,  
20 what are they doing?

21 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Oh, man. We have--  
22 we have three things here: Litter basket service,  
23 lot cleaning, and highway ramp cleaning--

24 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Uh-hm.  
25



2 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: --and, you know,  
3 when--a long time ago we used to do this thing called  
4 budget dance with Mayor Bloomberg. He would take  
5 things out so he could put it back in later. It was  
6 Art Theater. At this point we're talking about \$8.6  
7 million in one. I don't know how much the highway  
8 ramp cleaning is exactly.

9 MALE SPEAKER: \$864,000.

10 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: \$864,000, not even  
11 a million dollars, and the lot cleaning, and it's  
12 just--it's six--six workers I think or it's 31  
13 Sanitation workers and six supervisors. I just don't  
14 want to do the dance, and I feel like these are low  
15 hanging fruit. They're very popular it the City  
16 Council. Why even have this conversation? When it  
17 comes to the overall budget of \$2.7 million, I  
18 believe--

19 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: \$1.7--\$1.76  
20 billion, why are we even having this conversation on  
21 items that again are popular and seem to be effecting  
22 change. From what I understand, the litter basket  
23 service is actually improving the cleaning--the  
24 cleanliness of the sidewalks. Lot cleaning is good  
25 for quality of life and so forth, and then the

2 highway ramp cleaning I think someone already does  
3 that work, and we subsequent—we come in--

4 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: We do the ramps,  
5 yeah.

6 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: The ramps

7 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: We do the ramps.

8 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So, I just don't—I  
9 just don't want to have to go to B&T (sic) and that  
10 you give us this in three months and think it's a—  
11 you're, you know, we're winning. This is just things  
12 that should be baselined, and should be something we  
13 could handle.

14 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: So, some of them  
15 used to be baselined. Not even the litter basket  
16 collection, but it was only funded last year. They  
17 did not continue the funding into 2021. I would love  
18 to see it but I am not at the table with you when you  
19 are talking about the other bigger budget issues that  
20 are going on right at the moment. So, I mean I think  
21 that, you know, these would be painful if we don't  
22 see them restored, but I know that there are a lot of  
23 pressures this particular cycle on the budget. So,  
24 but I'm—I know from the news, but I'm not in the room  
25 when you're negotiating.

2 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: There's always  
3 pressures. They Mayor always tells us that, you  
4 know, the recession is coming. He's been doing it  
5 for six years, and it just never got here, but I  
6 think that it's very important that you—I just want  
7 the Administration to take note that these are not  
8 necessarily wins. They're things that we assume  
9 should have been in the budget that he should have  
10 baselined that we don't want to negotiate about any  
11 more, that we don't want to do this budget dance.  
12 It's just cumulatively when it comes to the bigger  
13 picture, they—they—they mean so much to the City of  
14 New York. It means so little to our overall budget.

15 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Yes.

16 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So, I just want to  
17 make sure that we had that conversation more--

18 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Openly?

19 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Okay.

20 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: No, I—I agree.

21 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Okay. So, so I  
22 think we're on the same page there. Street sidewalk  
23 cleanliness. So, unfortunately, I looked at a—can I  
24 take this map? I have a map here.

2 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: I don't like that  
3 map because it's--

4 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: I don't like it  
5 either.

6 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: --everything is  
7 over 90% except it's red.

8 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: You asked for  
9 night, so that's--that's a part of the problem, I  
10 think. I think a couple of things. You would want  
11 something that's rated from like 1 to 10. I think  
12 most treat (sic) in the city is rated under like 84  
13 or something like that?

14 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Oh, no, we have bad  
15 months. There--there can be bad months.

16 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: But there--but under  
17 New York City education levels there they're  
18 considered passing, and that's my problem with these  
19 percentages and these systems. It doesn't seem like  
20 the grading system truly accounts for the cleanliness  
21 of the street. If I tell my--my community we're at an  
22 85% cleanliness level, they would think that's a--  
23 that's B minus, that's a B. We could do better, but  
24 we're doing really well when actually it would be one  
25 of the dirtiest streets in the City of New York. So,

2 I just think that we need a re-have another  
3 conversation, and I know this is not the Department  
4 of Sanitation that runs this, but have a conversation  
5 about street cleanliness looks like. But the problem  
6 I have here is in looking at this, is that the areas  
7 that are dirtiest are also, the zip codes of the ED's  
8 that are census tracts that are considered the  
9 poorest parts of the City of New York. Northern  
10 Manhattan, Southern Bronx, Central and Northern  
11 Brooklyn, those, and it's a concern to me that-or I  
12 would like actually to ask when you get this as the  
13 Department of Sanitation from the Office of  
14 Sustainability and the-and

15 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Operations, the  
16 Mayor's Office of Operations.

17 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Operations. When  
18 you get this what is-what do you do with this  
19 information? Does it-does it-do you move resources  
20 around? How do you engage with it?

21 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: I mean there are-  
22 there are several different ways. I mean there's-  
23 part of this is when you think about the cleanliness,  
24 it's not necessarily moving resources around, and we  
25 do have more resources in some of those locations

2 that you've noted particularly in North Brooklyn, but  
3 you—because it gets rated well does not mean it  
4 wasn't dirty in the morning. Like I am cleaning up  
5 after people across the city all the time, and so,  
6 you know, it is a constant battle to keep up with the  
7 amount of sort of drop-offs litter, illegal dumping  
8 that is occurring, and so we have put extra resources  
9 into certain areas of the city including in North  
10 Brooklyn, and we continue to be very focused on  
11 those, and they get—also we'll get extra job training  
12 personnel located within or even community service  
13 work located within them, but it is—it's just a lot.  
14 It's a lot of work.

15 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So, you do use this  
16 to-to--?

17 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Yeah, to like where  
18 do we have—where do we have—and we try and be ahead  
19 of it. I mean like our supervisors are out there all  
20 the time. I mean we never know where they're going  
21 to go. So, they are out there looking for things  
22 that are dirty and make sure we're catching them sort  
23 of before we get graded.

24 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: I would—I'm going  
25 to be proposing—so another thing is that it's very

2 objective. I've gone out with these graders that  
3 tell us what the cleanliness is, and they don't tell  
4 you exactly what they're looking at, but they each  
5 have a different system by which they grade these.  
6 It's very what I believe subjective. Subjective,  
7 yes.

8 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: And that's a reason  
9 why we're--

10 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: And I want to--I  
11 want to start having like a check list that allows  
12 for us to know that how the person in the Upper West  
13 Side grades is similar to how the person in  
14 Williamsburg grades.

15 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: So, I--I don't--  
16 obviously I don't--I don't run that program, but my  
17 understanding was that they had a training manual  
18 that was supposed to make it so that it was even  
19 across all of the different districts. So, I don't--I  
20 don't--I don't know that for sure, but that was my  
21 understanding is if it has, you know, three things on  
22 it, it gets this number. If it gets--it has, you  
23 know, 10 things it gets this number. I thought it was  
24 pretty prescriptive, but I--I have not ever seen their  
25 training of their people. So, I don't know that.

2 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So, I just wanted  
3 to make sure that whatever resources we are  
4 allocating to street cleanliness that this actually  
5 will actually have some value, and that you use it  
6 and it seems like you do, So, I'm fine with that.

7 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: We do. I mean and  
8 some of our cleanest districts have almost no street  
9 cleaning resources. You know, they have no alternate  
10 side. They have no broom service so--

11 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So, when it comes  
12 to export work that we're doing in the City of New  
13 York, there are some residential waste still going to  
14 private sanitation garages. I wanted to ask about  
15 that.

16 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Private transfer  
17 stations.

18 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: I mean Sanitation-  
19 waste transfer stations I mean.

20 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Waste transfer  
21 stations, yes. There are--there are occasions in terms  
22 of like just for operational necessity in terms of  
23 being close to the district or that they are going to  
24 dump both sides of their vehicle either split body,  
25 half organics, half refuse that they are dumping



2 because they have to go no matter what there, and  
3 then there have been times where we've had work that  
4 we've needed to do at some of the marine transfer  
5 stations and they close for a period of time, and so  
6 we would send waste, we would divert waste to other  
7 places.

8 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So, I assume that  
9 the swamp plan was a goal to relieve ourselves from  
10 having to dump in private--

11 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: So, there's--there's  
12 swamp actually anticipates that there is some  
13 flexibility if you have operational needs.

14 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Okay, I just want  
15 to--do--do we know how much those contracts are in  
16 these private--?

17 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: The contracts are  
18 all BICs, they're all back-up contracts, but we can  
19 get you the volume the dollar figure like spent last  
20 year.

21 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Is there one area  
22 that's--that's specifically relying heavily on these  
23 back-up waste transfer stations?  
24  
25

2 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: So, we—it has been  
3 primarily in Eastern Queens and some in going up to  
4 Yonkers.

5 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: I would just like  
6 to see those contracts to understand that a little  
7 better because I thought these marine transfer  
8 stations were supposed to handle most of this or  
9 resolve it.

10 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Everything is  
11 handled. The vast majority I mean, you know, we have  
12 challenges post-holiday where we're—we're basically  
13 doubling the volume going through them where it—it  
14 becomes too much for them to handle, and also  
15 sometimes it—it just makes sense on a—we are not  
16 usually open on a Sunday, and other agencies actually  
17 have their own waste they need to get rid of so there  
18 are some contracts we still hold for that as well,  
19 but we can provide you with that.

20 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: I appreciate that,  
21 and then I think my last question is going to be  
22 related to mechanic to truck ratio. The information  
23 that I had had us at approximately 22% out of service  
24 rate, which is concerning. We were--the highest out  
25 of service rate was in DSNY, which makes sense that

2 DSNY and FDNY who have the larger more complicated  
3 vehicles would need the most amount of work, or the  
4 most amount expert-or expert type of work, and have  
5 huge issues with what I am assuming is understaffing  
6 and a lack of mechanics to handle this work  
7 especially high level mechanics, right. I want to  
8 make sure that we-we're able to differentiate between  
9 general auto mechanics, part-time ones, automotive  
10 electricians and so forth. Just an array of  
11 different types of mechanics that we have, ones that  
12 specifically that handle garbage trucks or that are  
13 able to work on garbage trucks. We-it-it seems to me  
14 that we had a 1 to 10. For every 10 vehicles we have  
15 one mechanic, and that's a concerning ratio to me.  
16 I'd just like to hear your understanding of how this  
17 is supposed to be working and why a 22% out-of-  
18 service rate is-is perfectly fine?

19 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: So, I don't think a  
20 22% out-of-service rate is perfectly fine. Today we  
21 are at a little bit over 16% in part because we did  
22 not have our vacancies filled, and that was  
23 incredibly problematic. We have also been challenged  
24 by the fact that so many of our facilities are in  
25 such bad, particularly our central repair shop 50% of

2 it is not usable for heavy duty trucks right now.

3 It's--this is a building that is the size of the

4 Empire State Building, and we literally don't have

5 50% of it right at the moment. So, we have made great

6 improvements because we did get the headcount and we

7 have been able to bring on auto mechanics--auto

8 electricians. We are trying. They are really hard

9 to recruit right this second. We know we need them,

10 but they're really hard to find.

11 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: But you feel like

12 we have the--within our headcount that we have the

13 capacity to--to have I guess a more responsible out-

14 of-service rate?

15 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Right. So within--

16 once we got up to headcount and we're--the out-of-

17 service rate went down significantly.

18 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: And when did you

19 start the headcount increase, I guess is what I would

20 like?

21 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: It's like the

22 headcount we--September or October, and then we

23 started the hiring process in the beginning of the

24 fall. It takes a long time to get people hired just

25 process wise, but once we got the approvals, and we

2 began to make those hires, we've seen those out-of-  
3 service rates come down significantly.

4 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Do you know how  
5 many folks were hired to fill that?

6 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: I don't have the  
7 exact number off the top of my head. I think at one  
8 point we were probably down 35 mechanics.

9 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So, being down 35  
10 mechanics. That would explain a lot, too.

11 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Yeah, we did not  
12 have enough people. We were--we were dying on the  
13 line.

14 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Do you feel that  
15 once you filled that headcount that you're more than--  
16 you will be more than happy without a service rate  
17 this is--

18 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Actually, I feel  
19 like we've made great progress on that since, and the  
20 only thing I'd say that could be a problem for us is  
21 we still are having facility issues in terms of  
22 having the bays for people to actually do the work,  
23 but, um--

24 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Do we have a--do we  
25 have a plan for that? .

2 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Oh, yes, we have  
3 lots of plans.

4 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: I guess a lot of  
5 capital purchase.

6 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: It's not. So, um--

7 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Can we talk about  
8 that? So, do we have like capital plan for how  
9 we're going to increase bays so we can put these?

10 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Oh, yeah, they're--  
11 they're included in every garage project. They're  
12 included in what we're rehabbing at the central  
13 repair shop, but that we've had 50% of that shut down  
14 for months now. So, we're hoping to get it back up,  
15 but then we're going to have to do the other half  
16 because of the structural failures.

17 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So, the--I'm going  
18 to be requesting in this budget--in this Executive  
19 Budget for an increase in mechanics, and I just  
20 wanted to--

21 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: I wouldn't be sad  
22 about that.

23 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Excuse me?

24 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: I would not be sad  
25 about that.

2 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: I-I appreciate  
3 that. I just want to make sure that--so, the half--not  
4 the half, like the life of these vehicles is supposed  
5 to be a certain amount of years. I think because we  
6 have great mechanics, we've extended it from 7 to 8 I  
7 believe years.

8 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Uh-hm.

9 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: That's a great--  
10 that's a great thing to--to note that they're doing a  
11 good job in extending the life of these vehicles, but  
12 if we have too many of them off the road, then, you  
13 know, we're losing money as a city. We're being  
14 irresponsible for it. Let's try to close this gap,  
15 and--and have a more responsible out-of-service rate.  
16 I also understand that there's been some  
17 consolidation that has been has been done. I hear  
18 about Parks Department vehicles and other department  
19 vehicles moving through what traditionally would have  
20 been like a Sanitation garage. I just want to have a  
21 better understanding of it, which I think I do, but I  
22 want a better understanding of it from you, but also,  
23 I think that we need to hire a lot more mechanics,  
24 and I'm going to be making that request--

25 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Okay.

