

THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
NEW YORK, NY 10007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 26, 2023

CONTACT: pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov, (212) 788-2958

**MAYOR ADAMS OUTLINES “WORKING PEOPLE’S AGENDA” FOR NYC IN
SECOND STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS**

*Agenda Rests on Four Pillars That Uphold Strong and Sustainable Society: Jobs, Safety,
Housing, and Care*

*Speech Lays Out Bold Plans to Keep Recidivists Off Streets, Connect 30,000 New Yorkers to
Apprenticeships, Launch Country’s Largest Curbside Composting Program, Kick Off
Community Planning Processes in Midtown and Staten Island’s North Shore, Electrify All For-
Hire Vehicles, and Provide Free, Comprehensive Health Care to All New Yorkers in City
Homeless Shelters*

Adams Administration Will Make NYC More Affordable, Safer, Cleaner, and More Livable

NEW YORK – New York City Mayor Eric Adams today outlined a “Working People’s Agenda” in his second State of the City address, delivered at the Queens Theatre in Flushing Meadows-Corona Park. Mayor Adams’ agenda is built on four pillars that are essential to building a city that meets the needs of working New Yorkers and represent the focus of his administration’s work in 2023: jobs, safety, housing, and care.

“Without a strong working class, this city cannot survive. That’s why, today, I’ve outlined how we plan to build a city for working people, one that is more affordable, safer, cleaner, and more livable,” said **Mayor Adams**. “You need good jobs and pathways to get those jobs, and those jobs need to be able to support a home for you and a family. You need to be safer, and you need care — not just in crisis but throughout your lives. These are the things that our administration is working for every day to sustain the workers who make this city possible and build a better city for all.”

JOBS

New York City has added more than 200,000 new jobs over the last year, with the city’s job growth outpacing both the state and the rest of the nation. But that progress masks a harsh, unequal reality: The unemployment rate for Black New Yorkers is more than three times the rate

for white New Yorkers. Mayor Adams' Working People's Agenda will ensure that all New Yorkers have access to family-sustaining jobs with good pay and benefits.

To do so, Mayor Adams will launch a new Apprenticeship Accelerator to connect 30,000 New Yorkers to apprenticeships by 2030. The Accelerator will track all forms of apprenticeship from youth to adults in the workforce — also providing technical assistance to support the expansion of apprenticeship programs by employers, training providers, educational institutions, and labor unions. The administration will also launch a citywide campaign to engage potential apprenticeship program participants by highlighting how these programs are providing a pathway to economic opportunity and financial security while transforming the career trajectory for New Yorkers in industries like information technology, marketing, health care, and finance.

In October 2022, Mayor Adams announced the [Science Park and Research Campus \(SPARC\) Kips Bay](#) project with New York Governor Kathy Hochul, a major step towards establishing New York City as a global leader in life sciences, health care, and public health jobs. Building on that work, Mayor Adams will kickstart a new effort to make New York City the global center of sustainable biotechnology — leveraging the city's growing life sciences and biotechnology industry to meet the city's carbon neutrality goals and create jobs. The Adams administration will open a first-in-the-nation, 50,000-square-foot innovation space that will provide office space, research laboratories, and events and programming space to support the growth of sustainable biotechnology startups and companies, with an emphasis on creating opportunities for women and people of color and bringing greater diversity to the industry. Additionally, the New York City Economic Development Corporation will release a request for expressions of interest for an operator to open a new hub for materials science innovation focusing on early-stage companies.

Under the Working People's Agenda, the Adams administration will also:

- Create a new Nursing Education Initiative, in partnership with the City University of New York (CUNY), to support 30,000 current and aspiring nurses over the next five years to enter the nursing workforce, stay in the profession, and climb the career ladder;
- Double the city's current rate of contracting with minority- and women-owned business enterprises (M/WBEs) and award \$25 billion in contracts to M/WBEs over the next four years and \$60 billion over the next eight years;
- Launch the new Center for Workplace Accessibility and Inclusion — a dedicated team that will connect 2,500 people with disabilities to jobs, help employers make their workplaces more accessible, and continue the mission of helping New Yorkers living with disabilities thrive in the workplace and every other aspect of city life;
- Expand the CUNY2x Tech program to more campuses — including community colleges — with a focus on institutions serving first-generation college students and communities of color;
- Help 36,000 economically disadvantaged workers and residents of high-poverty communities — including 8,000 construction workers and 28,000 service contract workers — connect to good jobs every year by working with city partners in Albany to finally empower New York City to require companies with city contracts to hire local community members;

- Support the city’s growing legal cannabis industry by launching a new loan fund to help more New Yorkers impacted by the ‘War on Drugs’ start new businesses, while increasing enforcement against unlicensed establishments undermining the legal industry;
- Give every child the support they need to read at or above grade level, building on the success of supplying every elementary school with a phonics-based curriculum rooted in the science of reading by ensuring every school has at least one staff member trained in literacy-based interventions, launching the first district school in city history dedicated solely to supporting students with dyslexia, and making dyslexia screenings available in every public school in New York City;
- Establish a whole-child approach to education that includes social-emotional learning, rolling out a pioneering student mental health program with telehealth care for every public high school student, community-based counseling for those who need additional support, daily breathing and mindfulness exercises, and expanded nutrition education standards and plant-powered school menus; and
- Ensure every child graduates high school with a clear pathway for the future — whether that is a job, job training, or continuing education, provide up to 35,000 middle school students in the Summer Rising program with career exposure and college visits, empowering LGBTQ+ youth through a new Summer Youth Employment Program Pride initiative that places students in truly supportive work opportunities, and expanding [FutureReadyNYC](#) to 90 schools and 7,000 students to provide a reimagined high school experience with early college and career-connected learning programs.

