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**TRANSCRIPT FROM TUESDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2022: MAYOR ERIC ADAMS HOSTS
COMMUNITY CONVERSATION ON PUBLIC SAFETY**

Commissioner Fred Kreizman, Mayor's Community Affairs Unit: Ladies and gentlemen, I just want to welcome everyone here this evening for the mayor's community conversation on public safety for Manhattan South area. I want to thank everyone for coming out this evening. We know you're all very busy, but you're all community-oriented people who are very active, helping your constituencies all the time. So just this meeting, the three parts. The first portion was the first hour of having police executives from throughout Brooklyn South at each table, a police executive; member of the mayor's office taking notes on any ideas, policy ideas that you had had; a member of the Department of Education, principal, superintendent; as well as an agency facilitator to help carry the conversation. So we want to thank all of you for participating, taking part. If your question's not asked today — so all of you have Q and A cards that are recorded by the mayor's office to ensure you get a call back within 10 days in order to address the issue directly with the agency that you have your question with.

And then the third portion's going to be direct questions from each table to the dais, addressed to the mayor and the members of the administration. And the run of the show is the mayor will speak, Borough President Levine will speak, and District Attorney Alvin Bragg will speak, and then we'll go straight to the Q and A. So at this time, we'll hand it over to Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Eric Adams: Thank you. Thank you. Thank you so much, Fred Kreizman, commissioner of our CAU and the entire team that's here. I think this is number... What is this? Number what, Fred?

Commissioner Kreizman: Number seven.

Mayor Adams: Number seven. And I am hoping in the next three years and two months, that I can do 700 because the more we speak one on one, we get past the narrative of having people speak for us and communicate. Just as I was a cop, I like being on the ground, speaking with people, hearing directly from you, and you can learn exactly what this team is doing. And so we're hoping we could have a good conversation, we could talk to each other. I've learned that communication seems to be something of the past, that we just spend so much time talking at each other, and we just want to engage in real conversation to solve real problems. We all have one thing in common. We want to create an environment where we can raise healthy children and families. That's the mission of this administration. That has been my mission for over 30 years from being a police officer, a state senator, borough president, and now the mayor, of that I believe is the greatest city in this entire country, if not the entire globe. And so I look forward to speaking with you as we going through tonight. We can to turn back over to Fred so you can turn it over to our amazing borough president.

Commissioner Kreizman: Thank you.

Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine: Thank you. Thank you, Fred, and thank you first, Mr. Mayor, for convening us tonight on this critical topic that we must speak openly about. Thank you for bringing this incredible array of government leaders here. I'm Mark Levine, proud to be your borough president. And thrilled that we're joined tonight by our Deputy Manhattan Borough President Keisha Sutton-James, who maybe she can raise her hand.

Manhattan South. The southern half of Manhattan was hit really hard in this pandemic and somewhat harder than other parts of this city and country, but we are really starting to come back. You see the signs. You see it everywhere. The truth is that for that comeback to reach full speed, we need people in this part of the city to feel safer. And tonight is about having an open conversation about that. We're not shying away from that topic.

Every single person in this room has a role in achieving that goal for this part of our city. First, I want to profoundly thank the women and men in uniform tonight of NYPD for your service to Manhattan South and to our city. But we have so many important leaders in the room. We have leaders of social service agencies, leaders in education, leaders in small business, leaders in public health. You're out here tonight. We are only going to solve this challenge if we mobilize every single one of the sectors that's present tonight, because so much of the public safety challenge that we have is also a public health challenge. It is at the intersection of the homelessness crisis and the challenges of mental health in this city. And we need everyone mobilized, every agency here mobilized to deal with this complicated multifaceted challenge. We have to do more to help people who are suffering on the street get the care they need, the kind of housing they need.

For some people, it's going to be supportive housing. For some people, it's going to be a safe haven shelter like Paul's Place that we just opened on 14th Street. Incredibly successful. For some people, the challenges are more severe. They're going to need intensive psychiatric assistance, They're going to need maybe inpatient psychiatric care, and we've lost hundreds of inpatient psychiatric beds in Manhattan and citywide. We have to reverse that trend. We have to create more options to meet the needs of people so they get the care that they need. Tonight is about having this honest conversation. Thank you to everyone who is committed to tackling the challenges of public safety thoughtfully, fairly, effectively. We can do this and I'm very excited for the conversation ahead. Thank you so much.

Commissioner Kreizman: District Attorney Alvin Bragg.

Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg: Good evening. I'm Alvin Bragg, Manhattan district attorney. I want to echo what our borough president said about our gratitude for our mayor. We spent — I think, Mr. Mayor, I don't know — eight hours together this weekend at a convening at Gracie Mansion called together by our mayor to have. And as we talked and talked, we kept on returning to this theme of robust discussion. We were, our public defenders, our police officers, multiple district attorneys, our social service agencies, deputy mayors, all sitting around talking about public safety because as our borough president said, we will not fully come back unless we are safe.

We're working every day in the Manhattan District Attorney's Office on homicides, gun safety, assaults, sexual assaults, doing that side by side with the brave officers of the NYPD. And I'm honored, honored, honored to be doing that on your behalf. But a big part of that is hearing directly from you and not just having the robust dialogue amongst the government leaders, but having it with you. So very, very excited to hear directly from you. And I just want to sound the

note that our borough president just said, because it was a major theme of this weekend's convening, which is our mental health services and our mental health infrastructure.

A lot of the cases we see in the district attorneys' offices around the city, but specifically here in Manhattan, arise from mental health issues. So yes, we are going to continue to do the gun prosecutions. We've done more this year than has been done in recent history. We're going to continue to work on the homicides, and homicides and shootings are down citywide and down even more in Manhattan. But we also have to work and connect people with services. That is also a big, big part of our public safety challenge. So I look forward to hearing from you tonight and listening. Have my notepad out and I'm ready to listen. Thank you so much.

Commissioner Kreizman: Thank you. So, let's get started. For the first table, for the first question, we'll start with Andrew.

Andrew: Good evening sir. How can we adequately fund public safety, community-based resources, and mental health resources to help stop the cycle of individuals between arrest and hospitals, as well as how can we keep the system accountable to prevent this cycle?

Mayor Adams: Okay, thank you for that question. As the borough president stated, what we have done is take a holistic approach to the issue, particularly around mental health. And I want the police commissioner to touch on some of that because what I found when I got elected is that there was almost a policy of ignoring the street mental health crisis we were facing. When I rode the subway systems during the first month of office, I went out in the street and I went into some of the camps, some of the encampments, some of the tents, and I engaged in a conversation with people who were living on our street that we really ignored. We pretended as though we didn't see them. We normalize people dealing with mental health issues living on our subway stations and living in our streets. And that first month in January, I must have visited a number of tents and encampments, and it was clear some people were dealing with bipolar, some people were on medication inside those camps that we were walking past with stale food, human waste, drug paraphernalia, people talking to themselves. And we just stated that we can't do this. We're not going to be an administration who we're going to act like this is something that is not happening in our city.

And so we put in place a very aggressive plan, number one, to get into our subway system and combine with mental health professionals the Bowery Mission and others. Dr. Vasan sat down with Deputy Mayor Anne Williams-Isom to come up with a plan. We sat down with the New

York City Police Department to make sure we put in place a real plan in our subway system. And the first phase of that was to get people in care. First week, we spoke to people in the subway system and they were unwilling to leave the system. We knew we had to build trust. We created pamphlets to show people that we were taking them to safe havens. And we went from that 22 people taking the care to over 2,000 people who were able to get off the subway system and go into care to get the wraparound services, mental health, not using our emergency rooms as primary care, giving them counselors, and we have more to go. But if you go on the subway now, you don't see the encampments. We still have those who are sleeping on the benches. I was on this morning. I ride the trains often and still, we saw those who are still there that we still have to engage, and the winter time is going to bring us more challenges, but we are going to be consistent on this.

