



Christopher Marte

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June 15, 2022

Brad Lander
New York City Comptroller
1 Centre Street
New York, NY 10007

Subject: Feasibility Study for Relocation of Women from Rikers to MDC

Dear Comptroller Lander,

I write to request a feasibility study of the relocation of the women currently held at the Rose M. Singer Center (“RMSC”) on Rikers Island to the Manhattan Detention Complex South Tower. This move, an alternative relocation site to the Queens Borough-Based Jail, would best serve these women as a central location with opportunity for the services and resources they need.

As Rikers Island closes, the City proposes that these women, fewer than 300, be relocated to the planned facility in Kew Gardens and thus be integrated with men in a space that lacks the services and resources tailored to best support these women while detained. Activists and elected officials alike have criticized this plan as putting the safety and wellbeing of these women at serious risk. We must as a city use all available resources to seize this opportunity by providing a safe, supportive, and transformative space for the women of RMSC as we progress toward decarceration and a transformative approach to justice.

For this reason I have proposed that these women be relocated to the South Tower of the Manhattan Detention Complex on White Street in Lower Manhattan, a currently empty City-owned facility that can easily be renovated to accommodate these goals. The site has the capacity to hold these women, but more importantly the potential for expanded spaces for services, higher quality living conditions, and a path toward supporting a shrinking jail population. Additionally, the costs of this alternative are minimal compared to the Manhattan Borough-Based Jail plan, a mutually beneficial plan that far better realizes the legislative and criminal justice goals of closing Rikers and the Borough-Based Jail plan.

I ask that the office of Comptroller Brad Lander conduct a feasibility study to better understand what I believe is the best option for the women of RMSC, for the Manhattan Detention Complex, and for the city as a whole. This feasibility study could shed light on how the South Tower can

be renovated into a high quality women's facility, the costs associated with this relocation, and how this plan compares to both the current relocation plan and the proposed jail on this site.

My office is happy to work together with you to conduct this study, and I look forward to discussing further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christopher Marte". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "C" and "M".

Christopher Marte
New York City Council Member