2 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: --at the City  
3 Council, and we've been rejoined by Council Member  
4 Cohen, and I believe he has some questions.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: I'm going to try.

6 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Go ahead, go ahead,  
7 Council Member Cohen.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: Thank you very  
9 much. I think just I want to preface I think this is  
10 my first budget hearing on the committee because I  
11 really realize that I'm looking at the--the facts and  
12 figures. I know nothing about the Department of  
13 Sanitation and, in fact, I came from Public Safety,  
14 and when you think your budget is significantly  
15 smaller than--than the Police Department--

16 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: A little bigger  
17 than I am.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: Yes, but you know,  
19 I mean as a New Yorker I think everybody has contact  
20 with the Department of Sanitation. You know, if  
21 you're--hopefully you don't have contact with the  
22 NYPD. You know it's a much smaller percentage. You  
23 touch everybody. Everybody and I think that you do a  
24 lot with the money you have. I'm interested in the--  
25 the PS money. It's--it's, you know, a billion of the--



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2 of the—I just want to make sure I'm saying this  
3 right.

4 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Of the total  
5 budget.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: Yes. Can you tell  
7 the breakdown between uniform and civilian in terms  
8 of dollars?

9 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: I don't know if I  
10 have the uniform. There—there are almost 8,000  
11 uniform employees, and a little bit over 10,000 total  
12 employees. So, the vast majority of the personnel  
13 service budget is for uniform employees.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: The—the-

15 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: I can get you the  
16 exact split, but I would say that it's within the

17 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: With the light  
18 (sic) trucks?

19 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Uh-hm.

20 MALE SPEAKER: So, 700.

21 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Probably 700 out of  
22 the billion is uniform.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: Can you just like-  
24 I—I know that there's—the answer is long, but in  
25

2 terms of the civilian, what are the kinds of jobs of  
3 civilians?

4 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Certainly. So, um,  
5 we have probably the largest piece in our Support  
6 Services, and so that is going to be things like auto  
7 mechanics as well as carpenters and plumbers and  
8 electricians who take care of our buildings. So,  
9 those end up being about a little bit over a thousand  
10 people across that, and then we might have about—we  
11 have a lot of IT people who are in that, and then we  
12 have enforcement agents who are in that particular  
13 group as well, and then obviously clerical support.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: Some enforcement is  
15 civilian and some is not or--

16 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Enforcement agents  
17 are civilian. If you are Sanitation Police, then you  
18 are a uniform. The Sanitation Police Officers carry  
19 guns. The enforcement agents do not.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: How many Sanitation  
21 Police are there?

22 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: I'll get you the  
23 exact number. It's—it's like below a hundred.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: What do—what do  
25 they do?

2 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: So, they primarily  
3 do things illegal dumping, and theft of materials.  
4 So, they'll do stakeouts. We also have ones that are  
5 specifically doing inspections of transfer stations,  
6 and looking at those as well as dealing with sort of  
7 syringe and needles and stuff like that as specially  
8 trained officers. Enforcement Agents primarily just  
9 write tickets.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: And in terms of  
11 facilities, I heard the Chair asking a lot of  
12 questions about garages. Again, did I--there's a lot  
13 I don't know about this. Where is the Department of  
14 Sanitation headquartered?

15 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: 125 Worth Street.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: And then like the  
17 facilities that facility when I leave you and I go up  
18 to Westside, there's that big--I think there are two  
19 big buildings, right?

20 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: There are two.  
21 There is the beautiful one at Spring Street, and the  
22 other less beautiful, but still very, very nice at  
23 57<sup>th</sup> Street.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: What happened to  
25 those buildings?

2 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Those are--those are  
3 great.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: What goes out--

5 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: All those are  
6 garages.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: They're just  
8 garages?

9 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: They're just  
10 garages. So, at--at Spring Street it's Manhattan 1, 2  
11 and 5 are in that building, and then at 57<sup>th</sup> Street  
12 it's 4 and 7 and the broom (sic) garage.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: And I--I heard  
14 and maybe this got fleshed out after I left, but  
15 there's an issue with garage space in the Bronx?

16 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Yes. There is a  
17 significant issue with the garages in the Bronx.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: I get that a  
19 thumbnail on that?

20 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Yeah, it was  
21 delivered--we'll so that. 3-A collapsed and there's--

22 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: Where is 3-A?

23 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Is West Farms Road.  
24 Enforcement we had to evacuate because it was  
25 structurally fail. Nine, 10 and 11, you can't walk or

2 drive on the floor because it's structurally not  
3 safe. Seven and 8 the ceiling—they're on top of each  
4 other. The ceiling fell down so, we're sounding that  
5 every week.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: Yep, I get it.

7 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: The Bronx, the  
8 façade at Bronx 6, the slab at Bronx 12. Yeah, and  
9 I'm having some problems with 5.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: Are the numbers—I'm  
11 going to embarrass myself. Are they—are they  
12 corresponding to community boards?

13 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Yes, yes, all of my  
14 garages are--

15 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: I should know that  
16 to think, too.

17 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: --are conterminous  
18 with Community boards.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: You know, I do  
20 always say, and I think I told you this that the  
21 reason that I think I'm not as knowledgeable about  
22 the way the Sanitation Department works at the  
23 district is I get very complaints. People's trash  
24 gets picked up, and then they don't, you know,  
25 there's—I get a lot of complaints about a lot of

2 agencies but by and large, you know, you get the  
3 trash picked up, and people don't complain. So, I'm  
4 fine with that.

5 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Yes. No, no, we  
6 actually try and make people happy. It is—it is one  
7 of the things that I say makes it a very nice agency  
8 to work for is people really do want their  
9 communities to be happy with the service that they're  
10 receiving.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: Where is 7 and 8?

12 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: It's in Manhattan  
13 at 215<sup>th</sup> Street.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: And—and that  
15 facility also—I didn't hear exactly what was the--?

16 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: So, it one-one  
17 garage on top of the other. The ceiling from it is  
18 falling down into the other garage, the cement is  
19 falling down so we have to—we'll have to stabilize  
20 that. We just don't—we don't at this time know when  
21 I can find swing space, but also, we don't yet have a  
22 cost estimate on it. So, we're working through the  
23 dollar figures with OMB. I mean they've been open to  
24 putting money in. It's just that we have a lot of—we

2 have a lot of—we have a lot of things going on that  
3 are not in great shape.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: Do you own most of  
5 your space?

6 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: No. We have a lot  
7 of leased space. So, it-it really varies across the  
8 city, but we do have a lot of leased facilities.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: Who does your  
10 capital work?

11 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Um, it's split  
12 between DDC and the Department. So, we are working  
13 on building Bronx 3 right now. They will do Staten  
14 Island 1, 3. We're doing the Bronx 9, 10 and 11  
15 garage. They did two the marine transfer stations, we  
16 did two of the marine transfer stations so--

17 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: I don't know if  
18 you're allowed to say it. Like is there any—would you  
19 say that there's been a qualitative difference in—in  
20 the work that each agency that each agency does in  
21 terms of capital?

22 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: I think I'm going  
23 to--

24 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: Okay.

25 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: --pass on that.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: (laughs) I don't—I  
3 would like to, you know, as part of the committee, at  
4 some point I'd like to see some of the facilities,  
5 and I'm going to reach out to--

6 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Yeah.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: --I'm sure the  
8 Chair has been probably, you know, he's been doing  
9 this a long time. He's done all that, but since I'm  
10 relatively new on the committee I'd like to see some  
11 of the facilities.

12 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: And we would love  
13 to have you out.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: I appreciate that.  
15 Thank you, Chair.

16 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: You can see the  
17 good, the bad, and the--and the ugly.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER COHEN: Thank you.

19 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Thank you. We've  
20 also been joined by Council Member Chaim Deutsch.  
21 Council Member, do you have any questions?

22 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Yeah, am I  
23 getting my corner waste baskets picked up again this  
24 year seven days a week?



2 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: That's not  
3 currently funded. No.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: What?

5 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: That is not  
6 currently funded in Fiscal 21.

7 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Council Member, did  
8 you say hi to the Commissioner? (laughter)

9 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: I would say  
10 before when I checked. (laughter)

11 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: It's lovely to see  
12 you.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Okay we had our  
14 fun.

15 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: We were—we were  
16 talking about the basket pickups, too. Basket, you  
17 know waste basket pickups for sure. It's something  
18 we want to continue.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: I want to talk  
20 to B&T.

21 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: We'd love to get it  
22 baselined.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Yes.

24 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So, we'll be  
25 talking go B&T to see if we can just make that

2 permanent. Instead of it being something we have to  
3 negotiate every single year, we would rather that  
4 just be the standard across the board.

5 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: If you are making  
6 it permanent, make it so that it is permanent with  
7 headcount, not just overtime.

8 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: It does.

9 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: It would be  
10 cheaper.

11 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Okay. I'll note  
12 that. I think I will—we're all three of us are on B&T  
13 so it's noted that we would like if we baseline it,  
14 we want to make sure that it's accounted for in head  
15 count as well. Outside of that, we have a lot of  
16 follow up to do, and I just want to make sure I recap  
17 on three things that I really want to make sure that  
18 we pay attention to, and don't let—don't let go. The  
19 sites for organics collection on the Compost Project  
20 I want to make sure—I want to see if the budget has  
21 stayed the same. I want to make sure we show the  
22 same amount of support for the folks that have been  
23 doing this work for a while, and also see if maybe  
24 working together we can talk to the Parks Department  
25 about the Queens site, and just want to have a better

2 like timeline and understanding of how we're going to  
3 ensure that the Lower East Side Ecology Center is  
4 okay. It's just—it could just be my ignorance, but  
5 I'm—I just want to make sure I get clarity.

6 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Yes.

7 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: That's one issue  
8 that's extremely important to me. The other one is  
9 the mechanic to truck ratio. Just want to really get  
10 the—the auto service rate as low as possible, and if  
11 it means that we just need to get—we need to get some  
12 folks in, let's talk about getting them in. The  
13 NYCHA recycling, I want to have more conversations  
14 about how as a matter of fact why that was  
15 unsuccessful, but it seems like there was some  
16 motivation in Brownsville. I also do want to say  
17 culture takes time, and we might have not seen some  
18 returns in the first two, three years, but as time  
19 goes on, people start getting used to things. So, I  
20 want to just have another conversation with that. If  
21 not, I think I'm going to take it to the Speaker, and  
22 talk about it as a Council initiative, and maybe it's  
23 something we would want to do in NYCHA developments.  
24 The tenants there get to take control or get to be a  
25 partner with the Department of Sanitation in

2 recycling and-and sorting, and I think, yeah, the  
3 litter basket I think we're going to take care of in-  
4 in B&T and the bike lane stuff. I feel like that's a  
5 larger conversation to be had for the smaller-for the  
6 smaller street sweepers. I want to have that  
7 conversation because it has to go through procurement  
8 and-

9 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Uh-hm.

10 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: --you know these-  
11 these-if we-if we buy all these new-new equipment,  
12 we're talking about 7 or 8 eight years that they  
13 might last or however long a street sweeper lasts. I  
14 really want to have a track or a timeline as to when  
15 we can start seeing the type of work because when we  
16 talk about the city of the future, the-the streets  
17 master plan, and so forth, those things matter. So, I  
18 want to make sure we follow up with that as well. I  
19 think we're going to meet one more time before it's  
20 all said and done. I hope to have a better  
21 understanding of how we are doing with these, those  
22 things that I just talked about, and I appreciate-I  
23 do appreciate your time. Thank you for being here,  
24 Commissioner, and oh, before we-we're going I want to  
25 give Council Member Deutsch more time.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Okay, thank you.  
3 Good afternoon, Commissioner.

4 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Good afternoon.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: It's great to  
6 see you here. So, my question is what is the budget  
7 on snow removal, and what happens when you don't use  
8 that budgets—what's budgeted for snow removal and  
9 what happens to that surplus, and why can't you use  
10 that for some other resources that we are asking for  
11 here in the Council that we don't have to go back to  
12 the B&T.

13 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Certainly. Our  
14 Current snow budget \$111 million. Next year's snow  
15 budget is \$101 million. The snow budget is in the  
16 Charter, and is a rolling five-year average. That is  
17 how it is set every year. When we do not use our  
18 budgeted number it just goes back to the General  
19 Fund, and can be used for us as well as anyone else.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: So, why can't  
21 that be used like for the corner waste baskets? I  
22 think last year we put in about \$8.6 million, and so  
23 you have here \$111 million that was budgeted in 2019.  
24 I don't think I remember maybe one snow day or two  
25 maybe so--

2 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Actually, some more  
3 events that we actually did have to get ready for.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: But that's a-  
5 that's a lot of money. So, why do we have to come  
6 back with \$8.6 million-

7 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: So,

8 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: --to ask--

9 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: So--

10 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: --in the budgets  
11 to get our streets cleaned?

12 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: So, while it would  
13 appear that, and just-let me just remind folks that  
14 is possible it could snow in March or April as it has  
15 in the last two years. So, I don't want to count my  
16 eggs before they're hatched.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: That sill allows  
18 you \$11 million.

19 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: No, no, there's not  
20 \$100. We've spent some of the money. We do always  
21 spend some of the money ahead of snow season. We did  
22 buy salt this year. We did buy a lot of salt. But  
23 you also have you recall in the way that they  
24 budgeted it doesn't just roll over into next year's  
25 fiscal budget. I don't just get to keep that money

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2 from Fiscal 9-from Fiscal 20 and just use it in '21.

3 So, right, so it's-it keeps--

4 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: But where does  
5 that, where does that money go?

6 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: It goes--if there  
7 are other deficits within the Financial Plan, it goes  
8 to--the money goes to this year.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Are there any  
10 other deficits in the Financial Plan that we know of?

