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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR ERIC ADAMS KICKS OFF LANDMARK STUDY TO  
REIMAGINE CROSS BRONX EXPRESSWAY**

**Deputy Mayor Meera Joshi, Operations:** Good morning everyone. The school bells are ringing. Thank you. Good morning. It's a proud day and a long day coming. For the last six decades, this highway, the Cross Bronx Expressway, has been both a symbol and an everyday source of life threatening, discriminatory infrastructure. When built, it displaced over 40,000 residents, ripping apart communities, neighborhoods, and families. This initial travesty has reverberated through generations ever since. The Bronx lost its unity, spiraling into economic decline, property owner flight, social isolation, and instability. But no more. And this morning I'd like to introduce our mayor, Mayor Adams, who will outline the promise that the recent federal grant that we have received brings to the Bronx community.

**Mayor Eric Adams:** Thank you. Thank you so much, deputy mayor. The entire Bronx delegation that is behind me, we need to applaud them for just their focus on this issue that has impacted the Bronx for so many years. We want to thank them in general, but the Cross Bronx travels throughout the entire borough of the Bronx. And so having the Bronx borough president, Vanessa Gibson here, understanding how important this study is as we move in a direction of addressing a historical problem for many years. And I just want to thank her for understanding the full scope of this.

But I cannot thank Congressman Ritchie Torres enough, because oftentimes we want innovation outside of the communities that are impacted. Congressman Torres immediately did an examination as we talked about how we were going to improve the environment of other parts of the city. He says, "Hold on here. What about the Bronx? What are we going to do to deal with the longstanding problem?" And when you elect someone to go to Washington, D.C. to fight on your behalf, they should never forget the local issues that are impacting their communities. And so kudos to you, congressman, for doing your job of highlighting the importance of the Cross Bronx Expressway and what it has done to this community for so many years.

And the deputy mayor is right. Deputy Mayor Joshi is pointing out the imperativeness that we are facing with the Cross Bronx Expressway. Really, the best time to deal with a problem is before it happens. That is what Bronx residents tried to do. They fought against the Cross Bronx when it was being planned, when it was being built, and even to the point when it was completed. They knew it was wrong then. And we know it is wrong now. They tried hard. No one would listen, and their fight

was in vain that some people would feel. But right now, those calls for assistance are being heard here today. We are going to push back on what Robert Moses did. He got his way then, but he's not getting his way now as we fix the scar that became a permanent fixture on the face of the Cross Bronx Expressway, displacing thousands of residents and tearing apart a vibrant community.

It was one of the many expressways constructed through a combination of racism and a brutal lack of concern. They divided the Bronx — Black and brown and immigrant communities across the city, these various expressways that ripped apart our communities. The construction of the Cross Bronx turned bustling streets into ghost towns. It was not like there was not a vibrant community prior to the building of the Cross Bronx. What it did, it gutted and devastated those communities. One writer said it looked like London after it was bombed by the first war.

50 years after the Cross Bronx was finished, we see the resiliency of this great borough. Never count the Bronx out. We are here to ensure the fight continues. We see these neighborhoods are vibrant again. The energy again, the electors that are here are bringing commerce here, bringing opportunities here. And we have to understand the tenacity of the advocates of yesterday have met the tenacity of the advocates of today and in the future. They're fighting to end the pollution that clouds the air. If you just look out these windows and you see the smog on these windows, it's the reflections of what these scholars that sit in the back, what they breathe all the time.

Every time I go to these communities where they're negatively impacted by policies, you ask the question, how many are dealing with asthma? We should not have a school system where every child has with their pen, paper, and books, they have an asthma pump. That is unacceptable. But that's the reality in many of these communities of color. We have waste treatment plants, garbage plants, and expressways close to their schools. These are our children, and their lungs should not be filled with toxic fumes every day. It's why the South Bronx residents have the highest risk of asthma in the entire country. The highest risk in the entire country, right here in the Bronx.

You listen to the noise out there, it is nonstop. It's repeated. The horns, the trucks, the sirens. Noise pollution makes it hard to sleep and increases the risk of chronic disease. It's all tied together, when you look at the high numbers in the Bronx, the contributor is so many things, but it's clearly the thing that's right here across from this school, and that's the Cross Bronx Expressway.

