



# Christopher Marte

紐約市市議員馬泰 Council Member, District 1

district1@council.nyc.gov  
(212) 587-3159

65 East Broadway  
New York, NY 10002

November 6, 2023

New York City Department of City Planning  
Environmental Assessment and Review Division  
120 Broadway, 31st Floor  
New York, NY 10271

To the Department of City Planning,

I write to provide my comments on the Draft Scope of Work for the proposed City of Yes for Housing Opportunity text amendment (CEQR No. 24DCP033Y).

We are in an affordable housing crisis, and we must do everything we can to preserve and develop quality and deeply affordable housing for the millions of New Yorkers who are housing insecure today because of rampant real estate speculation. The proposals of this text amendment must require more affordability in new projects and protect what rent-stabilized housing we have left.

I am fully against market-rate development on NYCHA, which is public land, or Mitchell-Lama properties. These sites especially should be used to create 100 percent affordable housing at income levels reflective of their surrounding community. This text amendment should not undermine the opportunity these affordable housing complexes have provided generations of New Yorkers -- instead it should enhance and increase their existing purpose and provide working class families a chance to have an apartment they can afford.

Socioeconomic conditions and the potential for residential displacement *must* be assessed in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The published Environmental Assessment Statement (EAS) states that 500 or more residents will *not* be displaced by this proposal, a citywide text amendment that drastically alters our development landscape. New and larger residential developments are proven to cause accelerated gentrification, and I welcome anyone to visit my district to see examples first hand across the Lower East Side and Chinatown.

Expansion of Single Room Occupancy (SRO) units and especially the elimination of Dwelling Unit Factors throughout the city can have disastrous effects on existing two and three bedroom residences and average unit sizes in new construction. We need affordable housing for *families*, not more reason for developers to squeeze profit out of SROs and studio apartments with no minimum size requirements. My district already has many examples of how dangerous

overcrowding in small units can be -- we have to learn from the past to create better policy in the future, not repeat the mistakes of the past.

Residential conversion in predominantly commercial areas will raise concerns regarding quality of life and habitability of these areas. We have seen these consequences in the Financial District where an office-centric neighborhood converted to a residential community now faces an abundance of quality of life issues that are difficult to address. There is almost no open space for a neighborhood that's almost entirely families, and there is constant air and noise pollution. The EIS must account for these kinds of impacts in commercial districts slated for residential conversion.

I hope that feedback from the public during this comment period is genuinely taken into account and used to strengthen the intention of this amendment, and that the environmental review for this proposal does its job in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of New Yorkers.

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, District 1