But we need help on a state level as well. During COVID, we closed mental health beds to fill those who were in need. And we partnered with the governor this weekend, where she's opening 50 more mental health beds. But we must go beyond what we have done traditionally. And this is what we have done. Someone is dealing with a mental health issue. We wait until they commit a crime. Either they're arrested — 48 percent of the inmates at Rikers Island have mental health issues. That's unacceptable. Or we take them to the hospital, Bellevue, another hospital, give them medication for one day and put them back in the street until they do something else that is going to cause harm to someone.

We don't believe in that system. We need follow-up care. People with mental health crises in the community, they need healthcare, they need support. Dr. Vasan came from the Fountain House, the clubhouse model. That's why we were able to bring him on our team. I'm happy that he's on there and we're going to roll out the next phase of how we're going to deal with some of the street mental health illnesses that we're seeing. The commissioner's putting a team together. The numbers are alarming. Commissioner, if you could talk to some of the numbers we have around those who are committing crimes and have a mental health illness background.

Police Commissioner Keechant Sewell, Police Department: Good evening, everyone. As the mayor said, we realize that mental health is a significant issue in the city. There are a number of people walking around the city right now and in the subway system who are clearly suffering from mental illness. I think we can say when we talk about bad actors, there are bad actors. But usually, with someone who's committing some of the acts of violence that we're seeing on the subway are clearly suffering from some other issue. So we did an overlay to be able to speak intelligently when we put our plans together for what we need to do in the subway system and above ground. And when you look at the number, there's no dispute that there are some issues here. We had nine homicides in the subway this year. 40 percent of those, four of the nine, the person has a prior history as an emotionally disturbed person. Citywide, 20 percent of our arrests, everything is double digit. Slashings, 22 and a half percent. Transit crime, double digits across

the board that we have seen that we are taking repeatedly people who have prior history of mental illness as an emotionally disturbed person.

So what do we do? As the mayor said, we do these wraparound services. So we put our teams together with the clinicians, with DOHMH, working with them to be able to come up with a way that we can address this issue. Because I think we all know that we can't police our way out of that. We can't keep arresting these people when they actually need services, so that they can get the help that they need. But the mayor and I have said on a number of different occasions, while we are of the mindset that people do need to get help and it's our responsibility to get them help, we can't allow them to continue to ride the subways and victimize people on the trains and on the streets before they get that help. So in order to be able to do that, we have to put these teams together to be able to address number one, the public safety threat that they present, and then get them transported to a location where they can get the comprehensive evaluation that they need. Just to send them there and to have them be out before the officer gets off his or her shift is not solving the problem. They have to be in these facilities where they can be evaluated and get the help that they need long-term.

Mayor Adams: The chief programing officer of Department of Health and Mental Hygiene — Dr. Vasan is not here, he's celebrating Diwali. But with the chief program officer here on our long term plan, we have abandoned the betrayal of allowing people to stay on our transit system and on our streets that endanger to themselves and they endanger to others. That is not how this administration is going to function. So, we want our Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

Christina Chang, Chief Program Officer, Department of Health and Mental

Hygiene: Hello, everybody. My name's Christina Chang and I'm the chief program officer at the Health Department. Dr. Vasan is unfortunately not able to come, and I think that we are working on a plan for addressing severe mental illness and the devastation I think it's wrought on individuals, families, and communities. And I think we're thinking about it in sort of three ways. We want to make sure that people are able to get the healthcare that they need, that they have the community that they need, and a connection, because that is the linchpin I think for them to be able to access the care that they need. And they need a home first and foremost, right? Something stable, something where they are feeling safe and secure. And these are all the different aspects that we need in order to be able to contribute to mental health and wellbeing, and making sure that they're engaged in care, that they're getting the care that they need and continue to be safe and healthy.

Mayor Adams: And I know we spending a lot of time on this one question, because this question is really eroding the feeling that we are having of uncertainty. When you see someone

push a child on the subway tracks for no reason at all — I thought of Jordan. I thought of my son. Lieutenant Russo was just standing outside and she was stabbed. This is a real issue, and it's impacting on the actual crime that we're seeing. But it's also the feeling of in our city that we don't feel safe. And there's a small number of people who are committing real crimes that we're looking at it, the repeated offenders, arrested 30, 40 times. But then there's this small pocket of people who are dealing with severe mental illness that have not been really given the treatment they deserve.

And then what complicates it a lot is that there's a certain threshold you have to pass before you can compel people to seek treatment. Kendra's Law is not strong enough. We're going back to Albany in January and we need to reanalyze Kendra's Law to give people the service that they need. If someone is on the subway station, 20 degree weather, no shoes on, yelling at themselves, no shirt on, I mean, something is wrong. And we can't continue to act like we're violating their rights if we give them the help that they need, and that is what we have been doing. I don't subscribe to that theory. We're better than that as a city and that is what we're going to be pushing for in January. But in the meantime, we're going to take a real approach to giving people the help they need and at the same time, preventing some of these cases that we're witnessing.

Commissioner Kreizman: Excellent. Next question, table two, Patrick.

Patrick: Good evening, Mr. Mayor. Our table talked about a general feeling of disorder and lack of public safety as quality of life issues have gone downhill, including open drug use and sales, including weed trucks that are all over the neighborhoods. There's also an issues of robberies from grand larceny to petty larceny that's happened throughout the communities and how the administration is going to address quality of life issues to help communities be safe and feel safe.

Mayor Adams: I can sit at that table. You know, I am with you. I came into office in January with the mission, a mission of making our city safe. There was a clear lack of quality of life, just everyday quality of life. So, what did we do? First thing we looked at was what was really suffocating our city: gun violence. Against all that's — the numerical minority, I'm not going to say all them. The numerical minority that said we should not go after guns, we put in place our anti-gun unit. The police commissioner put well-trained officers in place. We witnessed a double digit decrease in homicide, a double digit decrease in shootings. We took over 5,000 guns off the streets of the City of New York, arrested thousands of people. We have a 27 year high for felony arrests in this city. These numbers are unbelievable what the commissioner and her team were able to accomplish.

And now we're looking at those grand larcenies, those robberies, the GLAs, grand larceny autos, those areas that have ticked up throughout the time. We're now refocusing down on those areas, and some of the plans the commissioner can talk about, but we're going after quality of life issues. We were driving by people that had paper plates, illegal plates, stolen plates, and they were using those plates to commit crimes. Now, Chief Corey, Chief Maddrey, we're going in proactively going after those individuals who were driving these illegal cars. We're finding guns in the cars, we're finding that they're committing robberies in our cities. We're going after those three-wheel motorcycles. We have removed thousands of those three-wheelers that you're hearing all night, driving up and down the block with no regard for the people of this city. We have removed thousands off the street. They're illegal to be on the streets of New York. The dirt bikes are illegal to be on the streets of New York. We have clear plans of removing them.

Then we went into the subway system. We was basically stating, "Do what you want in our subway system." We were not prosecuting people who were jumping the turnstile. In 1984 when I was a cop, we learned that people were jumping this turnstile to commit crimes. We're catching people with guns that are jumping the turnstile. In Coney Island the other day, and within the same day, we caught someone with a .45 walking through the gate and a .22 walking through the gate. That proactive policing is crucial. So the numbers that you see of comparing 2022 to 2021, no one was using the subway in 2021. The real number that shows where crime is in the city and the subway system is 2019. That's when we had the full capacity.

When you examine 2019 to 2022, we have a decrease of index crimes in the subway system. 2018. We have less than 2018, less than 2017. In the last 10 years, we have a 17 percent decrease in crimes in our subway system. But what is happening, we point out the six crimes we have a day and we highlight them every day, but we got 3.5 million riders on our system every day. 3.5 million riders with six felonies a day.

Now, we got to get rid of those six felonies a day. I'm not saying that... But let's be clear, 750,000 station inspections the Police Department has done. We no longer leaving it up to the transit. Now the patrol officers are parking their cars going, into the subway system, doing an inspection. 75,000 summonses. 19,000 people have been removed from the system because they were breaking transit rules. Over 5,000 arrests for serious crimes. You're seeing a police department that historically was told to sit back and don't do anything. You're seeing a Police Department that's saying, "At last, we have a mayor that wants us to do our job and us to keep our city safe," and it's reflected in their activities. These cops want to do their job, and for far too long, we've ridiculed them, we put them on social media, we attacked them, we sent them out there to do their job and then we attacked them as they did their job.

