



NEW YORK LEAGUE OF CONSERVATION VOTERS  
NEW YORK LEAGUE OF CONSERVATION VOTERS EDUCATION FUND

# NEW YORK CITY POLICY AGENDA

## 2026





# FOREWORD

We stand at a pivotal moment in the fight against climate change and the future of our environment. With the federal government rolling back decades of bipartisan environmental protections, cutting funding for affordable clean energy, and attempting to take a hatchet to America’s green workforce, New York City has the opportunity – and the obligation – to show the rest of the country what real environmental leadership looks like.

From record-breaking heat year-after-year to more frequent and more powerful storms causing flash floods, the impacts of climate change are not distant threats, they are our current reality that shape daily life across the five boroughs. At the same time, aging infrastructure threatens everything from water quality to grid reliability for hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers.

With Mayor Zohran Mamdani, City Council Speaker Julie Menin, Comptroller Mark Levine, new Council Members and committee chairs, and new leadership in a number of key agencies, our city is poised to build a healthier, more equitable and resilient future for every New Yorker.

Our 2026 New York City Policy Agenda outlines the critical investments and bold actions required from lawmakers to meet this moment.

That means investing in the green spaces and resilient infrastructure that protect public health and strengthen our communities. Parks, trees, and wetlands are not luxuries, they are indispensable defenses that cool off our neighborhoods, absorb stormwater, and improve air quality, while also providing safe places for recreation and connecting with nature.

Yet these systems remain woefully underfunded and unevenly distributed, which is why we are advocating for substantial and ongoing investment in parks, a more robust urban tree canopy, and more expansive green infrastructure – especially in historically underserved neighborhoods. This must be central to the City’s climate strategy.

We must also accelerate the transition to clean energy while decarbonizing our buildings – the largest source of local emissions. Smart and effective implementation of Local Law 97, expanded renewable energy deployment, and investments in energy storage will reduce pollution, improve grid reliability, and lower long-term costs for residents and businesses alike. Just as importantly, the clean energy transition must establish pathways to good-paying green jobs in frontline communities.



Transportation is another critical challenge. A more reliable, affordable, and accessible public transit system is key to reducing emissions, improving air quality, and connecting New Yorkers to economic opportunities across the City. Building on the remarkable early success of congestion pricing, the City must continue to reimagine its streetscapes. That means prioritizing buses, bikes, pedestrians, and public space, while advancing Vision Zero street safety projects and expanding access to the Fair Fares program.

The communities that have endured decades of environmental injustice continue to face the greatest risks from heat, flooding, and pollution. Centering these environmental justice communities – whether in climate investments, workforce development, or public health protections – is not only a moral imperative, it is a prerequisite to building a city that serves all New Yorkers, regardless of their zip code.

Across all of these priorities runs a common theme: passing legislation is not enough. Real progress requires sustained funding, strong agency staffing, smart implementation, and accountability. Ensuring that environmental and climate laws deliver real-world results –

cleaner air, safer streets, cooler neighborhoods, and healthier homes – must remain the City’s North Star.

The path ahead is ambitious by design, but it is also achievable. New York City has long demonstrated that local leadership can shape national progress, and this moment demands that leadership once again.

This agenda serves as both a roadmap and a call to action. It will guide our advocacy, inform our partnerships, and help us hold decision-makers accountable. We look forward to working with city leaders, fellow advocates, and all New Yorkers to advance policies that safeguard our environment, strengthen our neighborhoods, and build a healthier, more sustainable future for generations to come.



*Julie Tighe*  
President, NYLCV



# Top Priorities for NYC 2026

## **INVEST IN PARKS, TREE CANOPY, AND RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE**

Despite being free to the public, the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation is chronically underfunded and understaffed. On top of this, parks, tree canopy, and access to the City's waterfront are not equitably distributed. The City must allocate at least 1% of the budget to our parks system and implement an Urban Forest Plan that equitably expands the City's tree canopy from the current 23% coverage to 30% coverage. In addition to investing in our existing parks, New York City must plan holistically to make our parks, green spaces, and waterfront more resilient, and expand green infrastructure, especially in the outer boroughs.

## **PRIORITIZE RENEWABLE INFRASTRUCTURE & DECARBONIZE OUR BUILDINGS**

As the Local Law 97 2030 compliance period approaches in which new and stricter limits are placed on covered buildings, the City must ramp up outreach and education, as well as expand technical assistance on compliance and financing pathways, particularly for low- and middle-income covered buildings. Moreover, the City must take the lead when it comes to increasing the use of renewable energy sources, such as solar panels, battery energy storage systems, and thermal energy networks, to make our energy grid more reliable, affordable, resilient, and efficient. Battery energy storage systems are essential for improving local air quality by moving away from dirty "peaker" plants and addressing reliability concerns on the hottest days.

## REIMAGINE OUR TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Transit is the lifeblood of New York City—investing in public transit is investing in New Yorkers. Yet, transportation is the second highest source of NYC’s greenhouse gas emissions and is a major source of air pollution, particularly for disadvantaged communities. The City must invest in its public transit network, including expanding eligibility to Fair Fares, implementing the mandated bus and bike lane milestones in the NYC Streets Plan, and working towards an all-electric fleet, including our City’s school bus fleet by 2035. Given the positive results of the country’s first Congestion Pricing program, we must take a comprehensive approach to reimagining our street space and fully commit to Vision Zero so that all New Yorkers are safe, whether a pedestrian, cyclist, rider, or driver.

