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**TRANSCRIPT FROM MONDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2022: MAYOR ERIC ADAMS HOSTS
COMMUNITY CONVERSATION ON PUBLIC SAFETY IN QUEENS**

Commissioner Fred Kreizman, Mayor's Community Affairs Unit: Ladies and gentlemen, we'll get started then. I just want to welcome everyone here today to the mayor's community conversation on public safety for Queens north. We want to just, first of all, thank everyone for coming out. We know it's raining and that usually keeps some people away, but it was important for the mayor. The mayor wanted to put this together. He has the police executives at every table, principals or superintendents, members of the mayor's office taking notes so this way we can have a discussion back at City Hall on any ideas you come up with, as well as key agency staff as agency facilitators at every table. Part of this thing is three parts. That was the first part. There's Q&A cards as well on the table in case your question is asked to the dais. And then we'll go around to as many tables as possible to take the questions directly to the mayor and the dais. And the run of show is the mayor's going to speak; the borough president, Donovan Richards; and we're going to have the DA, Melinda Katz, speak. Thank you very much.

Mayor Eric Adams: Thank you. Thanks so much, commissioner, and to the entire team that's here. We really want to hear directly from you. This is my leadership team and it's imperative that we've been holding these conversations throughout the five boroughs. We want to continue to do it in the next three years and three months, to make sure that we could just stay engaged and stay in touch. This is the best part of the job because I'd rather speak directly to you and not through the tabloids and not through others who want to interpret what we are doing. We want to lean on our record. We believe that we are really moving this city in the right direction. There's some real Ws that's here and we want to talk about them and share them with you, but hear from you on the ground. It's about quality of life. It's about this direct communication and interaction.

And I want to thank our councilwoman for being here, Lynn Schulman. Good to see you. And we have alumni, this school is where DA Katz attended and her son attends. And Councilman Donovan Richards is also here as... borough president. (Laughter.) He said, "Did you demote me?" Borough President Donovan Richards is also here as well. I've been in Queens this morning — you have been shaking down my pockets, man. (Laughter.) But so we want to turn it over to the DA and the borough president, then we want to hear directly from you. Okay?

Queens Borough President Donavon Richards: Ladies first.

Queens District Melinda Katz: Good evening everyone. I want to thank Mayor Adams for coming. I thought you chose this school because I went here. I grew up a few blocks from here, as many of you know in this room. This was my alma mater, this is — Hunter's going here now.

I want to thank Mayor Adams for coming so often to Queens. In our last town hall, I joked with Borough President Richards that Mayor Adams was actually running for borough president of Queens county and that we had to worry about that. But I'm here to support the mayor's initiatives, to support what he is doing on public safety. I do want to start right now by just telling you how sad I am and just to acknowledge, of course, the loss of Lieutenant Alison Russo-Elling. We are prosecuting that case, as you know, in my office. We cannot talk about the details, but the whole city feels for the family and for a woman who dedicated her adult life to serving the public.

And I do think that that is one of the reasons it's so great to have these town hall meetings. There has to be confidence in our system. There has to be confidence in public safety. We have to know that we're holding people accountable for what they are doing in the city. And accountability could mean prosecuting drivers of crime, but it could also mean mental health services and workforce development, and making sure that drug rehabilitation is happening out there as diversion programs. And most importantly, making sure that the youth today don't pick up the same guns that we just got off the streets yesterday.

And Mayor Adams and the city has really taken an initiative in making sure that we're doing that. I do want to acknowledge Michael Whitney, he is my deputy chief in homicide in (inaudible). He is the chief who is prosecuting the man in the subway at Howard Beach who was beating up on a woman. As you know, felony complaint was filed last week. We do have that case right now as well. Holding people accountable in the city's important. But Mayor Adams, the initiatives that you take with our cure violence programs, with our mental health, and with the youth of the city is to be commended. Thank you everybody for being here tonight.

Borough President Richards: Thank you. And I want to thank the mayor who's really kept his ear on the ground around the borough, and doing these particular community town halls are so important. And not only getting dialogue, but also just reaffirming the commitment from his administration. So I want to thank all the agency heads here who I'm sure will hear from the shy communities of Northern Queens tonight about what can be done better.

But I do want to start by thanking the mayor. As he said, every time he comes to Queens, he comes with a big check. And we often say that public safety is a shared responsibility. And what does that mean? That means that the drivers of crime — a lot of times when you look at what's happening in Northern Queens — are driven also by poverty. And you can't incarcerate your way out of poverty. So investments like the \$130 million he's provided to my office over the course of the last 19 months are going to help us, especially moving in to the new year start to see some of the decreases in crime that we're focusing on.

I just want to also focus in on mental health because that is also something that we see. And obviously when you look at what happened in the subway, when you hear, when you pick up the

newspapers or you watch the news, you often see people in distress, people in trauma who never got the services that they really needed early on, and then the pandemic hit and those issues are only exacerbated. We're focusing heavily on that with the mayor, but also our office is taking the lead and pushing Queens to be the center of health and wellness. October 11th, we'll be announcing a \$2 billion initiative with BetterHelp, that will focus on free counseling and therapy. We'll be working with community-based organizations all across Queens to really try to get to the crux of the issues very early on so we're not reading about individuals 30 or 40 years later who are in trauma.

And then, I'll end in just thanking the mayor. You might have saw him on the news, we joined him about, I feel like, it was midnight, towing some trucks across Queens. And I want to thank Patrol Borough Queens North, who I know will also be taking this initiative up as well. So, I want to be light because we want to hear from you. I just will end it off also saying that we will never tolerate hate crimes in our community, that Queens is the most diverse county in the world — 190 countries, 350 languages and dialects spoken here. And this is what this room is representative of. The people on the ground are the individuals who most likely and often have the solutions rooted in our communities on how to move forward.

So I want to thank each and every one of you for showing up. There's a lot of work to be done to make sure that we build a fairer Queens and a more just Queens. And that all starts with each and every one of us being here. Thank you all.

Commissioner Kreizman: Appreciate it. So, we'll get started with the first table, Anastasia.

Question: Good evening. Good evening, Mr. Mayor. Good evening, administration. Our table's question would be, what is the plan of city agencies to work together on mitigating systematic poverty, effects of inflation, and ultimately improving safety and opportunity?

Deputy Mayor for Strategic Initiatives Sheena Wright: Good evening. I'm Sheena Wright, deputy mayor for strategic initiatives. And the mayor has charged the administration with coming together across agencies. We've created a Gun Violence Prevention Task Force where we have every agency in the City of New York represented. And the job of that task force is to come up with an integrated strategy that goes upstream.

What do I mean by that? It's about identifying the communities that have some of the highest rates of crime, looking at the poverty levels, looking at homelessness, looking at educational outcomes, looking at the small businesses, and every agency coming together to really target and direct resources in an aligned, coordinated way to provide support for that community.