The Cross Bronx doesn't work for the Bronx residents, but I want to be clear. It does not only impact the Bronx residents, it impacts our entire city. It doesn't work for drivers. For far too long it has been nicknamed 'America's Parking Lot' because it sits for a long period of time allowing the pollutants to go into the air in this community. This community faces congested commutes on one of the most dangerous roads in the nation, one of the most dangerous roads in the nation. And the Cross Bronx clearly does not work for the environment, contributing to climate change and citywide pollution for all New Yorkers. So I wish we could go back in time to stop the Cross Bronx when it was built. But the second best time to fight a wrong is today. And that today is right in front of us.

I am honored to join our partners here in the Bronx, as well as Congressman Torres to launch this historic study to improve the Cross Bronx Expressway. Thanks to his fight we have a \$2 million grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation, and today we are beginning the process of re-imagining the entire Cross Bronx corridor, from the Harlem River to the Hutchinson River Parkway. This process is about more than just physical infrastructure. It's about envisioning an equitable, prosperous, healthy, and safe Bronx for generations to come.

We're going to look at all possible ways, including capping, to replace pollution and noise, to improve safety and environmental sustainability, and add more green space, something that Bronx residents have been calling for within the infrastructure of the borough, all which will improve the quality of life across the borough. So I want to thank our state and federal partners. I cannot thank Governor Hochul enough in her continuation of understanding how important it is to ensure that New York City receives the resources they need. And I want you to thank our state and federal partners, New York City Department of City Planning, Department of Transportation. Ydanis Rodriguez is here with us here, the commissioner, as well as community members like Nilka Martell.

Every day, energetic people, whoever says that you can't fight government, she showed us that you can kick government's ass and you could get stuff done in the process. And I thank that energy, I thank that fighter that we have, and she is representative of so many other communities that are standing up and fighting on behalf of their community. The participation in the process is essential. And I invite all of you, your neighbors, your residents, your business leaders, your community organizations, all to be engaged in this process. Don't be a detached spectator in this full contact sport called life. But let's sit down at the table and come up with real solutions. Let's disagree without being disagreeable. Let's have a focus on how do we come to a completion, not how do we remain in the paralysis of analysis and confusion.

While Robert Moses may have succeeded in building this road, the highway will never defeat the spirit of the Bronx. Together, we'll make the Bronx a place that we can be proud of. And this important study is a starting process of undoing a wrong that has permeated this community for far too long. Thank you very much. Deputy mayor.

**Deputy Mayor Joshi:** Thank you. And as our mayor mentioned, this was a group effort. I want to call out and give recognition to a few of our electeds that have joined us this morning who are integral to getting to this day. Representative Adriano Espaillat, Council Member Amanda Farías, Representative Ritchie Torres, Assembly Member Kenny Burgos, Assembly Member Yudelka Tapia, Council Member Oswald Feliz, Council Member Marjorie Velázquez, Borough President Vanessa Gibson, our state commissioner for transportation, Marie Therese Dominguez, Nilka Martell, thank you very much. Council Member Raphael Salamaña, State Senator José Serrano, and Council Member Pierina Sanchez. Thank you all very much.

Because when communities are divided, degraded and intentionally polluted, we as a society lose, we as a city lose, we lose generations who are simply unable to contribute to our collective growth, our amazing city, simply because they are suffering every day under the outsized burdens of discriminatory infrastructure. But today marks the first step towards righting that wrong. The Biden administration, the U.S. Department of Transportation, and our tireless federal electeds, Senators Schumer and Gillibrand, Congressmen Espaillat and Torres, and all of our state and city electeds have created a pathway for funding, specifically for the important work of reconnecting communities. Ironically, yesterday, December 18th was Robert Moses' birthday, and I could think of no better way to spite celebrate than today's announcement, the plan to reconnect communities torn apart by his very own Cross Bronx Expressway. In addition to the federal dollars, equally if not more important to get us to today is the sheer strength and power and determination of the Bronx community who never, ever gave up. Decades ago, your voices were literally bulldozed over and your opposition silenced. Today, thanks to your undying and loud voices, you are the builders. Thank you for your fortitude and advocacy. You carry our city forward. I'd like to now turn it over to another very strong and powerful voice in this conversation, Congress member.