11 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: There are  
12 definitely places where there is funding needs in  
13 this--

14 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Could we--could  
15 we just--could we look into that before we go back and  
16 try to fight for \$8.6 million that we keep for  
17 something else?

18 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Just even if--just--I  
19 could never make the decision to take the snow money  
20 and use it for litter baskets without OMB approval.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: So, we should--we  
22 should collaborate so--

23 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: You have to talk to  
24 OMB.

25

2 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: So, with the  
3 permission of the Chair we should write a letter to  
4 OMB and making this request to OMB in other words?

5 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Right, they—  
6 whenever there are surpluses in any agency budget  
7 they will take those surpluses and then they—it goes—  
8 you go through almost like how we do in new needs  
9 process in terms of the re-prioritization of what  
10 needs to be funded.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Okay, thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: And can I just—for  
13 some clarity here. Usually, we get—we get clarity on  
14 exactly how much we spent on snow—on the snow work  
15 the following fiscal year and we close gaps, right?

16 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Yeah. I mean often  
17 times I need to take money from other parts of my  
18 budget when we are in a bad year, and—and fund the  
19 overage. It just depends year to year. That's why  
20 it's a rolling five-year average.

21 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Okay, alright. So,  
22 we'll have more discussions about that. If we could  
23 use that money somewhere else, and we could be smart  
24 about it, I guess, we'll try, but it's OMB. If you're  
25 trying to take money away from OMB, or you're trying



2 to get money from OMB is tough, but we'll work  
3 together. I really appreciate your time again,  
4 Commissioner, and thank you so much for being here as  
5 usual. This part of the meeting is not adjourned.  
6 It's over.

7 COMMISSIONER GARCIA: It's over.

8 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Have a good day.

9 We're going to be hearing from BIC now. Can we get  
10 like just a one-minute—~~one-minute~~ break, Commissioner  
11 Genel? One minute. (pause) Okay, we're going  
12 reconvene our hearing. We've now been joined by  
13 Commissioner Genel. I want to allow for you to be  
14 sworn in, Commissioner.

15 LEGAL COUNSEL: Do you affirm to tell the  
16 truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth in  
17 your testimony before this committee today?

18 COMMISSIONER GENEL: I do.

19 LEGAL COUNSEL: Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Commissioner, do  
21 you have some testimony?

22 COMMISSIONER GENEL: Yes, I do.

23 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So, please go ahead  
24 with the testimony. Thank you.

2 COMMISSIONER GENEL: Thank you. Good  
3 afternoon Chair Reynoso, Council Member Chin. I am  
4 Noah Genel, Commissioner and Chair of the New York  
5 City Business Integrity Commission or BIC. Joining me  
6 today are BIC's Deputy Commissioner of Legal Affairs  
7 and General Counsel, David Feldman, and Deputy  
8 Commissioner of Regulatory Compliance and Background  
9 Investigations, Alison Bonfoey. Seated behind us are  
10 BIC's Deputy Commissioner of Investigations Cheryl  
11 Garcia and Assistant Commissioner of Finance and  
12 Administration Cindy Haskins. Thank you for inviting  
13 us to testify today. I will begin with some  
14 background information about BIC. We are both a law  
15 enforcement and regulatory agency with a total budget  
16 for Fiscal Year 2021 of \$9.71 million. BIC currently  
17 has a total of 85 employees of a total authorized  
18 fill of 91. Our roster includes 11 investigators, 10  
19 attorneys, 11 Intelligence Analysts and 7 auditors  
20 not including supervisors. In addition, we work with  
21 a squad of detectives from the NYPD's Criminal  
22 Enterprise Investigation Section who are physically  
23 stationed in BIC's offices. BIC's investigators and  
24 attorney frequently work with those NYPD detectives  
25 on long-term criminal investigations, but the

2 detectives generally do not participate in on the  
3 regulatory side of our enforcement operations. BIC  
4 was created through Local Law 42 of 1996 to regulate  
5 the commercial garbage hauling or trade waste  
6 industry and rid it of the grip of organized crime  
7 and other corruption that had plagued the industry  
8 for years. Soon after the agency's creation when it  
9 was named the Trade Waste Commission, the City  
10 Council expanded the agency's jurisdiction to include  
11 oversight of the city's public wholesale markets, the  
12 produce and meat markets, and the new Fulton Fish  
13 Market in the Hunts Point section of the Bronx along  
14 with the meat markets in the meat packing district in  
15 Manhattan, and Sunset Park, Brooklyn. We play a  
16 unique role city government as we work to regulate  
17 and improve these industries. In fact, there is no  
18 other agency quite like BIC anywhere in the country.  
19 One of BIC's chief functions is our comprehensive  
20 background investigations process. In the past year  
21 we have successfully removed a number of companies  
22 and individuals from both the trade waste industry  
23 and the public wholesale markets whose participation  
24 in those industries ran contrary to BIC's anti-  
25 corruption mission. Since our last budget testimony

2 in March 2019, BIC has denied 12 applications across  
3 the trade waste hauling industry and the public  
4 wholesale markets. For example, in June 2019, the  
5 Commission denied the respective license and  
6 registration renewal applications for Flag Container  
7 Services, INC. and Formica Construction, Inc., two  
8 related companies. There were numerous factors that  
9 supported the denials including the fact that one of  
10 the principals was under indictment for criminal acts  
11 relating to a murder and drug sales, as well as a  
12 history of unsafe practices at construction sites.  
13 The Flag denial is currently on appeal. In October  
14 2019, the Commission denied a photo identification  
15 application for an individual in a new Fulton Fish  
16 Market. As the results of a BIC led investigation,  
17 that individual was convicted in the Southern  
18 District of New York of stealing nearly a million  
19 from his employer in the new Fulton Fish Market. He  
20 was sentenced in August 2019 to 30 months  
21 imprisonment and to pay more than \$900,000 in  
22 restitution. As a result of BIC's subsequent denial  
23 of his photo identification application, that  
24 individual has been barred from working in the new  
25 Fulton Fish Market, and last Tuesday, the Commission

2 denied the registration renewal application of  
3 Stefmar Contraction Corp based on the failure of the  
4 applicant to inform the Commission that its principal  
5 associated with a high ranking member of the Gambino  
6 Crime Family. The company's principal also refused  
7 to testify under oath during BIC's investigation of  
8 the application. These cases are a sample of the  
9 broad range of corruption issues that BIC regularly  
10 addresses. We have numerous ongoing investigations  
11 and will continue to work to remove corrupt elements  
12 from both the trade waste industry and the public  
13 wholesale markets. Collecting and transporting trade  
14 waste particularly in New York City is a dangerous  
15 and strenuous job. The collection trucks are huge  
16 and must share the road with many other motor  
17 vehicles and cyclists and pedestrians. This  
18 administration has made safety in the industry and on  
19 the city streets a priority. Historically, BIC's  
20 jurisdiction over safety was limited. That changed  
21 on November 20, 2019 after the Council passed and  
22 when Mayor de Blasio signed Local Law 198 expanding  
23 BIC's jurisdiction to include traffic safety in the  
24 trade waste industry. It specifically enables BIC to  
25 deny a license or registration for safety issues that

2 rise to a level that warrants denial We are a small  
3 agency with a big mission and that mission continues  
4 to grow. Together with commercial waste zones, the  
5 Safety legislation will help improve safety in the  
6 trade waste industry. Since Mayor de Blasio  
7 appointed me as Commissioner last April, BIC has  
8 greatly increased its enforcement activity with an  
9 eye toward improving both safety and overall  
10 compliance with BIC's rules and regulations. We have  
11 increased our focus on unlicensed and unregistered  
12 haulers operating without BIC approval. As shown in  
13 our PMMR statistics, in the first four months of  
14 Fiscal Year 2020, we issued 41 violations for  
15 unlicensed during registered activity versus 20 in  
16 the same period of Fiscal Year 2019. Additionally,  
17 BIC has continued our partnership with the NYPD's  
18 Transportation Division conducting regular joint  
19 truck enforcement operations with them. BIC also now  
20 has a strong partnership with the NYPD's Collision  
21 Investigation Squad, which investigates all fatal  
22 traffic collisions in the city. When one of those  
23 collisions involves a trade waste truck, BIC's  
24 investigators go to the scene so that BIC has full  
25 information regarding the company and driver involved

2 and can stay informed about the criminal  
3 investigation, and last month two BIC investigators  
4 joined members of the NYPD for a two-week traffic  
5 crash investigation course given by Northwestern  
6 University's Center for Public Safety. One of BIC's  
7 most intense focuses this past year has been on  
8 ensuring compliance with Local Law 145 of 2013, the  
9 Trade Waste Vehicle Emission's law. This law  
10 requires that all heavy-duty trade waste vehicles be  
11 equipped with an engine certified to the 2007 EPA  
12 Standard or later, or utilize specific retrofit  
13 technology. The law's mandate went into effect on  
14 January 1, 2020, and covers more than 5,100 trucks as  
15 of today. Leading up to effective date of the law in  
16 2019 we spent a great deal of time and effort  
17 reaching out to the industry to ensure BIC's  
18 licensees and registrants were educated about the law  
19 and knew how to comply with it. In December 2019  
20 alone we spoke to nearly 300 companies about the law.  
21 With our outreach came increased compliance. In  
22 December 2019, companies turned in more than 300 BiC  
23 issued license plates for non-compliant trucks, thus  
24 making those trucks ineligible to legally haul trade  
25 waste in New York City. In January 2020, companies

2 turned in plates for more than 400 additional non-  
3 compliant trucks. In early February, we began issuing  
4 summonses against companies with non-compliant  
5 trucks. To date we have issued 100 such summonses.  
6 Each comes with at \$10,000 fine per truck, and the  
7 companies are given 60 days to correct the issue per  
8 the law. If they correct it, they summons is  
9 withdrawn. Our sister agency the Department of  
10 Environmental Protection has been a valuable partner  
11 in the effort to inspect, retrofitted trucks to  
12 ensure that they comply with the law. The PMMR is a  
13 measure of BIC's achievements, efforts and goals in  
14 carrying out our law enforcement and regulatory  
15 duties. BIC fulfills its mandate through rigorous  
16 background investigations, criminal administrative  
17 investigations, and the development and enforcement  
18 of our regulations. With respect to administrative  
19 violations, BIC issued significantly more violations  
20 to BIC licensed and registered trade waste companies  
21 over the first four months of this fiscal year  
22 compared to the same period last fiscal year. This  
23 increase is primarily due to trade waste companies  
24 failing to comply with Commission rules, such as  
25 providing BIC with a complete and accurate customer



2 register, and reporting collisions. For the city's  
3 public wholesale markets the number of violations  
4 issued in the first four months of this fiscal year  
5 remain consistent with the same period a year ago.  
6 Although improving our efficiency in the application  
7 process is important, BIC must maintain its high  
8 standard of background review and investigation for  
9 all of our applicants. As a regulatory and law  
10 enforcement agency we must be thorough. Our  
11 investigations are dynamic and can become quite  
12 complex. This past year has been particularly  
13 challenging to our efficiency for a number of  
14 reasons, one of which is that BIC's headcount  
15 fluctuated greatly. At one point due to a high rate  
16 of employee turnover, BIC's headcount was down  
17 approximately 20%. Yet, with a strong focus on  
18 replenishing our ranks we are now nearly at our  
19 maximum fill of 91. Perhaps more importantly, the  
20 past year was extremely busy for BIC in virtually  
21 every department. BIC personnel spent large amounts  
22 of time working on high priority initiatives and  
23 other projects, which pulled resources from  
24 application review. Those initiatives and projects  
25 included preparing for enforcement of and

2 implementing the mandate of Local Law 145; responding  
3 to inquiries from the City Council's Oversight and  
4 Investigations Committee; working to provide comments  
5 on and implement numerous bills directly affecting  
6 BIC; preparing to register unions in the trade waste  
7 industry, working with the Department of Sanitation  
8 on the Commercial Waste Zones Program and numerous  
9 confidential long-term investigations. As a result,  
10 the number of pending trade waste applications  
11 increased from 564 in the first four months of Fiscal  
12 Year 2019, to 597 in the same period of Fiscal Year  
13 2020, and market applications increased from 36 in  
14 the first four months of Fiscal Year 2019 to 93 in  
15 the same period of Fiscal Year 2020. The average  
16 time to approve a trade waste renewal application  
17 increased by 58% and the average age of a pending  
18 wholesale public market application increased by 32%.  
19 Despite these challenges because we prioritized  
20 reviewing new trade waste applications as opposed to  
21 renewals, the average time to approve a new trade  
22 waste hauling application saw a modest increase from  
23 126 days in the first four months of Fiscal Year 2019  
24 to 158 days during the same period of Fiscal Year  
25 2020. This is important because 3 ne applicants

2 cannot operate unless their applications are  
3 approved. Whereas, companies submitting renewal  
4 applications can continue to operate while their  
5 applications are under review. This year we will  
6 strive to improve those efficiency numbers. This  
7 summarizes our recent work. BIC is looking to  
8 forward to the challenges in the year ahead including  
9 continue to—continuing to improve safety in the trade  
10 waste industry, and ensuring compliance with the  
11 Vehicle Emissions Law. We now would be glad to  
12 answer your questions.