And so that task force has been hard at work. We're working with some other nonprofit organizations. We are eager to, and we will be one of the follow-ups from these convenings — are to come on the ground in those particular communities that are suffering from the highest rates of crime to continue that collaborative planning so that we're all working together. But said time and time again, you don't solve it downstream only. You have to go upstream. And all of those things are contributing to the outcomes that we're seeing in terms of public safety and all the agencies. That's why we're all here, are focused on that.

Commissioner Kreizman: Excellent. Next question, table number two, Tony.

Question: Mr. Mayor, good evening. The question from table two is, how will you address the mental health issues that came about due to COVID, that is impacting everyone in the city, from our young people to our homeless population, that has contributed to our increase in crime here in New York City?

Mayor Adams: Dr. Vasani is going to go in depth of what we did. We have to connect the dots when we talk about public safety in our city. I use the term all the time that there are many rivers that feed the sea of violence and two rivers that we are looking to dam. One is the over proliferation of guns in our city, gun violence is real. I was speaking to the mayor of Birmingham earlier today. All of my colleagues, my mayors across the country, St. Louis, Detroit, Chicago, Alabama, Carolina, they are all seeing this unbelievable uptick in gun violence. And we have a direct plan to address that, that's multifaceted.

But the mental health issue, I think guns and mental health illness attacks could have a major impact on our psyche. To walk down a block and get attacked for no reason, what we saw on our subway system... it just plays on our mental capacity of feeling safe. And this weekend spoke with Dr. Vasani and our team. We brought on several mental health professionals to talk about how holistically do we address the issue of the violence we are seeing that's stemming from people with mental health illnesses. Michelle Go, pushed to the subway track, mental health. Several people shot on the subway in Sunset Park, mental health. The murder of Lieutenant Russo, mental health. If you just go scenario by scenario, you keep coming up with this same coordination. And even those we are finding with gun violence, many of them have mental health issues as well. The mental health problem is a crisis. And we need all of our partners to be engaged to address it, because it can't be addressed just by the police.

That's a revolving door system. 48 percent of our inmates at Rikers Island have mental health issues. Arresting someone, then putting them back out in the street again, taking them to the doctor, to the hospital, giving them medication for a day, putting them back until they do something that's life threatening. That's just a failing system. And so Dr. Vasani, who was with a program called Fountain House, this is why I asked him to join our administration, because he wants to take a holistic approach to the components that we need to do to address mental health. Dr. Vasani, can you talk about some of the things we're going to be doing?

Commissioner Ashwin Vasani, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene: Sure. Thank you. Thank you to the community. Thank you to Northern Queens for having us and for having me in your community. This is a huge issue for this administration. We have three major priorities: addressing our youth mental health crisis, addressing our rising rates of overdose, which underneath it all is also a mental health crisis, and addressing our crisis of serious mental illness, which is most closely connected to the events the mayor described and the events you're all asking about. People living with serious mental illness, of which there are nearly 300,000 in New York City, for the most part are living their lives. They may even be amongst us today. They're just like you and me. They just have an illness. There's a small subset, a very small subset in fact, that need assisted care or might need more supports.

But one thing is clear, everyone living with serious mental illness needs three things: they need healthcare, they need a home, and they need a community. And too often we work a lot on providing the first two, but we don't think enough about the third. And the third really drives people into isolation, social isolation, which can worsen into crisis and often end up in the events that we see and that cause us so much pain and trauma. So, over the coming weeks and months, we're going to be releasing plans on those three key priority areas and really showing the architecture of what we're going to be building over the next months and years in this administration. But this is not a crisis that we created. This is not a crisis that any of us really created. This is something that's been around for generations, the way we treat people with serious mental illness. And we're going to go to the root of the crisis. We're going to go upstream and not just think about acute care and the interactions people have, but we're going to go at the causes. And social isolation is one of the root causes for mental health crises. And we're going to attack that really robustly. Thank you.

Commissioner Kreizman: Thank you. Next table, Kevin.

Question: Good evening, Mr. Mayor. And once again, thank you Council Member Schulman, for being at our table. There were concerns raised about the lack of safety in our trains and public transit, but especially in our schools. Where are we as a city when our school safety officers would rather work in correctional facilities than in our schools due to the low-wages provided? And what can be done to address these disparities?

Mayor Adams: Chancellor Banks is here who, he likes to remind us all the time, he was a school safety agent before becoming a chancellor. You remember during the campaign, there was a large voice to state, "We should take school safety agents out of our school." Everyone hopped on that bandwagon. And I was clear, "No, we're not." And if I was going to become mayor, we would not remove school safety agents out of the school. And our school safety agents are still in our schools. And they're more than security. If anyone knows the role of a school safety agent, you'll know that they are the aunties and the mothers and the grandmothers of these children. These children love these school safety agents. I was in the Bronx with school safety agents, collected clothing for some of the children who were living in homeless shelters. They know how to be, the early warning signs. They play a vital role on the part of this school community in protecting the schools.

And we're looking at some other things that Chancellor Banks is looking at around safety, such as locking the front door, but having the right mechanism so we can open it then in the times that we need to do so. We have been fortunate not to have some of the real mass shooters that we've witnessed over the entire country, but we are very focused on the safe environment for our school safety agents. And our goals during this contractual season is to engage in a real conversation on how we can compensate them in many ways, how we can be creative.

I think I was able to convince under one of the former mayors to put school safety agents on a pathway to becoming police officers after two years of watching them do their job, if they have the suitable skills to interact with children, I think it's an excellent opportunity to allow them to be promoted into the police officers rank. And this is something I want to reexamine. We did it

for a short period of time, it was removed later. But I think we need to revisit that because our school safety agents have the skills to be good law enforcement officers if we give them the opportunity to do so and give them pathway to improvement by allowing them.

We have a CUNY system. There's no reason we're not picking up half of their college courses if they want to go to college. The goal is to put them on the pathway to continue to advance in their careers and we want to do that with our school safety agents, our traffic enforcement agents, our hospital police, our HR police, all of those law enforcement agencies that are outside of the traditional New York City Police Department. Deputy Mayor Banks is looking at how do we continue to enhance that. But Chancellor, if you want to talk directly to the school safety agents.

Chancellor David C. Banks, Department of Education: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Mayor. I think it's critically important for all of us as a community to make sure that the school safety agents recognize that you, in fact, care about them. If you follow the press, they get a lot of negative press and a lot of people saying, "We don't need them." And I don't think there's anything that's further from the truth. When the mayor points out, they are part of the family and the fabric of any school, and they're there for all the right reasons, to ensure that our children are safe. There's nothing more important than the safety of our children. And we've done a great job. And Mark Rampersant is here. Mark, just stand up. Mark is in charge of the Office of School Safety, of the city. And he works 24 hours a day, trust me, to ensure that we do everything that we can possibly do.

And so I just want to reiterate that the mayor said we're looking at a whole host of initiatives, including camera and door locking systems where we can ultimately lock the front door. Right now, the front door is still open, it's manned by a school safety agent, but we want to ensure an even greater level of safety in that regard as well. So, that's something we're looking at. That'll take another level of investment to do that. But that is on the table for us. We're looking at that as we speak.

