



NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL SPEAKER  
**ADRIENNE E. ADAMS'**

# State City OF THE



**MARCH 2025**



## INTRODUCTION

In January 2022, I was elected as the first Black Speaker, mother, and grandmother to lead the New York City Council, which was historically comprised of its first women-majority and most diverse set of members. Our city's lawmaking body more accurately reflected the rich diversity of New York City and the leadership roles that women hold in our communities. This representation has empowered us to legislate based on the everyday perspectives and experiences of New Yorkers, investing in neighborhoods that have been overlooked and confronting longstanding inequities that have disproportionately harmed too many communities.

Over the last three years, this Council has prioritized critical issues of education, mental and physical health, housing, public safety, and opportunity for all New Yorkers. As part of my State of the City addresses, I am proud to have proposed innovative new solutions to some of New Yorkers'

greatest challenges, and then followed through to deliver on their implementation. We helped incubate several new programs with Council funding that successfully provided key services for the people of our city, including CUNY Reconnect, New York State's first Trauma Recovery Centers, and the first city-funded anti-poverty guaranteed income program. Additionally, my State of the City address and subsequent efforts have helped us expand Fair Fares public transit discounts, advance the Council's Mental Health Roadmap, and secure historic commitments towards housing solutions that address the city's housing crisis. These investments and policies have already begun to make a difference in the lives of New Yorkers, and can be expanded through greater commitments by the mayor's office.

Our city needs a government that fully commits to solutions that improve New Yorkers' lives. This Council has fought to ensure families and communities are the sole focus of city government's efforts and charted pathways to solutions that can alleviate the pressures New Yorkers are feeling.

If we remain true to our values and work together, we will not only overcome the challenges of today, but advance the stronger and safer city we all deserve. The Council will continue the hard work of meeting New Yorkers' needs and laying the foundation for a brighter future for our city by prioritizing the advancement of immediate and long-term solutions. Our continued partnership, with all New Yorkers, will help to build a safer, healthier, and more equitable city for all.

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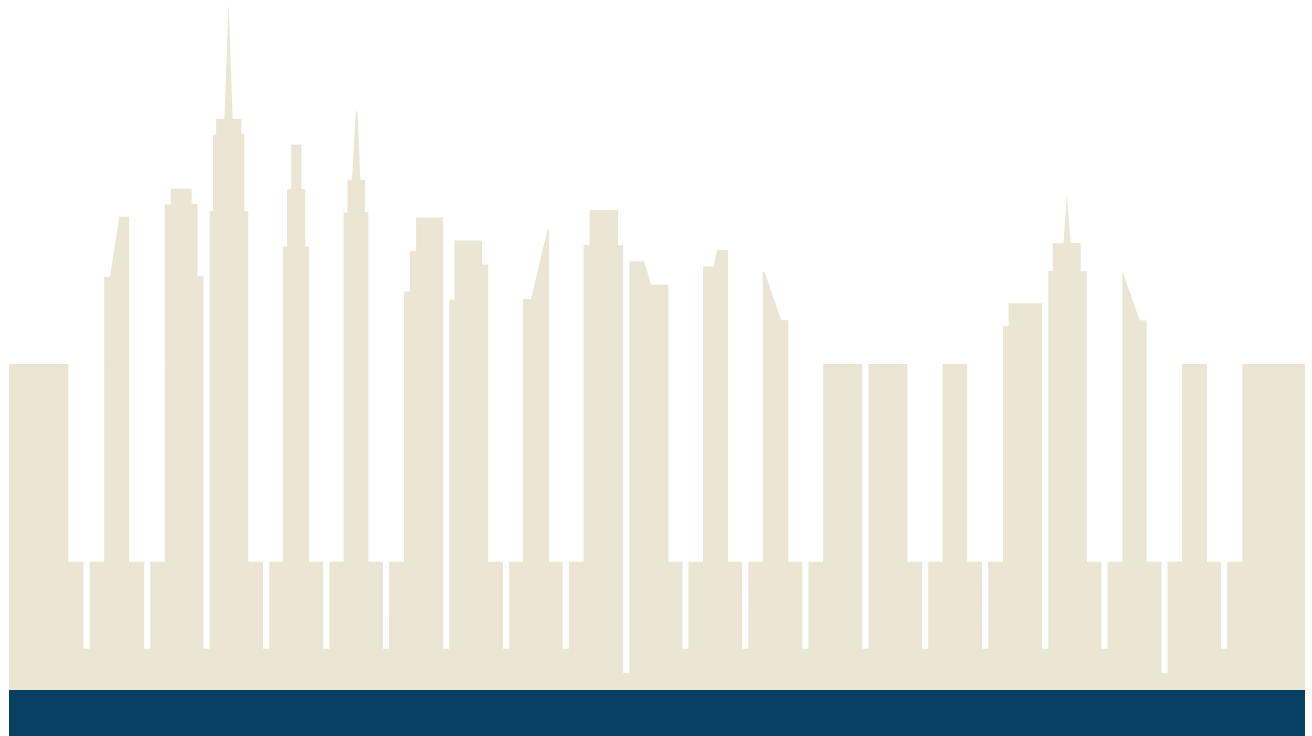
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# 2025 PROPOSALS

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## **PROPOSAL: Expanding 7-Day Library Service**

Libraries are essential resource hubs in communities that provide vital programs for New Yorkers of all ages. In every neighborhood, residents depend on their local library branch for critical services, including adult education classes, homework help for students, literacy and reading programs for young children, technology classes for older adults, workforce development services, and more. Currently, there are 21 library branches across the city that offer 7-day service, with nine in Brooklyn, eight in the Bronx, Manhattan, and Staten Island, and four in Queens.

Recognizing the critical role that libraries play in communities, the **Council will seek to expand 7-day library service to 10 additional branches citywide.** This approximately \$2 million expansion will ensure New Yorkers have more equitable access to library services and the educational and economic opportunities they provide across the five boroughs.

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## **PROPOSAL: Accelerating Minority-Owned Business Growth**

New York City is home to roughly 20,000 Black- and Latino-owned businesses across the five boroughs. Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (MWBES) are essential to the success of our communities and local economy. Yet, far too few of them are able to grow into medium-sized or large businesses. These disparities are stark, with the city's average minority-owned business generating less than half of the revenue of the average white-owned business. Boosting our minority-owned small businesses is critical to fostering equitable economic opportunities and ensuring small businesses in every community have the chance to grow and thrive.

To support the successful growth of minority-owned businesses, the **Council will help establish a Minority-Owned Business Accelerator**, modeled after a similar effort in Cincinnati. Since 2003, the Cincinnati program has helped several dozen minority-owned small businesses scale up by providing them with strong individualized business strategy and support, greater access to capital to finance expansion, and connections to major regional companies that direct significantly more procurement dollars to them.

The Accelerator would focus specifically on established minority-owned businesses that are poised for growth, but are likely to miss growth opportunities without strategic interventions. By equipping these businesses with the resources and connections needed to secure larger contracting opportunities, expand operations, and create more jobs, the Accelerator would fuel long-term economic growth and opportunity for communities of color across the city.

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## **PROPOSAL: Expanding Child Care for Working Families**

Affordable and accessible childcare is vital to the stability and success of working families and our economy. The high cost of care and lack of access negatively impact labor force participation and deprive New York City of billions of dollars in economic output. For low-income families in particular, childcare vouchers are a lifeline that make quality care, especially for infants and toddlers (under three years old) accessible. These vouchers are a critical component of the City's early childhood

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education system for children that are not served by 3-K and Pre-K. New York City needs increased funding from the state budget for the Child Care Assistance Program to make up for diminished federal support, so that thousands of currently eligible children do not lose access to this voucher-supported care.

