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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO ANNOUNCES LARGEST YEAR FOR
AFFORDABLE HOUSING PRODUCTION IN CITY'S HISTORY**

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Great job.

[Applause]

That was wonderful. You did a great, great job. Well done. Well done. Thank you Destiny, and I am so happy for you and for Destin. Is he going to share the chair or – he can have my chair?

[Laughter]

Destin, you want my chair or you want that chair, okay. Destin clearly has a mind of his own as we learned upstairs, for any of you who were on Destin's guided tour of the apartment. He is a very impressive young man and Destiny thank you, you have a lot to be proud of in that young man but you have a lot to be proud of also that you persevered. You're like so many New Yorkers who are working so hard, just trying to make ends meet, and need to know that they'll be able to live in this city and who care deeply for their neighborhood, and their borough and just want to be a part of it. And I really appreciate what you said and our job is to find a way to help so many hardworking people who have been struggling, just the way you've been struggling. But I want to thank you because you're providing example today that it can happen. People can get the help they need. So congratulations, Destiny.

[Applause]

I want to thank so many people here who have been a part of what we're going to talk about today. A lot of great people from the city government I want to thank, in particular everyone from HPD who did such hard work to get us to this achievement and so many others like it. Particular thanks to Commissioner Maria Torres-Springer for her extraordinary leadership. A lot has happened in our affordable housing program. You're going to hear from Deputy Mayor Glen in a moment but I really want to emphasize that the team at HPD has done an amazing job and they've set a new record that we're going to talk about in a moment so congratulations to you and your team.

[Applause]

Also this site has a lot of powerful history because going way back to the Koch years this was a site that was important in terms of that extraordinary affordable housing effort. And those buildings are still here, we're adding now – we've added this new building. But the folks at New Settlement have been a part, for decades, of fighting to protect this neighborhood and people in it in the toughest of times, and making sure there was affordable housing, and were they're partners in keeping the older affordable housing and building new affordable housing. So I want to thank our hosts here at the building – Jack Doyle, the executive director of New Settlement Apartments and Alexis Sewell, the executive director of Settlement Housing Fund. Let's thank them both.

[Applause]

So this gets back to the essential question that has been the essence of the administration – how do we make this a fairer city? We want to be the fairest big city in America. What does that mean? Well it means that people who work hard, and are trying their best to provide for their family can actually get housing they can afford. And that is good and decent housing. That's when you know you're living in a situation of fairness. It rewards the folks who've done the hard work and have stuck with their community. And it reminds us that we're all stakeholders – we all belong, we're all a part of this. Not just a small, privileged group are rewarded but everyone has a chance to get rewarded for their hard work. That is the entire idea behind this.

Here is the reality that I felt back in 2013, and I still see it in so many ways – people were filled with anxiety and fear of displacement and you heard it in Destiny's story, what it was like for her before she got this apartment. That sense of will I be here in another year? Will I be able to afford to live here? That anxiety was at a fever pitch already back in 2013, and that inspired us to create the biggest affordable housing program in the history of New York City. That anxiety is still out there. We've got a lot more people to reach. And I want to emphasize that I meet, every single day, New Yorkers who fear for their ability to stay here, and they need hope. And part of why we are here today and we're telling Destiny's story, is to remind people that there is real hope. There's a tangible hope that you can get the kind of affordable housing you deserve. It does take time, it won't happen overnight. This'll be a long effort, but for more and more New Yorkers, this affordable housing is becoming a part of their lives. For more and more New Yorkers, their dreams are being answered. So we're in this for the long haul, and we've got a lot to do. But today we celebrate the fact that there really is some progress.

I remind everyone that if we don't get this right, if we don't create more and more and more affordable housing – if we don't protect the affordable housing we have, aggressively, it will not be the same New York City anymore. New York City was always meant to be a place for everyone. It's deep, deep in our history and our values and why we are great is we are a place for everyone. We cannot let that slip away. When New York City is no longer a place for everyone it will cease to be the greatest city in the world. So our job is to protect that extraordinary legacy, constantly build new affordable housing, preserve the affordable housing we have. Fight back when, in the interest of greed, landlords take away from hard working New Yorkers the housing

they have a legal right to. We're going to talk about today another way that we're going to join that fight.

But let's go over the picture first, the most ambitious affordable housing program in our history. When we announced it, it was a plan for 200,000 apartments by 2024. We decided we could go farther, and we on target to create and preserve 300,000 affordable apartments by 2026. That's enough for three quarters of a million New Yorkers to stay in the city they love. That sound good to you? Alright.

[Applause]

Now you will not be surprised to know that many doubted this plan could be achieved. We had a lot of critique in the beginning, questioning whether the numbers were realistic, whether we could actually get there. Well, we're here today to say yes, this plan is on target, this plan will be achieved, and that three-quarters of a million of our fellow New Yorkers will benefit and will know that they have affordable housing for the long haul for decades and decades to come.

Here's the fact and the achievement that we're here to formally announce. In the last fiscal year, that ended just on June 30, this city financed more affordable housing than in any fiscal year in the history of New York City – 32,000 apartments in Fiscal Year '18. 32,000.

[Applause]

9,000 of those will be newly built. 23,000 will be preserved, meaning the folks who are living in them will get to stay in their apartment and have it subsidized and supported for the long term.

That now brings us to a grand total of – I think it's really, really impressive where we are now – 110,000 apartments have now been financed. And what does it mean? I want to tell you about the folks who are already in this affordable housing just like Destiny and Destin are. We've gotten over 60,000 apartments built or fully preserved in the last four years or so which means 150,000 New Yorkers are in those apartments right now.