We had right here in Queens, a mentally ill person who'd just been released from a facility, came right into the school and engaged in a confrontation. Thank God for that school safety agent, and thank God for that principal, and a school aid. The three of them who wrestled him to the ground. And it could have been a lot worse than that. And so, I live with that each and every day as chancellor, as does the mayor, to ensure the safety of all of our kids. So, we're working on all of it. We've increased the number of safety agents, the mayor's working on how to create a greater career pathway. But for those that we have right now, as soon as I walk into any school, I expressly go right to the school safety agents and tell them thank you for their service. Thank you for everything that they do, and I would encourage you to do the same.

Commissioner Kreizman: Thank you. Next table, we have Paula.

Question: Good evening, Mr. Mayor. The question we have here is, what can you do to empower judges and increase consequences for repeat offenders?

Mayor Adams: Judges?

Question: Correct.

Mayor Adams: Don't get me started.

Queens District Attorney Katz: After you, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Adams: No, don't get me started. I think what personifies my concern about really what's happening in the four areas of public safety, it's a team effort. And those of us who are old enough to remember during the eighties and early nineties when we took our city back from crime, everybody was on the same team. We all were focused, and that included the media. Everybody was Team Safe New York. And I just don't feel that way anymore. I feel that, for the most part, our police officers are left to do this on their own. And when you have someone that shot a police officer in the Bronx, shot himself, and to have a judge say the police were wrong and the shooter did everything his mother taught him to do and he was arrested. His mother didn't tell him to carry a gun.

And so I just believe there's a disconnect from what every day New Yorkers want and what all the arms of the criminal justice system is providing. We want our streets to be safe. When we did that analysis — Chief Corey and the police commissioner did an analysis of the violent offenders. I was blown away to see how many of them are repeated offenders. There's a catch, release, repeat system. And the small number of bad people, violent people don't respect our criminal justice system. They have made up their mind. They're going to be violent and they don't care what we do. And we are not responding accordingly to that. We need to zero in on these small number of violent people. How are you arrested for burglary 30, 40 times and you're back out to do burglary again. How do you get caught with a gun on one day in your back, out on the street again with another gun and still you're going through that system?

We took over 5,000 guns off the streets since January. And the number of shooters that we have removed off the street just to have them come back. And I take my hat off to the police officers. Out of even frustration, they continue to respond and continue to do the job. And so judges have a crucial role on three areas. Number one, they have to unbottleneck this system. You have shooters who are out on sentencing, getting involved in more shootings while out on sentencing. Why does it take so long to sentence someone? They're found guilty, let's have a faster turnaround. Then the unwillingness to use the powers they have. Yes, Albany did us a disservice, and I've said that over and over again, but there's still powers that judges have and they need to use those powers to keep dangerous people in jail.

And we must unbottleneck the system. It's just too — taken too long for people who are in jail to be sentenced so they can serve their time and for these trials to go through. And so the only way we're going to do that, I'm responsible for appointing some judges and I'm taking that into consideration with my appointments. But you raising your voice and being clear that we want a criminal justice system that does not protect people who commit crimes, but protect the innocent New Yorkers that are the victims of the crimes. We got this backwards. Every law that has been passed in Albany the last few years, those laws protected people who committed crimes. You cannot tell me one law that was passed that protected people who are the victims of crime. It's time to protect innocent New Yorkers, and judges have a role to do so. And by raising your voice

as civic leaders, you can send a strong message to those who are on the bench that we need to start protecting innocent New Yorkers. DA?

District Attorney Katz: So, if I might just agree with Mayor Adams, there has been a call amongst district attorneys and amongst many folks across the city that we are one out of 50 states — one state out of 50 — where a judge doesn't have any capacity of dealing with community safety at all. All we can look at is when someone might not show back up in court, which is a flight risk. But there is a lot of things that we can do. And I got to tell you we do it here in Queens County, is that we ask for remand, when I believe someone should be remanded while they are awaiting trial. Now, if there are DATs given, which are for minor crimes, if there's an open case on a DAT, at least now the police officers can have their hands a little bit untied and actually make the arrest and put them through central booking, which ends up back in front of our courtroom, which I think is extremely important.

We also only have the use of bail right now. We have increased, here in Queens County, the use of electronic monitoring. If someone does make bail, especially on those violent crimes where the mayor's absolutely right, many times they go out and it's a repeat. Do it once, repeat again. But also the laws did just change, where we have a little more capacity of holding those individuals or giving them some consequences for the repeat stealing, like the quality of life issues where they go into a drug store and steal what's on the shelves and then they come out, they go through the system and they get back to the drug store. So the discretion that judges have, I do believe should be increased as well. There has to be some consequence of community safety endangerment. I do believe that. And in Queens we try to do that as best we can. Thank you, Mr. Mayor. And I have to tell you, the Police Department are unbelievable partners every single day in making sure that they protect us here in Queens County. Eric, just so you know, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Adams: (Inaudible.)

Commissioner Kreizman: Next table, Alina.

Question: Hi. Good evening, Mr. Mayor. We have so many cuts that are hurting our safety. Do you have plans to use reserves to adequately provide services to meet the needs of our students, elderly, unhoused, and homeless?

Mayor Adams: We are in an economic crisis because of the dollars that are not coming from Wall Street. Historically, we have been really a one dimensional city where the bulk of our economy depended so much on Wall Street. And that was a big mistake. We're diversifying in a lot, particularly during the tech industry. We're only second to San Francisco and we continue to attract new businesses here. But we are faced with an unbelievable \$10 billion budget deficit in the out years. You're talking about some tough choices we have to make. We did some in the first round of the budget where we had a 3 percent PEG program to eliminate the gap. I told all of our agencies we have to find more efficient ways to running our government. And we're doing it again this budgetary cycle to do an additional PEG, and that includes City Hall.

We have to find a more efficient way just like you do every day. Those of you who run your households, you could only spend what you take in. And we have been spending far more than what we have been taking in. And we can't continue to run our government that way. And we have been inefficient. This has been an inefficient city. And so when you see, one would define as cuts, it is preparing us for the future of the dollars just won't be there in the future. We were able to keep a lot of our law enforcement agencies flat, our hospitals, we were able to keep them flat to make sure that we are not taken away from being safe and dealing with some of the crises. We put money in our sanitation because nothing's worse than a dirty city. And we want to make sure Jessica Katz, our new commissioner is able to keep the city clean and give the tools to our Police Department and our hospitals and our schools.

Chancellor Banks has done an amazing job, there's going to be a fiscal cliff that we're about to hit with federal dollars. And if we don't start doing a good job now, we are going to have to fall on already raising taxes in the city, which is the highest outside of California of my understanding. And we don't want to do that. We have to spend better and we have to manage your tax dollars better. We have not been doing that. And my role as the mayor and our Office of Management and Budget is to make sure we look at every agency and say, Are you producing a good product for the taxpayers of this city? You have not been getting your money's worth. You have not been getting your money's worth. And we want to make sure that you get your money's worth and you're spending your tax dollars appropriately.