At the same time, too many working families fall just above the income eligibility limit for these vouchers and are left struggling to afford the high costs of childcare. Currently, only families earning below 85% of the State Median Income (\$108,630 for a family of four) qualify for the assistance. In New York City, infant and toddler care in a private center can cost more than \$24,000 a year. For a family of four making \$125,000 a year, this cost can amount to 20% of their income, making it nearly impossible to afford care without sacrificing other essentials and living expenses.

To expand access to affordable childcare, **the City should fund** a voucher that covers half the cost of childcare, or \$12,000 per child annually, **for families earning up to \$128,000 a year—or 100% of the State Median Income.** This expansion would provide much-needed relief for working families that are currently stretched too thin. It would give working parents the freedom to choose the setting that best fits their child's needs—whether it's a center-based or family provider. By sharing the cost with families, our city can make childcare more accessible, more affordable, and less stressful for hardworking New Yorkers.

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### **PROPOSAL: Increasing Access to a CUNY Higher Education**

CUNY is an engine of equitable economic opportunity for low- and moderate-income New Yorkers, serving as a pathway to education and mobility. With 85% of CUNY students identifying as people of color and 35% as immigrants, investments in the public university system help ensure that every New Yorker has access to opportunity and advancement.

Stemming from her 2022 State of the City address, Speaker Adams and the Council, in partnership with CUNY, launched CUNY Reconnect, a university-wide program that re-engages former working-age students who have earned credits to return and complete their degrees. Since it was first established in 2022, CUNY Reconnect has helped re-enroll 47,000 students, the majority of whom are women and people of color. Over 3,000 returning students have graduated after accessing this new opportunity.

Building on the success of CUNY Reconnect and to expand access to educational and economic opportunities for working adults and low-income students in the City's public university system, **the City should take the following steps to expand and enhance CUNY support programs:**

#### **1. Baseline funding for CUNY Reconnect**

- The successful impact of CUNY Reconnect underscores the need for consistent and deeper investment in the program to ensure it is permanently sustained in the long term. While it has helped over 47,000 New Yorkers return to college, there are still more than 640,000 working-age New York City residents with some college credits, but no degree. By baselining funding for CUNY Reconnect in the city budget, the City can ensure that its impact continues for years to come, helping hundreds of thousands more working-age New Yorkers access educational and economic opportunities.

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## 2. Expand Support for Low-Income Adult Learners

- CUNY Flex – Nearly one-quarter of all degree-seeking undergraduate students at CUNY are over 25 years old, but too many never finish college. The Council is proposing CUNY Flex, a new initiative that would extend the benefits of the successful CUNY Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP) program to part-time, working adult students. Currently, CUNY ASAP provides participating students earning their associates degree with comprehensive and personalized advisement, academic support services, professional development opportunities, tuition assistance, transportation, and textbooks to support student success. By expanding financial, academic, and personal support, this program would help part-time adult learners stay on track to complete their degrees.
- CUNY Fresh Start – Many CUNY students who leave without a degree – often due to financial or family challenges – end up owing money for an unpaid bill. These debts can prevent students from reenrolling. The City and State should partner to establish a CUNY Fresh Start initiative that would clear an unpaid balance up to \$1,000 to help more adult learners re-enroll and finish their education.

## 3. Expand CUNY ACE to boost graduation rates

- Even after years of steady improvements, today, only 36% of full-time students at CUNY's senior colleges graduate in four years. For Black and Latino students, the graduation rate falls to 27.5%. However, CUNY Accelerate, Complete, and Engage (ACE), a program that provides intensive academic advisement, career development, tuition scholarships, textbooks, and transportation assistance, has proven to significantly boost graduation rates, despite only serving three percent of CUNY's undergraduate students. Expanding the successful but small-scale ACE program from three percent to 30 percent of eligible students would help increase graduation rates by ensuring that students are supported throughout their academic journeys. This increased investment will yield dividends for our city and its economy.

## 4. Application Fee Waiver

- For many New York City families who make less than \$43,890 a year, budgeting \$65 for a college application fee can be a significant burden and a barrier to accessing higher education. Currently, over 55% of CUNY enrollees report having a household income below the New York City poverty line, and two-thirds of undergraduate students attend tuition-free. Additionally, 44% of all CUNY students are the first generation in their families to attend college.
- As affordability is increasingly critical to higher education access, the Council is calling for the city budget to support maintaining a need-based application fee waiver that ensures access for low-income prospective students. In Fiscal Year 2024, CUNY provided over 48,000 waivers for low-income veterans, foster youth, and public-school students, but the New York City Department of Education discontinued its contribution to over 7,000 waivers for its students in Fiscal Year 2025. The need for waivers is expected to grow to 55,000, as DOE graduates face significant financial challenges. An additional \$1.5 million can fund the gap of 21,915 waivers in Fiscal Year 2026 to sustain the program and ensure equitable access to higher education.

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**PROPOSAL: Establishing a New Model for Holistic Community Centers**

To address disparities in health outcomes and community safety within certain neighborhoods, Speaker Adams and the Council have prioritized holistic approaches to improving the safety and well-being of all New Yorkers. Consistent with those efforts, Speaker Adams proposes the creation of new community health, wellness, and recreation centers in neighborhoods with significant health and safety challenges. These neighborhood hubs would offer critical physical and mental health services, access to community and recreational spaces, and other programming that promote the well-being of neighborhoods that is integral to public safety. These centers are especially vital in areas of the city that currently lack sufficient access to such resources and community spaces. **The Council will work with City agencies to develop the necessary planning to create these new centers, beginning** in Southeast Queens.

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**PROPOSAL: Fixing Administrative Barriers to CityFHEPS**

The City's housing voucher program, City Fighting Homelessness and Eviction Prevention Supplement (CityFHEPS), is vital to helping New Yorkers remain in their homes and move out of homeless shelters into permanent homes. As of [February 2025](#), more than 86,000 New Yorkers reside in the city's homeless shelter system, including more than 18,000 families with children. Record homelessness in New York City, coupled with rising eviction rates, underscores the urgent need for the efficient implementation of CityFHEPS.

However, bureaucratic obstacles and inefficient administration of this program has resulted in unnecessary and costly delays that prevent New Yorkers from accessing the support they need. In June 2023, the Council passed [four local laws](#) to remove barriers to the CityFHEPS housing voucher program to help keep New Yorkers facing eviction housed, provide young people in the youth shelter system with access, and reduce the city's record-high shelter population. Following the mayoral administration's refusal to implement the duly enacted laws, the Council has been engaged in [ongoing litigation](#) against the administration to compel its compliance.

As part of its continued commitment to reduce bureaucratic barriers to accessing CityFHEPS and ensure its effective implementation, **the Council is releasing a set of improvements to the program's application and benefit delivery processes that can be administratively implemented by the mayoral administration and Department of Social Services.** These recommendations present viable, low-cost solutions to issues related to administrative delays, technology, personnel, policies and procedures, and source of income discrimination, among others.

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**PROPOSAL: Reducing Delayed Payments to Non-Profits**

New York City's non-profit organizations play a critical role in delivering human and social services, operating largely through government contracts, that city residents rely on. In Fiscal Year 2024, the Mayor's Office of Contract Services (MOCS) reported that the City procured \$34.4 billion in goods and services, with \$19.9 billion, or 58%, dedicated to human services. The city's non-profit sector is a major economic driver, employing over 600,000 individuals, the vast majority of whom are women and people of color.

Despite their essential role, non-profit service providers face significant challenges due to the City's routinely late contract payments. A [recent report](#) found that 80% of City payments arrive late. As a result, some [non-profits have considered](#) layoffs of staff, taking out loans, or other fundraising methods to cover

the gaps. Some longstanding organizations have even been forced to permanently close their operations. Addressing these chronic and longstanding challenges is critical to ensuring the sustainability of the City's nonprofit sector and the essential services it provides to New Yorkers.