SAFETY AND QUALITY OF LIFE

Mayor Adams entered City Hall with a mission and a mandate to reduce gun violence. Having lowered shootings by double digits in its first year in office, and [leaving 2022 on an overall downward trend in major crimes](#), the administration will continue to focus on violent crime while rolling out new and expanded efforts to combat issues from property crime and traffic violence to quality-of-life issues.

The Adams administration will work to get ‘New York’s Most Wanted’ — roughly 1,700 known offenders responsible for a disproportionate amount of the city’s violent crime — off the streets. That means working with Albany on targeted, evidence-based solutions to this crisis and changes to state law to ensure that defendants receive the speedy trial that the Constitution guarantees, that victims and their families are provided justice in a timely manner, and that district attorneys and public defenders have the resources to hire more attorneys and paralegals to remove the bottleneck in the courts while simultaneously investing in technology. The administration will also work to address the overly complex and burdensome discovery process that is consuming innocent people with bureaucracy without getting dangerous people off the streets or providing closure for victims.

Following a [promising year for Vision Zero and traffic safety efforts](#), which included a 25-percent decrease in speeding after Mayor Adams turned on speed cameras 24/7, the Adams administration is focused in 2023 on holding reckless drivers accountable. The administration will work with partners in Albany to advance a package of six bills called Removing Offenders and Aggressive Drivers from Our Streets (ROADS) to increase penalties for serious crashes,

running red lights, and impaired driving. The ROADS legislative package would also ensure swift and serious consequences for those who drive with suspended or revoked licenses, including by revoking the privilege of driving on city streets and suspending the registration of vehicles that collect five or more red light camera violations within a 12-month period.

Mayor Adams will also continue to focus on quality of life and provide clean, high-quality public spaces that are essential to the city's comeback. The mayor will take a major step by launching the country's largest curbside composting program, with access for every New Yorker by the end of 2024. He will address the longstanding, pervasive issue of unsightly sidewalk construction sheds by replacing them with newly designed structures that keep our streets vibrant and strengthening enforcement against those who leave sheds up for years. And, building on the "[Making New York Work for Everyone](#)" action plan released in December, Mayor Adams will make a game-changing \$375 million investment to create extraordinary new public spaces and permanent Open Streets in all five boroughs, including:

- The Broadway Vision plan to connect Madison Square to Greeley Square between 21st and 33rd Streets;
- Unlocking two spaces under the Brooklyn Bridge in Manhattan for public use with a working group to evaluate medium- and long-term concepts for these spaces and others nearby;
- Additional high-quality pedestrian space around the perimeter of Court Square Park and along Thomson Avenue and Court Square West in Long Island City;
- A full reconstruction of Jamaica Avenue from Sutphin Boulevard to Merrick Boulevard in Jamaica;
- Permanent upgrades to the Open Street on Willis Avenue between East 147th Street and Bergen Avenue in the Bronx with a bike lane, pedestrian safety improvements, and public space beautification; and
- Permanent improvements to the Minthorne Street Open Street on Staten Island, with expanded pedestrian space at Tompkinsville Park and a new plaza at Central Avenue.

Under the Working People's Agenda, the Adams administration will also:

- Supplement the city's focus on the most violent offenders by redoubling efforts to protect New Yorkers from robberies and burglaries — including increasing the New York City Police Department's (NYPD) crime prevention units' focus on retail theft and working with business owners and business improvement districts on proactive solutions to prevent shoplifting;
- Expand the community response teams to operate at the borough level and address everything from ghost license plates to noise complaints and property crimes;
- Continue the fight against gun violence by expanding neighborhood safety teams to additional neighborhoods, investing in more violence-prevention programs in neighborhoods with the highest concentration of violent crime, and launching a new Neighborhood Safety Alliance — a partnership between local precincts, service providers, and community leaders in many of these same neighborhoods;

- Increase the number of NYPD tow trucks to address the growing number of abandoned or illegally parked cars blocking traffic and visibility, help keep delivery zones and bus and bike lanes clear, and crack down on illegal placards and placard abuse;
- Bring CompStat meetings to the community level and give New Yorkers direct access to a version of these meetings for the first time, allowing them to interact directly with local and citywide NYPD leaders;
- Build on efforts to electrify the city vehicle fleet by requiring the 100,000-plus high-volume for-hire vehicles to do the same — requiring them, with the support of Uber and Lyft, to be zero-emissions by 2030, with no new costs for individual drivers;
- Appoint a new director of the public realm to coordinate across city government, community organizations, and the private sector to ensure we invest in public spaces citywide;
- Work with the City Council to build on the massive success of the pandemic-era temporary Open Restaurants program and deliver a permanent program that actually works for businesses and residents in all five boroughs;
- Unveil an updated PlaNYC in April with even more of our sustainability agenda, including new data on how our food choices impact the environment; and
- Launch a new climate budgeting process — making New York City the first big city in the nation to adopt the approach of aligning financial resources with our sustainability and resiliency goals.

HOUSING

New York must remain a place where working people can get a foothold and afford an apartment while simultaneously raising a family in a community. But New York City cannot address its housing shortage and solve its affordable housing crisis simply by continuing the status quo. The city must build more housing, and that’s why Mayor Adams has committed to making New York a “City of Yes.”