13 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Thank you,  
14 Commissioner. I don't have many questions, but I do  
15 want to get right into Local Law 145, which is one of  
16 my greatest concerns. To put in context, this law  
17 that was put together in 2013 was asking for trucks  
18 to be compliant with 2017 PA standards. Right? So,  
19 six-year old standards, and that it would not be  
20 implemented until 2020, January 2020. So, we're  
21 arguably giving folks seven years. While we give  
22 them seven years to get into compliance and that  
23 compliance they had to get into was what I consider  
24 and outdated standard set for—by the EPA in 2007,  
25 which have changed since then. If we want to talk

2 about climate change and we want to talk about real  
3 crises and how we react to it, this is the bare  
4 minimum that we must do. Your agency took it upon  
5 itself to not enforce the law from January—from its  
6 implementation day of January 1, 2020 until February.  
7 I want to know what—what, if any excuse BIC can have  
8 to not want to enforce from January to February? I  
9 also want to note that if they are in violation there  
10 is a 60-day cure period put into the law that allows  
11 for these trucks to be into compliance 60 days after  
12 they receive their violation, which would mean that  
13 they can be compliant on March 1<sup>st</sup> as of January 1<sup>st</sup>.  
14 So, you give them a fine or a violation. So,  
15 considering all these safe gaps, and all these—all  
16 this white glove and handling with white gloves of  
17 these industries, why add another month of—of—of  
18 seeking for them to get to compliance given  
19 everything we've done so far to make this as easy as  
20 possible. To be honest, laughably, easily  
21 impossible, easy to accomplish.

22 COMMISSIONER GENEL: So, first thank you  
23 for your question. Let me say that we recognize the  
24 importance of Local Law 145, and particularly the way  
25 in which it positively affects the lives of those in

2 underserved and overburdened communities, and as you  
3 said the effective date of this law's mandate comes  
4 at a particularly important time for our environment.  
5 So, enforcement of this law is complicated, and has  
6 been complicated. Leading up to January 1<sup>st</sup> we did,  
7 as I mentioned in my testimony a lot of outreach to  
8 the carters to make sure that they understood how to  
9 comply, and to find out what their—what their plans  
10 were, and as we went through December, we started  
11 receiving, you know, plates from non-compliant trucks  
12 taking those trucks off the road. We received over  
13 300 plates from those trucks in December, and that  
14 continued in January where we received over 400  
15 plates from trucks effectively retiring them from  
16 service in in the trade waste industry. We also are  
17 working with Department of Environmental Protection  
18 to get retrofits inspected to make sure that we had  
19 good records when we went out to go inspect those  
20 trucks to make sure that we were not misusing our  
21 resources and we were effectively using our resources  
22 to target the non-compliant trucks. So, that's what  
23 we did in January. In the very beginning of February  
24 we went out, and instead of going around the streets  
25 looking for non-compliant trucks, we went directly to

2 the yards of the companies and targeted those so that  
3 we could get if possible all of their trucks at one  
4 time in one place, and we could inspect them all at  
5 one time, and now one month later, we've got 100, and  
6 I actually think today we issued another one, 101  
7 perhaps summonses against these companies each of  
8 which has a \$10,000 penalty if they do not correct  
9 within 60 days. Some of them have been correcting  
10 already, and so we're looking forward to continuing  
11 to enforce this. We will be continuing to go out and  
12 even--so we have a list of the companies with the non-  
13 compliant trucks. We're about two-thirds of the  
14 companies that have any non-compliant trucks have  
15 only one non-compliant truck. So, we're going down  
16 the list. I think the most right now is that have  
17 not been hit with a summons is three or four possibly  
18 five, but I don't so. I think we've hit them. So,  
19 and we are going to continue to go down the line, and  
20 even after we go through all of those companies, we  
21 are also going to be continuing to check to make sure  
22 that retrofits that have been done are effective and,  
23 you know, we're not engine experts at BIC, but we've  
24 been working closely with DEP to make sure that  
25 retrofits get inspected. We're going to continue

2 that, and to the extent that we find—if we find that  
3 a company should be compliant based on the year of  
4 their truck or based on the fact that they've gotten  
5 a retrofit, and they are not compliant that they will  
6 get another summons or worse depending on the nature  
7 of their non-compliance.

8 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So, do you—do you  
9 not feel that the seven years prior to this  
10 legislation actually being implemented was enough  
11 time for your agency to prepare to—to look at these  
12 trucks that are supposed to be retrofitted or this—  
13 this—and for these—these companies to become  
14 compliant? So, as of right now, you're saying that  
15 they're—out of the list of non-compliance about one-  
16 third is yet to be reviewed. So, there are companies  
17 right now that could be using these trucks that are  
18 non-compliant?

19 COMMISSIONER GENEL: Well no. So, I—well  
20 I--

21 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So, is it—is it a  
22 resource issue I guess is the question that I want to  
23 ask you?

24 COMMISSIONER GENEL: So, I mean so we—we  
25 make the most of what we have, and we have ten

1 investigators, but I can tell you that to give you  
2 some compliance statistics, better compliance  
3 statistics, So our—the way that we measure compliance  
4 is through our vehicle portal, which we've been  
5 building the data in the Vehicle Portal for the last  
6 three years, and we use that. We ask a number of  
7 questions about the truck so that we can figure out  
8 whether that truck is compliant, and if it's been—if  
9 it's too old and it needs a retrofit that's when DEP  
10 is inspecting it, and we also use that vehicle portal  
11 for to target enforcement of Local Law 145. Based on  
12 our data, more than 5,100 trucks are covered by Local  
13 Law 145, and of those in scope trucks, 91.8% of them  
14 are compliant as of today, and that's approximately  
15 4,700 trucks. 7.2% of the trucks are not compliant,  
16 which is approximately 370 trucks. Of course, we're  
17 going to continue to go out inspecting as I said, and  
18 we will continue working our way down the list to try  
19 to take as—to take them off the road, but, you know,  
20 so we have been, you know, our inspectors have been  
21 going out regularly and targeting the yards of the  
22 company so that we can get those trucks together.

23  
24 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: And Commissioner, I  
25 just want to I guess do you understand my frustration



2 as to the fact that a law for 2007 EPA Standards,  
3 which at this point would not even be considered a—a  
4 significant improvement or a significant I guess  
5 environmentally friendly EPA standards any more? EPA  
6 has actually modified I think the standards twice  
7 since 2007, and that we passed this law in 2013. So,  
8 we already gave them a relief by saying that trucks  
9 can be six years older than when this law was passed,  
10 but then after that, say, you know, what? We're  
11 going to give you seven more years to try to figure  
12 this out. We're going to give you seven more years.  
13 So, and then after those seven years, we still have  
14 300 trucks on the road right now as we speak that are  
15 not compliant, and I hear the progress that you're  
16 making, but you're not in the business of progress.  
17 You're in the business of enforcement, right? That  
18 you're not a service—a service agency that is here to  
19 educate folks on exactly what they should be doing.  
20 That should have been done seven years prior to this  
21 being--moving forward so-

22 COMMISSIONER GENEL: And it was and so  
23 and we have—I mean certainly the time--

24 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: I just think  
25 they're not going to take us seriously if we go about

2 passing legislation that's not be enforced by the  
3 enforcement agency like that is responsible for it.

4 COMMISSIONER GENEL: You're absolutely  
5 100% enforcing it, and-and that's where--

6 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: No, there's 300  
7 trucks that have not been--hasn't--have not--that are on  
8 the road now that are not compliant. That is your  
9 fault--

10 COMMISSIONER GENEL: Well that's--

11 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: --that are still  
12 there.

13 COMMISSIONER GENEL: So, I do understand  
14 your frustration 100%, but, you know, so we--as I said  
15 in my testimony, we have a lot of different  
16 responsibilities, and when it comes to enforcement  
17 and we are--we are making sure that we are hitting all  
18 of our different enforcement responsibilities. Our  
19 Environmental Justice issues are now very--are very  
20 important to BIC and they have become part of BIC's  
21 mission. BIC's mission also includes anti-  
22 corruption,

23 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Right.

24 COMMISSIONER GENEL: --and now also  
25 safety, and so our ten investigators are going out.

2 We are out there day and night almost every day and  
3 we have teams out, and we are looking for--

4 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Okay.

5 COMMISSIONER GENEL: --we're enforcing  
6 Local Law 145. We're looking for co-mingling, we're  
7 looking for safety issues and we're also looking to  
8 make sure that organized crime is not creeping back  
9 into the industry and other forms of corruption. So,  
10 we have a large mission, and I completely hear what  
11 you're saying, and we are working very hard to get  
12 those other trucks off the road.

13 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So, and--and I just  
14 want to--my frustration comes from this--this timeline,  
15 right. If I pass a law today and it gets signed  
16 today, but it doesn't go into effect in a month, I  
17 understand that we would have to have a conversation  
18 about the rollout, and so forth, and might even give  
19 us some opportunity to here to--to have a waiver  
20 period or a grievance period, but this is seven  
21 years, and that's my frustration. It's the amount of  
22 time that we've given for this to come into  
23 compliance and that we're still not there and the  
24 standards themselves are not significant. I just wish

2 you would have started on January 1<sup>st</sup> and I'm upset  
3 that that didn't happen.

4 COMMISSIONER GENEL: I hear you.

5 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Moving forward,  
6 should we have legislation that is passed that gets—  
7 gives you a seven-year grace period to figure out, I  
8 would suggest that maybe we don't wait. Give them  
9 another month unnecessarily to fall into compliance,  
10 and we start taking care of our planet and we start  
11 addressing climate change. So, that was my  
12 frustration. I just wanted to make sure you heard it  
13 because it's just that I just didn't understand, and  
14 I still don't understand why that one-month grace  
15 period had to exist. So, the Commercial Waste Zone  
16 Implementation, do you foresee needing additional  
17 staff to support full implementation of the  
18 Commercial Waste Zone, or do you feel the staff you  
19 currently have can help you achieve that?

20 COMMISSIONER GENEL: So, we are going to  
21 be heavily involved in Commercial Waste Zones and we  
22 are already in conversations with OMB about our staff  
23 need specifically with respect to Commercial Waste  
24 Zones. So, we are going to continue that

2 conversation. We have a very good relationship with  
3 OMB, and we will be continuing those conversations.

4 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: And just being able  
5 to give us a breakdown of where and what you might  
6 need to do that would be important as well.

7 COMMISSIONER GENEL: Okay, and right this  
8 moment I can't do that, but I'd be happy to, you  
9 know, talk to you more about it.

10 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Yeah, we have—the  
11 Commissioner of the Sanitation Department said that  
12 we had like 18 months away like from anything that's  
13 more—that's concrete. So, we have time, but when we  
14 do have the staff lines that exactly what they are so  
15 we can know how to advocate to make sure that your  
16 fully staffed. So BIC's primary function is  
17 organized—go after organized crime, and I wanted to  
18 ask to date FY20 to date, how many violations were  
19 issued to offenders. So, I want to like get the  
20 primary function. I heard a couple—I heard one—one  
21 more recent one here related to a million dollar--

22 COMMISSIONER GENEL: --that was one--

23 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: --stealing by an  
24 employee.

2 COMMISSIONER GENEL: --that was one of  
3 the-that was one of our denials, but as far as  
4 violations, the administrative violations, Fiscal  
5 Year 2020 to date, we have issued 702 violations,  
6 which is significantly more than we did a year ago.  
7 Since I became Commissioner we have increased  
8 enforcement significantly, and so to give you in  
9 Fiscal Year to date 2019 up until the date of our  
10 testimony last year was 437, and we've now issued 702  
11 this year, and that's because we've seen more  
12 problems, and we've had our--we've sort of altered the  
13 way that we are using our investigators in that we  
14 are scheduling things very specifically trying to  
15 make sure that we're hitting all the different things  
16 that we're doing and one of the--one of the things  
17 that we have been seeing is at least that we've been  
18 capturing is an increase in unlicensed and  
19 unregistered activity, which I see as being  
20 particularly problematic because they have not been  
21 vetted by BIC, and we--we're are going to continue on  
22 that path because we've--we've now I think found a way  
23 to--where--where we're finding them regularly, and we  
24 need to continue to issue those violations.

2 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Thank you for that.

3 I have one more question, but I want to allow for  
4 Council Member Margaret Chin to—to ask some  
5 questions.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you, Chair.

7 Thank you, Commissioner. My question is that in your  
8 testimony you're talking about coordination with the  
9 other agencies like DEP. So, for example I know like  
10 in my district for example there's a lot of  
11 construction going on, and a lot of renovation, new  
12 construction, and we see a lot of these waste, you  
13 know trucks that collect the waste, and some of them  
14 they demolished it right on the street. So, is it—is  
15 this under the jurisdiction of the BIC to inspect  
16 them so see if they are doing the correct way in  
17 terms of, you know, the workers wearing protective  
18 gears and also protecting pedestrians who are walking  
19 by there. You know they have to water it down or  
20 whatever. Is that under BIC's jurisdiction?

21 COMMISSIONER GENEL: So, the actual  
22 demolition is not under BIC's jurisdiction. We deal  
23 with the actual hauling of it. So, once they put it  
24 in a truck and then—so frequently construction  
25 companies will get a BIC registration so they can

2 cart away the debris that they generate, but we're  
3 not directly involved in the regulation such as the  
4 personal protective equipment for the workers who are  
5 doing the demolition and the watering it down. When  
6 you talk about safety for the pedestrians, whether or  
7 not that's—now that Local Law 198 is law, we have  
8 much more responsibility in terms of safety. It's  
9 mostly traffic safety, but incidentally we have seen  
10 times when carting companies are not functioning  
11 safely and by the sidewalks, and we have taken action  
12 to try to fix that, and you talk about inter-agency  
13 collaboration, and it's been I think quite  
14 successful. There's one that I can think of in  
15 Brooklyn where regularly there is a truck that was  
16 parked on the sidewalk, and was obstructing  
17 pedestrians. There were strollers going by, and one  
18 of the big problems was that the street was narrow,  
19 and if they didn't park on the sidewalk, no cars were  
20 able to get by, but on the other side of the street  
21 there was—there were cars parked, and by working with  
22 the NYPD we were able to change the signage there,  
23 and now the truck is able to park in the street, and  
24 it's much safer for everybody. So, in that way we  
25 keep our eyes out for safety issues, but when it



2 comes to the actual demolition of a building for  
3 example, we're not directly involved in that  
4 regulation.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: So, even though  
6 like they're—they are going to be hauling away the—  
7 the garbage, what they're doing is before they take  
8 it away they crush it there.

9 COMMISSIONER GENEL: Right.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Right, on the  
11 street. So, if it's not your jurisdiction then whose  
12 jurisdiction is that?