As part of its continued support of the human services sector and to ensure the timely delivery of critical services to communities across the city **the Council proposes the following actions to reduce payment delays to non-profit human services providers:**

- **Advance legislation to reduce delayed payments to non-profits by shifting contracts to a grant-based model.** By mandating that a portion of non-profit human service contract payments be provided earlier in the procurement process, this bill would reduce delayed payments, ensuring that nonprofits can focus on their mission rather than struggling to pay staff or using limited staff resources and time to access contract payments.
- **Advance legislation that requires City agencies to submit corrective action plans for Retroactive Contract Registrations.** The bill would require City agencies to submit annual reports on contract registration and, when applicable, corrective action plans for those contracts registered late, to enhance accountability, transparency and efficiency in the procurement process. By mandating regular reporting and targeted corrective measures, this bill would address systemic bottlenecks, drive meaningful reforms, and establish clear performance targets to incentivize the reduction of future delays.
- **Advocate for the Administration to restore funding to the Mayor's Office of Contracts Services (MOCS)** to resolve contracting delays that lead to late payments. In Fiscal Year 2025, the Administration cut MOCS' budget by 33%—approximately \$16 million—along with a headcount reduction of 14 positions, significantly weakening the agency's ability to process contracts and payments on time. The Administration should restore full funding to MOCS, which can prevent further administrative breakdowns and ensure that vital services remain accessible to New Yorkers.

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### **PROPOSAL: Strengthening Community Planning for Housing & Neighborhood Development**

A transparent, inclusive, and proactive approach to community planning is essential to ensure land use proposals are successful and better meet the needs of community members. The land use process shapes the future of neighborhoods and is pivotal to confronting the city's housing crisis. Establishing greater support at the most-local level by increasing engagement in the process of a more diverse set of neighborhood voices is crucial.

In December 2022, Speaker Adams released a [Planning and Land Use Toolkit](#), which serves as a principled guide and set of options for Council Members, local communities, land use applicants, and city agencies to employ for successful outcomes that balance citywide goals with neighborhood needs in development. To strengthen more inclusive community involvement and create a more equitable planning process, **the Council will release a Community Planning Framework that builds on the Planning and Land Use Toolkit.** This framework will be built on the following core principles:

- Expand participation and input from more diverse stakeholders at the neighborhood level, instead of limiting participation to those who are most often empowered in traditional public engagement processes.



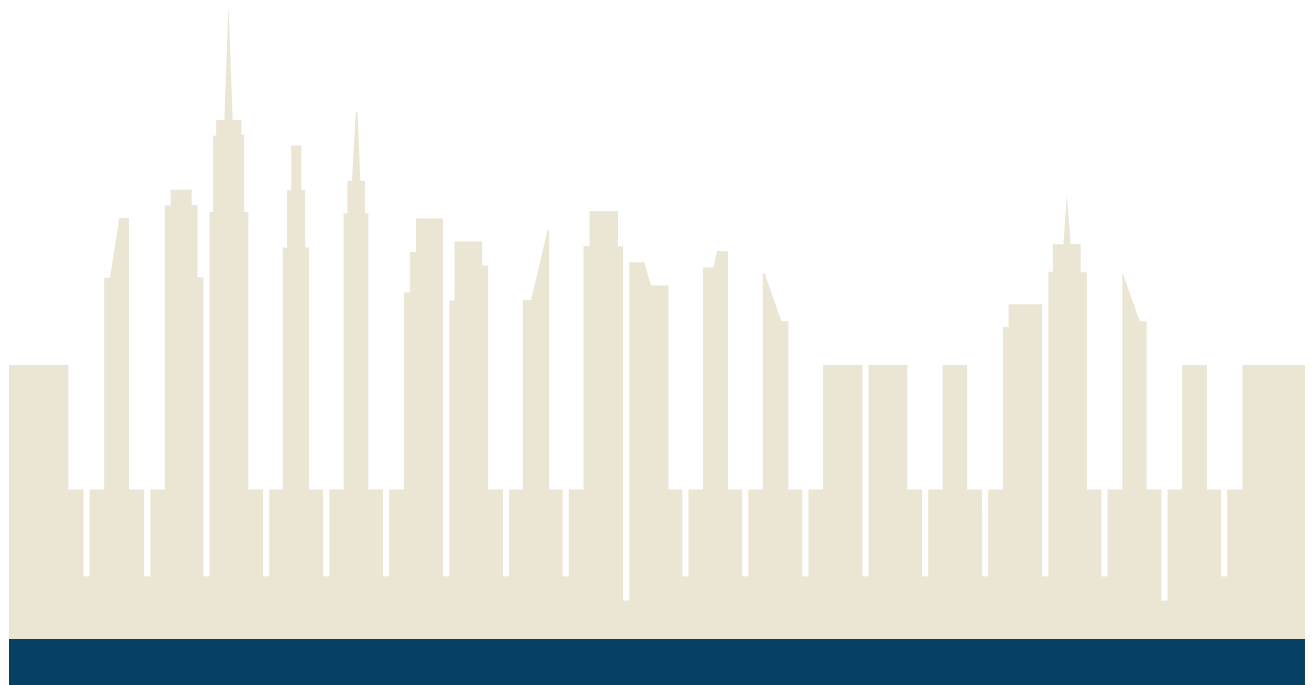
- Conduct engagement through both traditional and non-traditional venues and outlets.
- Balance local input with considerations of long-term citywide goals and needs that must be fairly addressed by all communities.
- Elevate the role of planning for communities and the entire city beyond specific projects and initiatives.
- Engage with local Council Members and stakeholders well before the start of any review process to offer opportunities for meaningful input.

### **PROPOSAL: Expanding the Continuity of Mental Health Care**

Intensive Mobile Treatment (IMT) and Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) programs provide essential, high-intensity treatment and wraparound support services for individuals with severe mental health challenges, substance use disorders, frequent contact with the criminal justice system, and experience with homelessness. These teams are critical to ensuring that individuals with complex needs receive comprehensive, community-based care.

However, demand for these services far exceeds capacity, creating long waitlists that prevent individuals from accessing the care they need. Currently, there are 1,000 individuals on ACT waitlists and 300 on IMT waitlists in the city. The City must expand access to these programs by funding them at a greater scale, reducing waitlists that leave too many New Yorkers without care.

**To further address the wait lists for IMT and ACT programs and strength the continuum of care, the Council will fund the creation of a pilot step-down program for clients who have progressed in their recovery and require less-intensive services.** By moving stabilized patients to step-down programs, IMT and ACT teams can support New Yorkers' continued mental health improvement and stability, while opening IMT and ACT spaces for new clients in urgent need. This increased community-based care ultimately reduces hospitalizations and justice system involvement for those in need of mental healthcare.



# PREVIOUS STATE OF THE CITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

2024

## LAYING A STRONG FOUNDATION FOR WORKING FAMILIES

In her 2024 address, Speaker Adams highlighted that New York City is experiencing an affordability crisis that has resulted in working- and middle-class families struggling to remain in their homes. To lay a strong foundation for all New Yorkers and families, she indicated that the City must address the lack of accessible housing, bolster early childhood education programs, and prioritize investments in its public schools. For too many New Yorkers, the housing and affordability crisis has presented an impossible dilemma: you cannot afford to live in the city, so you either struggle or you leave. The consequences of an increasing lack of affordability have disproportionately devastated middle-class families, Black communities, and other communities of color. Without a path to building stability, success, and equity, longtime New Yorkers have been moving elsewhere to build their legacies.

**The following proposals were included in Speaker Adams' 2024 State of the City Address and subsequently accomplished:**

### Confronting the Housing Crisis

Housing is one of the most basic elements to the foundation of healthy and safe neighborhoods, and it remains one of the greatest challenges the City must confront. New York City is in a housing crisis, with too few homes for New Yorkers and a lack of affordable housing and homeownership opportunities. The rising rates of evictions and homelessness are devastating communities. The City must produce significantly more housing, ensure affordability levels meet the needs of New Yorkers, protect tenants in private and public housing, and increase homeownership opportunities.