Building on the mayor’s [“Get Stuff Built”](#) plan and his moonshot goal to meet the need for 500,000 new homes across the city, the Adams administration will work with New York City Councilmembers Erik Bottcher, Keith Powers, and Kamillah Hanks to kick off two major community planning processes. In the coming weeks, community engagement will begin with the goals of creating more housing, including rent-restricted housing — in Midtown Manhattan where current zoning only allows for manufacturing and office space, as well as on the North Shore of Staten Island where the administration will pursue expanded waterfront access and flood resiliency, job creation, and mixed-use development.

Under the Working People’s Agenda, the Adams administration will also:

- Help New Yorkers stay in their homes by investing \$22 million in tenant protection programs to provide more staff dedicated to investigating and enforcing against bad landlords, creating stronger partnerships with community groups and legal services providers to protect tenants from being pushed out of rent-regulated apartments and cracking down on landlords who discriminate against tenants based on their source of income;

- Expand the Big Apple Connect program to reach even more New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) developments with free broadband and TV for tens of thousands of New Yorkers;
- Provide free broadband access to households with Section 8 vouchers with a new pilot program in the Bronx and Northern Manhattan;
- Continue putting money directly in New Yorkers' pockets — including \$350 million through the expanded Earned Income Tax credit — with an historic expansion of the city's free tax preparation program in coordination with schools, houses of worship, NYCHA, and community partners to process an additional 26,000 returns next year and save New Yorkers an additional \$14.3 million in filing fees and refunds;
- Broaden access to other public benefits like unemployment insurance, Medicaid, or SNAP by cutting unnecessary red tape and expanding benefit screenings so New Yorkers get every dollar they deserve; and
- Pursue legislation allowing New Yorkers to keep public benefits for up to six months after they accept a new job, easing the transition to financial independence.

CARE

Over the past year, New York City's ability to care was put to the test by an asylum seeker crisis. New Yorkers rose to the occasion, as they always do, and the Adams administration has provided shelter, food, health care, education, legal support, and a host of other services to the more than 42,000 asylum seekers that have arrived in New York City since last spring. The city will continue to do its part, but everyone else must do their part as well — New York City cannot continue to shoulder this cost on its own. The administration will continue to provide care for the newest New Yorkers, while also deepening its commitment to every resident of the five boroughs and fundamentally changing the way it provides care for its residents.

Mayor Adams will undertake an historic effort to provide health care for New Yorkers experiencing homelessness. The administration will work with its federal partners to allow New Yorkers who have spent more than seven days in the New York City Department of Homeless Services' (DHS) shelter system to become eligible for free, comprehensive health care services through a specialized network of dedicated providers and care management. This would make New York the first city in the country to provide this level of care and support to its residents. Connecting New Yorkers experiencing homelessness to ongoing primary care, behavioral health care, and social services is more cost-efficient than the cycle of hospitalizations and emergency room visits that so many people experience, more effective at supporting the health of a largely vulnerable population, and an important measure to get more New Yorkers into high-quality, permanent housing and ease overcrowding in DHS shelters.

The Adams administration is also developing a three-part mental health plan focused on child and family mental health and an upstream approach to the opioid crisis, including investing more than \$150 million in opioid settlement funds into proven harm reduction and treatment programs. As part of the plan, the administration will open new Clubhouses for New Yorkers with severe mental illness. Clubhouses provide peer support and access to services, employment, and educational opportunities — offering an alternative to the instability and danger of the streets,

hospitals, jails, or subways, while reducing hospitalization and contact with the criminal legal system and improving health and wellness.

Under the Working People's Agenda, the Adams administration will also:

- Continue to address women's health by hosting an all-hands-on-deck summit in March and putting forward initiatives that will help improve Black maternal mortality while also improving the birthing experience for all New Yorkers, in addition to unveiling a comprehensive women's agenda in the coming months; and
- Fight the crises of obesity and chronic disease by investing in access to healthier food for lower-income New Yorkers, relaunching the Groceries 2 Go program, and expanding [Health Bucks](#).

The full text of Mayor Adams' remarks, as prepared for delivery, is provided below:

My fellow New Yorkers, thank you.

A year ago, I was sworn in as your mayor. We've climbed a lot of mountains since that day.

One year ago, we were facing crisis after crisis — COVID, crime, an economy in freefall. I was mourning my mother, who transitioned before she could see her son become New York City's second Black mayor. But my mother never rested when there was work to do, and neither did New York City. We hit the ground running and got stuff done.

One year later, our city is on the pathway to being safer, our economy is recovering, and our stores, subways, and hotels are full. Our children are back in school with their teachers and friends. Our theaters are thriving, our restaurants are booked, and New Yorkers are back to work.

I'm proud of our achievements this year. And I want to thank all of you who worked so hard to get us to this moment.

Today, I stand before you here at the Queens Theater, in the borough where I grew up. Home to an international working-class community to say to you, my fellow New Yorkers: The state of our city is strong. As strong as the police officers and first responders who have made this city safer, as strong as the legions of city workers who have laid the groundwork for the future, and, above all, as strong as the working people of this city who make it all possible.

Your early mornings, late nights, and double shifts keep us moving, keep us healthy, keep us safe — especially over the last few years. You have done everything for us, and this city must do more for you.

Today, I want to outline a working people's agenda, based on the four pillars that uphold a strong and sustainable society: jobs, safety, housing, and care. These are the things that our administration is working for every day.

