



Legislation Text

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By Council Members Williams, Marte, Restler, Salaam, Brewer, Stevens, Hanif, Menin, Hanks, Rivera, Ossé, Cabán, Farías, Gutiérrez, Hudson, Avilés, Gennaro, Sanchez, Narcisse and the Public Advocate (Mr. Williams)

A Local Law in relation to establishing a New York city freedom trail task force

Be it enacted by the Council as follows:

Section 1. Freedom trail task force. a. Definitions. For purposes of this local law, the following terms have the following meanings:

City. The term “city” means the city of New York.

Freedom trail. The term “freedom trail” means a walkable tour of historical sites in the city associated with the abolitionist movement and Underground Railroad, including sites that have been marked and sites that remain unmarked, that are linked through unifying signage, programs, or maps.

Task force. The term “task force” means the New York city freedom trail task force established by this local law.

§ 2. Task force established. There is hereby established a task force to be known as the New York city freedom trail task force.

§ 3. Duties. The task force shall study and report on the feasibility of creating two freedom trails in the city: a freedom trail in lower Manhattan and a citywide freedom trail. The task force shall make recommendations for historical sites in lower Manhattan and citywide to be featured on such freedom trails, as well as for legislation and policy in furtherance of that objective. Those recommendations shall take into account the potential educational and cultural value of the freedom trails to persons in the city, the projected costs of implementing any recommended programs, anticipated effects on stakeholders, and any other considerations the task force deems relevant.

§ 4. Membership. a. The task force shall be composed of the following members:

1. The commissioner of cultural affairs or such commissioner’s designee, who shall serve as chair;
2. The commissioner of transportation or such commissioner’s designee;
3. The commissioner of parks and recreation or such commissioner’s designee;
4. The commissioner of small business services or such commissioner’s designee;
5. The chair of the landmarks preservation commission or such chair’s designee;
6. Five members appointed by the mayor; and
7. Three members appointed by the speaker of the council.

b. Appointed members shall include academic or historical scholars and representatives of institutions, organizations, corporations, or associations that are organized or operated primarily for historical, cultural, educational, religious, or charitable purposes.

c. The mayor may invite officers and representatives of relevant federal, state, and local agencies and authorities to participate in the work of the task force.

d. All appointments required by this section shall be made no later than 90 days after the effective date of this local law.

e. Each member of the task force shall serve at the pleasure of the officer who appointed the member. In the event of a vacancy on the task force, a successor shall be appointed in the same manner as the original appointment. All members of the task force shall serve without compensation.

§ 5. Meetings. a. The chair shall convene the first meeting of the task force no later than 30 days after the last member has been appointed, except that where not all members of the task force have been appointed within the time specified in section four, the chair shall convene the first meeting of the task force within 14 days of the appointment of a quorum.

b. The task force may invite experts and stakeholders to attend its meetings and to provide testimony and information relevant to its duties.

c. The task force shall meet no less than once each quarter to carry out the duties described in section three. The task force shall hold at least two public meetings prior to submission of the report, as required by section six, to solicit public comment on the establishment of the freedom trails.

d. The meeting requirement of subdivision c shall be suspended when the task force submits its report as required by section six.

§ 6. Report. a. No later than 1 year after the effective date of this local law, the task force shall submit a report to the mayor and the speaker of the council setting forth its recommendations for legislation and policy relating to the freedom trails, including the task force's recommendations for the feasibility of establishing the freedom trails. The report shall include a summary of information the task force considered in formulating its recommendations. In formulating its recommendation the task force shall consider the following:

1. The feasibility of establishing the freedom trails;
2. Potential sites along the freedom trails;
3. Methods or systems that would be necessary to link the sites along the freedom trails;
4. The extent of coordination among relevant city agencies and organizations that would be necessary to the implementation and operation of the freedom trails; and
5. Outreach and educational materials and efforts, including technological tools, that would be necessary to support the operation of the freedom trails.

b. The commissioner of cultural affairs shall publish the task force's report electronically on the website of the department of cultural affairs no later than 14 days after its submission to the mayor and the speaker of the council.

§ 7. Agency support. Each agency affected by this local law shall provide appropriate staff and resources to support the work of such agency related to the task force.

§ 8. Termination. The task force shall terminate 180 days after the date on which it submits its report, as required by section six.

§ 9. Effective date. This local law takes effect immediately.

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