No cut we are doing in any agency that we're telling to do the PEG is to do it to be harmful in our services. We're not doing layoffs and we're not reducing our services. We're telling our commissioners that are here with me today, look over your agencies and find the money to continue to produce a better product in a more efficient way. We're introducing technology in how we run a city, we are monitoring more of what we're doing. We're looking at key performance indexes. We are rethinking how we run a city in a more efficient way. And you deserve that. You deserve that. You pay your taxes, you should have a delivery of the product that you're paying for and you have not been getting the product that you deserve. I strongly believe that and I know we could do better in the process.

Commissioner Kreizman: Thank you. The next question, Patrick.

Question: Good evening, Mr. Mayor. One of the issues we discussed is the feeling of this order involving bikes. There are bikes on the sidewalk, groups of dirt bikes on the streets, and also people getting robbed on motorbikes and e-bikes. There is a general sense of lack of enforcement in this area. What are folks playing on doing regarding this issue?

Mayor Adams: Real pet peeve of mine, and Chief Maddrey, maybe you want to go over what you're doing around our motorcycles, illegal bikes, dirt bikes. Chief Maddrey and his team, they have been doing some things around that. And what's interesting, we learned from the days of the transit police, the people who jumped the turnstile were also committing crimes, robberies, and other crimes. So we stopped them from jumping the turnstile. We're learning that many of the people who have those illegal dirt bikes, we're catching them with guns, they want it for robberies. So we are being proactive. So chief, why don't you tell them what you're doing around that initiative?

Chief of Patrol Jeffrey Maddrey, Police Department: Yes, sir. Thank you, Mr. Mayor. And good evening. Queens. Queens North, thank you. Just really quick. When I took over this role as the chief of patrol in May, one of the first things that landed on my lap right out of this borough was the dirt bikes, the illegal ATVs and dirt bikes. They were flying up Woodhaven Boulevard, going over to the Rockaways terrorizing Rockaways. And we immediately started figuring out ways how to address the ATV problem. And it was something where we know we made a lot of mistakes. It took us a while to learn how to go after them, to learn how to corner them, to learn how to do it in a safe manner. Because as much as we wanted to catch them, we had to still make sure everybody was safe. But we worked with our highway unit. Highway units, started training our patrol units and we started becoming good at it.

This summer alone, we took over 5,000 bikes. Just the summer. Over 5,000 bikes, ATVs, motorized bikes. I think we're on pace to take over 10,000 bikes this year. But as much as we take them, it seems like they just keep coming. And not only are they terrorizing the streets just driving, we see that they are the way that a lot of the bad guys are using. They're using these ATVs and these illegal bikes as their getaway vehicles. And we put a lot of intention into that. We've created a lot of plans centered around addressing robbery patterns, other crime patterns that use ATV. And we are being very successful. We are grabbing a lot of firearms off ATVs. So not only are we getting the bike, we're getting illegal guns off the street, we're catching people wanted for other crimes, robberies, grand larceny, other things like that.

So it remains a challenge for us, but we get a lot of help from the community. The community tells us a lot of time where they're meeting up, which is very important. Because, when we know where they're meeting up, we can box them in and grab a lot of their bikes. A lot of the community people are telling us what gas stations they're going to, where they're parking them. Sometimes we're able to get into the locations where they're hiding them and we're able to get in with our Legal Department, with the Sheriff's Department, we're able to get into these locations and remove the bikes that way as well. So we'll continue to go out there. We'll continue to focus on taking bikes off the street. And again, we'll need your help doing this. So when you see things like this, reach out to your local precinct commanders, your NCOs, your community affairs.

They feed the information to the precincts, and all the precincts, all the boroughs and Queens have been participating in this operation. And I think this is why we've been so successful. So we'll continue to do that and make sure that we are targeting these illegal bikes. And I just want to make sure people know, people who are legitimately riding motorcycles, licensed motorcycles and stuff, we're not taking those motorcycles. If we see an infraction, most of the time we're warning them, because that's not our focus. Our focus are the illegal street bikes, the illegal ATVs that shouldn't be on the road. So thank you.

Mayor Adams: And the ATVs, the dirt bikes, they are not allowed to ride on our streets. And so we are zeroing in on them and we have a holistic approach. And just to be real candid, the problem we had in this city is police were told not to do their jobs. I mean, we saw this, it wasn't like we didn't know these illegal dirt bikes was riding up and down the street, but no one was proactively saying, this is not acceptable. Our city became a place where any and everything goes, no rules applied. I mean, we decriminalized public urination. It was as though everything

that you wanted to do in this city, go and do it. No, I'm not doing that. I'm not doing that. I refused to do that. And so all of the pushback and all the yelling that, you know what, Eric wants to be hard on everyone.

No, every day New York is deserved to live in a clean, safe environment. You have the right to do that. And so we proactively said, enough of this racing up and down Queens Boulevard, enough of this of driving on sidewalks with these dirt bikes in three wheelers. And we had to learn. They were smarter than we were. We did the training, we put in place our initiatives. We started getting calls from our elected officials telling them where they're mobilizing. And I don't know if you heard what he said, 5,000 bikes.

And we're going after those stores that are selling the bikes that they know is illegal to come on. And we're going to talk with our lawmakers in Albany to say that prior to someone being able to purchase the bike, they need to produce insurance and registration for the bike before you could take it out of the shop. Because if someone hits you with one of those bikes, you're stuck with the medical costs, you're stuck with the damage. So we need to be more proactive and that is why we need to get our state lawmakers to be part of this game of dealing with these quality of life issues that we're facing.

Commissioner Kreizman: Thank you. Next question, Alexandra.

Question: Are there any plans to provide funding or some kind of support that would help communities partner with police to improve neighborhood safety?

Deputy Mayor Wright: Sure. One of the big investments that we've made and we'll continue to make, is in the crisis management system. So these are credible messengers. These are people who are on the front lines, on the ground, community members who have really stepped up to say that they want to really engage in preventing violence. The co-chair of the Gun Violence Prevention Task Force's A.T. Mitchell who couldn't be here this evening. And the whole crisis management system is very actively engaged. We have many other nonprofit organizations that work with justice involved people, whether it's the Fortune Society or other organizations that are really in close, very, very close partnership with the administration.

Mayor Adams: And we do something else. Something else I remember. I remember my brother, and I just want to go back to that question that you asked about the police. I remember my brother and I... My brother's a retired sergeant. Sometimes he thinks he's the mayor. I have to remind him that he's not. But I remember him and I was sitting down watching TV and someone poured a bucket of water over the head of a police officer. And a police officer walked away. And we looked at each other. I said, "We lost the city. We lost the city." Everybody started doing it. Then they started cursing at police officers in their face on the trains. They started being disrespectful to them. There's no longer even care. We have people now who shoot guns in front of cops that are standing right on the corner. That's what happened. A slow erosion created this crisis that we're facing.