So, from the moment we announced this plan, May of 2014 – so almost exactly four years ago – 150,000 New Yorkers are in the affordable housing that was created or preserved under the plan. This moved fast and it's having a huge tangible impact on people's lives.

Now, look, we understand as I mentioned, we're still in an affordability crisis. We're going to face it for a long time. We're going to have to fight it with every tool we have. We're going to have to be creative. We're going to have to be innovative. We have to use every tool we have and when we find that's not enough, we have to invent new tools to fight for working people to make sure they have a place to live.

So, before we did things that were new and important. Rent freeze had never been done previously. It was the right thing to. Free lawyers to make sure people could fight illegal evictions. And the City Council played such a crucial role with Right to Counsel law. Mandatory Inclusionary Housing – we became the city that had the biggest and most progressive effort to

ensure that developers had to create affordable housing when they needed the City's approval to build. And again thanks to the Council for their extraordinary efforts on MIH.

Today we're going to announce another important tool to use on behalf of tenants to fight for their rights. We're announcing the creation of the Tenant Anti-Harassment Protection Unit at HPD.

Now, I want to tell you what this means. It means if there's a bad landlord out there who thinks they can get over on their tenants and get over on the City of New York, they are sorely mistaken because we are beefing up enforcement further. We will be inspecting more buildings than ever before and we'll be taking landlords to court directly if they violate the rights of their tenants.

We had a very important effort that we put together with the State to bring criminal charges against some of the worst landlords for some of the worst abuses but that's a time consuming effort.

While that continues, we wanted to do something more and bigger. So, this initiative will allow us to bring civil charges against landlords who harass their tenants and try and force them out. These will mean very serious penalties for those landlords. Tens of thousands of dollars to start if they have done the wrong thing, easily going up to hundreds of thousands of dollars in penalties.

So this is an approach with real teeth and it means that the word will quickly spread. Now, I always say, most landlords do the right thing and follow the law but there's an unscrupulous few who do a huge amount of damage and they hurt New York families and then they also take housing that had been affordable for a long time and they take it off the market by forcing people out.

This message will spread to those bad landlords that there's a lot more enforcement coming and they're going to pay the price if they dare to harass their tenants. So, this is about making sure that our city becomes fairer every day. And this new unit is going to be in the vanguard of fighting for tenants who really deserve a break in this town.

Just a few words in Spanish –

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

This is a new approach that's really going to make a difference and now it's my pleasure to bring forward our Deputy Mayor has been leading the charge. She started out her career, one of her earliest jobs was as a legal aid lawyer, so she knows plenty about what it takes to fight for our tenants, our Deputy Mayor Alicia Glen.

[Applause]

Deputy Mayor for Housing and Economic Development, Alicia Glen: Thank you Mayor and thank you Destiny so much for opening up your home to everybody. I have had the privilege to work for a very long time in over several administrations in the affordable housing space and it's

pretty clear to me now that it's fair to say that no administration has ever worked harder, been more creative, or done more to save and build affordable housing than this one. And this is a direct reflection to the Mayor's commitment to this work and a steadfast commitment to it. And as the Mayor said the numbers themselves are exceptional, in Destiny's story certainly drives home in a visceral and moving way just what this could mean to individual New Yorkers. But these amazing annual and cumulative numbers also now I think demonstrate that we have a new paradigm for affordable housing and how this will impact our city to come for decades.

So I would like to spend just a moment to talk a little bit about how we got here. As the Mayor said, this is sort of emblematic of the work that began in the Koch administration, but when that work began and the records we just broke, this was a very different city. Neighborhoods across the City were marred by empty lots, there were many more vacant buildings, real estate was cheaper, as was construction, and by the way there were about million and a half less people here.

Mayor: Oh that.

Deputy Mayor Glen: Oh that. So when we got here to really make a dent in the problem of affordability in one of the toughest housing markets in the country, we had to attack the problem from many different angles and employ many different strategies. So what we set out to do, we set out to create housing policies that actually address the changing demographics of the city, to match our housing stock, to the people who live here, to the growing number of seniors and singles. We had to revamp our planning processes and land use policies to link infrastructure investments, things like new libraries, new parks, better streets, to the housing we were building and preserving, to really talk about community development.

We had to make it clear to people that through zoning when we are increasing density. When we are building more housing, it's not if or when there is going to be permanent affordable housing? It's not an if, it's a must. We wanted to make this a cornerstone of our work that it was about economic diversity. We want to serve the lowest income New Yorkers but also the cops and nurses, the teachers, the artists, the people who make this city run and make us who we are as New Yorkers. We wanted to make sure that we were leveraging our tax expenditures, our capital dollars, our public assets more effectively. In plain English, to get more bang for our buck and we also made very clear that we need to protect our past investments while we lock in affordability for our changing neighborhoods. And to do that you have to constantly innovate, we can't just write the plan, put it on the shelf, and keep going. Constantly new tools, new pushing, whether it is modular ideas, it's all about innovation.

So it is incredibly ambitious but you need that to meaningfully address the city's housing crisis. And now we're seeing the results. We are keeping people in their houses, we're never giving up a square foot of affordable housing and we are simultaneously increasing the supply in a meaningful way of permanent, new affordable housing. There are real results.

We made huge progress in communities like Coney Island, East New York, Far Rockaway, Downtown Jamaica with nearly 1,400 affordable apartments that are going to build on large public sites that have been vacant and blighted for decades. We have doubled the number of

units created under mandatory inclusionary housing to more than 800 in just this year and produced another 800 units through our new 421a program. This is all to say that we have now got 8,800 apartments in our plan that will be permanently affordable as neighborhoods grow and change. That is a game changer and we are just beginning.

