

THE CITY OF NEW YORK
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**MAYOR DE BLASIO APPOINTS BEN FURNAS AS DIRECTOR OF THE MAYOR'S
OFFICE OF CLIMATE AND SUSTAINABILITY**

New office combines and streamlines work of the Mayor's Office of Climate Policy and Programs with the Mayor's Office of Sustainability; Jainey Bavishi to remain Director of the renamed Mayor's Office of Climate Resiliency

NEW YORK—Today, at the start of Earth Week, Mayor Bill de Blasio appointed Ben Furnas as Director of the Mayor's Office of Climate and Sustainability. The new office, which combines and streamlines the work of the Mayor's Office of Climate Policy and Programs with the Mayor's Office of Sustainability, will build upon the work of both offices to dramatically reduce our contributions to climate change, end the age of fossil fuels, and further environmental justice.

"Confronting the climate crisis requires bold, immediate action. Ben has the expertise, drive and passion to make these next eight months count," said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. "From reducing our reliance on fossil fuels to bringing clean energy into New York City, Ben will lead efforts to combat climate change on the front lines."

"These next eight months will be a sprint. Climate change is the generational challenge of our time, and we can't afford to waste a single moment," said **Ben Furnas, Director of the Mayor's Office of Climate and Sustainability**. "I'm thrilled to be joining the most ambitious municipal climate and sustainability team in the country. I look forward to working closely with Jainey Bavishi and the terrific people across city government and the five boroughs who care so deeply about fighting climate change while creating opportunities, improving everyday life, and correcting inequities in the city we love. Thank you, Mayor de Blasio for this humbling opportunity."

"Ben Furnas has consistently distinguished himself as a creative and strategic leader with deep expertise and a steady hand," said **Jainey Bavishi, Director of the Mayor's Office of Climate Resiliency**. "There is no better choice for this role. I look forward to working in lockstep with Ben to address pressing climate change issues across the five boroughs. Together, our offices will work to ensure that our communities, infrastructure, buildings, and transportation networks are built to achieve carbon neutrality and prepared to withstand worsening climate disasters."

Ben Furnas brings a wealth of expertise and vision to this role. As Deputy Director of the Mayor's Office of Policy and Planning, Furnas spearheaded the Mayor's climate, infrastructure, and transportation agenda, including playing instrumental roles in Vision Zero, OneNYC, the 80x50 Action Plan, the city's sweeping measures to improve building energy efficiency culminating with the Climate Mobilization Act, the electrification of the city fleet, and the expansion of the city's bus lanes and bike network.

Jainey Bavishi, who has served as Director of the Mayor's Office of Resiliency since January 2017, will remain in her role leading the renamed Mayor's Office of Climate Resiliency. This office will continue to spearhead New York City's ambitious climate adaptation efforts, including implementing more than \$20 billion in resiliency projects and developing policies and programs that create a more resilient, equitable and vibrant city for the New Yorkers of today and generations to come.

About Ben Furnas:

Ben Furnas most recently served as Deputy Director of the Mayor's Office of Policy and Planning, where he has been pivotal in bringing the majority of the Mayor's historic climate and transportation initiatives to life.

Furnas began his tenure in the Mayor's Office in 2014, serving as Senior Policy Advisor and then Special Advisor for Sustainability and Infrastructure to the First Deputy Mayor. Prior to joining the Mayor's Office, Furnas served as a senior policy associate for then-Public Advocate Bill de Blasio, focusing on budget, land use, street safety, transportation, health care, immigration, and labor issues. He began his career in Washington, DC at the Center for American Progress. Furnas earned his BA from Cornell University and JD from New York University. He grew up in Ithaca, NY and currently lives in Brooklyn with his wife and one-year-old daughter. He enjoys riding his pedal-assist e-bike.

"Ben Furnas is brilliant, hard-working, and deeply-committed to climate justice. And he's a mensch, too," said **Council Member Brad Lander**. "He's got the policy chops to outline bold strategies for the transition to renewable energy, to green buildings, to zero waste, and the organizing skills to forge coalitions to get us there. He's been a great anchor for climate work throughout the eight years of this administration, and I'm thrilled he'll be leading it down the stretch drive."

"The pace and policy set by the government of New York City is often the envy of cities everywhere. The appointment of Ben Furnas is one more reason for Mayors everywhere to say, 'I wish we'd done that first,'" said **Svante Myrick, Mayor of the City of Ithaca and Second Vice President of the New York Conference of Mayors**. "His policy brilliance, integrity, and uncommon kindness make him the ideal public servant - and I know he will help NYC lead the community of cities towards a more sustainable future."

"Ben Furnas combines an encyclopedic knowledge of climate policy and urbanism with a deep commitment to progressive values. I've learned a great deal from him and his work and can't think of a better person to direct the Mayor's Office of Climate and Sustainability," said **Julian Brave NoiseCat, Vice President of Policy and Strategy, Data for Progress**. "Climate action isn't just about reducing emissions, it's about creating jobs and opportunities for New Yorkers that improve their daily lives while addressing enduring inequities. Furnas understands this and through his leadership, the City of New York can lead on this urgent priority."

"Growing up in a family and community that fought fracking, Ben has a long commitment to community activism and climate leadership," said **Dominic Frongillo, Co-Founder and Executive Director of Elected Officials to Protect America, and former deputy mayor of Caroline, New York**. "Ben will continue to advance New York City's global leadership with his

unwavering commitment to the cause and focus of transforming the great city to phase out fossil fuels, run on 100 percent clean energy, and respond to the scale of the climate emergency. We look forward to working with Ben and the Mayor's Office to help New York City build on its global climate and sustainability leadership."

"As a proven leader and regular cyclist who understands the critical role that planning and transportation play in addressing climate change, we welcome the appointment of Ben Furnas in this important role," said **Danny Harris, Executive Director of Transportation Alternatives**. "We look forward to working with Ben and the Office of Climate and Sustainability in ensuring that New York becomes a more equitable, sustainable and vibrant city."

"Ben's work establishing interagency cooperation on Vision Zero has paid off in saved lives, and his open door and phone line has provided a great avenue for input on policy," said **veteran transit and cycling advocate Jon Orcutt**. "Congratulations to Ben on his move to head the Mayor's Office of Climate and Sustainability."

"Ben has years of experience working in New York City government to advance sustainability and climate action—on everything from clean energy to sustainable transportation," said **Leah Stokes, Assistant Professor, UC Santa Barbara**. "The city is beyond lucky to have him at the helm of the Mayor's Office of Climate and Sustainability."

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