And so what Sheena and A.T. Mitchell and others are doing, fighting, crime must be prevention and intervention. Intervention is stuff we're doing right now by making these arrests. The highest

number of felony arrests in the 27 year history. Highest number of gun arrests. But it's also intervention, because by the time that child gets a gun, we already failed. That's how we had a hundred thousand summer youth jobs this summer. First time in New York City history. That's why we're doing dyslexia screening in schools. 30 percent to 40 percent of our inmates on Rikers Island are dyslexic. So we're now screening all of our children so we could identify if they have learning issues, they just learn differently, to make sure that we prevent that. We're going to make our major announcement tomorrow with foster care. We know every year the results of foster care children falling through the cracks, and everybody act like we don't see it.

We wait downstream and we pull them out of the river after they fell through the cracks. We're going to announce tomorrow what we're doing to go upstream and prevent it from happening. We kept our schools open with Summer Rise program. 110,000 students were able to go back into the school, get food, get meals, get education, get instructions throughout the entire summer months. She and her team just put together one of the largest paid internship program with all of our corporate leaders. So our young people all year round can be exposed to jobs and get the training that they need so we can be preventive. Because, solving our problem can't be just the police. Solving the problem must take all of us to prevent the crimes from taking place, and that's what we are doing. This is an upstream administration, we're not going downstream. And listen, I know this stuff is frustrating. Woman stopped me and said, "You know what? You're just a failure as a mayor. We still have potholes, we have crime, we have schools are not doing what they're supposed to do. Homelessness is a mess." I said, "Ma'am, it's only February. Give us an opportunity to do what we're doing." We're seeing the results. It takes more than nine months to have a baby — give us the opportunity to do what we're doing. We know what we're doing and we're going to turn this city around.

District Attorney Katz: Just to add what Deputy Mayor Wright said and what Mayor Adams said, we also fund a lot of these violence interruption programs and they're great, but the Police Department also has unbelievably involved NCO and community affairs officers, so whatever precincts you are all from, if you really want to get involved in the community and with some of the organizations in the community, you can get some of that information, if I could be so bold, Chief Corey, as to ask the community affairs officers in the individual precincts. They're working with the kids on the street, they're working with basketball programs, with sports programs, with educational programs, with not-for-profits, and they do it every day, so it might be a good informational tool. There's also the police precinct council in each of the precincts in the city of New York, so you can always go to one of those meetings and find out how to get involved as well. Thank you, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Adams: Thank you.

Commissioner Kreizman: Next question, Karen.

Question: This table here, oh wow. I don't want to get in trouble but just know that Queens is not quiet. So I have five questions here and I'm not going to ask it, and I see your finger, commissioner, because actually all five questions have been answered, so every time they slide me another question. So I got one here, now I'm trying to figure out which one it is. I think the last one that hasn't been touched is what initiatives are you doing to raise the pay for our police

officers to put more police officers on the street so people can feel more safer? Is that a good one? Is y'all okay with that? Okay. I ain't in trouble? Okay.

Mayor Adams: And trust me, I know how loud Queens is because remember I'm a Queens boy. P.S. 140; I.S.A., Queens; Bayside High School, Queens. We still have our family home on 167th Street and 111th Avenue, so I'm Queens through and through. The contract time is now, and I think Pat Lynch has been an amazing advocate for the men and women that put their lives on the front line. These are the moments of contract negotiations where they're sitting in front of an arbitrator now to determine the salaries of our police officers.

And we must be fair to all of our civil servants within the financial restraints that we're dealing with, but we know this is a tough job and we want to continue to ask you to encourage young people to come into the profession. I loved every day being a police officer. It is an amazing profession. I'm sure Chief Corey and Chief Maddrey will say the same and all those who are sitting here, and we want to continue to encourage our men and women. The shortage that's taking place across the country, I think that some of the very aggressive and hard tones towards police officers across the country has hurt the profession, but I believe that you're going to continue to see people come into this noble profession. And we're going to make sure that we do everything possible to ensure that they're compensated for their job.

Commissioner Kreizman: Okay, next question, we have Mohamed.

Question: Good evening, Mr. Mayor. Question from table nine is that people don't feel safe on the subways anymore. How can the city and NYPD deploy more police officers to effectively fight crime and keep civilians safe?

Mayor Adams: The subway system is dealing with not only an actual crime problem, but they're dealing with a perception of safety problem. We're dealing with both and we have to address both. So what did we do? I ride the subways a lot, I believe we have one of the best subway systems on the globe, and when we first came in we spent a few nights riding the subway system and doing an observation of what we saw. We saw homeless encampments, we saw people who, with mental health illnesses and issues, were walking the subway system loud, just really creating a sense of uncertainty, and so we zeroed in on it. And also we saw something else, we saw our police officers not patrolling in a manner of which they should have been patrolling. And so we had a multi-prong approach with the governor and Janno Lieber from the MTA. First thing we did, I announced that we are going to remove all the encampments off our subway system and we did that. You go in the subway system now, you don't see the encampments, you don't see the tents. We focused on that.

Then I said we were going to focus on those with mental health illnesses. Dr. Vasan, Deputy Mayor Anne Williams-Isom, and the Police Department, our mental health professionals, we all came together as a team and started our initiative of moving people off the system into safe havens and other location into our shelter system. Week one, only 22 people took us up on our offer to get off the subway system. So what did we do? We made a brochure showing people this is where we are taking you and where we want you to go. Now, I think we're over 2,000, Dr. Vasan. 2,000 people, we moved off the subway system into shelters or safe haven locations. The

encampments are gone, the people who are dealing with mental health issues, because we cannot force people from being removed but those who are dangerous to themselves or others, we're clear with Dr. Katz and his team to give them the care based on Kendra's Law that they're supposed to. So we're seeing our system, offices are riding the trains again, they're doing patrol again, we're seeing the evolution of our system.

I always like to remind people we have 3.5 million people that use our subway system every day. We have an average of less than six felony crimes a day. But if you start your day reading one of those six felony crimes, if it happens to be an unfortunate incident like Michelle Go, you read that, then you go on the system and you hear someone being loud and disruptive, then you're seeing trash and dirty, that plays into your belief that we have a system that's out of control. That's the reality. The men and women are doing a difficult job. We want to get rid of those six crimes a day but we also want to look at what they're doing with the 3.5 million people that use that subway every day and they get home every night after using that subway system. And I'm one of those 3.5 million, I'm in that subway system as much as possible to check on the product, to make sure you're getting the product you deserve. We have more to do, we have a long way to go, but trust me, we're in the place of doing just that.

Borough President Richards: Yeah, and I just wanted to add, and I alluded to the fact that the mayor has really been a firm partner in investing in Queens. And you asked the question of resources and some of this, you have to look at from an equity lens. For instance, the 105 Precinct, which is located in Northern Queens, has the highest response times, partly because they cover 354 lane miles. The mayor graciously funded a \$92 million new precinct in which we topped off, which is going to give the equity lens there when it comes to addressing public safety for Southern Queens, but we also know, once again, that public safety is not just policing. So on top of that, his extra \$50 million for a new community center, which is going to be about \$148 million community center for Roy Wilkins Park, is also going to go into Southern Queens. But we're not stopping there because we know historically when you look at crime and where it's happening, and these are communities that have been disinvested in.