- **Increasing Housing Production:** The development of new homes is a critical part of addressing New York City's housing shortage. Speaker Adams indicated the Council would work with the Administration to update the City's decades-old zoning laws to promote greater housing production. In December 2024, the Council passed a modified version of the City of Yes for Housing Opportunity proposal to create 82,000 new homes through the five boroughs. It coincided with an agreement to invest \$5 billion in the Council's City for All housing plan to support greater affordable housing, homeownership, neighborhood infrastructure improvements, and tenant protections.
  - o The Speaker's proposal for the mayoral administration to advance efforts to **leverage existing library branches and city-owned properties for potential housing development** to address citywide housing challenges has been followed with actions to advance these projects across the City.
- **12 Floor-to-Area Ratio (FAR) Cap:** The Council's advocacy helped support the State enact

legislation to eliminate the outdated 12 FAR cap that restricted the City's ability to develop more housing in high-density areas of the city.

- o **Office-to-Residential Conversions:** The Council also successfully advocated for the state budget to include legislation that enables the conversion of commercial buildings to housing, accompanied by financial incentives that facilitate their creation of affordable housing. The zoning reforms passed by the Council also facilitated these greater housing opportunities.

- **Preserving Affordable Housing**

- o **Mitchell-Lama Developments:** Secured additional capital investments to support these housing developments and the commitment to establish a City-State Mitchell-Lama Action Group to improve and stabilize developments that have accumulated major costs in deferred maintenance that threaten their affordability.
- o **Restoring Vacant Public Housing Units:** The Council successfully secured \$200 million in its [City for All Housing Plan](#) to strengthen the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA)'s Vacant Unit Readiness Program which prepares vacant apartments for people to move into to reduce NYCHA's overall vacancy rate.

- **Deepening Housing Affordability:** In addition to securing greater investments in the City's affordable housing programs, Speaker Adams and the Council also successfully negotiated the inclusion of a new required option within the Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH) program when modifying the City of Yes for Housing Opportunity zoning text amendment that will provide more deeply affordable housing. This option will require affordable units in a project to average 40% area median income and better meet the housing needs of New Yorkers.
- **Strengthening Homeownership:** Homeownership is a critical tool for families to build equity and to close the wealth gap, but the lack of affordable opportunities is resulting in families departing the city. This has disproportionately impacted moderate-income families and communities of color. Black and Latino homeowners have also historically faced pressures that undermine these opportunities, because of redlining, predatory lending, and other discriminatory practices and treatment.

**To increase homeownership opportunities and preserve existing homeowners, the Council:**

- o Secured an increased investment of \$41 million that doubled funding for the City's HomeFirst Down Payment Assistance Program that expanded its eligibility to more moderate-income New Yorkers for homeownership opportunities.
- o Successfully negotiated the addition of \$27.7 million to expand HomeFix 2.0 that provides working-class homeowners with funding to maintain their properties.
- o Increased funding of legal services for homeowners through the Homeowner Help Desk by \$25.6 million to protect and support existing homeowners.
- o **Established an Estate Planning Initiative** to provide free estate planning resources for qualifying homeowners across the five boroughs to protect their assets and generational wealth.

- o **Passed legislation to help homeowners and their heirs** protect their family assets from [deed theft](#), which disproportionately targets and harms Black and Latino homeowners. Introduction 888-A, sponsored by Council Member Crystal Hudson, requires that when a purchaser submits an offer to buy certain residential property that the owner has not listed for sale or is not actively selling, the purchaser must disclose the estimated market value of the property. Introduction 901-A, sponsored by Council Member Kevin Riley, requires the Office of the Homeowner Advocate to consult with the Department of Consumer and Worker Protection to provide support and counseling to homeowners and their heirs to protect their assets.

## Prioritizing Education Programs for Students

For families to remain in the city, they need to believe that their success and their children's futures are being prioritized by city policies. For working- and middle-class families, it is vital that the City invests in its public education system, and this begins with early childhood education. Investments must also be made in student support programs, which are essential to our students' successful development and helping to combat the historic levels of learning loss since the beginning of the pandemic.

- **Protected 3-K and Early Childhood Education:** To effectively tackle current deficiencies and invest in the early childhood education system, the Council reached a comprehensive agreement in the Fiscal Year 2025 budget to immediately fund seats for families still awaiting 3-K placements or on waiting lists for preschool special education, and to implement other reforms that address problems in the system so families can access seats. The Council **secured \$293 million in the city budget to fund seats for families seeking 3-K and Pre-K seats and fix operational challenges** within the system to meet the needs of working families.
- **Preserved Public School Funding:** The Council also **secured \$400.2 million in the city budget to maintain school support and programs** that were at risk due to diminished federal funding, including for individual school budgets, Community Schools, mental health staff, and arts education. This funding is critical to ensure students have the support necessary to succeed.

## ADVANCING A HEALTHY AND SAFE CITY

One of city government's core functions is to protect the health and safety of all New Yorkers. By allocating funding and support towards initiatives related to healthcare infrastructure, mental health programs for young people, and community safety programs, the City can help to ensure all New Yorkers have the resources to thrive.

## Ensuring the Physical and Mental Health of New Yorkers

The Council's [Mental Health Roadmap](#) is an approach focused on expanding preventive, evidence-based solutions in communities that can improve mental health outcomes, in partnership with mental health advocates and providers. The Council made strides to increase the number of crisis respite centers, clubhouses, and other proven mental health care models as part of the Roadmap's first phase. The ongoing plan continues to advance solutions with stakeholders to address gaps in services, and its latest phase focused on improving youth mental health outcomes.

- **Improved Access to Youth Peer-Based Mental Health Programs:** With one in six children experiencing a mental health condition and suicide being the second leading cause of death, New York City's young people face a similar mental health crisis as their counterparts across the nation. To best serve young people's mental health needs, they must be met where they spend most of their time – in schools.
- **To address youth mental health challenges and support peer-to-peer programs, including in schools, the Council:**
  - **Passed legislation that requires the City to develop and offer “peer-to-peer mental health training” for New York City public schools and students.** The training would focus on helping students identify and assist peers experiencing mental health struggles and how to recognize the signs of mental distress in others and themselves.
  - **Passed legislation to develop a two-year pilot program** to involve mental health professionals and professional candidates in student wellness clubs in public middle and high schools.
  - **Secured \$250,000 in city funding to support a new Youth Peer Support pilot program** for young people between the ages of 14 and 24 to help manage mental health challenges and support their peers. The program will target this age range because 50% of all mental illnesses within a lifetime begin by age 14 and 75% begin by age 24.
- **Improved Maternal Mental Health Support:** The first women-majority Council prioritized addressing the significant maternal health disparities, characterized by high rates of maternal morbidity and mortality that disproportionately harm Black women and birthing people of color. In New York City, Black women are six times more likely than white women to die from a pregnancy-related cause, and nearly three times more likely to experience severe maternal morbidity. These remain pressing issues for women, birthing people, and families across our city, and maternal mental health is one of the greatest contributors to these challenges.
- **Fourth Trimester Support:** Becoming a parent is a transformative experience. For many, its joys can come with grief and uncertainty. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), about 1 in 8 new mothers experience mood and anxiety disorders during pregnancy or postpartum, and rates are higher among low-income individuals. Half of pregnant women with depression were not treated, which puts them and their families at risk of harm. Maternal mortality data analyzed by the CDC reveals that mental health conditions are among the most common underlying causes of maternal death, and the leading underlying cause of maternal death for many segments of the population.
- **The Council successfully pursued the following solutions to address fourth trimester maternal mental health issues:**
  - Passed legislation requiring the creation of a pilot program for post-partum support groups.
  - Passed legislation to require a public outreach and education campaign on resources available to help new parents with mental health challenges, including perinatal mood disorders.