Not while I'm the mayor of the City of New York. We're going to allow them to do their job. And they're showing up every day. They're showing up every day doing their job above ground and below ground. And so my message to you is don't believe all that hype. New York is not coming back. New York is back. New York is back. And the prerequisite to that is public safety. And this is going to be a safe city. And I know there's some things you're doing, Commissioner, you and the chief around GLAs and robberies as they were asking. Maybe you want to go into some of that.

Commissioner Sewell: Sure. I'll turn it over to Chief Corey in a moment. But to the mayor's point, grand larcenies actually make up for 40 percent of our overall major crime numbers, so that spikes that number. But obviously people are concerned about the crimes you described, which is robberies and overall quality of life. So while we will attack the robberies and we will attack the quality of life, which we get a lot of flack for, I don't know if people are aware of that. When we do proactive enforcement of quality of life offenses, people take offense to that. They say we should leave people alone. But as the mayor stated, we actually get loaded firearms off of people by telling them to sit up on the subway train or that they have to put their bags in a place where they're not obstructing someone else's seat.

But we do realize that we have to go after grand larcenies. We have to go after the people who are preying on our vulnerable populations. A lot of people are victims of scams. A lot of these are credit card frauds. A lot of them are overseas where we may not be able to make an arrest because it initiates overseas. But we can educate the public so that they don't become victims. But I'll turn it over to Chief Corey for just a moment.

Kenneth Corey, Chief of Department, Police Department: Thank you, commissioner. Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Before I get too deep into it, I just want to give a kudos to Chief Jimmy McCarthy, the borough commander and his whole team here. Well, you're already clapping and I haven't even told you why I'm giving him a kudos. So a great team of precinct commanders and they've got the cops here in Manhattan South fully engaged. So arrests for major crimes in Manhattan South are up 29 percent this year over what they were last year when we talk about quality of life enforcement. They've written more than 10,000 quality of life summons, and those are for the really bad violations that we want. That's for urinating. That's for public consumption of alcohol and violations like that. As a matter of fact, Manhattan South, nobody does more than Manhattan South than that area right now. They probably account for about a quarter of all the quality of life enforcement in the entire City of New York. So that's a true testament to the leadership here and to the police officers and detectives here.

So where is that getting us? Well, when I look at crime in Manhattan South right now, and I look at the last four weeks of crime, I see robberies actually decreasing over the same period last year. I see burglaries decreasing from the same period last year. I see auto theft decreasing from the same period last year. We still have a long way to go. I'm not sitting here waving a victory flag. What I'm telling you is, and this is true across the city, that the large spike in crime that we've seen, that we've gotten a handle on, and that we have been steadily pushing down year after year and even month after month. And even if you look back to the media accounts and you'll see in February they were saying, "Oh, crime is up 47 percent. Then crime was up 35 percent. Then crime's up 29 percent." And we continue to push it down, push it down, push it down. We didn't get here overnight. We're not getting back overnight, but we are making measurable sustained progress. That's a good thing. We know how to fight crime. We haven't forgotten.

So a couple weeks ago, the commissioner at a press conference announced our plan for the last quarter of the year. So without rehashing the whole thing in the essence of time, I'll just give you the high points. We graduated a class from our police academy last week. Those officers are all on the street now as we speak. All of those officers are assigned to foot patrol on commercial strips. All right. So in Manhattan South, that could be just about anywhere. That could be 14th Street. That could be Broadway. That could be Christopher Street and so on. They are there from roughly eight in the morning to 11 at night, seven days a week. They are out there walking, proactively engaging the conditions that they see, be they crime or quality of life. That's a return to the old school policing that got us to this safe city that we all enjoyed.

So they will be out there throughout the holiday season and in those areas where maybe all the stores close up at seven or eight or most of the stores close up at seven or eight, then they're going to be shifted over to those strips where there's bars and restaurants and the nightlife so that people see them and people feel safe with these officers out there doing what they do. We've added or in the process of adding, I'm sorry, more investigators to our robbery squads, our precinct detective squads, and our warrant squads. And that's to assist when we don't catch them immediately, identifying them quickly, and then giving them to the warrant squads so they can go out and get them into custody much more quickly than they have been in the past.

We know, just as we've said all year when regards to shootings, that there's fewer than 800 people in this entire city. A city of 8.8 million, there's fewer than 800 people, 0.002 percent of the city's population that are responsible for more than a third of the shootings. And when we focused in on those 800 people, we pushed shootings down. We pushed homicides down. We can say the same thing for just about every crime category. It's a small number of people. We know who they are, and now we're letting them know that we know who they are.

Our neighborhood coordination officers, our youth officers in some cases, they're showing up at their houses. They're knocking on their doors, checking in, "Hey, everything okay?" Just letting them know, we know who you are and we're out here watching. And we're starting to already see the results of that, as I said. Right here in Manhattan South, the last four weeks, declines in robbery, declines in burglary, declines in auto theft. And we're not taking our foot off the gas. We're just going to keep pushing right on through and we're going to turn this right back around.

Mayor Adams: And I think it's important. As you know, Sheena really reminds me all the time because I'm still a police officer. So I got to have that balance of, we are not only going after those who are committing crimes. We're stopping the feeders of crime. That's why we did dyslexia screenings in every school. 30 to 40 percent of our inmates at Rikers Island are dyslexic. 80 percent don't have a high school diploma or an equivalency. 55 percent have a learning disability. We've been feeding this crime. And so our attitude is how do we go upstream? We just announced a program called BlocPower, where we are training those who are justice involved, who have a criminal justice record. We're training them on green jobs. We can really spend billions of dollars on green economy. We are training these young people who have criminal records on how to get a job in the green economy.

We're leaning into foster care children. 6,700 foster care children age out every year at 21, and we know what's happening to them. They're not graduating from high school. They're more likely to be homeless, more likely to deal with mental health illness, more likely to be unemployed. So what did we do? We did number one, we did FairFutures that we giving them life coaches until they're 26. And then we are investing in them to go to college, paying \$15,000 a year for them to go to college, giving them \$60 for stipend to pay for their food and their books so they can go on with a productive life. Our probation, is probation here? Talk about the program we're doing with our justice involved young people on probation. All of our agencies are engaged.

Sharun Goodwin, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Probation: Yes. Hi everyone. I'm Sharun Goodwin, deputy commissioner at Probation. So what we're doing at Probation is that we're making sure that all of our youth are connected with a mental coordinator or a credible messenger. And this is huge for us. Not only are we doing that, but we are also expanding our resources within our NeON, which is our neighborhood opportunity networks, where we're working with community, our community serve as our stakeholders, and they help inform how we provide the service resources and opportunities. And so we are excited. We're continuing to provide for the communities as well as our clients, and we're going to keep doing the work. Thank you.

Commissioner Kreizman: Thank you. Next question. David?

David: Good evening, Mr. Mayor. With the legislative changes at the state level over the last few years, what is the city doing to address the effects and root causes of recidivism? How well is the district attorney and other legislators helping you and the police commissioner to address the overall decline in public safety and increase in recidivism?

Mayor Adams: Well, DA Bragg stated this weekend, I was really moved by the commitment and dedication that came from those of us who were involved in the criminal justice system. Commissioner was there, all of the district attorneys were there, defense attorneys, Legal Aid, judges. We were all in the room saying, "How do we start talking to each other and not at each other?" I'm extremely passionate about this issue. I cannot tell you how many nights the commissioner and I have showed up at hospitals and just witnessed these parents devastated by the violence there. And it's hard. It's hard on you when you have to go night after night. How do you explain to a mother that her 11-year-old child was shot? I mean, we were at that hospital. I know it tore us both apart to be there with Mora and Rivera watching their parents walk into Harlem Hospital. And we had to sit there in the room and just tell them that their babies were assassinated. And so there's a lot of passion. This is not so professional. It's personal.