So you look at where we made an announcement and, once again, hats off to the mayor for bringing his wallet every time he comes to Queens, we made an announcement with the Boys & Girls Club, for instance, in Astoria, where we're going to invest in supportive housing on the top and a brand new community center with former council member Costa Constantinides. We invested in Make the Road, who will have a center in Corona. We're working with the Boys & Girls Club on another community center in Corona. And then, as we talk about mental health, because that's what I'm feeling, that's what I see on the streets, that's who's calling our office, we have to look at the Creedmoor campus. And I'm sorry, I did not come here to win a popularity contest, there's over 100 acres on that site and we need to look at ways to ensure that we're putting services, supportive housing on the site, investing in individuals who are certainly in mental health needs. And that's the way we'll slowly climb out but we are so far behind, as the mayor said, and it's about time that we swim upstream.

Commissioner Kreizman: Thank you. Next question, we have Pastor Monrose.

Question: Thank you and good evening to all. Mr. Mayor, in Queens, women that face hardship that either stem from immigration status or maybe even trafficking are engaging in sex work. How can we invest in social services to support these women and potentially their families?

Mayor Adams: Commissioner Noel, do you want to touch that?

Commissioner Cecile Noel, Mayor's Office to End Domestic Violence and Gender-Based Violence: Good afternoon and it's an honor to be here with you in this space to really begin to talk about these very important issues and think about how we as a community, how we as the city can really help these survivors. Clearly, we have the Family Justice Centers in Queens that if you call 311 can help trafficking survivors and their families. We encourage you to reach out to our Family Justice Center, which is just down the road on Queens Boulevard, where we partner with community based organizations who are skilled in working with trafficking survivors, providing resources, providing it in the language that they speak, and culturally be able to connect with them and talk about the work that they're engaging in, but also to be able to work with our partners in the police department to identify if they are being trafficked against their will. How do we connect with our partners in PD to really identify these folks and have them follow up? We are really here to support, to think about how we both intervene, but also look at the folks causing the harm and how can we make a difference that way. Thank you.

Commissioner Kreizman: Thank you. Next question, we have Pastor Cabrera.

Question: Thank you so much, Mr. Mayor. The group will like to ask you can you talk about how you can increase the school budget to expand before and after school programs such as Beacon, CHAMPS, and PIL.

Mayor Adams: Chancellor, you want to touch on that and talk about some of the things that we're looking to do? And Keith, you could also, if you have something you want to add.

Chancellor Banks: One of the things, we're going to actually be making an announcement on Thursday morning, something we're calling Project Pivot. We've identified about 138 different organizations from around the city who are going to be working with a whole host of schools, schools that primarily have experienced some level of challenge, needing additional levels of support. And these are organizations which provide mentors, they provide safe passage to and from school, they provide tutors. It's a wide range of supports and services, something we're really excited about. We've been working with these groups for quite some time and you'll be hearing more about that on Thursday as we make that announcement.

And as I came here, I'm leaving a meeting with about 25 school principals, they serve as my Principals Advisory Council and they help me to understand how the things that we're doing at Tweed land actually in schools, and I can speak to the principals directly. And one of the things that they all are doing, which I'm so hopeful about, is they recognize that we are heading for some tough fiscal times in the city and we're not always going to have the budget that we want to have. But that's the moment why it's even more critical for us to invoke the village, if you will. There are community based organizations that are doing wonderful and amazing work. We need to make sure that they are fully in the game. And so while you may, as a school leader, not have

the principle to do certain things, you can be engaged in community partnership with organizations, many of which are already funded. They just need the partnership, they need to be connected to the schools.

Many of our school leaders have not been as well versed in how to connect with community partners. Some of them do it extremely well. And my job is going to be we're going to help to make sure that all the school leaders know how to do that and how to do that well. And there's been no time that we've needed it more than we're going to need it now and going forward because the reality is that we're not always going to have the budget to do all of these wonderful programs that we know that we need and that they're critically important. But if we engage with these other community partners, you got your local YMCA, you got the Children's Aid Society, you got dozens and dozens, hundreds actually of organizations that provide these services, and we need to make sure that all of our schools are fully aware. So I know, commissioner, this is your space.

Mayor Adams: It's my space, but it's a shared partnership between DOE and DYCD. I don't know if you realize this, but in this very school is a Beacon program. Queens Community House. Okay, clap it up for Queens Community House. They are running an outstanding program in this school. They're serving 100 young people. Excuse me, 100 adults and 600 young people in their Beacon program that they run as an after school program. In Queens alone, we have about 30,000 young people that are in Beacon programs in the borough of Queens. I think the challenge is having the participation rate go up because in some of the Beacon programs, the community based organizations are struggling with recruitment. So I think we need to focus in and do a better job at advertising and marketing so that you know that there is a Beacon program in the neighborhood schools and that you're taking full advantage of it. Thank you.

Commissioner Kreizman: Okay, excellent. Next question, Faith.

Question: Good evening Mr. Mayor. Hearing that there are efforts for cameras on the trains, is there any consideration for cameras at bus stops and on buses?

Mayor Adams: I love cameras. Not only do they help the police, I'm sure Chief Corey and Maddrey will tell you they help solve cases, but also they're great deterrents. And we want to just really lean into technology any way we can to really prevent and solve crimes. Because the faster we get a bad guy off the street, this prevents them from actually committing another crime. Just because we caught someone does not mean that's the only crime they did and cameras help us do that in an expeditious way. There are ways with technology. I know Chief Banks, Deputy Mayor Banks, I should say, is looking at all sorts of technology that's out there, so if we can find ways to integrate it into the bus stops, we're open to do that.

We had a program in Brooklyn when I was Brooklyn borough president called Safe Shoppers where every store, they had a camera. We would pay. If they would turn one of their cameras towards the streets, we will install that camera for them and it would connect to their system. And now the police department has a system where they're able to integrate a lot of the cameras that are throughout the city. Some of the apprehensions we make in video footage is not coming from police cameras but it's coming from private cameras that we're able to retrieve the data. So

if there's ways to put it on our buses and our bus stops... Buses now I know have it, occasions to get those who are parked in a bus zone, but whichever way we could use video technology to catch bad people, I'm all for it.

Commissioner Kreizman: Excellent. Next question, Angelica.

Question: Our table is requesting patrol cars at College Point Boulevard to address crime and quality of life issues, especially around smoke shops. In addition, they're asking for your consideration to build a new precinct dedicated to College Point and Whitestone areas, and its surroundings.

Mayor Adams: Y'all must all go to the Donovan Richards School of Get the Dollars. (Laughter.) Chief Corey, you want to talk about that?