**U.S. Representative Ritchie Torres:** And former Council member.

**Deputy Mayor Joshi:** And former Council member, Ritchie Torres.

**Representative Torres:** Before I offer my own comments, I want to read the following statement on behalf of the majority leader, Senator Chuck Schumer. "Dear friends, I'm sorry I cannot attend this announcement in person due to my obligations in Washington, but I'm with you in spirit. For too long, the people of the Bronx had borne the brunt of the consequences of the Cross Bronx Expressway, which literally splits neighborhoods in half, and left the legacy of pollution and high asthma rates. That's why I'm proud to announce this \$2 million federal RAISE grant to fund the community-based study to determine the best solutions and redesign the Cross Bronx sustainably and equitably. I personally advocated with my partner, Representative Ritchie Torres, to Secretary Buttigieg to deliver this federal grant. In the Bipartisan Infrastructure and Jobs Law, we secured \$1 billion in a reconnecting communities fund, as well as \$3.2 billion for the neighborhood access and equity grant program in the Inflation Reduction Act, which can be used in the future construction phases of the project. This is a proud day for all the advocates who helped make this happen. Sincerely, Senator Chuck Schumer."

First, I just want to thank my friend, our mayor, Eric Adams. You know, my friend Nilka Martell is the head of an organization known as Loving the Bronx, and never have we had a mayor who has shown as much love to the Bronx, who has had as much of a passion for public health as Eric Adams. In fact, he is in the Bronx so often I'm beginning to question whether he's a Bronxite.

Mr. Mayor, we need you to come out of the closet and come out as a Bronxite.

But we know that the mayor has been on a personal mission to empower every single New Yorker to live better and longer, healthier, and happier lives. He knows that health is not only about the individual choices we make, but also the institutional structures in which we live, which includes the Cross Bronx Expressway. I want to thank my greatest partner in the Bronx. We have no greater champion of the Bronx than our Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson. I often say that Amazon has Alexa, but the Bronx has Vanessa. Finally, we in the federal government are only as effective... But I'm a comedian on the side, by the way. But we're only as effective as our partners at the state and local level. We appropriate the funds at the federal level, but we rely on our state senators, our state assembly people, and of course, our New York City Council members, the greatest, to ensure that those dollars are efficiently spent.

In April of 2021, I stood with Nilka Martell, the Columbia Mailman School of Public Health, and environmental advocates from the Bronx to present a vision for capping the Cross Bronx Expressway and installing electrostatic filters that would prevent air pollutants from recirculating in the air. I then partnered with Senator Chuck Schumer to secure millions of dollars for a feasibility study, and I want to thank Congressman Espaillat for his support. Now, the Adams administration and New York City DOT have taken the lead in administering the grant. When we first presented the proposal, it was widely received with skepticism, but when you have the support of the majority leader, when you have the support of the governor and New York State DOT, and when you have the buy-in and the resources of the mayor and New York City, it expands the realm of what is politically possible.

We are the greatest city in the world, because we not only know how to dream, but we can deliver. Now, William Faulkner once said that "The past is not dead, it's not even past." Nowhere do those words hold more true than here in the South Bronx, which continues to be haunted by the ghost of Robert Moses, whose physical legacy includes the Cross Bronx Expressway. The Cross Bronx is both literally and metaphorically a structure of racism. It has left behind decades of disinvestment, and displacement, and environmental degradation. Every day to and from the Hunts Point market, there are about 15,000 diesel truck trips. Those diesel trucks, as well as tens of thousands of more,

create massive congestion on the Cross Bronx that unleash massive quantities of greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution, especially 2.5 particulate matter air pollution. Particulate matter air pollution is so small that it can easily invade the lungs of those who live nearby.

If you're a child who lives near the Cross Bronx, or if you attend school near the Cross Bronx, you are breathing in, through no fault of your own, air pollutants that cause you to have respiratory diseases like asthma. It is no accident that the South Bronx has the highest rate of asthma hospitalization in the country. According to the World Health Organization, more than 7 million people a year die from air pollution. According to the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, the communities with the highest rates of air pollution like the Bronx had the highest risk of Covid 19 morbidity and mortality. Notice during the peak of the pandemic, when we were all sheltering in place and staying at home, we actually saw a decline in asthma hospitalization, which indicates that the greatest factor in causing asthma is not only the indoor environment, it's the outdoor environment.

When it comes to the outdoor environment, the 800 pound gorilla in the room is the Cross Bronx Expressway. I would submit to you, there is no initiative that we could pursue that would do more to improve the public health of the Bronx, that would do more to improve the air quality and life expectancy of the Bronx, than the transformation of the Cross Bronx Expressway. The difference in life expectancy between the South Bronx and the Upper East Side could be as much as 10 years, and we have a historic opportunity to close that life expectancy gap. But again, this would not have been possible without our mayor, our honorary Bronxite, Eric Adams, so thank you.