- o Passed a resolution calling upon the State to enact legislation that would require OB-GYNs to screen for maternal health disorders, and for New York State Medicaid to reimburse screening during pregnancy by an OB provider, as well as postpartum mental health screening by an OB provider or pediatrician.
- o Passed a resolution calling for New York State Medicaid to require managed care organizations to collect the “prenatal depression screening and follow-up” Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS) measure and the “postpartum depression screening & follow-up” HEDIS measure.

## Prioritizing Community Safety Efforts

Achieving public safety requires investing in solutions that strengthen communities most impacted by violence and support their resilience. These solutions should respond efficiently to urgent and persisting safety concerns, while addressing the root causes of violence and harm. The Council is committed to comprehensively addressing the diverse needs of our city while paying special attention to the legacies of harm that have impacted generations of New Yorkers, particularly in underserved Black and Latino communities.

- **Supported Survivors of Violence and Trauma Recovery:** The Council provided the initial funding and support to establish New York State’s first trauma recovery centers in New York City, within the Bronx and Brooklyn. It’s multi-year commitment has provided these new services for communities experiencing high levels of violence that contribute to safer neighborhoods. Trauma recovery centers (TRCs) are designed to reach survivors of violent crime who are unlikely to receive victim services or engage in mainstream mental health or social services. They provide wraparound services and coordinated-care that includes mental health, physical health, psychological and legal services, and support access to victim services. They have been proven to increase the economic, health and social outcomes of those served, and they improve public safety by interrupting cycles of violence in communities that experience violence the most.
- **Confronted Hate with Proactive Solutions:** For years, the Council has consistently sought to prevent and respond to hate crimes targeting communities in New York City. Under Speaker Adams, the Council has taken some of the most significant actions in the nation to fund educational programs that help young people recognize hate in the online spaces they frequent, teaching them to respond in a responsible way.
  - o Speaker Adams has directly funded programs to train young people, who are targeted by digital hate, to identify and fight hate in online spaces. These programs have resulted in more than 450 workshops conducted in public schools to reach nearly 15,000 students, educating young people about the personal and societal consequences of this negative online activity and how to be an upstander. Council Members have added their own discretionary funding to support an additional 250 workshops that reach another 9,000 students, totaling nearly 25,000 young people who are being empowered to be responsible contributors towards stopping the spread of hate.
  - o In addition, the Council has allocated \$5 million in the city budget for community-based hate crime prevention and response programs that support affected communities.

- o To further address the rise in hate crimes in New York City and nationally directed at various communities, Speaker Adams formed the Council's first-ever Task Force to Combat Hate. The Task Force has engaged New Yorkers across the City in initiatives that bring diverse communities together to fight hate and make everyone safer.

## STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONAL PILLARS OF NYC

New York City's parks, libraries, and cultural institutions are fundamental pillars of our neighborhoods. These spaces are where New Yorkers of all backgrounds come together for recreation, an array of services, and to experience arts and culture. These institutions have an indispensable impact on our city's economy and communities.

### Prioritized Cultural Institutions

New York City is home to some of the most renowned cultural institutions in the world, which are integral to the enrichment and growth of our neighborhoods and city economy. These institutions and their resources are accessed by everyone from New York City schoolchildren and their families to international audiences. They provide cultural enrichment that advances understanding across the city's diverse communities. These institutions also contribute enormously to the city's economy, as the cultural economy generates \$110 billion in annual economic activity as major employers and drivers of increased patronage of local businesses. To remain the world's cultural capital, the City must protect the diverse institutions of the cultural sector and prioritize necessary investments for them, rather than continuing to reduce funding.

- In the Fiscal Year 2025 city budget, the Council **secured \$60.6 million for a full restoration of funding for arts and culture organizations**, including \$13 million baselined.

### Saved Library Funding

Libraries are an essential presence in every neighborhood of New York City, providing a wide range of indispensable services in safe and reliable spaces to all New Yorkers, including families, immigrant communities, seniors, and young people. These neighborhood pillars are not only for borrowing books and multimedia materials – libraries are information hubs and information centers that provide access to resources and opportunity.

- In the Fiscal Year 2024 budget cycle, spending reductions eliminated full library service, including library services on Sundays at certain branches. The Council championed libraries as a funding priority in the Fiscal Year 2025 city budget to ensure all New Yorkers can benefit from their local libraries and the essential services they provide.
  - o The Council **secured \$58.3 million in library funding restorations**, including \$42.6 million baselined, to restore full library service across all three library systems.

### Fought for Parks

Parks are vital contributors to the physical and mental well-being of New Yorkers and communities. They improve the physical health of surrounding residents by providing venues for recreational

activities and open spaces that promote wellness. Proximity and access to parks have been linked to reducing stress levels, lowering blood pressure and cholesterol levels, decreasing health complaints, and generally improving mental health. They also provide necessary defense against urban heat, alongside improving air quality and aiding with the absorption of carbon dioxide. All neighborhoods in our city deserve access to quality parks and their proven benefits. Yet, [inequities remain in accessibility and quality](#), with disparities for low-income neighborhoods and communities of color. New York City dedicates a smaller proportion of its budget to parks than many of the nation's big cities.

- In the Fiscal Year 2025 city budget, the Council secured \$15 million in funding to enhance and restore funding for Second Shift maintenance and cleaning positions at hot spots across city parks, and restored \$48.7 million to support Urban Park Rangers, Tree Stump Removal, and Green Thumb Restoration.

## CREATING OPPORTUNITY, PROTECTING SERVICES, AND CONFRONTING CHALLENGES

City government has a responsibility to facilitate greater opportunities for New Yorkers, while protecting the essential services relied upon by communities and effectively confronting the array of challenges often faced in the nation's largest city. Yet, there have been significant issues with the ability to successfully achieve these core responsibilities. The Council focused on addressing agencies' weakened ability to deliver essential city services.

### Solving Challenges through Effective Governance

While the major challenges facing New York City are often different and sometimes unexpected, New Yorkers rely on city government to effectively solve them. This responsibility is crucial to protecting the city's residents and neighborhoods, as well as preserving trust in government. The City's diminished ability to resolve vexing challenges reduced confidence in the ability for the City to overcome major obstacles. The Council committed to restoring confidence in city government through greater oversight and partnership.

- **Establish City Agency Report Cards:** The Council began conducting its own performance evaluations of city agencies through report cards for individual agencies on their delivery of services to New Yorkers. These evaluations include recommended action steps to remedy underperformance, starting with the Department of Veterans' Services (DVS) and the Department of Parks and Recreation. They will be released throughout the year on a rolling basis for selected agencies and will allow New Yorkers to better understand agency performance and where improvements are needed to better meet the city's needs.
- **Worked Together to Advance Solutions for New Arrivals and Our City:** The Council established the [New Arrivals Strategy Team](#) to improve the City's response to the increased number of new arrivals. It consists of seasoned government and non-profit professionals, supported by Council staff, whose mission is to collaborate with a cross-section of service providers, advocates, and directly impacted people. It has developed comprehensive solutions to improve support for immigrant communities and the neighborhoods in which they reside. It has focused on outlining specific best practices and approaches for our city, rooted in the experiences of both grassroots organizations providing direct services and affected New Yorkers.



**2023**

## PEOPLE OVER EVERYTHING

In 2023, Speaker Adrienne Adams outlined her vision to help the people of our city reach success by focusing on their needs as workers, entrepreneurs, students, parents, families, and communities. Speaker Adams emphasized the need to deliver the fundamentals: economic mobility, fair housing, and healthier and safer neighborhoods. She also emphasized the importance of advancing solutions for New Yorkers whose needs have too often been marginalized. For the city to succeed, expanding equitable opportunity to build a city that works for everyone was identified as foundational.