Chief of Department Kenneth Corey, Police Department: I'll talk about the first half, building new precincts is above my pay grade. Although I will say that obviously the city is much larger in terms of population than it was years ago. There's about another million and a half people living here than lived here 20 years ago. So some of the areas in Queens where you have very large precincts have become very crowded but it's a challenge, even in flush times, but in tight budget times, as the mayor indicated, and the process of building a new station house is very long. As far as the patrol cars on College Point Boulevard, we can absolutely take care of that but we've gone a step beyond that recently, and we've gone back to something that we used to do years ago along our commercial strips and we got away from, and that's foot patrols.

Starting with the academy class that graduated this past July, all of those officers are assigned to foot patrols along commercial strips. So you do see them out there, we do rotate them around quite a bit, and to use them and maximize their efficiency, we'll move them even halfway through the evening shift because if they're working a 6 at night to 2 in the morning shift and most of the stores close at 8 o'clock, well I don't really need police officers watching rolled down store gates, I'd rather move them to a street like Austin Street, where you've got bars, and restaurants, and nightlife, so people feel safe to go out and patronize those. And that's a small number now because it's only one academy class, so it's about 400 officers. But we've got another about 600 that are going to join them in just about two weeks. So now we'll have a thousand out there as we come into the holiday shopping season. So you'll certainly see the patrol cars, but you'll also see those officers out there on foot. And they're out there from roughly eight in the morning until 11 or 12 o'clock or sometimes two in the morning depending on where they are, every night, seven nights a week.

Question: Will we see that in College Point though?

Chief Corey: You will. So we said it started with a small number of officers, 400 citywide, we weren't able to staff every single zone. But with the class coming out now, the first one's getting it are the zones that didn't. And College Point, the 109 in particular did not get. Although we have shifted over Chief Frierson and recently shifted over his current crop into the 109 and they're going to get the officers out of this class that's coming up.

(Inaudible.)

Mayor Adams: Hold on, sir. Hold on. When we finish with all the tables, we going to come back, because the young lady here also, so we'll come back. I just want to make sure we get to all the tables, then we'll come back to you, okay.

Commissioner Kreizman: Next question we have Anthony.

Question: Good evening. Good evening, Mr. Mayor. The question from table 14 is, what can the administration do to improve school safety? And also to establish a direct line of communication between the schools and the local police precincts?

Mayor Adams: Some of that I believe was answered. I know Chancellor Banks already looked at some technology around what we've heard often from our electives in local organizations of having the front doors to the school lock. We just had to make sure that was practical and Chancellor Banks, I believe he found the solution to that. And I'm going to take an examination of that and then we going to roll out the dollars of that to make sure it's done right. Second, people often forget, but parents can play a huge role, before that gun comes into school it's in somebody's knapsack, it's under someone's mattress. We really have to start being engaged in what our children is doing. And if your baby's wearing red all day, it's quite possible he could be in a gang. If he's have drawing on his bag or his book bag or he's throwing up gang signs, or if every day he's coming home smoking like marijuana's on his clothing.

We have to be more engaged on our children are actually doing, and that is part of the combination of public protection, being engaged as a parent. And we want to continue to give out those tips of what parents can look for to see if their children are participating in any illegal behavior. But schools are crucial to us and that combination of being directly engaged with the police precincts is important and we want to continue to foster that relationship so the police can respond accordingly when incidents of violence is taking place. And that is why those who wanted to dismantle that relationship between police and school safety agents, I was very clear that it's not going to happen. It's not going to happen while I'm the mayor.

Chancellor Banks: I just want to add in Mr. Mayor as well...

Commissioner Kreizman: Your mic.

Chancellor Banks: Yeah. I just want to add, Mr. Mayor, as well, one other point. In the past, the school safety agents in the schools, if there was an incident that was taking place, they had to report it to their command central and then it would go to the NYPD. We've eliminated the middleman and so now all the school safety agents are actually on the same frequency with NYPD directly. And so we believe that that will also work. That level of communication, fine tuning that level of communication. You don't have to go through a middleman, NYPD they can hear it directly and our SSAs can contact them directly. That will only work to the benefit of safety for everyone that's in our schools. Not just the kids, but everybody. Everybody's safety is important to school's, teachers, those that work in the kitchens, counselors, everybody's safety is important to us and we think that's another piece that will be very, very helpful.

Commissioner Kreizman: Excellent. Next question we have Marcus.

Question: Good evening Mr. Mayor. Our table had a lot of conversations about the 109 Precinct, but I know you addressed part of it. One of the things that we wanted to ask was, is it possible, first of all to get additional safety officers in the elementary schools? Right now we have a principal who's dealing with one safety agent, when they go on lunch there's no safety. They're providing a school aid. And secondly, there's only 160 recruits in the next police academy. What do you plan on doing to increase recruitment?

Chief Corey: I'm sorry, 160 school safety recruits you mean?

Question: 160 NYPD recruits for the new police academy?

Chief Corey: No. There's 1,400 in the academy right now. About 700 of them are going to graduate in two weeks and they'll be replaced by another class.

Commissioner Kreizman: Excellent, thank you.

Chancellor Banks: And on the school safety front...

Mayor Adams: I'm sorry, I heard the 109 Precinct twice. So this week I'm going to meet you guys over at the 109 Precinct and find out what's going on over there. Because something comes up twice, there's something that's just not right. So I'm going to take a ride over there and I'll tell you the day later, I don't want to tip off to the DI that's here for the 109, but I'll be coming over to the 109.

Chancellor Banks: I just want to, the first part of that question also. We put out almost 200 new school safety agents, most recently to start off this school year. We got another class of 250 that are in now. And so we are working very hard to try to build those numbers back and get more safety agents, particularly in our elementary schools, which a lot of times we think it's fine to just have one agent there. Our goal is to do more than that, but we're working on it.

Commissioner Kreizman: So next question we have Andrew.

Question: Good evening sir. How can we increase communication across all levels of government and residents to improve public safety?

Chief Corey: We have a number of ways that we try to engage with the community. So we have our neighborhood coordination officers as the DA pointed out before and our community affairs officers. But for us in the Police Department, that engagement starts with just saying hello, right? Go to your local build the block meeting that your neighborhood coordination officers have. You can go online if you're not sure who they are and you can even get their cell phone number and email, their personal cell phone number and email right there on the website and then reach out to them and just start that conversation. Let them know what's going on in your neighborhood. Let them know what's going on in your block. One of the things that's very different for me, and

I've been in this business for 34 years and the DA reminded me when she got here, how long we know each other. And she reminded me that I had hair back then.

But one of the things that's different for me is the whole of government approach that the Adams administration takes to actually solving problems. And before, the other agencies, we didn't work well together, we all worked in a silo. So if police officers responded to your complaint and it wasn't something that was for them to address or something for them to solve, they would just tell you, "Well, you have to call the parks department or you have to call sanitation." And so on. And that didn't help you, that didn't solve your problem. And now we find ways to do it together. So the mayor mentioned some of the homeless initiatives and those are collaborative efforts and that involves the NYPD. It involves Department of Homeless Services, Social Services, nonprofits. The same thing when it comes to illegal street peddling and so many other conditions.