13 COMMISSIONER GENEL: Well, I'm not sure,  
14 but I'm—I'd be very interested to learn more about it  
15 because if it isn't, I will help find who it is, and  
16 so if we could contact you about these—about the  
17 specific spots we'd like to take a look.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Yeah, because like  
19 if a constituent asks us right, and they file a  
20 complaint and we ask them, you know, to call 311, my  
21 curiosity is that they call 311 where does that, you  
22 know, get routed to? Because it's happening quite  
23 often because we have so much construction and  
24 renovations going on.

2 COMMISSIONER GENEL: Well, so this is—I  
3 mean this sounds like a great time for us to  
4 collaborate with perhaps the Department of Buildings  
5 or another agency, but I—I'd like to find out more,  
6 and if it would be okay, I'll have somebody from my  
7 agency contact your office, and try to find out the  
8 specifics so we can go take a look.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: But I—I welcome  
10 that and I—I was thinking that it should be the  
11 Department of Buildings because they have to get  
12 permits, and if there is some coordination between  
13 the Department of Buildings and—and your agency, then  
14 maybe we can really try to improve some of the  
15 conditions that's happening.

16 COMMISSIONER GENEL: That sounds good.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you. Thank  
18 you, Chair.

19 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Thank you, Council  
20 Member. My last question is I'm very interested in  
21 BIC's investigation related to traffic collisions. I  
22 think the city does a terrible job at investigating  
23 traffic collisions in the city of New York, A lot of  
24 the time because of call culture the cyclists or  
25 pedestrians or the car—the driver of the vehicle is a

1 not-fault, and I think it has a lot to do with just  
2 the process by which investigation—how the  
3 investigations happen. I would love to have an  
4 opportunity to meet with you so you can let me know  
5 how—how this works and how you contribute to better  
6 understand because I would hope to get what I  
7 consider more justice to pedestrian and cyclists in  
8 our street that don't seem to have that because the  
9 Collisions Department and NYPD tends to just write  
10 off these things as accidents, and I have huge issues  
11 with that. So, we would love to have a conversation  
12 with you.

14 COMMISSIONER GENEL: Absolutely, and—and  
15 absolutely just so that to just briefly answer that,  
16 it is the NYPD that does the criminal investigation.  
17 The reason why we're going to the scene is because we  
18 look for other things, and it's important for us to  
19 know what happened so that when—now, especially now  
20 that Local Law 198 is in effect, when we're—when a  
21 company comes up for review we are looking at their  
22 safety record, and we need to know what they've been  
23 involved in and one of the ways to do that is to get  
24 a first-hand look by going to the scene.

2 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Right, and that's I  
3 think a part of it as well. If we're still gibing  
4 our licenses to a very dangerous company that's  
5 problematic to me and giving 198 and the new  
6 authorities that you have, I hope, that it's  
7 something you take seriously because we're very  
8 concerned about the high rate. When you look the  
9 Department of Sanitation's numbers compared to the  
10 private sanitation industry when it comes to reckless  
11 driving there's a huge disparity there, and I just  
12 want to make sure that we can address that not only,  
13 you know, what--what I think happens usually is only  
14 the driver gets charged or gets a punishment and the  
15 repercussions is these--the owners who I think put  
16 onerous responsibility on their drivers to do things  
17 and they end up cutting corners, and they get all the  
18 heat, and the owners don't. So, I want to make sure  
19 that we talk to see how--how you feel that we can  
20 address that issue.

21 COMMISSIONER GENEL: It's complicated  
22 and--but one of the things that I can tell you, and so  
23 I'm happy to talk to you more in depth about it, but  
24 one of the things I can tell you is that where the  
25 driver is arrested for whatever it is, we track that

2 case because when-if that driver is convicted of a  
3 crime, that then also does go back to the-under our  
4 authority the owner is also responsible for the  
5 actions of the driver, and so we will then go back  
6 and issue an administrative violation against the  
7 company for failure to abide by the law. So, that's  
8 one of the things that we do.

9 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: That's good to  
10 know. So, again, I want to thank you for your time,  
11 and for your effort. I do-I do have this headcount.  
12 The ten investigators I tried to count it up, but I  
13 only counted 37 when you talked about the breakdown  
14 of your staff.

15 COMMISSIONER GENEL: Oh, that was-I was  
16 just giving you-I wasn't telling you every person  
17 that was in the agency, but I'm happy to go through  
18 that if you wanted me to.

19 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: No, no so--

20 COMMISSIONER GENEL: But we have-right  
21 now we have 85. We had one person leave I think last  
22 week, but we also have two people who are approved by  
23 OMB, and one other person awaiting approval. So,  
24 shortly hopefully, we'll have 88 and we're actively  
25 searching for three more people an attorney, a

2 background investigator and a computer programmer,  
3 which would take us to our full headcount.

4 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So, that's good to  
5 know because my-my issue is with the 10 investigators  
6 that you have. It seems like you do a lot, and I  
7 don't know if they're over-burdened at this point, at  
8 this moment, and I would rather you be fully staffed  
9 there so that we can catch on my Local Law 145 issue  
10 and make sure that everyone-everyone is held  
11 accountable.

12 COMMISSIONER GENEL: We are currently  
13 filled with-with our lines with our investigators. We  
14 are constantly-we are regularly, meeting and  
15 discussing with OMB about our needs, and-but you're  
16 right that we do a lot and we are working very hard.

17 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Thank you. Thank  
18 you so much, Commissioner for your time here. I  
19 appreciate you coming by and your staff as well.  
20 Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Thank you. We're  
22 not going to start the public portion of the-of the  
23 Day. (sic) It's two-two committees. We have Pierre  
24 Simmons, Melissa Iachan or Justin Wood and Stefanos  
25 to please come-come forward, and if you haven't

2 submitted your information, please do so to the  
3 sergeant-at-arms standing here if you want to  
4 testify. Thank you. (pause) Okay, Melissa, we'll  
5 start with you and then when you're done--

6 MELISSA IACHAN: How are you feeling  
7 Council Member?

8 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: I'm feeling—I'm  
9 feeling good. I'm feeling better today than I did  
10 Friday, Saturday and Sunday. I'm making it work.  
11 Thank you for asking. Go ahead.

12 MELISSA IACHAN: Good afternoon. My name  
13 is Melissa Iachan, not Justin Wood, and I work in the  
14 Environmental Justice Program at New York Lawyers for  
15 the Public Interest. As our city continues to face  
16 the dual crises of climate change and social  
17 inequality, it is critical that we adequately fund  
18 programs to ensure that our city diverts waste from  
19 landfills, and that we realize the central goals of  
20 the city's solid waste management plan to move waste  
21 processing away from the truck intensive private  
22 transfer stations clustered in low-income communities  
23 and communities of color. We strongly support DSNY's  
24 Organic Waste Recycling Program, which diverts food  
25 waste from landfills, but as DSNY's own waste

2 characterization studies reveal, most of our organic  
3 waste is still going to landfill. Organic matter  
4 decomposing in landfill is a major source of methane  
5 emissions and recycling of material via composting or  
6 controlled anaerobic digestion processes is essential  
7 to reducing our city's greenhouse gas emissions and  
8 also has the potential to assist our city in moving  
9 towards more local renewable energy generation. We  
10 understand that DSNY faces significant efficiency and  
11 cost related challenges with the current Voluntary  
12 Curbside Organics Program, which have led to a  
13 troubling pause in the program's expansion. It is  
14 clear that without adequate funding to expand the  
15 Voluntary Curbside pickup citywide and begin to phase  
16 in mandatory organics recycling, we will never take  
17 the important steps forward in reducing our carbon  
18 footprint on moving closer to zero waste. We  
19 strongly urge the city to shift to phased-in  
20 mandatory Curbside Organics Collection program, which  
21 is proven effective in boosting waste diversion in  
22 other major cities. This would necessitate new and  
23 stronger outreach particularly in areas of the city  
24 where the voluntary program was never rolled out. The  
25 Council must fund a citywide mandatory organics



2 programs at \$42 million, which figure includes  
3 adequate funding for outreach and education in  
4 communities who have not yet received brown bins over  
5 the past several years. We further believe that the  
6 Department can find additional creative solutions  
7 that would increase the efficiency of the Residential  
8 Organics Program during this mandatory phase-in while  
9 tackling the even larger problem of commercial  
10 organic waste. The commercial waste stream is  
11 estimated to be about equal to the residential one,  
12 about 3 million tons of putrescible trade waste per  
13 year, and about one million tons of this huge stream  
14 are organic material. Troublingly, private transfer  
15 stations reports filed with the DEC show that very  
16 little of this material is diverted to compost or  
17 digestion facilities. We believe DSANY could  
18 substantially increase small business participation  
19 in organics recycling and improve efficiency of  
20 existing compost routes by offering an affordable  
21 brand in organic service to small businesses in  
22 communities where DSANY already operates residential  
23 organic service. Such a program would allow workers  
24 to fill existing organics trucks, allow small  
25 business owners to divert far more of their waste

2 from landfills, and boost business participation in a  
3 meaningful recycling program in advance of the new  
4 Commercial Waste Zone System. While reducing  
5 greenhouse gas emissions is a priority of the city as  
6 a whole, reducing landfill bound waste will be even  
7 more beneficial in communities where truck intensive  
8 waste transfer stations are clustered. Importantly,  
9 the city's 2005-2006 (bell) Solid Wastes Management  
10 Plan called for DSNY to begin utilizing marine  
11 transfer stations for commercial waste by 2010 to  
12 further reduce the amount of waste and trucks going  
13 to these private transfer stations. It is now a  
14 decade later, and we still haven't begun to use the  
15 four state-of-the-art city owned facilities to help  
16 make the commercial waste system more efficient and  
17 reduce pollution. As you know, the Commercial Waste  
18 Zone System implemented this year will greatly reduce  
19 the number of miles traveled by commercial waste  
20 trucks on their collection routes (bell) as haulers  
21 will be awarded specific zones rather than traversing  
22 the city to find customers. Giving these haulers  
23 access to publicly owned MTS's will allow them to  
24 operate even more efficiently and would reduce the  
25 number of diesel collection trucks and long-haul

2 export trucks operating in Environmental Justice  
3 Communities. I can go on if you'd like me to, or I  
4 can just conclude now. There's two more paragraphs,  
5 three.

6 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: (off mic) Go ahead.  
7 (sic).

8 MELISSA IACHAN: Okay. Having access to  
9 efficiently located marine and rail-based facilities  
10 is also advantageous for local private haulers in  
11 bidding on waste zones including--

12 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: You don't need--you  
13 don't need to read so fast. Don't worry about it.

14 MELISSA IACHAN: Okay.

15 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Just go ahead.

16 MELISSA IACHAN: Including smaller  
17 companies that do not own their own transfer  
18 stations. Any private hauler collecting commercial  
19 waste in Midtown Manhattan for example, would benefit  
20 by being able to tip waste at the East 91<sup>st</sup> Street  
21 MTS, which would eliminate several miles of driving  
22 and the bridge crossings currently required to get to  
23 private transfer stations in the outer boroughs. It  
24 is a no-brainer and yet in order to fully utilize  
25 these facilities with incredible potential the

2 Council must allocate funding for them to run longer  
3 hours, and in particular those hours during which  
4 commercial haulers tend to dump the waste they  
5 collect overnight. By adding a third overnight shift  
6 to currently under-utilized marine transfer stations  
7 DSNY would also be creating additional high-quality  
8 green jobs in safe facilities. We, therefore, urge  
9 the Mayor's Office and City Council to ensure that  
10 there's ample funding in this year's budget to begin  
11 operating the MTS's at full capacity, and begin  
12 accepting commercial waste during and overnight  
13 shift. We know that Commissioner Garcia and DSNY  
14 share our desire to make strides in the push to Zero  
15 Waste, and reduce carbon footprint, and we hope that  
16 the Council will take seriously the need to fund  
17 these important initiatives at DSNY in order to make  
18 these important policy proposals our path forward as  
19 a city. Thank you, Council Member.

20 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Thank you for your  
21 testimony.