The following proposals were introduced during Speaker Adams' [2023 State of the City Address](#):

## JOBS AND ECONOMIC MOBILITY

### Prioritized Industrial Development for Jobs, Manufacturing, and Green Energy

New York City's industrial businesses are an invaluable source of mid-to-high wage jobs that have low barriers of entry – many do not require a college degree. Eighty percent of the industrial workforce is made up of people of color, making the sector a pathway to achieve equitable access to economic mobility. The Council identified expanding this sector and connecting more New Yorkers to entrepreneurship and jobs within it as a boon to the city's economy and economic equity.

To address the lack of a coherent economic development strategy to cultivate industrial growth, Speaker Adams identified the following proposals that the Council successfully advanced:

- Following Speaker Adams' 2023 State of the City 2023 proposal to advance legislation to require the creation of Economic Development Action Plans for industrial areas to support job growth, the Council passed [Local Law 172](#) of 2023. This law requires the Department of City Planning (DCP), Department of Small Business Services (SBS), and the Economic Development Corporation (NYC EDC) to develop a citywide industrial development strategic plan. The plan must be completed every eight years, and include an overview of city policies to support and grow the industrial sector, an analysis of industrial sector economic trends and the role of the sector in achieving key policy objectives such as the transition to green energy, identification of citywide goals and strategies to support industrial development, analyses of specific economic and land use data, and recommendations for priority job sectors, reform of financial incentives, land use, capital investments, and workforce development.
- In May 2024, the Council secured significant commitments from the Administration related to protecting and enhancing industrial businesses as part of the agreement to approve the [Zoning for Economic Opportunity](#) citywide zoning text reform. These included the advancement of a required special permit process for last mile facilities and initiation of environmental review scoping for that application by the end of March 2025, support for legislation to regulate emissions associated with the facilities' operations, and the continued development of a "Blue Highway" program to support waterborne freight as an alternative to truck traffic.

- In September of 2024, DCP, SBS, and NYC EDC announced the launch of the [NYC Industrial Plan](#), a comprehensive framework to support the development of industrial business and jobs. The final version of this plan will be released at the end of 2025.

## Supported Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (M/WBEs) and Underrepresented Entrepreneurs

Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (M/WBEs) continue to lack access to business opportunities, including contracting with the city, while entrepreneurs in underserved communities struggle to access support that helps transform their ventures into successful businesses. The challenges they face include a lack of access to capital from traditional banks and business development support.

Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs), whose mission is to advance equitable lending, help extend economic opportunities in low-income and under-resourced communities that have been historically excluded from traditional financial institutions. Despite their work to support small businesses and entrepreneurs, not enough of these entrepreneurs know about the value CDFIs can provide to support the development of their businesses.

### To increase support for M/WBEs and entrepreneurs, the Council:

- Passed [Local Law 133 of 2023](#), requiring the Department of Small Business Services (SBS) to provide information related to CDFIs via their one-stop-shop online portal. Information includes a directory of participating local CDFIs and a description of each CDFI's mission statement, operating locations, and the services and types of loans offered.
- Hosted [The Melanin Summit: Changing the Color of Capital financial](#), a resource summit in partnership with the Department of Small Business Services to support M/WBEs. The event highlighted and addressed well-documented challenges many minority businesses and M/WBEs face in accessing traditional financial resources, connected participants with various CDFIs, and facilitated conversations on funding options and opportunities for collaboration.

## Expanding Workforce Development for Disconnected Youth

The number of out-of-school/out-of-work (OSOW) young people in New York City had been decreasing for a decade before the COVID-19 pandemic threatened this progress, falling from 197,000 in 2010 to 117,000 in 2018. As of 2018, more than one in eight New Yorkers between the ages of 16 and 24 were out of school or out of work. Black and Latino youth made up the overwhelming proportion of the OSOW population in New York City, concentrated in low-income communities. This disconnection often carries significant long-term negative effects on economic and health outcomes.

### To support out-of-school/out-of-work young people, the Council:

- **Expanded city funding to the Renaissance Technical Institute (RTI) program** that provides free vocational training to young people, particularly disconnected youth, at-risk students, or justice-involved young people. Since its creation in 2016, the organization has graduated over 435 students trained in carpentry, plumbing, solar panel installation, security, and other vocational trades. By extending workforce development opportunities to more young people, these investments increase access to economic mobility and help break cycles of poverty, recidivism, and lack of opportunity in neighborhoods.

## FAIR HOUSING

In December 2022, Speaker Adams released “A Housing Agenda to Confront the City’s Crisis,” which detailed actionable steps to increase housing production with a focus on equity, deepening affordability, preservation, and restoring capacity for housing agencies and staff. A major part of her plan includes the intention to advance a new Fair Housing law that established community district-level targets for housing goals.

### Advanced the Fair Housing Framework Act

In her 2023 State of the City Address, Speaker Adams first outlined her Fair Housing Framework legislation in detail. It proposed establishing local targets for housing production, preservation, voucher use, and neighborhood investment for neighborhoods across the city.

In November 2023, the Council passed the Fair Housing Framework Act to promote the responsibility of every neighborhood to contribute towards housing production and other citywide housing goals.

## HEALTHIER, SAFER NEIGHBORHOODS

Health, safety, and opportunity have been the hallmarks of our city’s historic women-majority City Council, and improving the health and safety of our neighborhoods is critical to increasing opportunity for all New Yorkers. Too many communities lack access to the basic support services they need to thrive. The City must begin to address long-standing inequities that undermine the health and safety of our neighborhoods through targeted programs and services.

### Advanced Guaranteed Income Program

For New Yorkers who face the greatest challenges, securing basic needs makes it even more difficult to access economic opportunities that can ultimately help them attain stability and mobility. By providing life-stabilizing financial assistance to people who need it the most, the City can have an outsized impact on their health and well-being, reducing poverty.

Speaker Adams first announced the intention to initiate city support for anti-poverty guaranteed income programs in her 2023 State of the City Address. The Council then passed Council Member Crystal Hudson’s [Local Law 105](#) of 2023, clearing the pathway for the City to support guaranteed income programs.

In October 2024, Speaker Adams and Council Members [announced](#) a new Council funding initiative to support a guaranteed income program for expectant mothers to improve maternal health and reduce child poverty. Pregnant people experiencing housing insecurity are far less likely to receive quality prenatal care and are more likely to experience adverse health conditions while pregnant and postpartum. In addition, the costs associated with pregnancy often push women on the economic brink into the shelter system. As a result, [over 1,400 babies](#) are born into the city’s shelter system each year. Infants born into homelessness are also more likely to experience adverse health conditions, including a higher likelihood of respiratory disease, asthma, and hospitalization. Guaranteed income provides economic stability, helps to accelerate the transition into permanent housing, reduces stress, and improves the overall well-being of expectant mothers and their children.

The Council allocated \$1.5 million in Fiscal Year 2025 to support [The Bridge Project](#) in establishing a new cohort of 161 pregnant women experiencing housing insecurity who receive regular and unconditional income assistance. It is the first time in city history that municipal funds have been utilized for a guaranteed income program.

## Expanded Fair Fares Eligibility to Reach More New Yorkers

In 2019, the New York City Council launched [Fair Fares](#), a program that offers a 50% percent discount on the city's subways and buses for New Yorkers with incomes up to 100% of the federal poverty level. By March 2023, 280,000 New Yorkers had enrolled in Fair Fares, but according to the Community Service Society's Unheard Third Survey, one in three New Yorkers with incomes between 100% and 200% of the federal poverty level were still struggling to pay for transit.

In her 2023 state of the City Address, Speaker Adams announced support for expanding eligibility for the program to 200% of the Federal Poverty Level to help more New Yorkers benefit from access to the transit system through reduced-fare subway and bus rides.

- In the Fiscal Year 2024 city budget, the Council secured funding to expand eligibility for New Yorkers with incomes up to 120% of the Federal Poverty Level (\$17,496 for an individual or \$36,000 for a family of four in 2023).
- In the Fiscal Year 2025 city budget, the Council secured funding to further expand eligibility for New Yorkers living up to 145% of the Federal Poverty Level (\$21,837 for an individual or \$45,240 for a family of four in 2024).
- For Fiscal Year 2025, an additional \$2 million was dedicated to outreach and education on Fair Fares to increase utilization.