And I think this is also incredibly important. We are serving more New Yorkers who are having the hardest time finding or keeping a unit they can afford. Almost 60 percent of the apartments that we are building and preserving will be affordable to families that are making, if they are two adults, basically they are making minimum wage and aren't those the people who we really want to make sure can stay in our city? We raise the minimum wage and we build housing for people who are working, who can stay here.

So I think we have a demonstrated and established new blueprint for the preservation and building of housing and thinking about affordability for the long term. It's exactly what we came here to do four years ago when we launched the plan. None of this happened so that the most extraordinary interagency effort I've certainly ever seen in government. The cooperation amongst the agencies is extraordinary. I do want to obviously thank again Maria Torres for her and her team. Particular shout out to Molly Park who hasn't slept in about two months but you look great, you look great. Eric's on vacation, well deserved, but also for the folks at EDC and DCP, who also have been extraordinary partners in this effort. So proud and privileged to work with this team, thank you very much, and what a beautiful day here in the Bronx, thank you.

[Applause]

Mayor: Thank you Alicia. I was very struck last night watching the weather on New York 1. The weatherman said that this is going to be one of the ten most beautiful days of 2018. So happy to share it with all of you, look at the perfect blue sky, make sure you get that in your coverage.

The – I mentioned before the City Council has played an absolutely crucial role in furthering so many of these strategies. There's been real partnership and shared vision. So I want you to hear from some of the members of council who have been leaders in this effort starting with a man who represents this very community. He knows how important this affordable housing is for his constituents, Council Member Fernando Cabrera.

[Applause]

[...]

Mayor: As we go into questions, I just want to express – because I know a lot of good people are here from our agencies, again to everyone from HDC and EDC and City Planning in addition to everyone from HPD, really extraordinary team effort and everyone should celebrate today and Molly needs to get some sleep. Alright let's go to questions on this announcement and then we will go to other topics. Yes.

Question: The new anti-tenant or anti-harassment –

Mayor: Anti-harassment, yes.

Question: Does it require new staff? I mean this sounds like something HPD should be doing more, is doing already, how is it different?

Mayor: Yes, it's a great question. So it is an anti-harassment unit, is pro tenant, anti-harassment, it is building upon a lot of the things that exist already. You know that recently the Council made a real priority of creating a unit like this at the Department of Buildings which is now up and running. But when we looked at our efforts at HPD which have been going on for years, including the newer effort I mentioned with the Attorney General's office and the State Housing Department, everything kept adding to anti-harassment efforts, but we've seen a lot of harassment, you know what's going on with the price of housing and unfortunately some bad landlords have been motivated to take even more aggressive steps. We realized we needed more, that's the bottom line. We needed more personal so yes, there will be additional personal in this unit, more lawyers, so there will be additional lawyers in this unit so we could bring civil actions. The criminal actions are extraordinarily powerful, and those will continue.

But as I mentioned, by definition, those take serious time and energy to build each case. Civil cases can be done more effectively or more quickly at least I should say. We expect to be able to bring a hundred or more civil case a year. Now I'd love it if we didn't have that many to have to bring but we are realist. I think there will be plenty of business for this unit. This unit should be able to do about 1,500 building inspections a year – so really going after the worse cases but with more firepower, more personal, more consequence. Yes.

Question: To build on that – will this involve more lawyers for tenants for representation in housing court because I know that's something that was expanded a couple of years ago [inaudible]

Mayor: That part – that's a great question also – that part has been secured. There is a build out effort for the lawyers who will represent tenants, that's all about the Right to Counsel law that the Council passed and I strongly believe in. And those services are going to be available universally for any New Yorker who makes less than \$50,000 – they will get the full services of a legal aid lawyer. For those who make more than \$50,000, they will still have legal advice and counsel available to them. That is building out right now. Even with what we had done previously and the last numbers we had, you heard that referenced 27 percent in evictions, as more and more legal support has been available, but that's going to keep growing. This is a different approach. This is lawyers that work on behalf of the government, to bring civil cases against landlords who have harassed their tenants illegally, not providing them with the services they deserve, not providing them repairs or sometimes, we've seen making "repairs" or renovation to force people out, to make life impossible in the building. When we find those illegal situations, we can now bring civil cases directly, we don't need to – again we love the work we are doing with the State, we are going to keep doing that. But these civil cases can be brought directly by HPD's lawyers, but they needed more lawyers to do that so that's part of what this is all about. David.

Question: A couple questions about the housing numbers but just how many people are going to be in this unit? Did you say? I didn't hear.

Mayor: To begin with, is it – how many Maria, how many to begin? How many new people in the unit – look at me, how many new people in the unit?

[Inaudible]

Ten – begins with ten. That is the lawyers and the inspectors, and again that's one that if we see additional need we will keep adding to it.

Question: Okay so on the housing numbers, I mean the fiscal year numbers are far above what other fiscal years –

Mayor: Yes.

Question: Maybe this is more for Commissioner Torres-Springer and for the Deputy Mayor, but when I was talking to folks from HPD, and HTC earlier this year, this is a lot of concern about the effect of the tax plan on the tax credit –

Mayor: Yes.

Question: And how you are going to make sure, how you are going to keep pace with what you guys are doing, you are putting more money in already last year – did you find that you had to put in more city subsidy this year to get to this number? I mean how did you sort of, how did the city meet this, not just the existing goal, but exceed previous goals, while facing all of these headwinds from Washington?