Noise complaints, all summer long we deployed multi-agency teams to handle these chronic noise complaints where before the police would show up, tell you to turn the music down, maybe give you a summons and go about their business. And now as we go on with other city agencies and we've got the buildings department that says, "Well you can't even occupy this structure because it's illegal." Or the fire department that says "This is overcrowded and now you're shut down." And bringing every tool in the toolbox to bear on solving your problem. So we are now communicating amongst ourselves and doing it better. So you need to join that communication with us. And the easiest way to do that is to reach out to your local community affairs officer, your local neighborhood coordination officer and just start that conversation and tell us how we can best serve you.

Deputy Mayor Wright: And I would just add, and I know Fred will talk more about this, just the Community Affairs Unit is a direct line to every agency in the city and to really encourage people. We have ways for young people to get involved as well, there are youth councils that are connected to the NYPD Division of Youth and Community Development as well because we absolutely need to hear from our young people and have them engage in partnership with us as well.

Commissioner Kreizman: So definitely the Mayor's Community Affairs Unit is the eyes and ears for the mayor. It's the direct conduit to ensure the communities can have access and ensure the appropriate services. We work with all the commissioners, all the deputy mayors, everyone in the City Hall to ensure that your voices are heard. So please, you have Kevin Morris, Ido Shargal, two Queens borough directors, who are always beck and call to be available. We have deputy commissioners, you have myself as CAU commissioner, we're here to help any way possible. And then we also have one more...

District Attorney Katz: I'd be remiss if I didn't add, just so you know, the coordination of this administration, I've been doing this about 30 years, is really remarkable. And also at every community board meeting and every precinct council meeting in the borough of Queens County, I have a non-lawyer that goes to that meeting to be able to get information from the community as to what is needed and also to disseminate information. So please, if you have a need for that, they're out there as well. Thank you.

Commissioner Kreizman: Excellent. And then we have the last table... one second. We have a little respect our colleagues here.

Audience member: (Inaudible.)

Commissioner Kreizman: We want to respect the last table before we take any other questions so...

Audience member: (Inaudible.)

Commissioner Kreizman: Okay.

Audience member: Mayor Adams why would you...

Commissioner Kreizman: Yes. The next question we have Tiffany.

Question: Good evening Mr. Mayor. In Northeast Queens, many of our children travel to school in other boroughs. They are met with individuals who harass them, even defecate and use drugs in front of them. What advice would you give our kids in navigating around NYC in this current time?

Chief Corey: Yeah, so we're talking about in the subway or buses? Again, we want to help you with that and we do try to provide safe corridors for our students, particularly during the morning and the evenings when they're coming to and from school. But I need a little more specifics there.

Mayor Adams: And that's part of what Chancellor Banks is talking about, what he's going to announce this week about Project Pivot, creating those safe corridors. But there's a specific area that the questioner was asking about. We'd like to know about it so we can look at it and make sure that that corridor is a safe corridor.

Question: This...

Mayor Adams: Go ahead finish, there's more to it.

Question: Well, she's just saying it's in the streets in general and subways and buses.

Mayor Adams: Okay yeah. So it is about what Chancellor Banks is really focusing on and rolling out is those corridors that our children use. They're familiar corridors where they walk, what buses do they take in the morning? We want to create a safe space for them to get to and from schools. And one thing that I encourage parents to do when I was Brooklyn borough president, I would say it again, that parents should walk the route of where their children go to and from school and identify safe zones for them. What store is on the route? What barbershop is on the route? What person is on the route?

And if that child feels threatened in any way, there's a safe place that they can go into and just wait until the police can come or a responsible adult is there. It could be a church, a house of worship many times, or store, a local bodega, a local restaurant, a local business. But identifying, telling that child, this is what I did with Jordan when he was growing up. Here's the place you go if you feel threatened on the route to school and reach out to me, your mom, or reach out to the law enforcement. But we need to do those basic things to empower our children to know they have a safe place that they can go in route to school.

Commissioner Kreizman: We have two questions.

Mayor Adams: Yeah, two questions. Want to come back? Do you have one and gentlemen in the back, in the blue jean shirt?

Question: Oh hi, I'm Judy Lui and I live in Flushing. I don't have a question, but I just have a statement. I just don't want to share something with you. With the exception of right now, but every day when I walk outside my house, I always carry pepper spray and I also give my daughter who's in school a pepper spray to go to school and from school. She's not the only one. I know that there are many children and adults who carry something with them so that they can feel they can defend themselves the moment they walk out on the street. And so we just feel that something's not right with this. I mean, we start carrying this since the pandemic, nothing before that, before that we feel very safe. So we just feel that we shouldn't have to carry something not to feel safe.

And honestly, I don't think even carrying pepper spray would do any more to help myself. But I'm really at my wit's end. I don't know what to do to make myself, be safer. So with that said, honestly Mr. Mayor, I do have great faith in you. I do look up to you because you are my mayor. But I just want you to do everything in your power. I know it's not easy, there's no one simple solution. If you can help reduce the crimes across the board, it could be robbery, burglary, assault, whatever, so that we can feel safe again and live our life again. Thank you.

Mayor Adams: Thank you for that. I was at the wake this afternoon with Lieutenant Russo's dad and mom, and they said the same thing. We know how devastating it is to lose a child. I looked at that video and that video tore me apart. And when I spoke with them, they said the same thing. They said that they want this city and they want to work with me. And they are really committed as hard working New Yorkers in this city and state to see our city. We all want that. And I am committed every day, all day to getting this done and getting it right.

And we were here before. When I was a rookie cop I remember this city, I remember the graffiti on the trains. I remember over 2,000 homicides, 98,000 robberies. I remember people carrying items and weapons to defend themselves and people threw up their hands and said, I don't want to live in this city anymore. This is our city. We're not going to surrender the city to violence and we're not going to surrender the city to those who won hate crimes. We're not going to surrender the city. This is our city and we are going to turn this city around and we're seeing indicators of that. And I know we are going to move this city in the right direction. But I really thank you for that, thank you for your comments and thank you for your vote of confidence. We're not going to disappoint you.

Commissioner Kreizman: From the back.

Mayor Adams: Sir? In the back, sir.

Question: Mr. Mayor, you said you would come to the 109 Precinct. If you are promising us that you'll come to the 109 precinct and meet with us, I'd be more than happy to discuss what I wanted to discuss with you there, maybe at a smaller forum.

Mayor Adams: Okay, my team is going to get your information. And one thing, promise made, promise kept. And trust me, you're going to be annoyed with me calling you all the time because I like being engaged. I don't like information being filtered through my team. I like being one on one with people to see firsthand what the issues are. So we are going to make a stop over to the 109 Precinct and see what's happening over there.

Commissioner Kreizman: Excellent. So we want to thank everyone for coming out here today and getting through all the tables. And again, please fill out your Q&A cards on your tables in case your question wasn't asked. We'll have staff collect and make sure you get a response and follow up from the appropriate agency. I want to thank Deputy Mayor Sheena Wright, Deputy Mayor Banks, Phil Banks for being here as well as the executive staff, staff from all the agencies. Thank you.

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