The Council continues to push for expanded Fair Fares eligibility to 200% of the federal poverty level, which covers individuals with an income of up to \$31,300 or \$64,300 for a family of four in [2025](#), to fully address the need for affordable transit access among low-income New Yorkers.

## Improved Swim Access and Water Safety

Our city's pools and beaches are a source of relief in the summertime, recreation for countless families, and seasonal jobs that spur our local economy. However, not all residents have access to public pools, hampering their ability to swim. According to a 2017 survey by the City's Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), 27.5% of New Yorkers 18 years old or younger cannot swim. Nearly one in three Black and Asian students, and one in four Latino students, cannot swim. This lack of access poses grave safety issues: According to the [CDC](#), drowning is the leading cause of death among one-to-four-year-olds nationwide and the rate is nearly double for children of color. Altogether, in 2023, 16 Council districts in New York City had no access to a public pool.

**To address these disparities, the Council enacted four bills to improve citywide swim access and water safety:**

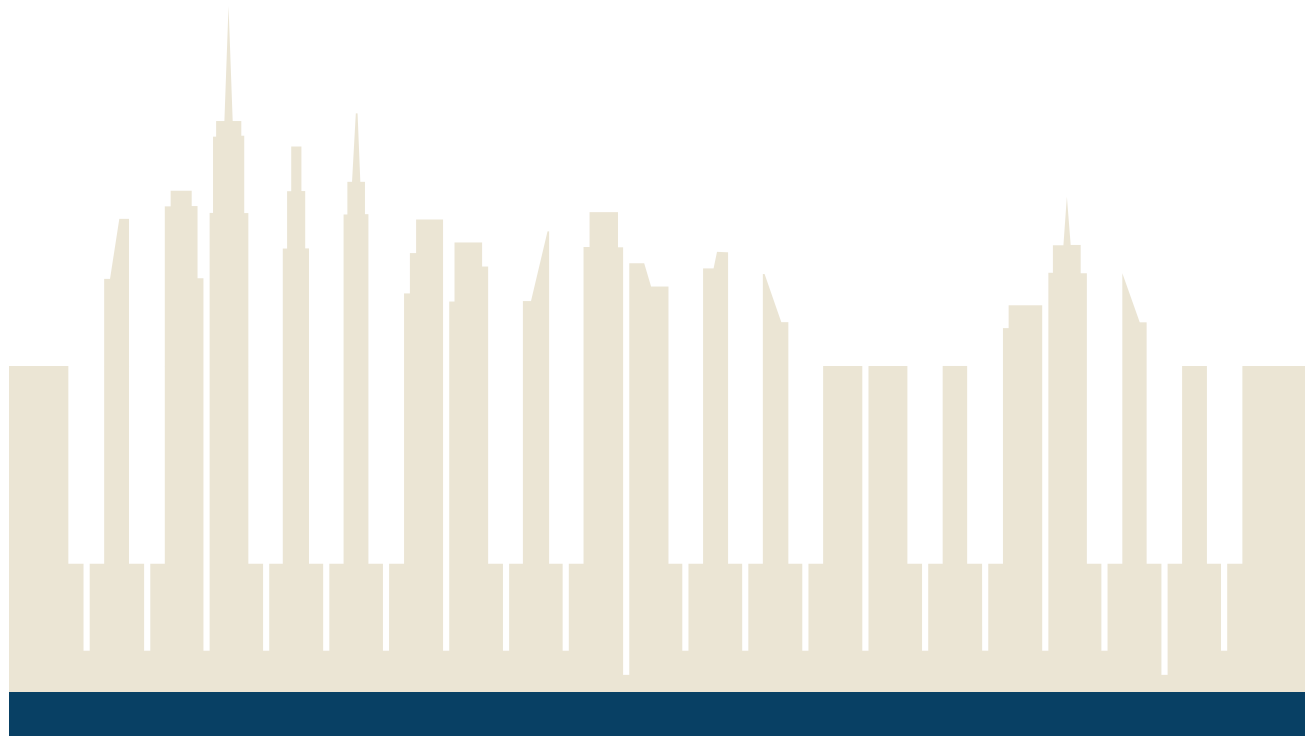
- [Local Law 129](#) of 2023, which requires the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) to provide free swimming lessons and water safety instruction to NYC public school second grade students;

- [Local Law 132](#) of 2023, which requires DPR to identify suitable locations where additional public swimming pools could be built, develop plans with the Department of Education (DOE) to open pools for use by the public, and offer free swimming lessons at indoor swimming pool locations, with a focus on communities that are currently lacking access;
- [Local Law 134](#) of 2023, which would require DPR to submit an annual report to the Mayor and Council on staffing levels and training for the City's pools and beaches programs; and
- [Local Law 159](#) of 2023, which requires the DOHMH to report annually on drowning deaths that occur in the city.

## Renewed the Commitment to Close Rikers

In 2019, the New York City Council approved a plan to close the jail facilities on Rikers Island and shift to a borough-based jail system by 2027. Since the earliest days of the pandemic, the situation at Rikers has only worsened. The jail population has increased, with people detained spending longer periods of time in custody. More than half of New Yorkers detained in our jail system have a mental health diagnosis and the number of those with a serious mental health diagnosis has risen. Conditions at Rikers have reached crisis levels and are a stain on the City, harming the safety of detainees, staff, and all New Yorkers.

- Speaker Adams' 2023 State of the City proposed to recommission the [Independent Rikers Commission 2.0](#), led by former New York State Chief Judge Jonathan Lippman. It has worked to strengthen the roadmap towards closure and intends to continue engaging with stakeholders on successful implementation. Its new report is expected to be released in the coming weeks.



**2022**

## INVESTING IN HEALTH, COMMUNITY-BASED PUBLIC SAFETY, AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEW YORKERS

Speaker Adams' 2022 State of the City, her first, proposed various solutions to health disparities, the lack of affordable housing, educational and economic opportunity, and investments in our youth and older adults.

**The following proposals were introduced during Speaker Adams' 2022 State of the City Address and subsequently accomplished:**

### ADVANCING INVESTMENTS IN HOUSING

Speaker Adams proposed that the City fulfill the Administration's commitment to add \$4 billion to the capital budget for affordable housing in Fiscal Year 2023. In the Fiscal Year 2024 budget, Speaker Adams and the City Council secured this increased investment.

In 2024, the City Council secured additional funding for supportive housing that had been a consistent demand since Speaker Adams' 2022 State of the City Address, and in subsequent budgets to address the housing and re-entry needs of New Yorkers. The Council gained a commitment of \$137 million in capital funding to work on issues related to Justice Involved Supportive Housing and the 15/15 Supportive Housing program.

### ADVANCING INVESTMENTS IN PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

Too many New Yorkers lack access to health, especially amongst Black communities, immigrant New Yorkers, and low-income, and working-class communities. Those who suffered the worst outcomes of COVID-19 had higher rates of infection, hospitalization, and death, largely due to having more preexisting health conditions. In order to ensure safer neighborhoods, the City has to deepen its investments in expanding access to physical and mental health.

### Safeguarded Abortion and Reproductive Healthcare Rights

The continued healthcare disparities for women of color, especially Black women, as well as LGBTQIA+ and gender non-conforming New Yorkers, remains a major issue across the City. In her 2022 address, Speaker Adams proposed a comprehensive legislative package to protect and expand access to abortion and reproductive healthcare. After the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* later that year, the Council passed the [NYC Abortion Rights Act](#), expanding abortion and reproductive health services to those seeking access to care. It also codified New York City's role as a safe harbor for abortion healthcare, protecting against attacks on reproductive freedom from other states. The Council also [provided \\$1 million](#) towards expanding direct access to abortion care in New York City, the largest commitment of municipal funds by any city in the United States.