Mayor: Great questions and let me start and then pass to Alicia, Maria, either, both. So first I would say we remain very concerned about some of the impact of what happened in Washington with the tax legislation but remember that was very recent and the full impact has not yet been felt. I think one of the big X factors here was that the big policy changes are finally starting to be felt. You remember the very dramatic debate and vote for mandatory inclusionary housing, that was a couple of years ago. But to be actually felt in practice it took this time for us to be able to implement that policy and have it really create affordable housing. You remember the very dramatic debate over 421A, same thing. When that finally got resolved, I believe and I want to really thank Alicia for this because she led the way – resolved in favor of much more focus on affordable housing. Now we are yielding the fruit of that. Some of the City owned sites that had previous not been acted on, that now are being acted on. So there are some X factors here David, that allow these numbers to go up. That's not going to be every year. You know I want to be clear. There's the tax legislation, we are still waiting to see impact. There's the economy which right now is strong, different economy might yield different results in terms of the private housing market. But I think one of the reasons we are seeing these new numbers is that a bunch of seeds that got planted finally bore fruit. Want to add?

Deputy Mayor Glen: Yes, that's exactly right, there are a couple of things. There was some softening in the markets for tax credit pricing but not as dramatic as I think many people felt. But also the team did an extraordinary job of making surer that we only added incremental subsidy as much as we needed to. I mean these guys are driving really hard bargains and pushing our partners very hard. But that did result in on the new construction sites slightly more per unit subsidy. That is a true statement. But again, we got so many more of what we would call free units, through these legislative efforts that have taken years to bear fruit, seeing both the mandatory numbers come in, the 421A legislation come in and actually a surprising number of voluntary inclusionary units so overall, we are sticking to our average budgets that we have projected and we are getting more money for our dollars. And we have to keep our eyes on the markets, that's absolutely true. Yes.

Question: [Inaudible] slightly more per unit subsidy on the construction site, how much more roughly?

Deputy Mayor Glen: I'm going to let Maria give you the exact details, it's a little more, yes.

Question: Can I ask you on the [inaudible] how many units came from mandatory inclusionary in the past couple of years?

Deputy Mayor Glen: 800 in this past fiscal year were starts under MIH.

Question: That's not really explaining this big number? Can you get me the 1,000 more than last year?

Deputy Mayor Glen: Well they are including voluntary inclusionary housing. So there's two numbers. There's the annual number and then the cumulative number and hopefully the fact sheet is differentiating between those two things. Okay, Maria do you want to?

Commissioner Torres-Springer: So first just to clarify mandatory inclusionary as Alicia mentioned, for the past fiscal year, it's 805 units, to date, it 1,200 units. And then I think in terms of the budget – we use different programs, right? Both under construction and for preservation and so what we are finding for new construction, because both in terms of the increase in construction prices across the city, the drop in pricing relative to the past few years and our commitment to reaching deeper levels of affordability as mentioned, almost 60 percent are for lower income New Yorkers in terms of the numbers for this year. I think a good statistic to just have as a metric for how we are doing budget wise and the overall plan that might be helpful to folks in that we have reached, because we are at 109,000 of the 300,000 goal – so we are 37 percent of the way, of our way towards the overall goal, but in terms of city subsidy expended we are at 26 percent. So we are on budget, maybe even under budget, but we will continue to drive a hard bargain. I did want to mention that right behind us, especially for members of the community who are here, this is our outreach van. It has been traveling to different communities across the city, partnering with Council members across the city. When we do the events, they provide information, how to apply for affordable housing for tenants, for owners, what it means to correct you violations, avail yourselves of our programs, and so it will continue to travel because our work is to take government and our services to the people and to communities.

Question: My question was what was the per unit increase?

Unknown: [Inaudible]

President Torres-Springer: Great, terrific, terrific.

Question: I thought the Deputy Mayor had you come up there to answer the question of what was the per-unit subsidy increase in the construction.

President Torres-Springer: We'll get back to you on that. There is an increase but it's for good reasons as I mentioned. Increase in construction costs – the drop in pricing and very importantly it's best for the new construction units being able to reach, to build deeply affordable units for the people.

Question: [Inaudible] percent of the budget – that's the \$80 billion number –

President Torres-Springer: No, that's the \$16.5 billion that is City subsidy, City capital [inaudible].

Question: A specific question and then broad question. Specific question – is Starcity counted in these numbers?

Mayor: Yes because a major City tax exemption was provided to keep it affordable for the long haul.

Question: [Inaudible] question. Does this 300,000 number – do you think of this when say a paradigm shift of being able to actually bring down market rents in some way or are we talking about better chances of winning the lotto?

Mayor: Well, I'll start and I'll let the experts speak. I'll give the layman's answer. I think it's better chances of winning the lottery and just using sheer volume. I mean look I don't know and it would be a very interesting thing to get the exact numbers on – I don't know what exact percentage of the 8.6 million people right now in this city have no affordable housing need or do not anticipate an affordable housing need.

I think there's obviously millions of New Yorkers who are really stressed and struggling to make ends meet. Thank God we have rent regulation which reaches well over two million people. Thank God we have public housing which reaches 400,000 people. But suffice it to say there's a vast need and when you put into play enough affordable housing for 750,000 people – so getting close to one-in-ten New Yorkers – by definition that's changing the equation.

I think what this, today, epitomizes is you have to fire on all cylinders. In other words you have to continue to stop the evictions and to reduce the rate of loss of affordable housing and those numbers actually have been pretty promising lately from where things were about a decade ago

when a lot of affordable housing was being lost. We've tightened up particularly with the legal services.

Big, big question is next year in Albany, if rent regulation is strengthened. It's one of the most important things we can do to protect affordability in New York City. If it's not we will be losing a golden opportunity. So, I'm going to be working very hard on that. But the – anyway, to bring it all together.

