



Christopher Marte

紐約市市議員馬泰 Council Member, District 1

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Office location pending

January 21, 2022

Commissioner Thomas Foley
Department of Design and Construction
30-30 Thomson Ave
Long Island City, NY 11101

Subject: Air Quality Monitoring at the ESCR Site

Dear Commissioner Foley,

I am writing on behalf of residents of the Lower East Side who live adjacent to the East Side Coastal Resiliency (ESCR) Project Site, many of whom are seniors and public housing residents. The adverse air quality impacts of the prolonged construction during the project and the lack of air monitoring at the site have caused great concern.

As the Department of Design and Construction (DDC) acknowledged in its Air Quality Monitoring Report issued in July 2021, ESCR construction will inevitably generate high levels of nitrogen oxides (NO_x), particulate matter (PM), and other potentially hazardous material due to the use of non-road construction equipment and on-road vehicles, dust generated by excavation and landfill, loading and unloading of hazardous waste and contaminated soil, and other construction activities. In the same report, DDC promised that mitigating measures would be implemented to reduce emissions and that compliance with regulatory air quality standards will be maintained during the construction process.

However, since the construction started, our office has been alerted by nearby residents about the lack of transparency and accountability. The construction has been operating behind closed gates, so residents are understandably worried about whether any mitigating measures have been implemented to offset the air quality damage. We have also been notified that the number of air monitors at the construction site is inadequate, and residents have not been able to receive air quality reports in a timely manner.

To ensure the health, safety, and the right to transparent information of the residents during the construction process of the project, we request the following:

1. To immediately add six air monitors to adequately measure the air quality of the entire area, and to adjust the number of monitors accordingly as the magnitude of the construction changes;

2. To release daily air quality reports to the public, including levels of NO₂, CO, PM (both PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}), and other potentially hazardous materials, to ensure transparency and accountability; and
3. To establish a clear channel to hear community feedback that is addressed in a timely manner.

DDC and other city agencies have repeatedly promised that ESCR construction will not have a significant adverse impact on air quality. However, the only way to demonstrate that to the community is through publishing real-time data that is accurate and transparent. Our office would be happy to provide any assistance in the matter. If you would like to discuss this further, please contact any of us directly or via Ian Wang in my office at IWang@council.nyc.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Christopher Marte', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Christopher Marte
New York City Council Member