Every New Yorker needs a good-paying job, so we are investing in a new generation of apprenticeships, community hiring, and job training. Every New Yorker needs a safe and welcoming neighborhood, so we are getting New York City's "Most Wanted" off our streets and investing millions to make our city cleaner and greener. Every New Yorker needs an affordable place to live, so we are working to add 500,000 more homes across all five boroughs. And every one of us needs care — not just in crisis but throughout our lives.

That's why we are expanding the social safety net, making it easier to access public benefits and health care, no matter who you are or where you live. We're changing how we get things done for New Yorkers — building success at the source, solving problems upstream instead of reacting to crises downstream, moving beyond recovery into a new era of abundance and equity.

And it starts now, with us. We're getting things done for the people of New York City. And we are not doing it alone. It will take everyone in this room working together.

I want to recognize my colleagues in government who are here today: Attorney General Letitia James, State Comptroller Tom DiNapoli, Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, City Comptroller Brad Lander, Public Advocate Jumaane Williams, City Council Speaker Adrienne Adams, District Attorneys Alvin Bragg, Darcel Clark, and Melinda Katz, Borough Presidents Vito Fossella, Vanessa Gibson, Mark Levine, Antonio Reynoso, and Donovan Richards.

And last but not least, I want to thank Governor Hochul. It's been a long time since the governor of New York has come to a State of the City address. It's a testament not only to our incredible partnership but to your commitment to the people of New York City. I'm grateful to have you here today and to have you fighting for us in Albany.

So as I said, our Working People's Agenda starts with jobs — not side hustles or occasional gigs but jobs with good pay and good benefits, jobs you can support yourself and a family on, jobs you can build a life around. New York City has added more than 200,000 new jobs over the last year, and our employment growth has outpaced the state and the nation.

But that progress masks a harsh reality. The unemployment rate for Black New Yorkers is at least three times as high as for white New Yorkers. This era of inequality must end.

We are going to make sure that all New Yorkers finally have access to good jobs. We're reimagining our city's workforce development system from the bottom up — improving education, expanding job training, and creating employment on-ramps at every stage of the process, so that New Yorkers from all walks of life can benefit from this economic recovery.

People used to move where the jobs were — but in today's economy, jobs come to where the talent is. So we are going to bolster, build, and diversify that talent, creating the best-educated, best-prepared workforce anywhere in this nation.

Today, I'm proud to announce that we will connect 30,000 New Yorkers to apprenticeships by 2030, thanks to our new Apprenticeship Accelerator. This is on-the-job experience with an

opportunity for permanent employment in high-demand careers, and it will ensure employers can tap the talent they need.

We're also going to expand the CUNY2x Tech program to more campuses — including community colleges — with a focus on institutions serving first-generation college students and communities of color.

We're also investing in the jobs of the future. Last year, Governor Hochul and I announced a new life sciences hub in Kips Bay, which will create 10,000 jobs and \$25 billion in economic impact. And this year, the city will kickstart a new effort to become the global center of sustainable biotech.

We will start by opening a first-in-the-nation incubator at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, where biotech startups will transform the way we eat, build, and protect our environment. And as we work to create more jobs, we will also help New Yorkers train for the jobs that are in high demand right now — jobs in tech, renewable energy, and nursing.

Our city and country are already facing a nursing shortage, and the federal government estimates we will need 275,000 more nurses nationally by 2030. So I'm proud to announce a new Nursing Education Initiative — in partnership with CUNY — that will help more New Yorkers enter the nursing workforce, stay in the profession, and climb the career ladder. We will support 30,000 current and aspiring nurses over the next five years with everything from additional training to mentorship and clinical placements. New York City needs our nurses, who did such incredible work during the pandemic. Nurses are the hands, heart, and soul of our health care system, and we will never forget you.

We also need to help more New Yorkers with disabilities enter the workforce — right now, only one in three are employed. Our city will launch the new Center for Workplace Accessibility and Inclusion, which will connect over 2,500 people with disabilities to jobs. We will continue the mission of helping New Yorkers living with disabilities thrive in the workplace and in every other aspect of city life.

We're also looking for new ways to address old injustices, including supporting the largest legal cannabis industry in the nation. This year, we will launch a new loan fund to help more New Yorkers who were impacted by the “War on Drugs” to start new businesses.

At the same time, we will increase enforcement against unlicensed cannabis shops. We're not going to let bad actors undermine the promise we made to New Yorkers who were impacted by marijuana criminalization. If you think you're going to come into our communities without a license, put our kids at risk, and steal jobs away from people trying to do it the right way, you must be smoking something.

We're also going to make sure more of the money that our city spends goes towards creating good jobs for New Yorkers right here at home. That means working with our partners in Albany to finally give New York City the power to require companies that benefit from city contracts to

hire local community members. Promoting community hiring will allow us to help 36,000 economically disadvantaged workers connect to good jobs every year.

We also want to make sure even more city dollars go to minority- and women-owned businesses. We recently hit our M/WBE spending goal three years ahead of schedule. Today, I'm announcing an even more ambitious commitment. Working with Speaker Adams and the City Council, we are committing to award \$25 billion in contracts to M/WBE businesses by Fiscal Year 2026. And we will increase that number to \$60 billion by 2030 — more than doubling our current rate.

Our support for small businesses does not end there. This week, we announced the Small Business Opportunity Fund, a \$75 million loan fund that will be the largest in New York City history. And while our tourism and hospitality industries have recovered substantially since our city shut down in 2020, we cannot take that progress for granted.