My answer is – if you can provide new affordable housing, meaning it was not guaranteed before and now it's guaranteed, for three-quarters-of-a-million people on top of rent regulation, on top of anti-eviction efforts, on top of public housing we can keep this a city for everyone.

As to whether it has a market impact. Let the experts speak –

Deputy Mayor Glen: I'll be really brief. Yes, it's a paradigm shift in a bunch of different ways. Number one, we have embraced smart growth strategies which are also designed to overall increase the supply of housing particularly rental housing, right. In a city of renters, we need to continue to build for the people who are here and the people who we want to have come to the city and stay here.

But we have changed the paradigm as to what that looks like, right. So this is administration proof, I like to call it. Something like the Mandatory Inclusionary Housing will now be a permanent part of what housing development looks like in a vast, vast majority of new neighborhood development and large scale development.

And that's really a – paying it forward so that there's always going to be affordable housing in large scale development and neighborhood rezonings. The fact that we're now building more rental housing in general is also, yes, having a slight impact on market rents which in many things is a good thing because even if you're not eligible for affordable housing, you're often rent burdened, right. Fifty-five percent of New Yorkers are rent burdened so –

Question: [Inaudible] –

Deputy Mayor Glen: Yeah, so you're seeing a little softening at the top of the market. You guys report on the data all the time and that's a fine thing. Landlord's margins are still fine. Trust me.

Question: Do you think that's related to the [inaudible] –

Deputy Mayor Glen: Yes I think – absolutely because with 421-a back that is a program that is designed to encourage the production of market rate and affordable housing. And it is good to see that much supply coming onto the market because as I said many New Yorkers who are not eligible for affordable housing are often and also deeply rent burdened. And we need to bring down the cost of housing to have a healthy economy and a healthy workforce.

Mayor: I want to – hold on a second. I want to make sure you guys are not talking past each other. You're saying, I think that the market housing –

Deputy Mayor Glen: [Inaudible]

Mayor: – that's being created is what's having a little bit of an impact on bringing down rents among other factors. I think the question originally was, is the affordable housing also? Per say [inaudible] –

Deputy Mayor Glen: You think the increased supply of affordable housing over – no, I don't think that's true.

Question: I was just wondering the cost of the Anti-Harassment Tenants Unit.

Mayor: What's the exact cost? A million a year? A million a year. Okay, on this announcement. Erin?

Question: [Inaudible] building is one that has a 50 percent community preference. And I was just wondering, I mean on the one hand of course that allows folks like the ones we met today to stay in the neighborhood but on the other hand you have this lawsuit pending saying it's exacerbating segregation. And you've spoken frequently about school segregation [inaudible] housing segregation. [Inaudible] that these community preferences are exacerbating segregation and if anything can be done within your housing policy that could combat that both in the housing level and [inaudible].

Mayor: Right, so there is a litigation going on so I'm just going to speak very broadly. I think our current approach which predates us – I mean this is the policy that was here when we came in but I think it's a balanced approach and I think it achieves multiple important goals at once. So, I think this is the best way to achieve all the things that we're trying to in terms of serving the people of this city. Okay, on this? Yes?

Question: [Inaudible]

Mayor: Yes, 3-1-1 and that – it will be. I just want to check, when do we expect that to be –

Unknown: [Inaudible]

Mayor: But when can they start calling 3-1-1? So, different from fully operational. Can we get back today on that? [Inaudible] because it's building out over the next few months. Obviously we're hiring people and all but even if it's not yet fully operational, it still could receive those calls and act on them.

Unknown: [Inaudible]

Mayor: Come over here, come over here.

President Torres-Springer: The unit will be fully operational by the end of the year but if tenants are experiencing harassment or problems with building conditions, they can and should

always call 3-1-1 and we will use every tool that we have at HPD and work with our sister agencies to help.

Mayor: Now, I want to pull that together. Anyone – in terms of your reporting – anyone who is experiencing harassment should call right now and we have been able to address it in a variety of ways. What we think is going to do is allow us to address it more deeply and with more consequence for bad landlords. But definitely, people should call now.

Let's see if there's anyone who has not gotten a question who wants to do it on this topic. Okay, David?

Question: A couple quick questions – what is the total City subsidy for the past fiscal year for this?

Mayor: You got it? Fiscal '18.

President Torres-Springer: For the –

Mayor: Wait, wait, can I clarify? What are you saying, for the new unit? More for –

Question: [Inaudible]

President Torres-Springer: The 32,000.

Mayor: The 32,000 [inaudible] Fiscal '18.

President Torres-Springer: That's right. It is about \$1.6 billion.

Question: [Inaudible]

President Torres Springer: That is direct City subsidy.

Question: [Inaudible]

President Torres-Springer: It is for this fiscal year, approximately \$1.6 billion as well.

Mayor: [Inaudible] – for '18.

President Torres-Springer: For '18, that's right. Both '18. Those are both Fiscal Year '18 numbers.

Question: [Inaudible] or so units are counted towards in this plan?

President Torres-Springer: That's correct.

Question: [Inaudible] for the Deputy Mayor. Your speech sort of seemed valedictorian. Are you planning on leaving the administration?

[Laughter]

Deputy Mayor Glen: [Inaudible]

Mayor: That is – that’s a flight of fancy right there. It didn’t seem valedictorian to me at all. It seemed like –

Deputy Mayor Glen: [Inaudible]

Mayor: Yeah, she is doing great and we look forward to a long time ahead together in triumph. On this announcement, anything else? Yes?

Question: Just, what is the process for applying for an apartment in a building like this?

Mayor: Ah-ha. Let’s go over that. If you don’t have this beautiful van drive up to you, what would you do?