**Deputy Mayor Joshi:** Thank you, Congressman Torres. Next we'll hear from Congressman Espailat. Thank you.

**U.S. Representative Adriano Espailat:** Thank you. Thank you, Mayor. Thank you for being... We claim him in the Bronx and in Manhattan.

(...)

**Representative Espailat:** Yeah, well... I want to congratulate Richie Torres. He really has taken a strong lead on this initiative. Him and I share the Cross Bronx Expressway, although I'll be honest, he has the vast majority of it. I always tell everyone in Washington that I represent the largest parking lot in the country. It's called a Cross Bronx Expressway. If you want to take a look at what it's doing to children's lungs, just take a look at the bridge apartments in the Manhattan side and take a look at the facade. They hover over the Cross Bronx, actually, that's called the Trans Manhattan Expressway, it's a piece of the Cross Bronx that's called the Trans Manhattan Expressway. They have the four towers there, the Highbridge apartments.

If you take a look at the facade of those buildings, you'll see what's happening to our lungs. It's not a pretty sight. This is not just an environmental project, this is not just a beautification and a green project. This is also a racial equity project, because the Cross Bronx was severed in half into the South Bronx and the North Bronx, and with all the connotations that historically marked those neighborhoods and sort of like to bridge it now to connected, really is also a racial equity initiative that I think will send messages not just in New York City, but across the country. It's important that we look at infrastructure. We passed the \$1 trillion infrastructure bill, that's a lot of money, a trillion dollars with a capital T, that may be a bigger investment than Eisenhower made in the network of highways across the country.

Let's do it right. Let's remediate some of the issues and adapt, and some of the issues that are prevalent and visible to all of us. I was at the COP27 in Egypt this past month, and adaptation, it's one of the biggest challenges for countries around the world. How do you remediate and adapt new structures that will then deal with environmental injustice, right? In the Inflation Reduction Act, there's \$62 billion for environmental justice initiatives. We have the money there to do things like this. This is a study that will show us the way on how to go about and remediate and adapt new practices that will connect the Bronx and make it accessible to people all over the country. Thank you so much, Ritchie. Congratulations, Mr. Mayor.

**Deputy Mayor Joshi:** Thank you, congressman. Thank you for your advocacy for dollars for projects all across New York City to reconnect communities. It's my pleasure to introduce a friend, a colleague, and someone who's deeply entrenched in and works very closely with New York City across our boroughs on highway projects. Not just rebuilding them, but thinking about how we can make them pathways for communities instead of scars on communities. I bring you the commissioner of New York State DOT Marie Therese Dominguez.

**Marie Therese Dominguez, Commissioner, New York State Department of Transportation:** Thank you. All right. Good morning everybody. All right. It's great to be in the Bronx. On behalf of Governor Hochul, I really want to thank you, mayor, and all of our federal and elected officials, but also the great community advocates. Thank you all for having me here today. The State Department of Transportation is fully supportive of this project, and we're kicking off today with a grant, a raised grant that was made possible by the Biden administration and all of our incredible New York delegates in Congress, who really made the IJA possible. This level of funding is truly remarkable and I just want to thank them for all of their support to get it all done. It truly is being leveraged across the state, but certainly here in the city of New York. The story of the Cross Bronx Expressway, as the mayor so eloquently put it, and Congressman Torres and Congressman Espaillat, it's the same story that we're seeing all across the state of New York. The bottom line is that, a poorly planned highway, extremely poorly planned highway built decades ago, has negatively impacted a community here in the Bronx.

Not just a community, the entire community for generations. It's thwarted forward progress. It's divided the community, and it literally has stifled economic growth. We're seeing this across the state. We're seeing it in Syracuse with the I81 project, which literally divided a city and displaced an entire community. The 15th Ward was literally severed, in which traditionally an African American and Latino community has literally been bisected for generations.

We're seeing it in Buffalo with the Kensington Expressway, and in Rochester with the Inner Loop. The same story, different places, but the bottom line is that we need to fix it. We saw it here in the South Bronx, but rather than just seeing it, we're actively working to fix it, actively working to fix these mistakes, to rectify the mistakes. Starting with the Sheridan Expressway, which the State Department of Transportation converted into a pedestrian friendly boulevard.