We will show the world that New York City is open and ready for visitors, attracting major events like the 2026 FIFA World Cup and — we hope — next year's Democratic National Convention. We'll continue to invest in our cultural and creative sectors across the board — from iconic museums and arts organizations to our legendary film and television production industry.

As I said before, talent is at the center of our jobs strategy, and we know it starts with education. Chancellor Banks and I are united in our vision of giving all of our children a bright start and a bold future.

We are making three fundamental commitments to our young people. One, every child will get the support they need to become a strong reader, at or above grade level. Two, We will establish a whole-child approach to education, factoring in social-emotional learning and other supportive services. And three, every student who graduates from a New York City high school will have a clear pathway to the future — whether that is a job, job training, or continuing education.

Let's start with reading, the foundational skill that every child needs to succeed. This year, we made sure every elementary school was supplied with a phonics-based curriculum built on the science of reading. And going forward, every school leader will be trained in this improved literacy instruction, so they can support the teachers in implementing that curriculum. Next year, every school will also have at least one staff member trained in the most effective reading interventions available, so that every student can access the support they need. We will also launch the first district school in city history dedicated to supporting students with dyslexia, while continuing to expand new dyslexia programs citywide.

Before I took office, there were no consistent dyslexia specific screenings across all our public schools. As of this year, we've rolled out new screenings in nearly 200 schools. And by next year, they will be available in every public school in the city — supporting families like Sanayi Canton's. Three of her sons were diagnosed with dyslexia, but, until recently, our public schools simply didn't have enough support for students facing those challenges. Sanayi worked two jobs

to get them extra tutoring, and her oldest son has since earned a full scholarship to Fordham University.

We are inspired by this family, but no parent should have to work two jobs just to provide a basic education for their children. Sanayi, we are proud to be working with you to ensure your youngest son and children like him can get all the services they need right in their school and their neighborhood.

Second, academic success is important, but we must also take a whole-child approach to education — supporting our children with healthy food, physical education, social-emotional learning, and mental health services. This year, we are rolling out a new, comprehensive mental health program for our students. We will provide our high school students with everything from telehealth care to community-based counseling, depending on their individual needs. We'll initiate a new program focused on daily breathing and mindfulness exercises and continue to expand nutrition education standards and plant-powered menus in our schools.

And, this year, we are going to make long-overdue updates to our Fair Student Funding formula, redirecting \$90 million towards supporting students in temporary housing and schools with a concentration of high-need students.

That brings me to our third promise: Every student will be ready for what comes after high school. It's not just about connecting them to jobs — it's about planning for the future all along the way.

Starting this summer, up to 35,000 middle school students in our Summer Rising program will receive career exposure, field trips, and college visits. We are also enhancing and diversifying our largest-in-the-nation Summer Youth Employment Program. This year, we will empower our LGBTQ+ youth through a new initiative that places students in truly supportive work opportunities.

Our city is determined to make sure our students graduate from high school with skills, strategy, and purpose. That's why we are expanding our FutureReadyNYC program to 90 schools and 7,000 students next year. We want our students to get the experience and support they need to transition to college and career paths before they graduate. So when you get your hard-earned diploma, you will get more than a handshake — you will get support, direction, and a path to opportunity.

Our children must be educated, but they must be safe, too. Our administration came into City Hall with a mission and a mandate: Reducing gun violence. We've already made real progress. Shootings are down, murders are down, and major crimes were down last quarter for the first time in six quarters.

New Yorkers can finally see safer days ahead after several years of rising crime.

I want to thank everyone who has supported this effort, especially Governor Hochul and President Biden. They understand that fighting the scourge of illegal guns is a top priority for

our city. We will continue to work with all of our colleagues in government to combat gun violence in New York City and across the nation.

That means advocating for common-sense gun reform at every level of government. We're just a few weeks into the New Year, and already this country has seen multiple mass shootings.

Americans have had enough. We must get this done. Because ending gun violence means stopping it before it starts, especially when it comes to our youth. By the time a young person gets a gun, the system has already failed. We're not going to let that keep happening in our city.

We're going to use proven methods and intensive community support to keep gun culture from taking root and taking over. That means more neighborhood safety teams in more places, more violence-prevention programs in neighborhoods with the highest concentration of violent crime, and a new Neighborhood Safety Alliance — a partnership between local precincts, service providers, and community leaders in many of these same neighborhoods.

I want to thank Police Commissioner Sewell for all her work keeping New Yorkers safe this year. She has saved lives and supported the department through a very tough year.

This year, we will build on that work — increasing our efforts to protect New Yorkers from robberies and burglaries as well as violent crime. The NYPD's crime prevention units will expand their focus on retail theft and work with business owners and business improvement districts on solutions to prevent shoplifting. We'll also expand the community response teams to operate at the borough level.

And we will make better use of our most powerful tool in the fight against crime: Our communities. We're bringing CompStat meetings to the community level. These are the monthly meetings where local precincts and NYPD brass go through the data to determine how to address crime block by block. We're going to give New Yorkers direct access to a version of these meetings for the first time, so they can interact directly with local and citywide NYPD leaders. If New Yorkers don't feel like they can engage with the NYPD, we will never be able to fully serve them and keep them safe. Breaking down these barriers will be a big step in the right direction.

We will also roll out new and expanded efforts to fight everything from property crime to traffic violence and quality-of-life issues. Many of these problems are rooted in the continuing crisis of recidivism.