President Torres-Springer: So, nyc.gov/housing has all of the resources including a link to Housing Connect. Housing Connect is our marketing lottery system. We have tried very hard to make it as streamlined and as easy as possible. You fill out a profile, the types of units that are homes that are available to you, you apply for. And we work with not-for-profit organizations across the city to make that process as streamlined and easy as possible. But NYC.gov/housing and for anyone in the neighborhood please drop by the van.

Mayor: Go ahead.

Question: Who are the best candidates who qualifies for?

President Torres-Springer: So the homes that are available are available to people of different incomes and so for every – like this building. Once the marketing is up its very clear the income bands for which you can qualify and as I mentioned we’ll work – there’s a lot of handholding to make sure the people are filling out the applications properly. That you know if you are eligible and we’ll you through the process.

Mayor: Okay, on this topic, you. Yes?

Question: What are the income bands for this particular building?

Mayor: Come on over.

President Torres-Springer: This particular building is fully leased.

Mayor: What were they?

President Torres-Springer: Oh, understood. They were – just give me one second and I will get that to you.

Mayor: While Maria is looking for it. I am going to make her translate into English. So she'll do AMI's but we're going to talk about family incomes for a family of three.

President Torres-Springer: That's right. Family incomes or a family of three, the homes in the new apartment in the new building are affordable to families who have an income of \$28,000 to \$85,000. That's a family of three.

Question: Mayor, can you tell us about the affordable houses in Inwood [inaudible].

Mayor: The Inwood rezoning process? Yes. So I'll be very broad because it's still going on and the Councilmember obviously is deep in discussion with us and with the community. But I think there's been a lot of shared vision that we have to create substantial amount of affordable housing. One of the things that Ydanis Rodriguez has said to me for years is that in the previous administration there was very little affordable housing created in Washington Heights and Inwood. And that's an area that has faced really profound pressures in terms of rising rents. And so it's imperative in the rezoning to make sure we achieve substantial affordable housing but also there are lot of unmet community needs that the rezoning will allow us to address. It's a chance – I always say a rezoning is effectively a once in a generation opportunity to take stock of the needs of a community and address a lot of them simultaneously with serious investment. So that's what we're trying to achieve. Okay, last call on this announcement. Yes?

Question: When did this building [inaudible]?

Mayor: When did this building open?

President Torres-Springer: End of 2017 it started leasing up. So and it – over the course of the last several months it's been fully leased.

Mayor: Okay, let's go to other topics. Yes?

Question: Okay, what do you think of the NYPD's decision to immediately start disciplinary action in the Eric Garner case since [inaudible]. Because just a few days ago the NYPD said they were going to wait [inaudible].

Mayor: Yeah, the – I am perplexed by the approach of the Department of Justice. And I think this is the answer to your question. I don't know why it's taking them four years to make a decision up or down. Repeatedly we got the message – by the way in the previous presidential administration and this one to hold off because they were anticipating a potential prosecution. That message obviously has changed now. And I was surprised by the DOJ spokesperson statement the other day. I asked the Commissioner to have it confirmed not just – with all due respect to spokespeople but through a senior DOJ official. It was confirmed late yesterday, or early this morning. And we obviously – it's their saying it no longer in their has a bearing on

their actions. We will now proceed with the disciplinary actions immediately. There is no reason to wait anymore. But I think this is causing me at least, and I am going to have this conversation with the law department in the NYPD. We are going to have to re-think our approach going forward. God forbid we have another situation like this, I hope we don't. But if DOJ can't work on coherent timelines, then we're going to have to think differently about the whole situation. Yeah?

Question: When you say re-think differently about the whole situation. What do you mean? Will you just disregard—

Mayor: Meaning, again what I would like to believe is we will never have another incident like this. I want to be very clear that is our goal in everything we do to never have to have a tragedy like this for everyone involved again. But you know, I've been in this job for four and a half years and in the beginning I think there was a real sense of sort of a solidity when we dealt with prosecutors, not just DOJ but the Attorney General, and District Attorneys that there was a real sense of having to move quickly. And when they said explicitly in any one of these cases, at any level of government please defer to us. We have the ability to prosecute and that is the highest call that made sense. And I think if you look at the Attorney General, with the power the Attorney General has now in certain police involved shootings those prosecutions have been timely and efficient. And you look at District Attorneys; I think that's generally been true as well. But here is the Department of Justice that was the gold standard for you know generations, and it has taken them four years, and even at this hour they have not made a decision. I want to really emphasize that to my fellow New Yorkers. They haven't made a decision either way. And I don't know how on earth that's possible since they've obviously done all of the investigation they ever needed to do. So this is a new reality we're going to have to take into account going forward.

Question: What punishment do you think is appropriate for these officers?

Mayor: I don't pass judgment in that fashion. There is due process, I honor due process. There will be a trial and you know that ultimately I want to respect that process, and let it play out. Yes?

Question: There are at least five officers on tape on the Garner tape, either not intervening or using force. There's been reports of omissions of facts in the reporting, in the NYPD reporting afterword's. Will there be — there's only two people right now facing disciplinary inquiries? Are the others that were involved that day going to be facing any kind of inquiries?

Mayor: Okay, first I would ask you on any specifics talk to the NYPD. In my understanding is that after all of the process they have undertaken over these last four years that only the two officers will now be subject to the disciplinary action. But for the reasons in the specifics, you have to talk to the NYPD. I want to remind you that the wild card of the Justice Department continues in this case. Deciding not to decide reality means and they've said it very explicitly again in the last 24 hours to us that they are reserving their right to act, and they do not believe that whatever the NYPD does has any bearing at this point. Meaning it does not affect their actions or their decision. So in terms of who might be potentially prosecuted, how many people

how, that still is a live question in terms of DOJ but for the NYPD I think the situation is fixed now.