We connected the community, an east/west connection, not just the north/south connection for cars and trucks. We're creating access to the Bronx River. That's where we started a few years ago. And now we're working to do even more to reconnect the Bronx, with the 1.7 billion Hunts Point Access Improvement project, which we just completed phase one of. And I have to say it's working. It's actually working to help take trucks out of the neighborhoods in the Bronx and deliver them directly to Hunts Point. It's providing the citizens here in the residents in the Bronx with a new and more accessible neighborhood, and giving you access directly to Green Space, direct access to the Bronx River.

And while we're opening up opportunities for new walkways, for fishing, for recreation, for anything you want to do, just hanging out in Starlight Park in the afternoon and enjoying the outdoors, those are literally walkable, bike-able and available.

And that goes all the way from the Bronx River and Hunts Point Island all the way up to the Bruckner and beyond. Every project that I've mentioned today is in various phases of planning or construction, to really fix these generational planning and design mistakes that separated communities and hindered progress, but especially here in the Bronx.

Governor Hochul has a vision, a vision to reconnect communities across New York, to fix these mistakes of the past. And when she took office, she put that vision into motion. In total, governor Hochul included \$3 billion in the state DOT capital plan to help reconnect communities across the state. Today as part of these efforts, we launch a new study with Mayor Adams and the City of New York, to reimagine the Cross Bronx Expressway, which has divided communities from the Harlem River to the Hutchinson River Parkway.

Mayor, you have my assurance that Governor Hochul and the State Department of Transportation will be a partner with the city every step of the way with regard to this study, which has great potential to literally raise the quality of life for the entire Borough for all future generations of New Yorkers.

The team at New York State, DOT under Governor Hochul's leadership has helped the city secure the funding for this study. And we want to partner with you and the residents of the community on new bold ideas for the Cross Bronx. And I want to, again, thank our partners, the city DOT, under your leadership, mayor, Commissioner Rodriguez, Deputy Mayor Joshi.

But I also want to thank our outstanding congressional delegation from New York, Senator Schumer, who's been a tireless advocate and literally helped get the IJA a pass, Senator Gillibrand and certainly our two federal representatives, Ritchie Torres, such an eloquent advocate for his community. Thank you so much. You not only are a great order, but you're truly a guy that gets things done. And Congressman Espaillat, thank you so much. Your leadership has proven to be invaluable across all of this.

And the team at USDOT, they are our partners and they will help us get this done, and I want to thank the Biden administration for that. We know that every problem has a solution. It just takes teamwork and a will, a will to get things done. And that's what we have with Governor Hochul and Mayor Adams at our side. In Kathy Hochul's New York, we're working hand in hand with the city to solve problems large and small.

And in the process we're working to improve the quality of life for all New Yorkers all across the city. And I look forward to working with you, mayor, and the rest of your team to bring this study forward, and really and capture the bold vision of re-imagining the Bronx Expressway, the Cross Bronx Expressway, and truly, truly improving the quality of life for everyone once and for all. Thank you.

**Deputy Mayor Joshi:** Thank you, commissioner. Next we'll hear from Nilka Martell. Thank you, Nilka.

**Nilka Martell, Founder, Loving The Bronx:** Thank you. Thank you. It feels unreal to be here right now at this particular moment, so many years of work and here we are. So for those of you that don't

know me, my name is Nilka Martell. I was born and raised here in the Bronx, and for close to five decades, I've lived near the Cross Bronx Expressway. My youngest son suffered from asthma the first couple months of his life. And as a parent, holding your baby, seeing your child, feeling your child struggling to breathe is extremely frightening. And earlier this year, my granddaughter had to have a couple of treatments, so it kicks it all in again, how generation after generation, they're dealing with these respiratory issues.

I didn't realize how many kids actually suffered from asthma until I had to register his pump in the nurse's office. And when I got there, she took out a bin filled with marked Ziploc bags of inhalers. So this is an issue. This is an issue that again, continues generation after generation. In 2016, Loving the Bronx kicked off a campaign called Cap the Cross Bronx, and it was seeking ways to reduce the air and the noise pollution created by the trucks that travel the Cross Bronx.