And to have everyone in the room to say, "Let's lean in the areas we agree. The criminal justice system is just broken." DA's not having enough attorneys. The bottleneck of this system. We change laws and did not change the infrastructure around those laws. And we have to now catch up to what we're asking of DAs, what we're asking of prosecutors, what we're asking of judges. And we don't agree in every area. There's some areas that we disagree, and I'm going to continue to advocate on those areas I agree. But as I stated, 8 out of the 10 areas, we are on the same page. And we realized this weekend, let's move towards those things we agree that we could ensure justice is served. And right now, justice is not being served fairly.

I'm hoping when we return to Albany, we will take a look at the small number of juveniles that are committing repeated violent crimes. I think that people like exploiting that. Those of us who are old enough to remember drug dealers, we give juveniles drugs back during the 80s and 70s because they knew that juveniles would not be charged at a higher rate. That's what they're doing with guns. They realize that juveniles won't be charged the same as an adult if they carry a gun, so now the juveniles are carrying their guns.

There's a substantial increase of shooters involving juveniles as victims and as shooters. We got to close that loophole and we need to focus on those who are exploiting those young people. We need to look at the ghost guns. So I think that there's some more things we can do and I'm looking to use those who we met over the weekend and convene to see how we can close loopholes, how we can give the resources that are needed to make sure that people are receiving justice in a fair way. And I think that's what the DA agrees on as well as what I saw this weekend. Thank you.

Commissioner Kreizman: Excellent. The next question, Kevin.

Kevin: Good evening, Mr. Mayor. We had a very substantive discussion here around the role of police officers in terms of public safety and community engagement. And we also actually had Deputy Commissioner Goodwin at our table. So, thank you very much deputy commissioner for your insight and for our conversations. But how do we find a balance where we are not over-policing our communities, but NYPD has the support and tools to address crime in our city so that New Yorkers feel safer?

Mayor Adams: And the commissioner can talk about it. One thing we cannot tolerate, we cannot tolerate a breakdown of the quality of life we deserve. And I talked about it. We zeroed in on paper plates, zeroed in on illegal motorcycles, zeroed in on people who are walking into stores, stealing what they want, and walking out. And some people say, "Eric, you're trying to criminalize the poor." No, I'm trying to criminalize criminal behavior. When Duane Reade calls us and states, "I can't keep this drugstore open anymore because people are stealing so much." Every person who's employed in that store is going to lose their job. And then we learned because of how we partner with the attorney general, we learned that it was organized crimes. Having people go into stores, stealing what they want.

And so we're zeroing in on those crimes. And which we believe there are ways to do it, that if someone has a drug problem, instead of arresting them to send them to Rikers, give them an option of, "If you are willing to go through drug treatment and gets the support you need..." Because we don't want a revolving door system. "To get the support you need that we can get you off the streets, then we are willing to find that pathway." And those are the partnerships we want to do with the district attorney and judges to allow people to get the help they need. But we are not going to accept people totally disregarding the basic laws of this city.

This is a city of law and order and not unlawfulness and disorder. And that is what the police commissioner and her team, what they have been zeroing in on and learning how to create those great partnerships. I know there was one of the things we doing with young girls, but you may want to talk about some of the other initiatives that we are doing to build the bridge between communities and policing.

Commissioner Sewell: So one of the things that never ceases to amaze me is the number of partnerships that the NYPD has and the number of programs that we have as outreach to our communities because we recognize number one, the community. You talk about the tools that we have. The community is our biggest partner. It's also one of our largest tools as well. Everything we do is in partnership. We have programs in the Police Department. We have one of the most successful ones we had was this past summer. We had the Summer Youth Employment Program. The NYPD, we actually took in over 800 people into that program, and that's just in the Police Department alone.

But we realize that these programs that we have, the outreach that we have with our community affairs officers, the prom dress giveaways that we have, the holiday giveaways that we have, the mentoring programs that we have, they're all in furtherance of having positive interactions with the community so they're not negative. So the first interaction you have with the police department is something you remember as something maybe you can move forward with in life as a positive experience. We have explorer programs, cadet programs. We recognize that we need to show the community that we are the community. So these tools that we have are basically the talent pool we have that recognizes that we need to reach out and work in conjunction with the people that we serve.

So as we move forward, obviously our primary objective is public safety, but I think we do that through outreach. We do that through communication, we do that through the programs and partnerships that we have. If you look across this table, we actually speak to each other on a regular basis, recognizing that the police department aren't the only ones who are responsible for the overall feeling of public safety. We keep saying it over and over again. Public safety is a shared responsibility. It's the corner store owner who recognizes that a child is hungry and maybe there needs to be some intervention in that home to get that child help before he steals something. It's someone who recognizes there's a problem that may not be remedied by the police department first. Maybe it needs social services first. So when it comes to public safety, if we all work together and we all recognize the tools that we have and use them effectively, I think we're moving toward a safer city.

Mayor Adams: And if you have, and this is an offer to all of you. If you have ideas on what we can do better, let us know. If you know of what we are doing that can build a better bridge or better, as they say, a better mousetrap, share it with us. Let us know. We want to be proactive. We want to look at the dynamics. We now promote cops based on taking an exam or based on their crime activity. We think we need to be promoting based on their interaction also in the community. If community residency Officer Johnson is someone that is always there, polite, kind, respectful, he's solving problems, they should be lifted up also. It can't be just who can pass an exam and who has made more arrests. Well how about those who prevented the crime from taking place in the first place? And that is some of the things we want to focus on.

Commissioner Kreizman: Thank you. Next question, Tiffany.

Tiffany: Good evening, Mayor. My table would like to know, what are some of your long term and short term solutions to build capacity within the community to address public safety and community resilience?

Mayor Adams: We say public safety and justice is the prerequisite to prosperity, and it's a upstream approach. This administration is clearly... We are upstream thinkers and we want to prevent crime. We don't want to wait until people fall in the river and we have to pull them out. And so number one, really leaning into our youth. Chancellor Banks is just doing an amazing job of developing the full personhood of our children. Our Summer Youth Employment Program that Deputy Mayor Wright put together, focusing on our young people, she did not only have them go for a job. She taught them financial literacy. Every child, it was 110,000 or 100,000? 100,000 young people that went through our SYEP, Summer Youth Employment. They all went through financial literacy training. They all went through meditation training, conflict resolution.

We allow these children to develop their full personhood and that's what we're going to do in the Department of Education under Chancellor Banks. Because giving these children the opportunity that they deserve, that's a long term plan. And how do we live in this city and celebrate the diversity of this city? And then focusing on, how do we build partnerships? Intergenerational and inter community and cultural partnerships with each other so we can live in this city holistically around in communities and building communities together. Real employment opportunities. Make sure we zero in on those areas that we need to focus on where opportunities are lacking. And so there's a real long term plan here that we have a blueprint to bring our city forward together. And we have to deal with the inequality. The inequality is real in this city. So many communities are going without historically. And if we going to lift this city up, we have to lift everyone up together at the same time. Deputy mayor, I don't know if you want to touch on some of the things that you're doing as deputy mayor of strategic partnerships.

Deputy Mayor Sheena Wright, Strategic Initiatives: Sure. One thing I'll also mention is in building community resiliency, we have to make sure that our nonprofit organizations are strong. A little hallelujah there. So we've created a Mayor's Office of Nonprofits that's focused on one, making sure that nonprofits get paid on time, procurement, but also capacity building, technical assistance and support, and just making it easier to do business with government. Certainly we have our DYCD commissioner that's really building a lot of community assets and opportunities for young people. Our parks commissioner is here. Those are also really important spaces for community that need to be strengthened and we are committed to that so I don't know if...

Mayor Adams: No, no. Go into the nonprofits, what you did with the nonprofits.

Deputy Mayor Wright: Yeah. I mean, when we came into the administration, there was a backlog of over \$5 billion that was, with a B, that was owed to thousands of nonprofits. And many of you are probably in the room and know these trusted organizations that are just going to do the work, whether they get paid on time or not. They are going to be in service to their communities and quite frankly, people were taking advantage of them and just were not moving it through. We set a 12 week deadline. We said we want to clear that backlog, and in 12 weeks we cleared \$4.25 billion of money that was owed to nonprofits. And that's the spirit that we are approaching that work. We're not stopping until we are complete. And that also we fixed the system so it never happens again.