Question: Two questions on the same issue. The first is you said that you confirmed with high level DOJ people that there was kind of this message in spring that the NYPD –

Mayor: No, not in the spring, the last 24 hours. In all of my dealings with our lawyers from the law department in the NYPD what I heard consistently was we were not getting an all clear signal from DOJ. When the spokesperson said it the other day that was the first time I'd ever heard it, meaning earlier this week. I asked the Commissioner to go back and get formal confirmation because bluntly again notwithstanding excellent public servants like Eric Phillips. Something of this sensitivity we did not want to hear it from spokesperson we wanted to hear it from a ranking official of DOJ. That was done in the last 24 hours, it was specifically confirmed, that makes abundantly clear to all of us it's time to move the process forward.

Question: You still haven't confirmed whether that message was delivered in the spring. I – it certainly wasn't delivered to me and I don't have any evidence it was delivered but it's a little moot at this point. We're talking something that's now ready to move right away and it will move.

Question: Second point, I just want to get a better understand of the relationship between the DOJ and the NYPD. When they make these requests, I guess how would you categorize it. Is it kind of a courtesy request that's made to the NYPD? Is there any kind of administrative reason why you have to –

Mayor: Yeah, it's a – again I am not a lawyer, but I will do my best I think it's a very fair question. So, we've seen it so consistently. You know, coming into this work not a lawyer, not with a law enforcement background, I watched the pattern across all these different agencies – Attorney General of the State, Department of Justice – whether it's the Justice Department in Washington, or the U.S. Attorney's Office – the different DA's – and we've had situations now involving several different DA's – very consistent pattern. The first request is, do not take any action at the agency level that might interfere with a prosecution or might air evidence in such a fashion as to affect a prosecution – that's been very, very consistent.

Now, even very narrow questions, like body camera, footage – a couple of instances in the last six months or so where body camera footage was released by the NYPD after consultation with the District Attorneys in each case to confirm that they had no objection to the release and did not think it would adversely affect their activities. I think that's a perfectly sane approach. It's not a courtesy matter, it's a jurisdictional matter. It's respecting that we don't prosecute for crimes through the NYPD. What NYPD does is essentially an occupational process, determining if there's going to be any penalties in terms of someone's employment. The criminal prosecutions are at a much, much higher level. So, we're deferring to that. But my point in that is, up until now, up until this case, there was a pretty consistent pattern – a lot of communication, very clear lines, when it was no longer necessary to hold back, we got that clear message, we move forward. This one has drifted, and drifted, and drifted. And I didn't understand it in the previous presidential administration and I don't understand it in this one. Maybe you could argue

in the first months they were getting their feet wet, but it's been a year-and-a-half. Again, this, to me says we may be in a new circumstance that we're going to have to reevaluate, but it's been very consistent previously.

Go ahead, Rich.

Question: Mr. Mayor, now that there is a green light from the DOJ, are you relieved that this process is going forward?

Mayor: I think every New Yorker is relieved that we can finally try and get some closure here. I mean, this was a horrible tragedy that everyone felt in this city, and no one felt it more than the Garner family, and this has not been speedy justice. And again, if you want a bipartisan statement, you know, we had two presidential administrations that were polar opposites, but neither one of them could manage to make a decision. So, this has not been a good and fair situation. I think to finally have action on the one piece we can control will bring a small measure of closure here.

Okay, other questions – yeah?

Question: Mr. Mayor, you said at a town hall last month that you'd be in favor of having the City do many of the zoning [inaudible] that developers can exploit to increase the height and density of their buildings. I'm wondering, with all of the rezoning projects moving forward right now in the City, do you find that there's more [inaudible]?

Mayor: Well, I think – first of all, my view of the rezonings during this administration – different that previous administrations – is – and I want to give this team here a lot of credit, and the Council too – there has been a unity about holding developers to their obligations and putting real teeth into any zoning agreement, and having consequences if they don't live up to their obligations. That's certainly what MIH is all about, but I think an atmosphere has been created where we drive a hard bargain and then there's going to be real consequences if a developer doesn't live up to it. That's the central fact, that's the most important piece of the equation. To the question of loopholes, I think there are some outstanding issues that need to be examined, and City Planning is doing that right now. And at that town hall meeting, if I remember correctly, City Planning said by the end of this year they think they will have done a full review and they would have identified if there's anything that needs additional action.

Question: Do you have any update on this steam explosion and there's a reason why you didn't go to the scene?

Mayor: I have an update to the second question – this incident happened very quickly, and then all of the information I got from my team, lead by our Deputy Mayor for Operations Laura Anglin – and, of course, our Fire Commissioner Dan Nigro is up there – is that the incident was over quickly, the area was secured, the evacuations took place quickly, and there was no threat of any further explosion or any further incident. And thank God there were no – at least, as we've heard at this point – no major injuries. Although, we've put out a very clear message to people who may have been affected by any of the debris or material in the air to have that checked right

away. So, I think, considering the incident was over and there were no major injuries, that's a situation I don't always go, obviously. I go when something is ongoing, or when there has been a more serious impact. But that's the status update – the situation's under control, the evacuations happened. There are some environmental concerns being looked at. We don't have full answers on that. Eric will let you know as soon as we know more. Health Department's involved, DEP's involved. We don't take that lightly, but, in terms of immediate impact, no serious injuries, thank God.

Question: Do we have more information on the cause of the explosion?

Mayor: I don't, and we expect to have that in the course of the day.