## Victim Services and Trauma Recovery Centers

Speaker Adams first outlined the need for New York City to prioritize addressing the trauma that violence inflicts on victims and families in communities that experience it the most in her 2022 address. The trauma left behind by violence creates worse outcomes when it remains unaddressed and perpetuates cycles of violence in communities. Too often, victims of violence and their communities are not supported in their recovery. Many victims in communities of color have been blamed for their own victimization or just simply disregarded. To address the reality that access to victim services is often out-of-reach, ill-equipped, or unable to provide trauma-informed care that best services survivors, Speaker Adams proposed and took several action steps.

Through city funding, the Council established New York State's [first trauma recovery centers](#) (TRCs) to address the trauma that violence inflicts on victims and families in communities that experience it most. TRCs ensure access to a range of wrap-around services to help people impacted by violence to regain health and stability, while stopping cycles of violence in neighborhoods.

- The Council has allocated **\$4.8 million to support the creation of the state's first trauma recovery centers**. There are two locations in The Bronx, one in Brooklyn, and another set to be open in Brooklyn.
- TRCs are a national model for investing in the recovery of underserved victims of violence for communities most harmed by violence. They ensure access to a range of wrap-around services to help people impacted by violence to regain health and stability, while stopping cycles of violence in neighborhoods.
- Speaker Adams also established a citywide Council budget initiative – Community Safety and Victim Services Initiative – to provide \$100,000 for each Council Member to allocate for community safety and victim services programs that make communities safer.

## Supporting Unhoused Students

In the 2020-2021 school year, more than 101,000 city students experienced homelessness, of which 28,000 spent time in shelters. Of these students, only 52% graduated on time, and 60% were chronically absent. The Council called on the City to hire 100 shelter-based coordinators to support students and families living in shelter with educational support to improve attendance, connect them to resources, and help them navigate the school system.

- In Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025, the Council secured funding in the budget to hire and maintain these critical Department of Education staff, which Speaker Adams highlighted in her 2022 address.

## Allocated Funding to Reduce Hate Violence

Hate violence has risen nationally and in New York City. Whether it was the white supremacist violence that killed nearly a dozen members of Buffalo's Black community or the increased attacks against New York City's Asian, Jewish, Sikh, Muslim and LGBTQIA+ communities, hate violence leaves too many communities unsafe. Speaker Adams called for at least \$5 million in additional resources to support community-based organizations involved in hate crime prevention efforts.

- Since Fiscal Year 2023, the Council has **invested \$5 million annually for community-based hate crimes prevention and response programs** to support New Yorkers that disproportionately face discrimination and hate.

## Funded Emergency Food Assistance Program

Speaker Adams called on the City to expand funding for the Emergency Food Assistance Program to support hundreds of food pantries and soup kitchens that provide an array of essential food items to New Yorkers in need.

- The Council secured a **\$30 million increase to the revamped [Community Food Connection program](#)** in Fiscal Years 2023-2025.

## Funded Home-Delivered Meals for Older Adults

As New York City's older adult population grows and struggles with financial hardship, additional funding will be needed to combat food insecurity and hunger. Speaker Adams called on the City to invest \$12.7 million to increase the reimbursement rate for providers in the home-delivered meal program and continue addressing the demand and better serve older adults.

- The Council has made progress towards this goal **by securing increases to the current per meal reimbursement** in back-to-back city budgets. The per meal rate has increased from \$11.78 to \$13.78 in the Fiscal Year 2025 budget. The Council will continue to push towards reaching the \$15.31 rate that will account for providers' actual costs.

## Innovative Food Programs and Capital Investments

Speaker Adams called for establishing additional food pantries and providing fresh food boxes through schools in high-need areas, and the Council has pursued capital budget increases for kitchen capital projects in New York City public schools.

- The Council allocated \$1 million for Food Bank for NYC to operate **[25 school-based food and hygiene pantries at high-need Department of Education \(DOE\) public schools](#)**. This investment supports schools in every borough, including eight in Brooklyn, seven in The Bronx, five in Queens, four in Manhattan, and one in Staten Island.
- The Council secured \$75 million in capital funding in Fiscal Year 2023 to improve public school kitchen and cafeteria spaces. The Council worked to increase this funding in the capital funding plan for Fiscal Year 2025 to \$150 million.

## New Micro-Parks and Green Spaces

Speaker Adams committed to advancing the development of new micro-parks and green spaces in underserved neighborhoods through legislation that requires the City to identify vacant city-owned lots and underutilized spaces.

- In 2022, the Council **[passed legislation](#)** focused on turning dead ends and underutilized city lots into places of refuge that can also have environmental benefits to protect communities from extreme climate events.



## EXPANDING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES AND ACCESSIBILITY

### Investing in our Youth

Through the Summer Youth Employment Program and the Work, Learn and Grow Program, NYC youth are connected with different career exploration opportunities and paid work experience to develop productive workplace habits, and engage in learning experiences that strengthen their social, civic, and leadership skills. By participating in structured projects and work-based opportunities, NYC youth are better prepared for careers of the future. Speaker Adams prioritized these programs in her 2022 address.

- To support New York City youth and foster workforce development city-wide, the **Council secured \$170 million in the Fiscal Year 2023 budget to expand and strengthen SYEP.**
- The Council called on the City to invest in expanding the **Work, Learn and Grow (WLG)** program. WLG helps youth participants build work skills and aptitude through direct exposure and access to paid workforce programs. **In Fiscal Years 2023-2025, the Council secured funding to maintain the Learning to Work program** and support the access of New York City youth to critical workforce opportunities.

### CUNY Reconnect

The pursuit of a higher education is one of many paths to economic mobility, but the road to acquiring a degree for working New Yorkers is a challenge. In her 2022 State of the City address, Speaker Adams announced the intent to establish a citywide program at the City University of New York (CUNY) that would re-engage working-age New Yorkers with some college credits to return to CUNY and finish earning their degree. The majority of these New Yorkers with some college credit but who left before finishing are people of color and women, and the program was identified as an opportunity to increase their earning potential and incomes.

- The Council secured funding to establish **CUNY Reconnect** in the Fiscal Year 2023 budget and continued funding in each subsequent budget. The program has already re-enrolled more than [47,000 New Yorkers](#) with some college credits but no degree, and is pursuing baselined funding for this initiative so the city can ensure that its impact continues for years to come.

### Civil Service Career Opportunities

Speaker Adams committed to pursuing legislation to create a Civil Service Ambassador program where current municipal employees would travel to schools, Administration for Children's Services foster and juvenile facilities, Department of Homeless Services facilities, and supportive housing sites to engage with those populations about benefits and pathways to joining the civil service.

- In 2022, the Council passed [legislation](#) to create the civil service ambassador program that provides educational materials to populations that would benefit from joining the civil service and learning about its examination process.
- The Council also passed a bill to create a public service corps program that offers internships at various city agencies.

Speaker Adams also proposed removing barriers to job opportunity by expanding access to civil service careers for justice-involved New Yorkers.

- In July 2023, the Council passed [Local Law 113](#) of 2023, which requires the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) to administer civil service exams in the City's forthcoming borough-based jails, authorizing DCAS to waive the civil service exam fee for justice-involved individuals, and requiring the City to provide information about the civil service exam system to them.

## Language Access for New Yorkers

Speaker Adams called on the City to create a [Community Interpreter Bank](#) to improve access to language services in city agencies. The NYC Community Interpreter Bank centralizes interpretation services available to immigrants across the five boroughs and will recruit, train, and dispatch interpreters to City-funded legal service providers, community navigation sites, and City Council offices. Interpreters fluent in the city's most requested languages help ensure that every New Yorker can access services and information in their preferred language.

- In Fiscal Year 2025, the Council allocated \$1.4 million to finally launch the city's first-ever Community Interpreter Bank.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to all the staff and partners who contributed to Speaker Adams' 2025 State of the City address.