Commissioner Kreizman: Thank you. So next question, we have Penny.

Penny: Good evening, mayor. The question from this table is, will the administration be willing to reinstate the NYPD Homeless Outreach Program and review how the supervised release program is being implemented.

Mayor Adams: First of all, I'm a firm believer in the NYPD's homeless outreach. I remember in the transit police in 1984, 5, 6, watching the services they did. And I think that they can compliment what the mental health professionals are able to do. It's what we have done in the subway system that I believe led to the success, the end of the line services engaging. I think it's the partnership of... between NYPD and our mental health professionals to resolve this issue of homelessness, a generational problem. 40 years, we've never gotten this right. And we inherited a system where we were ignoring it, and NYPD's playing a role. But as the commissioner stated

and reminds us all the time, 911 is not the answer to fix everything. It needs to be a combination. We have unfairly treated police officers. We called them for everything.

No matter what it was, if it was a cat up the tree, if I want to divorce my spouse, no matter what it was, to call NYPD. That it was just unfair. And so many other agencies sat on the sideline and said, "Let the NYPD handle the problem." Then, we complained when they wouldn't handle the problem. We're not doing that anymore. Every agency must be a partner with the New York City Police Department so that we can effectively resolve these issues. But homeless outreach is re-instituted in the subway system, and they're partnering with the mental health professionals.

Commissioner Kreizman: Excellent. And the mayor's leadership, the numbers actually did increase under his direction from when he came into our office. The number was like 20, and it increased 100 members of the department. Next question, Anastasia?

Anastasia: Good evening, Mr. Mayor. I'll keep it short. How can we improve recruitment efforts for NYPD?

Mayor Adams: I met with the commissioner, I think it was last weekend, we met. And there was a belief that no one wanted to be a police officer. And I sat down with the commissioner and her team, I think it was last Sunday, we met. And that's not the issue. People want to become police officers. Everyone is put out that whole message that no one wants to be a cop anymore. Commissioner broke it down for me when I asked her. I said, "Do we have a deficit of people wanting to be cops?" We were having a problem giving the exams. The agency that was in charge of giving the exams, we had such a backlog of giving the exams in other locations. So, the commissioner and her team said, "If we can open the police academy and give the exams in a different way, we can have more people come into the department."

And that is what she was able to reach out to DCAS. They were able to bring together a partnership. I believe now they donate to the police academy. I know she resolved the issue. So, we are going to get all those young men and women that are dying to put on that blue uniform and become public safety officers. We're not going to hold them back because of bureaucracy of not being able to give the exam. We're doing just the opposite. And so, you'll see these stories that, okay, police officers are fleeing by the numbers because they're angry. That's just not true. Those are big classes. They've reached their 20 years. People, after you get 20 years, you have the option to retire. People are trying to give narratives that are just not true.

We are always going to maintain the right number of police officers to keep this city safe. And people want to be police officers. Don't let anyone kid you. It is an amazing job. It was the best job I ever — well, second best. Being mayor is number one. But so, we are going to continue to build those ranks. And if you know anyone that wants to be a police officer, you should share. Police officers are pilots, they are in the labs, they are teachers, they are detectives. It's an amazing career. And you should encourage those young people that you know to join the NYPD.

Commissioner Kreizman: Thank you. Next question. Alina?

Alina: Hi. Good evening, Mr. Mayor. You answered almost the question. They have the question that goes back to what you said about other agencies. How can we get an agency rep and staff from DHS, DOT, Health and Hospitals, and other agencies assigned to each patrol borough to respond to issues in real time and or enhance 311 to have a better way of holding each agency accountable to respond to issues promptly, least alleviating everything with the NYPD?

Mayor Adams: Yes. And that is how we operate. We operate in this team approach. There were too many walls and too many silos to government, and everyone was passing the buck. The whole team is now operating on one unit. We meet every morning, we communicate every morning at 8 a.m. to go over some of the top line issues. But we are focusing on the team. And let me tell you one of the best examples of the team effort that many people missed. The asylum seekers and the migrants, we had a clear plan. Out of nowhere, this was dropped in our laps. 21,500 migrant seekers, asylum seekers came through the city. DSS had to come together with the NYPD, with to DOE. Chancellor Banks had to seamlessly put children into schools and make sure that we were able to make sure these babies education was not disrupted.

We had to make sure that we had people that were placed in housing. Not one child slept on the street in this city because we did not do our job. And then, we had to have a real plan with the federal government to tell the federal government, "Listen, you need a decompression strategy. You can't just put this on the City of New York, Washington D.C., and Chicago." Our healthcare system kicked into gear. We're required to make sure that people have a bed to sleep in. But we didn't stop there. We gave healthcare, eyeglasses, education, food, clothing. We showed the entire country what New York City was about. And we coordinated with all of our agencies to make sure that we were able to address this issue until Washington D.C. did the right thing and made it the national response instead of just a local response. That is how we deal with every issue in the city.

The team must get together and resolve these problems as a team. This is a team administration that, by the way, first administration in the history of this city where we have five women deputy mayors, first woman police commissioner, we have a woman leading the Department of Sanitation. We are going to be the cleanest city in America with her initiative that she's putting in place. My chief advisor, Ingrid Lewis Martin, first woman to hold that position. You look at this administration, this administration is being led by women who are smart, bold, bright, and think about how to solve these modern day problems.

Commissioner Kreizman: Next question. Ito?

Ito: Good evening, Mr. Mayor. Some of this, you've already touched on, but our table was interested in this question. What are your top three priorities, you would say, over the next six months to address both the perception and reality of rising crime and overarching concerns around mental health? Thanks.

Mayor Adams: Thank you for that. Number one, nothing brings down the feeling of being unsafe in that uniform. Commissioner announced over the weekend with the governor about our transit public safety plan, the second phase of that. The first phase, we rolled out January 6th immediately. After riding the subway system, I just saw gaps in patrol, gaps in some of the things we were doing. The commissioner came together with the chief of the transit bureau, and she rolled out our first phase of the plan. As I stated, our crime in this subway system is, index crimes, are lower than 2019, 18, 17, and 17 percent lower than the last 10 years. So, she immediately did that. We made an adjustment this weekend, but we need our officers riding the trains. We need our officers patrolling, walking up and down the platforms, talking to people. The commissioner instituted when a train pulls in the station and the police officers on the platform, an announcement goes on.

Passengers, there's a police officer on the platform. If there's a problem, reach out to him. If you pull the train into a station and there's a transit district, they announce that. Right now, people didn't even know where a transit district was located if there's a problem, how they get off. And so, we think omnipresence is going to deal with the feeling. You want to see your cops. You want to see them, and you want them to talk to you. You want them to let them know that, "Hey, is there something going on? How are you? Good morning." That's revolutionary. Just hello to each other.

And we are going to really have the omnipresence to deal with the feeling that people felt that things were out of control. They're going to be proactive. You saw it. All of us saw it. People outstretched on the platform. Our offices were afraid to engage them and walking away. People yelling in the train station, yelling on the street. We were just walking away from them. We're not doing that anymore. We are going to interact proactively with those images of disorder to show the order. Commissioner, you want to add to that?

Commissioner Sewell: The mayor says it's going to take all of us to get this done, and we can talk about COMPStat. Let me go back to a question that was asked a little while ago about holding other agencies responsible. COMPStat, without a doubt, was one of the best crime fighting tools invented to be able to hold ourselves accountable to making sure that we are addressing the crime disorder and conditions that we need to in the city. We are beginning a public-facing COMPStat, which is where we bring the voices of the people of the City of New York into the Jack Maple room to be able to talk about the issues that affect them. And we are bringing in our partners as well from the Department of Sanitation, DOT, and others to be able to hold ourselves accountable collectively as a city. So, we can talk about deployment, which undoubtedly, you want to see a police officer. You want to interact with a police officer.