Question: I just want to go back to the jurisdictional issue with the DOJ, because you said that's been very consistent. Advocates are pointing to cases in a wide number of other cities where the cities immediately terminate a police officer, and the other issue is, you know, after four years, the NYPD did decide, you know what, we're not waiting any longer. Why did it have to reach such a lengthy period of time before the City said, we're going to take matters in to our own hands?

Mayor: Okay, so, two very separate questions. On the question of other cities, that's also a question of other incidents – some of the incidents that occurred in other cities were exceedingly clear. I think each one has to be looked at in its own individuality, but sometimes there is a situation where there is not a lot of doubt. Other times there's a situation where there's a lot of open questions. But I don't know what their conversations were in other places with prosecutorial offices. I think it's right that we respect the concerns of prosecutors – that's such a central concept. And this is what I have experienced – again, I have no ability to fully reference what happened elsewhere. In case, after case, after case, the prosecutors involved asked for special consideration to make sure their cases were not undermined. We have to honor that. That said, I am now holding out a specific example – the Department of Justice – that does not conform to the other examples and is going to have to cause us to reconsider our approach if we're dealing with an agency that may not honor the notion of speedy justice. If they can't give us some kind of clear timeline, it begs the question if we need to proceed on our own, going forward. But that's going to have to be its own discussion.

Question: [Inaudible]

Mayor: Wait, let me just finish this – the other part of your question?

Question: Why is a four-year –

Mayor: Oh, in this case, yeah. Because, look, again, I think where there's a fundamental misunderstanding – I'm asking you guys to shed some light here – the difference between departmental charges and criminal charges. Departmental charges – the highest penalty the department can bring is termination, in any case. We all know the difference between that and criminal charges, which can result in years in prison. So, when a prosecutor says, don't interfere with our case, we take that seriously. And I think that what happened here was – look, it was

well reported there were differences within the Justice Department. So, our hope in the previous administration was they would resolve them and come forward with an answer. I think most people were surprised in November of 2016 with the result of the election, and that took away the continuity within the Justice Department, then there was a new cast of characters. And, at first, it was not shocking to say, okay, now they have to look at it again and make their decisions. But it's just dragged on to a point that's unacceptable. I think if the new administration had come in, in a matter of months made a decision, that would not have been shocking. But there's – literally after numerous conversations, there was not even a timeline for a decision. There was no endpoint. There was no criteria given to us. So, enough was enough – that's the bottom line.

Question: On the NYCHA issue [inaudible] considering that NYCHA was found to have falsely filed certain documents with the federal government, have you considered doing any kind of – ordering any kind of audit of other City agencies to make sure that their filing practices, and, sort of, their declarations to the authorities are accurate.

Mayor: Look, this is one where I'd state the common-sense answer – this has not been a problem with other agencies that I know of. I've been at this four-and-a-half year in this role, but I'm thinking back through my previous roles in public service. I don't remember an instance like this. So, if we had any indication of one, of course we would go and do that kind of forensic work. There's also a lot of oversight entities that are constantly looking at these agencies. To the best of my knowledge, they have not brought up anything like that.

Yes?

Question: Two things – one [inaudible] speak to the lawsuit that was filed yesterday on the sanctuary city issue? What is the City hoping to achieve? I believe there's a \$4 million grant [inaudible] has there been material harm to the City from that? And beyond getting the money, what are you hoping to achieve with this suit?

Mayor: Sure, so first yes of course there's been material harm. \$4 million that we should have gotten already we haven't gotten and there's no indication that the federal government intends to give it to us. That \$4 million goes to crime-fighting, it goes to very tangible work, to keep crime down in this city, and we should get that money. This is the leading police department in country; it has a lot to do. It also does a lot that supports the work of our nation, including our anti-terrorism work. Of course we deserve that money, so the very immediate reason for the lawsuit is to get the money that was given to us consistently before, and has been withheld, I think, for political reasons. The second reason for the lawsuit is to challenge the very constitutionality of the law that the current administration in Washington keeps waiving in everyone's face as their rationale. We don't believe it's constitutional on its face to force these kinds of obligations on a locality; we're in a federal system. One of the things I hope comes out of the Trump experience is that people in this city, in this country understand the federal system better. It's not the federal government's place to deny funding to the city in the manner they're doing it or to any city. We think it's a violation of the constitution.

Reporter: The administration made a decision yesterday to change its previous decision and allow a team from Staten Island to travel to North Carolina.

Mayor: Yeah

Reporter: I'm wondering if you could speak to why you changed your mind on that and if this kind of – if people are going to be allowed to travel, is there a purpose to retaining this travel ban.

Mayor: The ban is in place and it's obviously something a lot of governments around this country are honoring a lot of nonprofit organizations, a lot of businesses are honoring because there's still a very unfair law in that state. And look, I think that kind of economic pressure has really had a positive impact in a number of cases; insuring that more tolerant policies come into play. So, I think it's an approach that has proven to be effective.

This case I don't know all the facts but this one seems to me, there was a certain amount of misunderstanding and miscommunication. As I understand it these kids only qualified recently, there was not an understanding that this problem was going to affect them. And look, it's a bunch of kids who have earned the right to participate. Sometimes, we say, there's a valid exception. I certainly didn't want to stand in the way of these kids having this opportunity but I do believe the ban is the right thing to do. Last one.

Reporter: Now that the Justice Department isn't a problem. Are we going to get any public report of what happened that night? Gwen Carr has called for the release of the names of the officers involved but a public understanding of what went down?

Mayor: I think the trial process is public and I think that it will certainly achieve that outcome. I don't know and I'd be happy to ask the NYPD if there's any other information that they plan to come out but there's going to be a public trial, that's part of due process, and I think that will shed a lot of light.

Thank you everyone. Alright.

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