We were thinking about reconnecting communities and creating new open spaces. That battle was received with a lot of negativity. But last year, we were able to work with Alexander Levine of the Bronx One Policy Group, a group of medical students from Albert Einstein College of Medicine, and with Dr. Peter Muennig and his team at Columbia University, who penned a case study on the cost effectiveness of capping the Cross Bronx, with the assistance of Assemblywoman Karines Reyes, the leadership of Congressman Ritchie Torres, and the support of Senator Schumer, we are here today.

Our collective effort is the reason why we're here today. Today is a result of grass-root activism. Today is a result of organizing and so many partners that we've had throughout the years, the Bronx Council for Environmental Quality, the Point CDC, David Scheffler at Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice, Dr. Camilia Tepelus at the Morris Park BID, Michael Brady at the Third Avenue BID. Lisa Swaren at The Chambers, this is what the Bronx looks like.

This is what community looks like. And we look forward to working with New York City Planning and the amazing team, Alvaro Munoz Hansen, who couldn't be here today, and the wonderful Elizabeth Hamby, I could not have picked a better team to be working with. And this is a 24-month study, so we'll be back in two years to see what goes on, and how to really push the government to make this a reality. I thank you all.

**Mayor Adams:** Thank you. Thank you.

**Question:** Good morning, mayor. How are you?

**Mayor Adams:** How's it going?

**Question:** Good to see you. We've talked a lot about capping the Cross Bronx, that's been obviously discussed as (inaudible) for years. What will be sort of the guideposts of this study? What is the vision and does it involve capping the Cross Bronx?

**Mayor Adams:** Everything is on the table and that's why it's so important to allocate the dollars to do a good thorough community wide study, with input for all the stakeholders involved and we want to be open. We want to think non-traditional ways of solving a real problem. And I believe that this is going to become a blueprint that's going to be used in other municipalities across the city and country. We have a BQE problem. Diana Reyna, my former deputy borough president, she was talking about capping the BQE. I think if we get it right here, we could utilize the same methodology throughout the entire country. So everything is on the table, but it's imperative for me that we have



community input, so they can decide self-determination. Kujichagulia, that's one of the Kwanzaa days.

**Question:** You mentioned BQE real quick. You might have seen the letter that came out on Friday from congressional, state, city leaders that said the vision that was put forth by the DOT on the BQE was just not forward thinking enough. What's your response to that?

**Mayor Adams:** Well, I think they zeroed in on the fact that we're doing three lanes. We are required to do three lanes. So we look within the requirements and before we're thinking in the requirements. So we're saying let's utilize one of those lanes to be public transportation, electric vehicles and other types of vehicles that won't contribute to a negative environment of — we are far more forward thinking than before. They were isolating just to the Brooklyn Heights part to fix. Those are the most affluent communities in Brooklyn, and they wanted to just fix that part. And we said no. The BQE goes into Bay Ridge, it goes into Williamsburg, it goes into parts of Queens. So we are not just focusing on those with the most cash, we are focusing on those with the most problems. And that's forward thinking, and we hope they become partners with us and sit down at the table and come up with some good ideas on what they think, because we're open to that.

**Question:** Hi Mr. Mayor. I was hoping you could speak to the infrastructure bill — was signed a year ago now. This is obviously a huge grant from that. What is the impact you've seen on the city so far from a total perspective? What else is coming from the infrastructure bill that you think will really move the needle on transportation in New York City?

**Mayor Adams:** Want to give it to you, deputy mayor.

**Deputy Mayor Joshi:** I'm happy. We have been aggressively pursuing every possibility to date. We've applied for over a \$1.3 billion in federal money and received around 300 million or almost 300 million. One of the biggest projects that got funded is the Hunts Point project. So looking at redoing the traffic patterns, understanding how we can take the pollution out of the refrigerator units there, is an incredibly important environmental justice project that we're really proud to have gotten funding for. We also got some considerable funding for our greenways projects, and there's plenty more coming through. So as we get them, we'll be happy to report out.

**Mayor Adams:** And as I keep saying, 2022 was my rookie year. 2023 is my Aaron Judge year. We have some good stuff in the pipeline. We are really excited about what we are going to do in 2023.

**Question:** My question for you and the congressman, can you give us some details about the study? This is a large grant. Who's going to help, when will the study be complete, and what types of ideas are you looking to get at?