But we have so many other things that we can do to address the feeling of being unsafe in the city. When a street light is out, people feel unsafe. When there's trash on the street, people feel unsafe. When there's graffiti on the wall, people think there's disorder. So, when we come together with all of our partners to be able to address these things with the approach of it's all for one, we're all in at the same time, I think we'll have a better result. So, to the point of holding other agencies accountable, we're going to hold ourselves accountable collectively with that public-facing COMPStat. And I think Manhattan South is next Tuesday, Tuesday. So, I think you're going to see a lot more collaboration when we do the public-facing COMPStat. And you're going to see a lot more ways we can address the disorder across the city.

Commissioner Kreizman: Excellent. Also, we want to take the time to acknowledge our host, the principal of the Clinton School, John Levin. So, thank you very much for hosting us today. The next question is, Paula?

Paula: Good evening, Mr. Mayor. Our question is, what are your thoughts on a central platform that captures all the cities and nonprofits' available social services to New Yorkers, so New Yorkers know where to go for help? A central platform that has all the available social services programs from the city or nonprofit. Is that something that the city's considering?

Mayor Adams: Yes, and we love that. I'm a tech geek. I started out in the police department. I was part of the precursor to the original COMPStat i-program in COBOL for training and assembly. And I bring that thought in everything I do. You should not have to find the resources that are available. It's unbelievable to me how much we leave on the table. Everything from Snap to WIC, to childcare. We leave too much on the table because government is too bureaucratic and too challenging to navigate. And we want to centralize that through something called My City Card that is going to proactively tell people where resources are available and actually where to go to provide those resources.

There's no reason that every time you go to a city agency, you are filling out the same forms, giving the same information no matter what agency you're going through. It just doesn't make any sense. Our vision is to put it in the cloud, do it one time, and you don't have to go and fill out forms over and over again. And to have a centralized way of knowing what resources are available. If you're looking for a tutor, if you're looking for a job, there should be one job database that if I were to ask the average person on the street, "Where do you go to get a job?" They have no idea. We should know a centralized place. If I'm looking for a job or if I want to post who I'm looking to hire, there should be one place that people can go to do a search. All of these resources that people need must be centralized and not split up in different locations because government is intimidating, and we need to be more user-friendly as the government. And that is what this administration is going to do.

Commissioner Kreizman: Next question, we have Tony.

Tony: Mr. Mayor, good evening. Quick question for you because you've actually just touched upon almost everything that we had a discussion at this table about. And I'm not surprised because I know you're always on the spot. But let me ask this question. How can we more effectively communicate that which you just illustrated to our youth in the effort of making sure that they actually can have access, and it resonates with them?

Mayor Adams: And DYCD is here, the commissioner, I may want to touch on something, but we just had a couple of hundred youth at Gracie Mansion two weeks ago, or could be last week. BMA is like a dog life. Your one day is many. And by allowing young people to engage. And our goal is to really bring our young people — I see we have a young lady that's here. We are going to do this just for young people. They need to be part of how we run this city. And our goal is those young people were extremely amazing that were at Gracie Mansion. They held a leaders forum and conversation.

A young man that... I was shopping in a department store. The young man introduced himself to me, and he was just energetic. He was really smart as a whip. I told him to come see me at City Hall. We later interviewed him, hired him, and he has been this leader of engaging young people. And so, the goal is with teaching civics. And Chancellor Banks, you may want to touch on some of that, of what you are doing around young people and getting them engaged because you're really thinking outside the box. So, why don't you touch on some of the things that you are doing?

Chancellor David Banks, Department of Education: Well, I think that first of all, the young man that you're talking about, we were at Gracie Mansion a few days ago. I thought it was just an amazing story and the level of confidence that he had. He said in that moment, he said he saw the mayor shopping, and he wanted to go over and see him. And he said he had something, a voice inside of him which said, "Now, is your time. Make your move right now. You may not have this opportunity again." And he had enough confidence to go over to the mayor and to tell him what was on his mind and impressed the mayor so much so that not only did the man in fact have him come to City Hall, was so impressed with him that he hired him, but this young man is like, he's a natural born leader.

And when I went to Gracie to be a part of that event, there were just dozens and dozens of young people, but they were all coordinated to be there by this one student. And it just goes to show that if you impact one life in such a powerful way, the impact, it can reverberate. And that's what I'm trying to do. That's what you're doing at DYCD. And just try to impact as many lives as we possibly can. And I don't just do that myself. It was pointed out just now. Principal Levin, who's here again, just wave again, Principal Levin. I just wanted to, again, thank you as the chancellor for hosting us here in your wonderful school. It's the first time I've been here. It's a beautiful school. I know you've been a principal for a long time. I just want to let you know that I see you and not just for hosting us, but he's one of the only principals in the city that leads an International Baccalaureate School, which is a very unique special type of educational experience.

And what we're seeing is coming off of this COVID pandemic, we've said we've got to reimagine how our kids engage and how they learn. And he's doing that. And he has strongly encouraged me to expand to scale this kind of a school experience. A lot of people don't know anything about it. I'm very familiar with it. And we're going to take a very good look at that. But also, just the other folks who are here, superintendents who are here in the room, please just stand real quick, please. I know we recognize NYPD. I always want to recognize our great educators as well.

These are the superintendents that represent various parts of Manhattan and this district. And I just want to thank you all for all that you do in the leadership that you provide. Mr. Mayor, it's through them that this work is happening, working with the principals like Principal Levin who are inspiring young people every day. And they've heard me say, we want to get them more civically engaged. Young people need to understand how government actually operates and works if we want them to be a part of the democracy moving forward. It's not enough just to talk to them about it. In fact, it just gave me an idea. We should be talking about how we get more young people across various schools to actually show up and in much greater numbers to actually see this and be a part of this. Because that's how they learn, and that's how they grow. And I'm happy to be a part of it.

Commissioner Keith Howard, Department of Youth and Community Development: I just want to echo that and just say that in this particular school alone, we have an afterschool program, and we have a magnificent, wonderful community-based organization called Manhattan Youth. And they literally are serving 171 young people in this building and after school sports program. And they have an excellent relationship with the principal, and I want to thank you for that as well. As we talk about partnerships, just to echo with the mayor, and the deputy mayor, and the police commissioner saying, looking at the youth and the youth investment with 100,000 young people in summer youth employment, 110,000 young people in Summer Rising, which is summer camp. The safe initiative that we are working with with NYPD for Saturday Night Lights, which we have programs and our cornerstone programs, which we have two in the vicinity where we're opening up the community centers and schools on Saturday so that young people can have enrichment programs.

But I was also aware at the mayor's event on the future leaders, and one of the things that came up, what the young person said was, "Hey, we are our programs, and we do have amazing programs in our after school programs. We do have amazing community-based organizations that are running programs." But if you have to ask that question where your program is, then that means we're not doing a good job in communicating where the program's at. So, that's what you're charging me with. This is what the mayor charged me with and the deputy mayor to make sure that we have a communication strategy that is reaching not only the parents but all the stakeholders as well. So, you will be seeing changes in the next couple of weeks on our communication outreach and just engaging in our stakeholders to just say, "Hey, we have amazing programs out there. Please utilize those programs."

Mayor Adams: And tell us how. Tell us what is your method and mode of communication? Because if we are missing, let us know how. Because we want to communicate directly with you with the great stuff we are doing. So, if there's another way, let us know how, and we will make that alteration.

Commissioner Kreizman: Definitely. And also, just want to reemphasize the conduit is Andrew Kunkes, our Manhattan South director in the Mayor's Community Affairs Unit, to please make sure to reach out to the Mayor's Community Affairs Unit, works across all deputy mayors. It works with all deputy mayors, all commissioners of all the city agencies. And please, take advantage of our office to reach out and work alongside us to make sure that message gets across. Pastor Monroe is next question.

Pastor Gil Monroe: Yeah, thank you and good evening to everyone. On this table is cops versus clergy. And I didn't set that up. And we were talking about on DOE, and we're talking about perception versus reality. A lot of good stuff coming out of the administration. We are doing a lot of great work. And so, this group wanted to know how can we use our young people as influencers to create social media traction that encourages and supports our city's physical and emotional safety? Because the reality is most of them have been saying, and even clergy, what they're seeing on the news is not really what's happening in this room. How do we have young people use social media to show the good work that the administration is doing? Thank you.