22 PIERRE SIMMONS: Okay. I'd like to  
23 start. My name is Pierre Simmons. I'm a canner, and  
24 I sit on the Board as Vice President as Sure We Can.  
25 I'd like to start this out by first bringing to mind

2 that this involves everybody in this room. We're  
3 facing a plastic pollution crisis with nine million  
4 tons of plastic worldwide entering the ocean each  
5 year. The State Bottle Bill was effective in  
6 preventing plastic containers from being littered and  
7 entering water bodies, and this information comes  
8 from Judith Enck, but in less than two years four  
9 redemption centers in our area have been closed. We  
10 collect millions and millions of plastic bottles and  
11 cans that without the canners would stay exactly  
12 where they are polluting our streets and oceans. Two  
13 weeks ago, Sure we Can received a notice that will  
14 be—that we will be evicted from our location on April  
15 30<sup>th</sup> if we cannot come up with \$3 million the owner  
16 asked for the lot. For the last 10 years Sure We can  
17 has been at 219 McKibben Street in Brooklyn. We have  
18 adopted many services including storage bins for  
19 canners, a community teaching program and a compost  
20 program, an upcycling project for plastic film single  
21 use bag. We also run environmental education  
22 programs with local schools, universities and other  
23 partners and forge alliances with the canner  
24 community and organizations in the area to further  
25 reach out and service the traditionally undercounted

2 immigrants, low-income people, elderly, homeless, et  
3 cetera. We do not have anywhere else to go. There  
4 are no affordable or appropriate sites. We would  
5 need a nearby location as our members work on foot  
6 and are mainly elderly or disabled. Eviction from  
7 our site means abandoning these who society has left  
8 behind, and even forgotten. Judith Enck in her  
9 letter to the New York Times Editor wrote: When—when  
10 I worked—when I worked to pass New York's Bottle Bill  
11 in 1982, I made the point that children would pick up  
12 empty beverages containers or supplement—to  
13 supplement their allowances. Little did I know that  
14 the growing problem of income equality would result  
15 in thousands of people relying on nickel deposits as  
16 a source of income. It will benefit everybody to up-  
17 update the 1982 law by increasing the nickel (bell)  
18 deposit to a dime, and by adding non-carbonated  
19 beverages—beverage containers such as ice teas, wine  
20 and liquor. The Department of Sanitation is opposed—  
21 is opposed because it does not want to lose money  
22 from recyclables by its Curbside Recycling Program  
23 she says. The City can remedy—remedy this by  
24 supporting redemption centers and helping to  
25 establish new ones. The redemption centers should be

2 required to send material to recycling companies that  
3 the city has contracts with. The canning community  
4 is self-motivated, inspired and hardworking and needs  
5 the help of the city to continue to reduce pollution  
6 and making a living. The New York's Bottle Bill has  
7 succeeded in preventing tons of recycling material  
8 from going to landfills and polluting our streets and  
9 oceans. The redeemers provided service needs—and  
10 need the support of the city and the Department of  
11 Sanitation to continue. We can continue pollution  
12 together. We can—we can fight pollution together  
13 with your support. Thank you. I would also like to  
14 add this: Contrary to what you might have heard  
15 earlier in terms of Sanitation getting—doing more  
16 recycle, I'd like to say this: I am a canner. I'm  
17 the expert. I'm the one who goes into those bags.  
18 People, Council Member Reynoso, are not recycling.  
19 More recycle ends up in garbage bags. That is where  
20 the bulk of recycling is. Recycle in one particular  
21 neighborhood is only once a week. Once a week, but  
22 you have canners who make a \$100, \$200 a day. They  
23 can't get that from recycle. It's impossible. It is  
24 impossible. I don't make my money off of recycle. I  
25 mean once in a while I'll pick some up if it's there,

1 but there's so much inequality in terms of money for  
2 people. They fight over those recycle bags. It  
3 doesn't make any sense for me to go into them. I go  
4 where the money is in the garbage bags and  
5 occasionally there's a--there's a--I'm not saying  
6 necessarily on the side but a can, a recycling can I  
7 might go into, but I don't make my money off of  
8 recycle, but I am here to tell you that there are  
9 more cans in the garbage bags in subway stations.  
10 Sanitation can never get it. They never can get it.  
11 I lived in New York City before there was ever any of  
12 this Bottle Bill, and I'm telling you when you got up  
13 on Saturday morning 50, 55 years ago, the streets  
14 were covered--covered with bottles. If--if you had you  
15 had the amount of recyclables on the streets now that  
16 you had then, oh, man, you'd be able to pay your rent  
17 for two or three years. It's just not happening.  
18 The--the canners are the ones who are bringing in the  
19 bulk of the recycle, and we're seeming to be pushed  
20 out of the picture. Four recycling redemption  
21 centers has been closed in our community, and this  
22 has put a strain on us. Now we're doing things that  
23 no other recycling place has ever did. We feed the  
24 poor, we give clothes to the poor. We wanted to  
25



1 start a social services program, but we also provide  
2 a place where those who want to be independent can  
3 work and come and bring in. You have immigrants who  
4 are not on welfare. They don't get SSI, but they're  
5 able to work together in husband and wife teams. You  
6 have the Chinese, you have the Mexicans. These  
7 people are geniuses. They make the money, man that I  
8 wish that I could make. I definitely wouldn't make  
9 it on a--on a minimum wage job. I wouldn't but they  
10 can, and they take that money and they invest it in  
11 their families and their children because they don't  
12 have a career here. They're just coming here, and  
13 these people pay taxes. It's got to be a way that the  
14 Sanitation--the Sanitation Department and canners can  
15 work together, and we're thinking about using Sure We  
16 Can as a--as a waste drop-off point for Sanitation,  
17 but the recycling in those blue bags don't represent  
18 10% of what's out there, and canners are out there  
19 seven days a week early in the morning 3:00 or 4:00  
20 in the morning, have women in their 80s and 90s, and  
21 it breaks my heart to see that, but that's what it  
22 is. They're going out there. They're the ones that's  
23 bringing in all these tremendous loads on these  
24 shopping carts. These are not all homeless people.

2 These are immigrants who remain the foundation for  
3 the next generation because they can't spend all that  
4 money. I mean they could, but I don't think that's  
5 what they're doing.

6 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So, where—so just—  
7 so where we are by the way having conversations with  
8 DYSDA with DSNY. We want to have a meeting between  
9 DSNY and the canning community to really figure out a  
10 way that there could be collaborating in work, and  
11 that they could work together so that redemption  
12 centers and just a better conversation about what's  
13 happening with recyclables can happen. We're trying  
14 to do that very quickly because you—you know April is  
15 a ways—is not a ways away. It's right around the  
16 corner, and if that redemption center Sure We Can  
17 shuts down, it's going to be a big problem. So we're  
18 trying to do that as quickly as possible, and it  
19 seems like we have a huge issue with enforcement or  
20 the lack thereof by DSNY that allows for the general  
21 refuse to have more recyclables than they're  
22 recycling bags. So, I appreciate your testimony and  
23 we are hearing it. We're trying to do something. I  
24 don't know if the meeting is this week. We're trying  
25 to have something done as soon as possible so we can

2 meet with Sure We Can specifically about their  
3 facility and we—we are on the same page related to  
4 the recycling or waste centers, which are  
5 conversations we've had in the past and we're—we're  
6 very interested in them, and we're—we're starting  
7 that in a more meaningful way through legislation and  
8 policy. So, I really appreciate your testimony, and  
9 we got to get building, but the timeline is really  
10 tight right now when it comes to the Sure We Can  
11 stuff and we are paying attention to that.

12 PIERRE SIMMONS: Okay.

13 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: We're aware I  
14 guess, and I'm actually very concerned.

15 PIERRE SIMMONS: But we know you've—  
16 you've been involved with us before.

17 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: I know but we—we—  
18 we're very concerned because I don't know if there's  
19 an easy solution to this, and I'm worried about what,  
20 you know, not finding a solution means.

21 PIERRE SIMMONS: Yes.

22 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So, we're—we're  
23 working on it, though and it's a top priority in the  
24 work that we're doing in our local office. So again,  
25 thank you for your testimony. I really appreciate it.

2 PIERRE SIMMONS: Thank you.

3 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Thank you. Yes,  
4 yes. (background comments/pause)

5 STEFANO CULIOS: Council Member Reynoso,  
6 Council Member Chin. My name is Stefanos Culios  
7 (sp?). I represent the Coalition for Progressive  
8 Waste Management Reform. Last month at a Brooklyn  
9 SWAB event, Council Member Reynoso said: Justice  
10 should not have a price tag on it. The Coalition for  
11 Progressive Waste Management Reform, the Coalition of  
12 members of the three SWABS: Academics and community  
13 and non-profit organizations formed that evening  
14 based on that statement. We are now here to make the  
15 case for significant realignment of resources  
16 financial and otherwise to further environmental  
17 justice, advance progressive waste management reform,  
18 and pursue true waste equity beyond the measures  
19 called for in Waste Equity Bill and commercial waste  
20 zoning. In its most complete expression, waste  
21 equity would be an application of the principles of  
22 the Public Trust Doctrine applied to sanitation and  
23 solid waste. The Coalition recognizes the Council's  
24 commitments to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by  
25 2050, advancing the Climate Mobilization Act and as a

1 response to mass protests less than a year ago  
2 declaring a climate emergency. We also recognize  
3 Council Member Rivera's and Constantinides' efforts  
4 on resolution calling on Congress to pass and the  
5 President to sign the Green New Deal into law. But  
6 this coalition believes that the longer we wait on  
7 the federal government the less time we have to  
8 achieve zero by 30 as outlined in One NYC. Meanwhile  
9 the recycling rate hovers at around 17%. I don't know  
10 what Commissioner Garcia was telling you, but the  
11 numbers—her numbers right here are not 20%. They're  
12 still like 17%, which is about half the national  
13 estimated average. While the curbside organics—the  
14 Curbside Organics Program, which has a coverage of  
15 less than 10% of New York City's population and a  
16 participation rate of 10% for that coverage area has  
17 been stalled indefinitely. It's not working.

18 Meanwhile, community scale composting, which places  
19 both the built and the social infrastructure within  
20 communities to promulgate organics recycling has been  
21 defunded or entirely unfunded. The largest community  
22 composting site in the U.S. to run entirely on  
23 renewables is right here in New York City, and yet  
24 its founder, David Buckle is no longer with us.  
25

1 Large—in large part due to death by a thousand cuts  
2 and a thousand slights. Meanwhile, informal waste  
3 management sector workers often are undocumented and  
4 most destitute operate in a gray area. At best they  
5 receive no official recognition for their dual value  
6 that they add to society large by (1) extracting  
7 redeemables from a comingled waste system—waste  
8 stream (bell) and second, the potential of real time  
9 outreach in education that they represent to the  
10 people in their community, the people that they live  
11 with. At worst, they are—they are outright  
12 persecuted. What kind of a vision of social justice  
13 is that? Meanwhile, waste inequity is perpetuated by  
14 a lack of investment in NYCHA housing, a veritable  
15 city within a city. Investment to provide training  
16 and empower tenants' associations to enter into  
17 revenue sharing partnerships with the city tied to  
18 recycling performance. What is it that's preventing  
19 us from scaling the worker owned models that Green  
20 City Forests and Intercity Green Team have  
21 implemented? What prevents us from applying those  
22 same revenue sharing partnerships tying them to  
23 recycling performance with community board across the  
24 city offering bonuses or multipliers for  
25

1 participatory budgeting. Meanwhile, DSNY for  
2 everything it's doing right claims to employ a one-  
3 size-fits all model so as to provide uniform service  
4 while at the same time bemoaning challenges presented  
5 by the variability of housing stock, which makes a  
6 one-size-fits all model approach inadequate, and  
7 does DSNY offer uniform service across the city?  
8 NYCHA residents might beg to differ, and have, in  
9 fact, gone to court over the issue. Expecting a one-  
10 size fits all approach to work for everyone in the  
11 world's most diverse city seems like a case of  
12 cognitive dissonance at best. Meanwhile, our waste  
13 management remains less than democratic than ever.  
14 The city citing the exigency of externalizing waste  
15 enters into contracts with corporations that contain  
16 language to the exclusion of ad hoc, and community-  
17 based organizations, organizations that would  
18 otherwise be playing a meaningful role in waste  
19 management. These contracts instead favor  
20 corporations that are subject to highly volatile  
21 commodity markets or entire countries like China  
22 simply refusing to accept our so-called recyclables  
23 any longer. These corporations cannot by design  
24 operate with Environmental Justice as their ultimate  
25

2 priority, as Environmental Justice is not as salient  
3 to those corporations as it is to the frontline  
4 communities. It was less than 10 years ago when then  
5 Mayor Michael Bloomberg reinstated the Curbside  
6 Recycling Program after having cancelled it for two  
7 years. While there has been a recent surge in  
8 recycling infrastructure investment in the U.S. to  
9 sort and refine comingled recycling, time will tell  
10 whether these facilities ultimately succeed. Most  
11 importantly, however is the question of what role the  
12 city can play in the global circular economy, and how  
13 the city's residents cannot only participate, but  
14 benefit. Meanwhile, the commercial sector from  
15 Amazon to Whole Foods to your neighborhood dry  
16 cleaners and wine store have realized that using a  
17 truck to get around is nowhere near as efficient as a  
18 cargo bike and that a hub and spoke system rather  
19 than a centralized model distribution makes a lot  
20 more sense. At the same time, Teamsters Local 831  
21 balks at efficiency measures such as GPS for route  
22 optimization, while collection workers have little  
23 time or opportunity to engage with the public on  
24 their routes. That stated, this coalition recognizes  
25 and appreciates the value and necessity of collective



2 bargaining rights for the working class, but not at  
3 the expense of

4 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Can you sum up—can  
5 you sum up (bell) your—your testimony?

6 STEFANO CULIOS: Not at the expense of  
7 the digging our own graves with union labor. (pause)  
8 We will actively oppose and argue vehemently against  
9 attempts that lead (bell) to the uberfication (sp?)  
10 of trash, a Gig economy approach that we view as a  
11 race to the bottom further divorcing New Yorkers from  
12 their relationships to their discards. I'm almost  
13 done, your honor. One more paragraph, please. We  
14 recognize, however, that there are untapped  
15 technologies such a block chain-based carbon credit  
16 exchanges tied to recycling performance that could  
17 improve the resource recovery landscape. A block  
18 chain-based carbon credit exchange tied to recycling  
19 performance for the onus of participation is shifted  
20 from individual decisions to community benefits such  
21 as civic waste centers, civic resource centers. The  
22 city in turn would realize great carbon reduction and  
23 thus harm reduction, and be better equipped to meet  
24 its carbon reduction commitments and zero waste  
25 goals. Meanwhile, communities in Upstate New York,

2 New Jersey, Virginia, Ohio and so on, are sick and  
3 tired of our garbage both figuratively speaking and  
4 quite literally. Do we want to invest in a future  
5 economy based on exporting landfilling incineration  
6 and the exploitation economy or invest in local  
7 health, local jobs, local justice and the solidarity  
8 economy?

9 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: I was about to cut  
10 you off, but thank you for—for your testimony to—to  
11 you all.