**Mayor Adams:** You want to do that or you want to...

**Representative Torres:** Sure. I just want to... Even though the notion of capping an expressway sounds far-fetched, it's actually been done on several locations throughout the country, most notably in Seattle. So this is not theoretical or hypothetical. This is an actionable proposal. The second point I would make is capping a highway is far more cost effective than digging. You might recall the big dig project in Boston, which costs upward of \$20 billion. This is going to be far less expensive. I suspect less than a billion, but I think the purpose of the feasibility study is to determine what can be done, how much would it cost? And that will be the basis for an actual proposal that we hope for which we would secure federal funding.

**Mayor Adams:** Okay. All right. We're going to do some off topic. I don't want you all to go through this.

**Question:** Hi Mr. Mayor. For you, Title 42 is expected to expire on Wednesday — is expiring on Wednesday. What is the city preparing for as the amount of migrants could now surge after we seen weeks of them not coming here? What are the preparations the city is making in case that search comes back?

**Mayor Adams:** Well, and you're right. Title 42 is looking to expire on the 21st. And we are not waiting for the expiration before we do our planning. We need to be clear on that. We've had a number of communications with the state. We've had a number of communications and visits to Washington. I communicated both to the majority leader in the Senate, the minority leader in Congress, had lunch with Congressman Jeffries, Leader Jeffries, last week. The team has been meeting just about every day looking at what is our capacity. Are we going to shift and put in place new initiatives, some things we're going to have to cut back on. But we are fortifying ourselves for what we believe is going to be predictable to receive a massive increase per week of new asylum seekers and migrants.

But let's be clear, when El Paso made the official announcement that they were no longer shipping buses, we were still getting about 150 a day, and our numbers increased from 20 something thousand to almost 30 something thousand, so we were still getting an influx. This has never really... was eradicated. It may have dissipated a little, but it wasn't eradicated.

But the end of the conversation, I've been frustrated throughout my life in public service. I've never been more frustrated now. This is a national problem. El Paso shouldn't be going through this. Chicago shouldn't be going through this. Washington, Houston, cities should not be carrying the weight of a national problem. This is unfair to all of our cities to have to go through this without any help from the national government and the state government. And so we are building out that which is within our span of control, but we need help from the federal and state government to assist us.

**Question:** Thank you. Can you hear me?

**Mayor Adams:** Yes.

**Question:** Are you considering putting the tent back up on Randalls Island in anticipation of the incoming migrants?

**Mayor Adams:** Nothing is off the table in dealing with a crisis. Nothing is off the table. We don't want to go back to what we had to use when there were a large influx. But leadership is doing difficult things, and whatever I need to do to ensure that we are dealing with a crisis, I'm going to do it in a humane way. And so if one want to focus on Randalls Island, that's their right to do so. I need to focus on the totality of a crisis that's about to hit our city and I need to be prepared for that crisis and I'm willing to do that.

**Question:** Hi. Politico recently reported that Deloitte is providing pro bono ongoing training sessions to your administration. Can you speak more to what's being accomplished in those meetings and the results of your personality quiz?

**Mayor Adams:** I am surprised that people will ask about free training to improve our skills. This is what people should do. People should constantly improve the skills to deal with challenging time. Leaderships of today, all corporations will tell you, all major industries will tell you that we need to invest in our people, and emotional intelligence is the key signal of successful corporations.

My team is not only getting training from Deloitte, we are getting training from all over the place. We send out monthly books to read to improve our skills. How do we invest in our manpower and womanpower? This is what we do to produce a better product. And so when you say my personality traits, I'm dyslexic. I'm imperfect. I've been arrested. I've been rejected. Now I'm elected. I'm the mayor of the City of New York. That's my personality.

**Question:** If we can return to the migrant situation real quick, the statement yesterday seemed a little alarming in that you mentioned there could be threats to the services the city provides to New Yorkers. What's on the table in terms of you're going to have to look at if you do see the surge of migrants that New Yorkers might see services getting diminished?

**Mayor Adams:** It is alarming. It is. And New Yorkers need to be aware of what we are up against. And I'm not going to sugarcoat it. I'm not going to give the impression that this new influx is not going to impact our basic services. And so when you say, "Which service?" Look at every service we provide. Every service we provide is going to be impacted by the influx of migrants in our city. It's going to impact education. It's going to impact the dollars we're using to clean our streets. It's going to impact our public safety. It's going to impact our helping those long term New Yorkers who are in need.

Every service, if you look down the list of services, I have to now go back to the drawing board, already multi billion dollars in deficit because of the pandemic. I have to return to the drawing board and now reconfigure every service we are providing in this city based on what is about to happen to this city.

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