Mayor Adams: First of all, while you're standing folks, I just really want to thank Pastor Monroe and what he has done for the asylum seekers and the migrants. He and his team, they have just been amazing in how they've reached out and really allowed the faith-based leaders to show their support. I just want to personally thank you for what you have done. Chancellor Banks, you want to talk about it? You're around young people all day.

Chancellor Banks: Listen Pastor, we've got a lot of work to do. One of the things that the mayor has often talked about as well, which, commissioner, I really need to make sure we start to push on this, is how we bring young people together with the police in a very positive fashion and not just through basketball. Basketball is great and it's fun. That's an easy one, but there's some other things with some kids, which is a lot of fun. Pickleball is a new big thing. I don't know where that came from. We can think of just other things that kids can do, dodgeball, soccer, just to have fun bringing them together with the police so that they begin to see at the earliest ages, they see the police department in a different light. There's no better way to do that than being engaged while you're having fun doing it, bowling tournaments.

The mayor has said this before, "How do you get one precinct against another precinct?" It's about fun. It's competition because kids love to compete, but they don't like to compete one on one. They'd really rather compete my group against your group. If we can figure out how to

marry that spirit of competition together with bringing a greater level of respect for the police so young people don't see it as us against them, I think there are great opportunities for us to do that.

I'm saying that to the police commissioner. We've got some work to do. We should really sit down and organize that. I know there have been a lot of other pressing issues, but I think for us to put some things like that together I think could be a really good deal. That's the kind of thing our superintendents, you can also be a part of helping us to craft those things and we can get ideas from kids around the kinds of things that they love to do as well, good stuff.

Commissioner Sewell: To the chancellor's point, we have to do better with our social media too, right? We have to make sure it looks like something that kids actually want to be a part of. If you ask me, I have a MySpace page. That's the last time if it gives you any indication. We do have to do better, right? We have a lot of kids out here that are really good at this sort of thing and they know what's going to catch clicks.

They know what people are going to be interested in. We have to bring their voices into the police department too to be able to show them that we want to work together on this. I think using them and their eyes and their youth and what attracts them is something we have to do better with ourselves.

Commissioner Kreizman: And it's something the mayor has been thinking about. At the next forum after we finish, the next one of these is going to be focused on youth town hall settings to have these community conversations directly with them to address those type of concerns. Next question is Pastor Cabrera.

Pastor Fernando Cabrera: Thank you. Good evening, Mr. Mayor. Our table would like to know how can we get more police officers to deal with illegal vending in the legal marijuana shops? While at the same time, how could you better engage the sheriff's department to enforce the laws related to the above mentioned illegal activities?

Corey: A lot of that goes into our deployment strategy, having the officers out there walking along those commercial strips, and that's part of what they're going after. As a matter of fact, just as we sat down here, I got an email from our legal department, which are right on the point that

you're talking about. It's training material we're going to distribute to our officers and it's guidelines for marijuana enforcement in commercial locations.

One of the hallmarks of the Adam's administration that is really very different from anything that I've seen before, and I've worked for the police department now it's almost 34 and a half years, is this... (Applause.) Thank you. I started when I was five. It's this whole of government approach, right? (laughter) For many years, we went at it alone and the commissioner has alluded to it several times. The mayor alluded to it several times.

Everything was, "Call the police. Call the police." Mr. Mayor, I'm sure you have like I have — I've done many divorces over the years. I don't know how legal they are, but I've divorced people. When it comes to tackling these problems the police officer only has so many tools in the toolbox and be that places now selling marijuana, the weed truck somebody mentioned before, be it street peddling. Everybody else at this table has other tools that they bring as well. Now we take this collaborative approach to tackling these problems.

When we go after the weed trucks, when we go after the stores that are illegally selling it's not just the police going in. We're going in with the Buildings Department. We're going in with the Fire Department. We're going in with Consumer Affairs Worker Protection. We're going in with the Department of Health because they're selling edibles. We're going in with the Sheriff's Department and everybody has different tools that they bring to try to actually solve the problem and not just kick the can down the road.

To the homeless issue and the street homeless, somebody asked about the homeless outreach before. I know that was asked and answered, but we've cleaned up more than 3,000 homeless encampments since March and I mean cleaned up, removed. As a police officer, my tools for that, I'm a young police officer out there walking the street tonight and there's an individual who's experiencing homelessness. Maybe he's down on his luck. Maybe he's mentally ill and he's sleeping on a cardboard box.

The tools in my toolbox are, "Hey, buddy, you can't stay here. Pack it up and move it along. You want to go to the shelter? I'll get you a ride. No? Okay, well you can't be here." He's going to pick up his cardboard box and he is going to move around the corner or down the block. I haven't solved anything. Now we go out with the Department of Homeless Services and Social Services. Department of Sanitation is heavily involved in these cleanups.

We engage people and we connect them with the services that are available and we get them the help that they need. We actually attempt to get them off the street and then clean everything up so that the area is clean again. That's how we solve problems, not just by moving it around, and that's the approach that this administration takes to tackling every single problem that we have.

Commissioner Kreizman: Excellent.

Mayor Adams: Someone asked about the weed truck. I think it was this table here. I don't know what was the numbers we did, but we had an initiative that just went after the weed trucks and we had to be creative in doing so. We learned that they didn't pay their summons. We partnered with NYPD and the sheriffs and we did what we do in New York. We told them. We're now focusing on these shops that are selling edibles and illegal marijuana. We are zooming in on them. We're not a sit back administration. You going to get every dime of your tax dollars.

Everybody is working and we are coming together as a team. What has been happening, they would thumb their nose at the PD and say, "Well, you can't come in here because we are doing X." The PD says, "Well, you know what? I have the Department of Buildings here with me now. I have DOHMH here with me now. I have the sheriff here with me now." Now the full toolbox is going to solve these problems in our city. We weren't doing that before. We're doing it now.

Commissioner Kreizman: The next question we have is Jerry.

Jerry: Yes, hello, good evening. Good evening, honorable mayor and panel. Here at this table we had a question. They had a question. What is the vision for inter-agency collaboration to support youth development and also what is the plan for supporting mental health for all schools?

Mayor Adams: One of the things that the mayor charged us with in our contracting process just to deal with the mental health component is just to make sure that any of our contracts that come out in the next couple of weeks, next year have a mental health component to it that deals with young people where you can meet young people where they're at, dealing with mental health, dealing with trauma.

As you see DYCD's RFP, that's what it's called, come out, you're going to see across the board mental health and a mental health component. Community-based organizations that are trying to get awarded those contracts, they have to have a mental health structure in place. That's number one. Number two is in terms of youth development, our community-based organizations working in partnership with Department of Education, working in partnership with the police department.

We are putting together curriculums that deal with STEAM. We know what STEAM is, right? Science, technology, engineering, architecture, math, we have programs dealing with culinary. We have programs dealing with green jobs and the mayor just mentioned that as well. In terms of developing our young people and our young people's skill, I just came from a graduation with Columbia Business School.

They have a program at Columbia Business School in Harlem where they were teaching young people, high school kids, bookkeeping because they saw the need that young people in this industry needed bookkeepers. Although we should be doing a better job of tailoring exactly how the youth development and the areas in which we are developing kids and their skill level, those programs are out there and they're very good programs.

Chancellor Banks: I would also just offer this. I give the mayor so much credit because he made the decision very early on that we were going to keep schools open. It was a lot of pressure to close schools and people were closing schools all around the country, but the mayor made the courageous decision to say, "We're going to keep the schools open."

I think that that ought to be saluted because that has put us back on the path to getting back to normal and normal meaning the best remedy for some of these challenges that our kids have experienced was just getting back to school, being around their teachers, being around their friends. That sense of normalcy went a long way toward helping kids who were often in very challenging situations.