12 STEFANO CULIOS: Thank you Council Member  
13 Reynoso.

14 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: I'm—I'm hearing you  
15 all. The commercial waste stuff coming into our  
16 facilities that we've built out makes a lot of sense.  
17 I think it's an intention and a goal that the City of  
18 New York might have. I'm having conversations with  
19 DSNY now, and we're not there yet. The organics  
20 stuff absolutely is low hanging fruit that we should  
21 be handling this year. I would say that with the  
22 money. The money will come. If we legislate it, the  
23 money will be there so I feel comfortable that  
24 organic recycling is something we'll do before the  
25 end of this year. Again, we're working with DSNY to

1 try to figure something out with the short-term goal  
2 of Sure We Can, while also having a more  
3 comprehensive conversation about how we're going to  
4 handle trash in the future or long-term here in city  
5 and, you know, we've been handling trash the same way  
6 since the 1970s and even later than that, and we  
7 might have to start being innovative about how we do  
8 that. The thing is that Sanitation is one of the  
9 slowest moving or the tankers that are the hardest to  
10 turn around. So, it's going to be progress or slow  
11 progress in the work that we're doing here in the  
12 city of New York, but it is something that we're  
13 looking into as well. So, I want to thank this panel  
14 for speaking, and we're going to call the next panel  
15 Thank you. Thank you so much. The next panel is  
16 Dr. Tuck Orolay, (sp?) Dr. Tuck. (laughs) Chio  
17 Valerio Gonzalez, Debbie Lee Cohen, Bridget Assenti  
18 (sp?) and John Arcot (sp?). You can all come up at  
19 the same time please. We don't have our hard staff.  
20 I want to give people enough time. Just be very  
21 mindful of the time. I don't want to—I'm not even  
22 going to put the clock. I just want you to like  
23 respect the time. I don't want to have to cut you  
24 off. So, please. Are there four seats up there?  
25

2 JOHN ARCOT: I don't think so.

3 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: There's a fourth  
4 one there. You're good. We need one more.

5 (background comments) He got—he got you, he got you.

6 Well, give her a seat because it's going to be here.

7 John, I'm going to start with you and move down this

8 way, okay? Alright, thank you. I don't think—I don't

9 think you're micked up.

10 JOHN ARCOT: Thanks Chairman Reynoso for

11 raising the issue of how our—the size of our street

12 sweepers is actually driving street design in New

13 York, specifically bike lanes that are so wide that

14 you can drive a semi-truck into them. We won't spend

15 a lot of time with a prepared statement, but I will

16 say that one of the things that was really striking

17 when we looked at this issue in other cities was how

18 different departments worked together from the get-go

19 to align street design, and vehicle procurement. So,

20 like a city like Denver said, well, if we're going to

21 have protective bike lanes, we need street—snow plows

22 that are going to be able to fit in there, and they

23 bought those the same time that they started the

24 program. We've been installing protective bike lanes

25 in New York since 2007, which while we're 13 years

2 into the program, and we still don't have the  
3 Sanitation Department on board. So, we're really,  
4 you know, excited and eager to work with you. To  
5 resolve this clearly, it's going to take a lot of  
6 outside pressure to make our different gigantic  
7 agencies work together to get our streets into a safe  
8 place. Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Thank you and we  
10 ate going to have a conversation. We were talking  
11 about starting in BIDs in certain areas and pilot  
12 them whatever we can do to—to start addressing the  
13 issue of not allowing vehicles to move into the bike  
14 lanes. Grant Street in my district there's a—a  
15 primary example of how we shouldn't design bike lanes  
16 where vehicles have no problem moving through them,  
17 and actually have a—they have a protected lane in my  
18 district if you go through the bike lane in your  
19 vehicle.

20 JOHN ARCOT: I mean we fought to get  
21 hard—stronger barriers on that lane--

22 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Yeah.

23 JOHN ARCOT: --and it's just—it's just  
24 providing even more protection for the trucks that  
25 are driving up there. You know, one of the things

2 we—we think we could do, you could have a pretty wide  
3 bike lane in New York if you have the skinny street  
4 sweepers because you could actually cap it with a  
5 bollard or something. The street sweeper could still  
6 get in there, but the—but the other trucks couldn't,  
7 and we would have room for all kinds of light  
8 traffic. So, it would open up a world of design  
9 possibilities if we can get this and DOT has been  
10 laboring under this problem for years.

11 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Yeah, we'll have  
12 the discussions more intently moving forward for  
13 sure.

14 JOHN ARCOT: Okay appreciate it.

15 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Thank you, thank  
16 you so much, John. I appreciate it.

17 DR. TOPE: Alright, good afternoon.  
18 Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. My name  
19 is Dr. Tope (sic) and I'm testifying on behalf of the  
20 New York City Environmental Justice Alliance. For  
21 decades NYJA has led efforts for comprehensive policy  
22 reforms to address the disproportionate burden of New  
23 York's solid waste system on a handful of  
24 Environmental Justice Communities. The impacts of  
25 the Solid waste system are greatest in a few low-

2 income and communities of color where truck dependent  
3 transfer stations are clustered causing higher  
4 proportions of health consequences such as asthma,  
5 heart disease, COPD and various cancers. We are here  
6 today to advocate for adjustments in city budget  
7 allocations for the upcoming fiscal years that we  
8 think would dramatically improve equity for  
9 Environmental Justice and frontline communities and  
10 ensure the city's commitment to its stated goals.

11 Investing in staff for overnight MTS shifts.

12 Commercial refuse is collected at night and primarily  
13 dumped in private transfer stations in a handful of  
14 neighborhoods. The city's marine transfer stations  
15 are more equitably distributed throughout the city  
16 including some in Manhattan and are not yet at  
17 capacity in accepting waste. Staffing the marine  
18 transfer stations at night would help to reduce  
19 burdens in the handful of communities over-burdened  
20 by both truck traffic and private transfer stations,  
21 which are not currently adhering to city zoning laws  
22 for example in Southeast Queens. This would reduce  
23 the impacts of odors, leche, dust, truck idling and  
24 air pollution in facilities that are not all fully  
25 enclosed. This would also allow more carters to use

2 the MTS's under the upcoming change to a commercial  
3 waste zone system. Extending hours in staffing at  
4 MTS's can also help private carters throw out trash  
5 away from private facilities that are currently  
6 enabled to evade city zoning codes by failing to meet  
7 stricter laws for facilities near residences.

8 Opening Ganesvoort Marine Transfer Station: In New  
9 York City's 2006 Solid Waste Management Plan, the  
10 city committed to allocating \$25 million to open the  
11 Ganesvoort Marine Transfer Station handling metals,  
12 glass, and plastics. This supposed to be matched in  
13 kind by the State Government through the signing of  
14 an MOU. It is 14 years later, and the marine  
15 transfer station is still not open, which means that  
16 recyclables are still routed in large quantities to  
17 transfer facilities in over-burdened neighborhoods.

18 Implement Commercial Waste Zones Law, Trucks and  
19 Transfer Stations: The carters selected under the  
20 Commercial Waste Zones Law will be required to follow  
21 strict standards. We want to ensure that those who  
22 bid and receive contracts based on robust submissions  
23 property adhere to the laws. This includes ending  
24 comingling of garbage and recycling, insulation of  
25 electric vehicles, ensuring use of MTS's, investment



2 in facilities improvements, and changing stations to  
3 motivate transitions to electric vehicles among other  
4 things. Regarding the carting contracts with private  
5 transfer stations, we want to ensure that inspectors  
6 check and suspend work at transfer stations that do  
7 not have enclosed buildings and do not meet high  
8 performance standards as required by law and do not  
9 award these bad actors extended decade long contracts  
10 under the Commercial Waste Zone System. Mandating  
11 Residential Organics Collection: In the proposed  
12 Fiscal Year 2020 and 2021 Budgets, funding for waste  
13 prevention, reuse and recycling is reduced compare to  
14 previous years despite our need to meet robust zero  
15 waste targets by 2030. Among many needed initiatives  
16 the city should make the necessary investments to  
17 mandate residential organics as promised years ago as  
18 opposed to voluntary programs in a few privileged  
19 neighborhoods. There is a robust program of  
20 residents voluntarily bringing their waste to compost  
21 drop-off locations showing that a mandatory program  
22 would be utilized and would make our city's waste  
23 management more on par with cities like Seattle and  
24 countries like Germany. Enabling Micro hauler  
25 organics processing at DSNY funded facilities while

2 opening more organics processing facilities, funding  
3 should be allocated within the budget to make  
4 investments that will enable zero and low emissions  
5 micro haulers to access DSNY funded organics  
6 processing facilities such as Bigger Use, Earth  
7 Matter and Redhook Composting facility. As they have  
8 repeatedly requested, they have been enabled to scale  
9 up their organics collection under the forth coming  
10 commercial waste zone system, but within the same law  
11 that they were disabled from tipping at privately run  
12 transfer stations. This begs the question: How are  
13 micro haulers going to be able to scale up their  
14 diversion of waste from landfills, and what measures  
15 is the city taking to support this goal? There is no  
16 more time to waste. We need organics processing  
17 capacity within the city. Additionally, the city  
18 should reconsider DSNY's Put or Pay contracts, that  
19 incentive dumping higher rates of waste in  
20 incinerator-incinerators or landfills, and put this  
21 money instead into well run organics processing  
22 facilities. Thank you for the opportunity—  
23 opportunity to raise these concerns. We encourage  
24 the city to invest in the development of long-term  
25 waste reduction and waste equity plans to reduce

2 burdens unjustly faced by a handful of communities  
3 and to preserve our planet's limited resources.

4 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Thank you, Dr.  
5 Tope.

6 CHIO VALERIO GONZALEZ: Good afternoon.

7 My name is Chio Valerio Gonzalez, and I am the  
8 Campaign Director at ALIGN, and along with ALIGN and  
9 a handful of coalition members, we advocated for the  
10 Commercial waste system and under the leadership of  
11 Council Member Antonio Reynoso we were able to pass  
12 it so, yeah, thank you for that. I'm here just to  
13 echo what my colleagues from NYJA and NYLPI have been  
14 saying. You know, we want to advocate for the opening  
15 of municipal marine transfer stations to receive  
16 commercial waste. There will be a significant  
17 reduction in the MTs especially in EJA communities  
18 that have bared the brunt of the commercial waste  
19 dumping for years. So, opening the—opening the waste  
20 transfer stations on 91<sup>st</sup> Street and Gansevoort will  
21 significantly reduce the pollution that these  
22 communities are facing already, but I want to talk  
23 specifically about what it could mean for workers in  
24 these transfer stations. Recently I was able to have  
25 a meeting with a couple of workers that worked at a

2 Bronx transfer station where they described wage  
3 theft, rampant wage theft for undocumented workers  
4 and even for those that were documented. They had  
5 absolutely no security in their job. They were fired  
6 ad hoc. Some of them testified saying that they were  
7 forced to handle medical waste without having any  
8 actual training in it, and so there wasn't any—at  
9 these private transfer stations, often times they're  
10 just told, Hey, just dump it where it's supposed to  
11 go instead of, you know, if you get a red bag, it's  
12 supposed to go elsewhere. They said that they handled  
13 a lot of this waste without any proper protective  
14 equipment. Additionally, they also talked about the  
15 order and the enclosurement of these transfer stations  
16 and some of the injury levels that they had  
17 encountered were extremely high. So, opening up the  
18 transfer station the Municipal Transfer Station can  
19 actually mean good clean jobs for the communities  
20 that need it the most. We need an expansion of good  
21 jobs, and given the state of our climate crisis and  
22 the fact that, you know, the President's  
23 environmental priorities are really just tragic. We  
24 really need New York City to step up and make sure

2 that we have a planet that our kids can live in and a  
3 clean New York for all of us. Thank you.

4 DEBBIE LEE COHEN: Hello, Council Member  
5 Reynoso and Council Member Chin. Thank you so much  
6 for this opportunity and for all that you have done  
7 to promote the plastic bans, and support the plastic  
8 bans. I'm Debbie Lee Cohen. I'm the Executive  
9 Director and Founder of Cafeteria Culture. We were  
10 founded—it started—it started from out of schools in  
11 2009, and we catalized the elimination of Styrofoam  
12 trays from all New York City schools, and nine other  
13 large urban school districts. We're actually working  
14 now to get rid of the rest of the single use plastics  
15 in school cafeterias. On May 15<sup>th</sup> we have a Plastic  
16 Free Lunch Day that we're partnering with Department  
17 of Ed School Food Now, OFNS to citywide and maybe the  
18 City Council would like to join us and show support  
19 for all our 1.1 million students who will have that  
20 opportunity to take the climate action on May 15<sup>th</sup>.  
21 I'll send you some information about that. So, we  
22 ask ourselves as Cafeteria Culture Team all the time  
23 how do we get to zero waste? I wake up every morning  
24 asking that question. I'm a parent and educator, and  
25 a Stage 4 Cancer patient just coming off my 40<sup>th</sup>

2 Chemo treatment. I don't always say this, but I  
3 decided today to say it because I feel an incredible  
4 urgency that I feel relates to what my students feel  
5 and many youth, but we just don't have time to waste.

6 That's actually how we were able to convince the  
7 directors of School Food to let's get on with the  
8 plastic free lunch day. We can't wait five years.

9 Like it has to happen now. So, as we move forward, I  
10 thank you for what you've done in the past, a single  
11 use plastic citywide and I ask for your total support  
12 to continue with the straw bill. Let's help get that  
13 to the floor, and the other single-use bans as well  
14 as the reusable bills. How can we bring those  
15 forward? Our youth want to help and we're eager.

16 About expanding organics, it is time. We had a  
17 meeting with the Mayor's Office and Rebecca, my  
18 mentee who's 17 on Monday about the unfairness of  
19 half of the schools having organics collection and  
20 the other half not. So, I'm here also to urge you to  
21 make that a priority. Of course, I care about  
22 residential as well, but schools like we are missing  
23 a gigantic opportunity. You know, every year that  
24 goes by I'm like heart broken because I can see what  
25 happens when kids have it. Rebecca is one of those

1 kids. She—she started in fifth grade. She's now an  
2 11<sup>th</sup> Grade. She's in a school that doesn't do any  
3 recycling in the cafeteria and she's shocked by it.

4 So, I know like if we can do this now we can start—

5 it's like building equity, you know, in our students,

6 in our youth. NYCHA, many of our students live in

7 NYCHA housing and, you know, the difference of being

8 in a school where you're told to work toward zero

9 waste and recycle and then you go home and there's no

10 infrastructure or there's not even a trash can.