Time after time, we see crime after crime from a core group of repeat offenders. There are roughly 1,700 known offenders that are responsible for a disproportionate amount of violent crime in our city. These are New York's "Most Wanted." We know who they are, and we need to get them off our streets.

This year, we are going to work with our partners in Albany to find reasonable, evidence-based solutions to this recidivism crisis. We all agree that no one should be in jail simply because they

can't afford to post bail. But we should also agree that we cannot allow a small number of violent individuals to continue terrorizing our neighbors over and over again.

We look forward to working with the Governor and the legislature to make changes in the law that ensure defendants are provided with the speedy trial that our Constitution guarantees and that victims and their families are provided justice in a timely manner. That means making sure our district attorneys and public defenders have the resources they need to clear the backlog of cases and finding ways to expedite the discovery process. Discovery is the process of exchanging legal information before a trial begins, and it has become so complex that it is jamming up the entire system. This must change. Justice delayed is justice denied.

Our legal system must ensure that dangerous people are kept off the streets, innocent people are not consumed by bureaucracy, and victims can obtain resolution. This is something we can all agree on. Let's get it done in 2023.

Our city is also going to escalate our campaign to end another deadly crime that kills far too many innocent people: Traffic violence. 2023 is the year we are going to tighten the screws on reckless drivers — holding them accountable for their actions before they harm others.

We must treat traffic violence the same way we treat other dangerous crimes. We are working with our partners in Albany to advance new legislation called ROADS. That stands for Removing Offenders and Aggressive Drivers from our Streets. These new laws would increase penalties for serious crashes, running red lights, and impaired driving — including revoking the privilege to drive on our city streets.

We will also continue to save lives by expanding protected bike lanes, cracking down on illegal placards and placard abuse, and ensuring swift and serious consequences for those who drive with suspended and revoked licenses.

New Yorkers have had enough of gridlock and scofflaws. Going forward, we are going to deploy more NYPD tow trucks on our streets. We're going to ticket and tow abandoned or illegally parked cars that block traffic and visibility. This will help keep our delivery zones, bus lanes, and bike lanes clear and help us to make driving, biking, and walking easier and safer for everyone.

New Yorkers should not have to fear for their lives every time they cross the street or bike to work. Vision Zero means exactly that: Zero fatalities. That's a goal we take very seriously.

Our administration is also going to invest in improving quality of life for New Yorkers across the board. For far too long, New Yorkers were asked to accept things that should be unacceptable — crime, rats, trash, traffic. When we allow quality of life to deteriorate, it is working-class New Yorkers that suffer most. It also hurts our economic recovery.

Last year, our administration made significant improvements to more than 75 commercial corridors in all five boroughs. This year, we will build upon that work — especially when it comes to rats. Most people don't know this about me, but I hate rats. And pretty soon, those rats will be hating me.

Hiring our new Rat Czar will be just the beginning of a new era in delivering the best in public services and public spaces. We're going to "Get Stuff Cleaner" by launching the country's largest curbside composting program. By the end of 2024, all 8.5 million New Yorkers will finally have the rat-defying solution they've been waiting for for two decades.

In just three months, a pilot composting program right here in Queens kept nearly 13 million pounds of kitchen and yard waste out of landfills. That's more than the weight of 300 city buses. Imagine how much we will accomplish when every family in the city is participating. A lot of people have talked about this issue, but this administration is getting it done.

Quality of life improvements won't stop there. We're also going to replace unsightly construction sheds — requiring all buildings to use newly designed structures that preserve the vibrancy of our streets — and increase enforcement against those that leave those sheds up for years at a time, blocking sidewalks and windows.

And speaking of sheds, it's time to retire those COVID cabins and replace them with something better. The Open Restaurants program was a massive success that saved so many of our restaurants, bars, and cafés during the pandemic. But now it's time to come together and figure out how New Yorkers can enjoy outdoor dining with a permanent version that works for businesses and residents. I know New Yorkers support this vision, and I look forward to working with Councilmember Marjorie Velázquez and the City Council to achieve it.

Open space is important. The pandemic highlighted the critical role our parks, playgrounds, and waterfronts play in improving the physical and mental health of all New Yorkers. Building on the commitments Governor Hochul and I announced in our "New New York" plan, we are going to create extraordinary new public spaces in every borough. We will invest more than \$375 million in new parks and plazas, widened sidewalks, safer intersections, expanded bike lanes, and inviting landscaping. And we will build on the success and popularity of our Open Streets program by creating permanent community spaces where people can gather and enjoy the best in cultural and wellness programming. Our new director of the public realm will ensure we invest in our public spaces citywide, coordinating across city agencies, businesses, and community groups to deliver results for all New Yorkers.

Public safety means more than protecting our streets. It means protecting our environment — the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the future of our children and generations to come. For too long, our working-class neighborhoods have borne the burden of highways and heavy industry, leading to polluted air and the highest asthma rates in the nation. This environmental injustice is not acceptable, especially when the technology we need to change it is already here.

That's why we are committed to reducing building emissions to create a healthier and more sustainable city. We're also electrifying our city vehicle fleet.

And we are going to go even further, requiring for-hire vehicles to do the same. Today, we are announcing that Uber and Lyft will be required to have a zero-emissions fleet by 2030. That's zero emissions for over 100,000 vehicles on our city streets. And it will be achieved with no new

costs for individual drivers. We're pleased that both companies are embracing this shift, and we look forward to working with them to get it done. We're also encouraging New Yorkers who drive to make the switch to electric vehicles as well, adding charging stations in all five boroughs.