School is not just about the instruction that you receive. It's the spirit. It's the connection. It's the greatest thing. All the research talks about it, that the greatest thing that kids have are the relationships with their teachers and the relationships in schools. That helps to foster their path forward and then you have a shot at everything else if you have that. When that is missing that was the greatest disruptor in their lives.

I'm just happy that we're back, that we're back to normal. As I visit schools, I don't get a lot of we are facing severe mental health challenges. We do have some. We know that and in those cases we funded every school. They can hire social workers. We've got community-based organizations, which we are partnering with. Many of our schools have mental health clinics as well.

There's a wide range of things that we're doing to address that. The biggest challenge I've heard from schools is that the kids still don't feel a level of safety outside of school. They feel safe in school. We've had a record number of weapons that we found in schools and the kids are not bringing it to do harm to their classmates.

They're saying, "I need this to protect myself on my way to school and from school." We all know that that is part of the issue. They're feeling the same stress that a lot of other people are feeling, but as it relates to being in school, I think we're in a much better place and it's getting better every single day.

Commissioner Kreizman: Thank you and the next question we have is Lamona.

Lamona: Good evening everyone. Mayor Adams, what additional support can we get to help the Asian community navigate policymaking and contracting?

Mayor Adams: Thank you for that. Calvin, deputy commissioner, SBS, is here, let's talk about some of the stuff we're doing. We have the first Korean American to be the commissioner of SBS. We're really proud as you're looking at this table of the diversity of this administration, but we have SBS. When you finish answering the last question, when you finish just hand the mic down and let each one of my commissioners and representatives introduce themselves. I'm really proud of this team that we have here, but they're asking about Asian Americans and opportunities around business.

Calvin Brown, Deputy Commissioner of Neighborhood Development, Department of Small Business Services: Yes, at SBS we've been making sure that we've been reaching out to the Asian American community, making sure that there's opportunities not only for small businesses,

but even for the grants that we have in our neighborhoods to make sure that we're hitting those immigrant communities. We have a lot of programs that are dedicated to Asian Americans, but also to all immigrant communities and communities of color just to make sure that those opportunities are available to all the commercial corridors throughout New York City.

Mayor Adams: We do say something else. Deputy Mayor Maria Torres-Springer, when we came into office in, I think it was January, February at most, I heard on the campaign trail all the time how government was just too bureaucratic and difficult. Every time someone walked into your business, you felt as though they were there to take something away instead of keep your doors open.

We gave the order to go into every agency that deals with businesses in the city and see what rules did we have on the books that were harmful to businesses? We looked at 118 of them and a portion of them we took off the books altogether. Another portion, we gave an opportunity for people to fix the problem instead of giving them a fine right away, others we modified.

We're saving small businesses millions of dollars based on how we're changing the culture that our agencies are there to keep your doors open, not to find ways to keep you closed. We put in place a new commissioner over at the department of buildings, Eric Ulrich, who has really changed the culture of Department of Buildings and how we do business in the city. Commissioner Kim, he's really focusing on not only lifting businesses in the city in general, but he has specifically focused on those AAPI communities.

Many of our Asian businesses were devastated during COVID because of the demonizing of the community around COVID and the attacks. We knew we had to have a special focus on those businesses and that's what Commissioner Kim is doing. Why don't we just introduce our commissioners before we bounce so that you'll know who's here in the room? Again, I just completely love this team.

These teams all personally have different narratives and their lives and where they've come from, their contributions. Gary Jenkins who's now in charge of our homeless services, he lived in a homeless shelter. You look at the stories of the people who are here and what they've gone through. They've brought their lives to this mission.

When you want to help people who have gone through a lot you want to bring a bunch of people together who have gone through a lot to help those who are going through a lot right now. Why don't we start from the end and just do a quick introduction? I got three more events tonight that I have to make sure I get to.

Brown: What I also want to mention that we do have the Asian American Task Force at the Department of Small Business Services. My name is Calvin Brown. I'm the deputy commissioner for neighborhood development at the Department for Small Business Services.

Saloni Sethi, First Deputy Commissioner, Mayor's Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based Violence: Hi, everyone. My name is Saloni Sethi. I'm the first deputy commissioner at the Mayor's Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based Violence or NGBV.

Commissioner Annabel Palma, NYC Commission on Human Rights: Good evening everyone. I'm Annabel Palma. I'm the commissioner at the New York City Commission of Human Rights.

Commissioner Jessica Tisch, Department of Sanitation: Hello everyone. I am Jessie Tisch. I am the commissioner of Sanitation.

Commissioner Sue Donoghue, Department of Parks and Recreation: Good evening everyone. I'm Sue Donoghue, the commissioner of the New York City Parks Department.

Sharun Goodwin, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Probation: Hello everyone. I'm Sharun Goodwin, deputy commissioner for Department of Probation, sitting in for my commissioner, Ana Bermúdez.

Commissioner Zachary Iscol, New York City Emergency Management: Good evening everyone. My name is Zach Iscol. I'm the commissioner for Emergency Management.

Mayor Adams: Zach did an amazing job. Thank you, Zach. Zach was in charge of the operation for the asylum seekers and all that he has done. He called me one night late at night. He said, "What did you get me into? Why did I take this job?" Ex military person, I just cannot tell you how he was a team leader and really coordinated this entire effort. This city owes you a lot and future is going to be kind to you for what you did.

Eva Trimble, Chief Operating Officer, New York City Housing Authority: That's a hard act to follow, but good evening everyone. I'm Eva Trimble, the chief operating officer at NYCHA.

Justin Meyers, Chief of Staff, Deputy Mayor for Public Safety Philip Banks: Good evening. I'm Justin Meyers. I'm the chief of staff to the deputy mayor for public safety, Phil Banks.

Corey: Hi, I'm Ken Corey. I'm the chief of department for the New York City Police Department.

Mayor Adams: 34 years, Ken has announced he's going to greener pastures and 34 years, 34 years of putting on a bulletproof vest, protecting the children and families of this city. In 34 years, he has seen a lot and you serve this city. He'll say it all the time, "My family is here. I raised my family here. I grew up here in the city." He has really been a symbol of what's great about the New York City Police Department. We thank you for your service, for what you have done.

Commissioner Sewell: Huge loss. I am Keechant Sewell. I am honored to be the 45th police commissioner leading the absolutely finest women and men in policing in the world.

Deputy Mayor Wright: Sheena Wright, I'm the deputy mayor for strategic initiatives.

Commissioner Kreizman: Fred Kreizman, commissioner of the Mayor's Community Affairs Unit.

Borough President Levine: I'm Mark Levine, Manhattan borough president, and I'm still getting over the fact that the mayor didn't list being borough president as one of his favorite two jobs. We're going to have to talk about that.

District Attorney Bragg: Alvin Bragg, Manhattan district attorney.

Chancellor Banks: David Banks, New York City schools chancellor, and while the mayor loves all the members of his team, I'm his favorite.

Dr. Mitchell Katz, President and Chief Executive Officer, NYC Health + Hospitals: Good evening everyone. I'm Mitch Katz and I run New York City Health and Hospitals.

Commissioner Howard: Good evening everybody. I'm your commissioner for the Department of Youth And Community Development.

Chang: Hi, I'm Christina Chang. I'm the chief program officer at the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene representing Dr. Ashwin Vasan.

Jill Berry, First Deputy Commissioner, Department of Social Services: Good evening, Jill Berry, first deputy commissioner at the Department of Social Services.

Michael Ognibene, First Deputy Commissioner, Department of the Aging: Finally, Michael Ognibene, first deputy commissioner, Department for the Aging, and also we had the commissioner of ACS step out. He had to just step out, but he was here today as well.

Mayor Adams: All the good men and women of the New York City Police Department, I see some of our inspectors, our chief. Can you just stand up so you can see who they are? Thank you. Thank you for what you do. We know sometimes people forget your family, men, and women.

You care about the safety of the children and families of this city and I'm proud of you. I'm just going to make it clear I'm not going to send you into the line of fire. Generals don't do that. I'm going to lead you into the line of fire. We're going to take our city back one block at a time. Thank you so much for coming out.

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