11 There's the loner recycling bins with no trash, and

12 the recycling bins are full of trash. It's—it's a

13 unjust situation that our city actually has to focus

14 on in order to achieve our zero waste goals. But the

15 meat of what I want to say today, and here's the real

16 gut of it, is that I'm here to ask for your support

17 this year to work towards zero waste climate literacy

18 from Pre-K up through 12<sup>th</sup> Grade in all of our

19 schools. It is time for us to triple our investment

20 in environmental education. I just feel like we are

21 teaching—when I say, we, not Cafeteria Culture. A

22 lot of the money from Department of Sanitation that's

23 going towards education in our DOE schools is going

24 towards the same kind of narrative that we've been  
25

2 teaching for 30 years. My daughter told me about an  
3 organization that came into her classroom in high  
4 school, and I said, oh, my gosh, that sounds like  
5 what they taught me in the 1970s. I thought how can  
6 we still be getting away with that and wasting our  
7 tax dollars on that. So, I'm urging you to actually  
8 provide for our 1.1 million students hands-on  
9 interdisciplinary curriculum that teaches the why  
10 with he how. We're not going to get anywhere if we  
11 don't teach the why. We need to change overall our  
12 narrative for all education about waste making it  
13 appealing because we connect it to the climate  
14 crisis. We connect it to Environmental Justice.  
15 I've—I've taught lessons at least in thousands of  
16 classrooms at this point for the last ten years doing  
17 exactly that. I know where the ah-ha moments are and  
18 those are the aha moments for kids from age from Pre-  
19 K even Pre-K up through all of our teachers. You know  
20 when they look up, and they say Oh, Gosh, I didn't  
21 know that. So, we need to provide students not just  
22 with good solid science based climate crisis  
23 education, but community leadership roles, and the  
24 opportunities to design the solutions, not just to be  
25 taught the solutions, that they take—they take on the



1 responsibility to design the solutions, and giving  
2 them the opportunity to take climate action right in  
3 their school cafeterias on a daily basis. That's why  
4 we're doing the Plastic Free Lunch Day. That's how we  
5 pitched it to school food directors, and I actually  
6 believe that's why they bought it. They felt like  
7 okay, Rebecca told me, you know what, I can't afford  
8 to take every Friday off to strike. I've got to get  
9 a full scholarship to college. Her parents are, you  
10 know, pushing her every day. So, part of this is  
11 with our youth. We felt, well how do we come up with  
12 climate action that can happen right in schools, and  
13 that's—the cafeteria is an excellent place to start,  
14 but that's reframing the narrative. So, if you're  
15 not sure like what this kind of education can look  
16 like, we took care of that for you. (laughs) we spent  
17 years, three years dedicating our lives and our shoe  
18 string budget to making of this documentary:

19 Microplastic Madness. Thank you, Council Member  
20 Reynoso for your participation in that. I would love  
21 for you to see it. Maybe we could host a screening  
22 here with Council Members. It shows what a two-year  
23 in-depth quality environmental education that's  
24

2 interdisciplinary that includes civics, community  
3 outreach, collective data.

4 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Debbie have you  
5 talked to DSN—have you sat with DSNY and the  
6 Department of Education? I know you've met with the  
7 Department of Education, but I mean like seriously  
8 consider this curriculum?

9 DEBBIE LEE COHEN: So, we meet regularly  
10 with Meredith McDermott—Meredith Mc Dermott, the head  
11 of Sustainability. We have not yet met with people  
12 working on curriculum, and those offices at DOE, but  
13 we need to, and if you would like to help me, your  
14 office could help make an introduction, and I can ask  
15 Meredith for that, too. It would be great. The  
16 timing is right.

17 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Because I think  
18 your—yeah, because—well DSNY and the work that we do  
19 is more meat and potatoes about making sure that  
20 these schools do this work.

21 DEBBIE LEE COHEN: Right.

22 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: It isn't about  
23 educating or any curriculum-based work necessarily,  
24 right. So, we, we could put the—the trash out. We  
25 could put the different trash bags, different trash

2 bins. We can tell people to use recyclable-  
3 biodegradable work stuff and separating, but the work  
4 of educating and doing all of that falls into the  
5 school, and if you have to build something it would  
6 have to be done probably through the Department of  
7 Education.

8 DEBBIE LEE COHEN: I agree.

9 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So, I think we  
10 would have to talk to whoever the chair of the  
11 Department of Education is like Danny? Not Danny.

12 DEBBIE LEE COHEN: Treyger, he's here.

13 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: There you go, Mark  
14 Treyger about it.

15 DEBBIE LEE COHEN: Alright, but I do  
16 actually see this as an inter-as an inter-committee  
17 issue--

18 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Absolutely.

19 DEBBIE LEE COHEN: --because--because the  
20 messaging that's in schools that we're paying for it  
21 through the DSNY budget for the same old signs that  
22 go in our basements. We've made other signs, and we  
23 can see the difference. You just put up an exciting  
24 sign that's colorful, that's bright, that's, you

2 know, what a difference it makes, and how you tell  
3 the story of it.

4 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So, we'll--so let's  
5 do that in the stuff that we can control--

6 DEBBIE LEE COHEN: Okay, let's do it  
7 great.

8 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: --right the stuff in  
9 the Department of Sanitation related to the outreach  
10 that's happening in these schools, you believe that  
11 Cafeteria Culture could like take on that role in  
12 assisting in the development like this educational  
13 material.

14 DEBBIE LEE COHEN: Great, we have.

15 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So, I want to--I  
16 want to--so let's try that.

17 DEBBIE LEE COHEN: Perfect.

18 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: It sounds like an  
19 achievable goal that we can put together. I'll talk  
20 to Department of Sanitation, their media and the  
21 outreach or whatever the marketing team, whatever  
22 they're doing in schools I want them to see if they  
23 can meet with you and maybe use you as like a  
24 consultant free of charge for now.

25 DEBBIE LEE COHEN: (laughs)

2 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: But consult,  
3 consult about

4 DEBBIE LEE COHEN: We don't want to put  
5 about ten years on this free of charge and actually  
6 dedicated.

7 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: But consultants-  
8 consultants to do it right way. So, let's work on  
9 that, okay?

10 DEBBIE LEE COHEN: Thank you, Council  
11 Member, thank you so much.

12 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Love you. Thank  
13 you, Debbie. I think that is a good way to start. I  
14 want to try to do this introduction and hope that we  
15 can make happen. Okay.

16 DEBBIE LEE COHEN: Fantastic. Thank you  
17 so much.

18 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Thank you so much  
19 and we love Cafeteria Culture. We love you guys and  
20 stay tuned. We got a lot of good stuff coming in the  
21 Council soon.

22 DEBBIE LEE COHEN: We can't wait. Thank  
23 you so much for all that you do.

24 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Okay, thank you.

25 DEBBIE LEE COHEN: Thank you so much.

2 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Thank you, thank  
3 you, thank you.

4 BRIDGET VICENTI: That's wonderful.  
5 Hello, Council Members.

6 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Hello, how are you?

7 BRIDGET VICENTI: Hi.

8 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Is there—is it on?  
9 Is it on?

10 BRIDGET VICENTI: Hello.

11 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: There you go.

12 BRIDGET VICENTI: This is a little  
13 background. My name is Bridget Vicenti, and I'm a  
14 lifelong NYCHA resident. I thought I was recycling  
15 by bringing my recyclables down and putting them in  
16 the bins outside my building for many years until  
17 2006. That is when I discovered my recyclables were  
18 being thrown away with the garbage. I felt  
19 disappointed and disparaged to learn there was  
20 virtually no working recycling program in NYCHA.  
21 With thee feelings of Frustration, I visualized the  
22 solution for a convenient way for my fellow NYCHA  
23 residents and me to recycle. To address this I  
24 founded the Intercity Green Team and develop the  
25 Door-to-Door Recycling Collection Initiative. ICGT's

2 Mission is to protect the environment and help  
3 transform the lives of residents living in NYCHA  
4 developments through education, job training, and  
5 paid work that can lead to a lifetime of employment  
6 and civic engagement.

7 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Bridget, Ms.  
8 Vicenti, can I ask you I think everyone here knows  
9 what you do and who you are. I hope they do. At  
10 least we do.

11 BRIDGET VICENTI: Okay.

12 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: But I want to ask  
13 you've heard the testimony of the Commissioner--

14 BRIDGET VICENTI: I did.

15 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: --and she was very--  
16 she was very dismissive of what she considered low  
17 outcomes. So, I wanted to and I spent time on your  
18 testimony--

19 BRIDGET VICENTI: Okay.

20 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: --to speak to  
21 contradicting that if you think you can--

22 BRIDGET VICENTI: Okay.

23 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: --but they--they see  
24 the value almost exclusively on outcomes. So, we  
25 need to talk about that because I want to be able to

2 make a case to her that you did do that. I didn't  
3 have the information on me as she was relaying that  
4 so I couldn't fight back.

5 BRIDGET VICENTI: Right.

6 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: I couldn't go back  
7 and forth for her. So, you educated me on how you  
8 might disagree with her assessment of the work that  
9 you were doing in NYCHA.

10 BRIDGET VICENTI: Well, at first off let  
11 me say I completely and utterly disagree. I happened  
12 to just walk in when you said the word Brownsville,  
13 and she went on to—to say that our jobs, what we were  
14 doing out there is minimal at best, which is  
15 completely false. As far as I know, throughout all  
16 of NYCHA we are doing the best recycling in the city.  
17 We average 500 pounds a week and that has totaled to  
18 over 18 tons since we've been out there since June-  
19 July, since July 2018.

20 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: When you got the  
21 contract originally were there goals set that you  
22 needed to achieve?

23 BRIDGET VICENTI: They wanted the—the  
24 recycling rate to be increased to at least 20% if  
25 I'm—20% if I'm—20%, and we were out there for four



2 months, and we increased—it was—the number was 2% and  
3 we increased to almost 8%, 7.9% and we were only out  
4 there for four months with a very small budget and  
5 just--

6 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Yeah, we have a \$2  
7 billion budget and we don't do 20%. I just want to  
8 put it in perspective. I want to have a  
9 conversation. I think what is going to end up  
10 happening is the City Council is going to going to  
11 figure out a way to take care of you. We still are  
12 going to talk to DSNY, and hope that they can partner  
13 with us so we can re-integrate this program back into  
14 Brownsville. If we can't, I'm going to try to figure  
15 out a way in the Council that we could do this work  
16 and we need to set goals, which we will do, which I  
17 think you're more than happy to try to accomplish or  
18 achieve. I want to make sure you have the resources.  
19 The city-NYCHA recycles at zero percent right now,  
20 right and they want you to go from zero 2 to 20% in  
21 four months. It's completely unreasonable. These  
22 folks want to go to zero waste by 2030 and they're  
23 still at 18%. So, like the standards that they're  
24 giving you and setting you for is that they  
25 completely are awash of it, and they have no

2 accountability or responsibility for it, and for them  
3 to say that your program was inefficient or didn't  
4 result in the outcomes that they wanted, anything is  
5 better than zero percent, which is what's happening  
6 right now, and it's building culture, and you're  
7 saying that they only gave you four months to do this  
8 work. So, I want to—I want to have another  
9 conversation with you. I want to—if I—if I can't be  
10 there you'll meet with my staff, but I just want the  
11 contents of the work that you did so to make sure  
12 that I can make the argument to DSNY

13 BRIDGET VICENTI: Okay.

14 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: The worst case that  
15 we figure out the way hopefully in the City Council  
16 to be able to make you whole. I wanted you to hear  
17 what the Department of Sanitation was saying because  
18 that's what they would tell me behind closed doors.  
19 I just want to make sure that you—you see what we're  
20 fighting against is as an administration or at least  
21 an agency that doesn't believe in the work that you  
22 do. So, we're going to get to brass tacks here.  
23 We're going to meet with you. Before the budget is  
24 over, we'll have an answer as to how we're going to

2 be able to do this work. Because I believe in you,  
3 and I think that you are doing great work.

4 BRIDGET VICENTI: Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: And—and we want to—  
6 we want to allow for you to be for a model that could  
7 have everywhere else. If everyone in the city was  
8 doing 8%, in NYCHA, we would be doing an amazing  
9 amount of work. That is something that I can't  
10 believe that they say is not enough.

11 BRIDGET VACENTI: Yeah, it is.

12 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: So, they're going  
13 to have to give me different answers moving forward,  
14 but I want to get the content of the work that you  
15 did so I can use it in my arguments against them  
16 moving forward.

17 BRIDGET VACENTI: I have averages for  
18 every collection since we started.

19 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Alright.

20 BRIDGET VACENTI: So--

21 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: And trust me, the  
22 amount of money they gave you was probably chump  
23 change. Don't say how much it is, but I'm telling  
24 you 8% for whatever you're doing is probably the most  
25 efficient way of spending their money in the entire--

2 in the entire budget. So, thank you. So, I just  
3 didn't want you to go through testimony--

4 BRIDGET VACENTI: Okay, yes.

5 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: --because I know  
6 who you are, and I like the work you do. I just  
7 wanted to know if you heard what she said so that we  
8 could be prepared.

9 BRIDGET VACENTI: I heard part—I heard  
10 partial. I heard you grilling her--

11 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: I tried—I tried.

12 BRIDGET VACENTI: --and, yeah which is  
13 total false, totally false.

14 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: I know. It's  
15 discouraging. I know. I just---I'd rather her have  
16 said it in a different way because if somebody else  
17 wants to do this work, we want to encourage it, we  
18 want to empower people, and that was a very  
19 disempowering message from here. It came out very  
20 wrong. So, I want to follow up with her and see if we  
21 get to a better place with this--

22 BRIDGET VACENTI: Okay.

23 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: --and then get back  
24 to you.

25 BRIDGET VACENTI: Excellent.

2 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: Okay?

3 BRIDGET VACENTI: Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON REYNOSO: I know you are the  
5 Mariana Rivera of the night. So, you shut down the  
6 meeting. You're the last one. So, I just want to  
7 thank everybody for being here. I'm sorry if it went  
8 over. I want to thank Council Member Margaret Chin  
9 for staying here the entire time, and as of now, this  
10 meeting is adjourned. (gavel)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date March 30, 2020