Our commitment to improving the environment and fighting climate change means reinventing our energy sector across the board. New York will continue to lead the way to our clean-energy future by becoming the wind power hub of the Eastern seaboard. The South Brooklyn Marine Terminal will soon become one of the largest offshore wind port facilities in the nation. This will create jobs and help New York City meet our goal of 100-percent clean electricity by 2040.

We'll also be unveiling even more of our sustainability agenda this April in our updated PlaNYC, which will include new data on how our food choices impact the environment. And we will be launching a new climate budgeting process that puts sustainability front and center. Going forward, the first question we will ask about new programs and investments is, "Will this help meet our climate goals?"

The future of New York City will be cleaner, greener, and healthier for all, including our wildlife and marine life, like the dolphins who recently visited us in the Bronx River. That's the future of our city. More dolphins, fewer rats.

This is the greatest city in the world. And every day, more people want to come here, work here, and be part of the New York City story. New York must remain a city where everyday people can find an affordable place to live. Young people, immigrants, families, and retired folks all need a place to call their own.

That's why we have continued to support public housing every step of the way. It is the foundation of our affordable housing stock and a pathway out of poverty. For years, public housing was underfunded by the federal government, but we are starting to turn that tide. Last year, we made renovations to more than 8,500 NYCHA apartments through the RAD program. And we have committed a historic \$23 billion for housing, including money for repairs to NYCHA buildings.

We got the NYCHA Trust passed, unlocking billions of dollars for long overdue renovations. But we never would have gotten it done if we didn't have tenant leaders like Barbara McFadden leading the way. She helped organize her neighbors at Sheepshead-Nostrand Houses. Along with so many other NYCHA residents, they took the long ride up to Albany and spent day after day meeting with state legislators. Barbara, you got it done for us. Now we are going to get those repairs done for you.

We need to invest in our public housing. But we also need to build more affordable housing for all New Yorkers. That is why New York has committed to being a "City of Yes" — yes to more housing, in every borough and every neighborhood. Last month, we released our plan to Get Stuff Built and laid out a moonshot goal of building 500,000 additional homes over the next decade — homes for all people, from recent arrivals to lifelong New Yorkers, homes for seniors, families, and veterans.

I said we couldn't do it alone — and the good news is that we don't have to. In her State of the State address, Governor Hochul committed to providing more tools for New York City to build the housing we need. I want to thank the governor for her leadership and support. On so many issues, she has been there for our city right from the start.

And, in 2023, we are going to accomplish great things together, including building more housing in high-opportunity neighborhoods and near transit hubs. I recently announced plans for 6,000 new homes and 10,000 new jobs around four new Metro-North stations in the Bronx, and we are not stopping there.

At Willets Point, just a short walk from where we are now, we are working with Councilmember Francisco Moya to build the largest new 100-percent affordable housing development in 40 years. This visionary new development will feature much more than housing — it will have a world-class soccer stadium, public space, and good jobs, too.

This year, we will pursue opportunities to add even more housing, jobs, and infrastructure in all five boroughs. From the moment I took office, I've said that we want to work in partnership with Councilmembers and communities to build more housing together, and more and more of our Council colleagues are standing up to be part of the solution.

Councilmembers Erik Bottcher and Keith Powers have called on us to help them make Midtown Manhattan a true live-work community. That means creating housing in areas that currently only allow manufacturing and office uses while protecting good jobs in the center of our city's economy.

We've also heard Council Member Kamillah Hanks' call for a master plan for the North Shore of Staten Island, with investments in the waterfront, housing, and job opportunities. Councilmembers, I'm proud to say we are answering your call. The Economic Development Corporation and the Department of City Planning will be working with you and Speaker Adams on plans that address the needs of your communities while tackling our citywide housing crisis. Thank you for demonstrating what real leadership looks like.

Building new housing is essential for our future, but we also need to address the housing crisis in the here and now. That means protecting tenants and helping New Yorkers stay in their homes. So we are investing over \$22 million in tenant protection programs — including more staff to increase investigation and enforcement against bad landlords and stronger partnerships with community groups and legal service providers to protect tenants from being pushed out of rent-regulated apartments.

We're also cracking down on landlords who discriminate based on source of income. If you tell a potential tenant that you don't accept Section 8 vouchers or other rental assistance, guess what? That tenant might be an actor hired by the city, and we are going to take enforcement action against you.

Housing is the biggest cost New Yorkers face, but it's not the only one. In this digital era, access to the internet is essential for work, school, and life, including medical care. We're going to help

all New Yorkers get connected, no matter what their income level. We're expanding Big Apple Connect within NYCHA developments, delivering free internet and TV to tens of thousands of New Yorkers. And we will launch a new pilot program providing free broadband to Section 8 households in the Bronx and Northern Manhattan.

We're committed to fighting for support for working people and actually making sure they get that support. This year, we will make it simpler for New Yorkers to access public benefits like unemployment insurance, Medicaid, and SNAP. We will cut unnecessary red tape and expand benefit screenings so New Yorkers in need will get every dollar they deserve. That will include a focus on seniors as well as veterans who may be eligible for newly expanded federal funds.

And we are working to pass legislation that will allow individuals to keep public benefits for up to six months after they take a new job, easing the transition to financial independence.

Last year, we announced we were putting \$350 million dollars back into the pockets of working people through our expansion of the Earned Income Tax Credit. This year, we're making sure working people actually get that tax credit by launching a historic expansion of our free tax prep program. And, beginning tomorrow, we'll be introducing free business tax prep for freelancers and gig workers — another first for New York City.

With an infusion of new funding and unprecedented coordination with schools, houses of worship, NYCHA, and community partners, we'll be able to process an additional 26,000 returns next year and save New Yorkers approximately \$14.3 million in filing fees and refunds. As we speak, New Yorkers are applying for and receiving these expanded benefits. A family of four making \$25,000 will see their payout increase from \$300 to \$900.

Let me tell you what a difference these programs can make. Ronald Brown lives in Queensbridge Houses with his two daughters. Like so many New Yorkers, he got laid off during the pandemic and was having a hard time getting back on his feet. Last year, he came to one of our free tax prep centers hoping to get his federal stimulus check for \$1,400. By the time he walked out, we had gotten him almost \$15,000 — including the expanded state income tax credit we fought for and won.

Ronald, I hope you're coming back this year, because we are going to get you and your family the money you deserve.

Finally, I want to talk about something that doesn't get enough attention: Our responsibility as a city to care for New Yorkers in the greatest need. Over the past year, our ability to care was put to the test by the asylum seeker crisis. New Yorkers rose to the occasion, as they always do. Since last spring, we have had more than 42,000 asylum seekers arrive in our city, and we have provided them with shelter, food, education, health care, and legal support.

We will continue to do our part, but we need everyone else to do their part as well. I want to thank Majority Leader Schumer, Minority Leader Jeffries, and our tireless New York congressional delegation for everything they have done so far.

But New York City cannot continue to shoulder this cost on our own. We need more help from Albany and Washington, D.C. The asylum seeker crisis is a national issue, not a local one.

While we will continue to provide care for new arrivals, we will also deepen our commitment to every resident of the five boroughs. We are going to fundamentally change the way we provide care for our citizens. We're moving from a system that waits until New Yorkers are in crisis before offering help to one that focuses on upstream solutions. That means eliminating bureaucratic barriers and focusing on the structural challenges that so often force people into crisis.

And we will begin with one of our most vulnerable populations: People experiencing homelessness. This year, we are working with our state and federal partners to offer free comprehensive health care to New Yorkers who have spent more than seven days in our Department of Homeless Services shelters. This would make New York the first city in the country to do so.

We're not going to wait for people in crisis to show up at the ER — we will provide the care they need when they need it. That's progress, that's compassion, that's care in New York City.

We'll also take an upstream approach to our opioid crisis, investing more than \$150 million of opioid settlement funds secured by my good friend Attorney General Tish James into proven harm reduction and treatment programs.

And we will move mountains to address the growing problems of untreated serious mental illness and social isolation. A few months ago, we laid out an initial approach for connecting the most severely mentally ill New Yorkers with needed care. This work is driven by the dedicated heroes who are out on our streets and in our subways, night and day, helping New Yorkers in crisis.

People like Richard Arroyo, who works on one of our Health Engagement and Assessment Teams. He grew up in Marcy Houses and studied to become a social worker to help people in need. Richard has spent the last ten months riding our subways, in high-stakes, high-stress situations, helping people in crisis get the services they need. That could be as simple as pointing them to a food pantry or as big as getting them into shelter or treatment.

He says the most important thing is to look people in the eye, show them you see them as human beings, as equals. They may not accept help the first time, but once they see city workers helping others, they're willing to open up the lines of communication. Richard, on behalf of the entire city, thank you for your service.

This year, we will give Richard and his colleagues even more ways to connect people with mental illness to care and compassion. A few months ago, we laid out an initial strategy for connecting the most seriously mentally ill New Yorkers with needed care. And in the next few weeks, we will outline our broader plan around mental health. That will include new Clubhouses for people with serious mental illness — places that provide peer support and community, access to services, and employment and educational opportunities.

We also want to keep New Yorkers healthy by making sure they have access to fresh food, including fruit and vegetables. We will fight the continuing crisis of obesity and chronic disease by expanding city investment in healthy food access for lower income New Yorkers, including the launch of Groceries 2 Go and Green Stands.

And when it comes to care, no one cares for us the way our families do, especially the women in our lives. That's why I was proud to announce a new future for women's health in our city, building on the important work we've already done, including supporting new mothers with doulas and home visits. We'll continue to focus on women's health through an all-hands-on-deck summit in March and other initiatives I announced last week. And in the coming months, we will unveil a comprehensive women's agenda, driven by the amazing women in leadership positions at City Hall and throughout this administration. Because when we support women and families, we are all better for it.

Over the past year, we have spoken about getting things done. We came into office with a "People's Plan," and I'm proud to say we have delivered for the working people of this city.

We are on the pathway to a safer city, with more jobs and more opportunity. And we have laid the cornerstone for a new era of affordable housing. Promises made, promises kept.

This coming year is about expanding that vision of what can get done and what will get done. It means building a strong foundation that supports today's realities and anticipates tomorrow's needs.

City government must work to improve the public good, support an economy that works for all, and care for the working people who make it possible. Jobs, safety, housing, and care — without these pillars of support, cities crumble, institutions fall, society weakens. We will not allow that to happen in New York.

It is the working class that has lifted up this city, built it brick by brick on the bedrock of a free and democratic nation. And, going forward, we will sustain the workers who make this city possible. Working together, we can build a better city for all, keep those pillars of civic power strong, open more golden doors, and inspire others to do the same.

We're just getting started, and there's no stopping the world's greatest city — filled with the best stuff on earth: New Yorkers.

###