## FUND AND TIMELY IMPLEMENT ENVIRONMENTAL LAWS

A major throughline for our policy priorities is the importance of robust funding for agency staffing and timely implementation. With the passage of numerous

environmental and climate laws in the last several years, we must ensure the City allocates sufficient funding for agency staffing, implementation, and outreach.

## CENTER EQUITY AS WE FIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE

Given the decades of environmental racism and historic disinvestment in low-income and communities of color, in addition to the day-to-day impacts of climate change such as extreme heat, environmental justice communities must receive specific attention and prioritization when it comes to investing in green jobs, parks, resilient infrastructure, transportation, and emissions reduction. NYLCV looks forward to the development and publication of the City’s first ever Environmental Justice Plan, which will outline a unified vision for advancing environmental justice and creating a healthier, more resilient city for all New Yorkers.



SUNSET PARK, BROOKLYN — DOGORA SUN / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM



# Fighting Climate Change

As we ramp up efforts to meet the City’s goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions 80% by 2050, we must continue to advance policies that decrease emissions from all sectors including buildings, energy, transportation, and waste. These decarbonization efforts also provide us the opportunity to expand our green job sector as well, prioritizing green workforce training and development programs in frontline communities.

## BUILDINGS & RENEWABLE ENERGY

- 1. Local Law 97:** Continue implementing and enforcing LL97 of 2019. Implement the Affordable Housing Reinvestment Fund to allow building owners to comply with LL97 while reducing emissions in affordable housing. Fund and staff a new LL97 Compliance Delivery Pilot Program to deliver technical and financial assistance for LL97 covered buildings. The program should aim to lower the costs and reduce complexity through city bulk purchasing of equipment and services to comply with the law. Ensure that City-owned buildings are on track to meet LL97 emissions reduction targets. Phase out capital spending on City-owned and operated fossil fuel-fired equipment, appliances, building systems, and infrastructure. Clarify that solar and energy storage sited within city limits can be used for LL97 compliance beyond 2029, and accurately account for the carbon emissions reduction value of solar energy.
- 2. Benchmarking:** Pass legislation to expand the City’s existing benchmarking law to include buildings greater than 10,000 gross square feet. This data helps owners and tenants improve a building’s energy efficiency, lower carbon emissions, and save money, in addition to helping policymakers measure pollution.
- 3. Solar:** Raise NYC’s solar goal to 2 gigawatts by 2035. Ensure the City is on track to install 150 megawatts (MW) of solar photovoltaic systems on the roofs of city-owned buildings and other city-owned property by 2035, prioritizing disadvantaged communities, with an interim goal of completing at least 100 MW worth by September 1, 2030 as required by Local Law 99 of 2024. Dedicate funding to support targeted, community-led, residential solar and energy efficiency retrofit campaigns to spur the growth of renewable energy projects in low-income communities across the City.
- 4. Battery Energy Storage Systems:** Pass legislation establishing a goal of at least 2 gigawatts of battery energy storage systems (BESS) capacity by 2030. Pass legislation requiring MOCEJ and DCAS to develop and implement a citywide plan identifying city-owned lots suitable for installing energy storage systems, and how to achieve the amount of energy storage capacity specified. Establish a robust public education campaign, including community outreach, to instill trust and awareness about BESS. Pass legislation requiring FDNY to align its permitting requirements for small residential and medium-scale energy storage systems with the newly enacted NYS Fire Code, which was developed through broad stakeholder engagement.
- 5. Solar & BESS:** Develop an inter-agency action plan for overcoming regulatory and technological barriers to BESS and solar installation on privately- and publicly-owned buildings, including peaker power plants, to achieve the goals set forth in the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act. Incentivize co-locating BESSs with solar power generation to provide money-saving and resiliency benefits for building owners and residents.
- 6. Renewable Energy Procurement:** Pass legislation to implement programs Community Choice Aggregation (CCA), a shared purchasing model that can serve as a vehicle for increased procurement of renewables as the City’s energy source.
- 7. Decarbonize NYC Schools:** Commit capital funding for clean energy upgrades in existing NYC Public Schools and continue constructing all electric school buildings. This includes green technology such as solar panels, thermal energy networks, and upgrading current building systems to be more energy efficient to make our schools cleaner and reduce emissions. Couple DOE sustainable retrofits with educational programming and job training opportunities for students.
- 8. Thermal Energy Networks:** Direct DCAS to develop a plan for developing Thermal Energy Networks pilot projects on city-owned property, such as CUNY buildings and using sewer infrastructure. Continue implementing Local Law 2 of 2022, creating a district-scale City demonstration program for geothermal exchange systems. Evaluate the feasibility of a district-scale system that connects multiple buildings to shared infrastructure.
- 9. Co-Digestion:** Take action to upgrade the City’s wastewater treatment plants’ digesters to process organic waste into renewable energy to reduce local pollution and help address food waste, including exploring the feasibility of public-private partnerships.
- 10. Green Jobs:** Advocate for the creation of equitable green jobs and training programs, prioritizing frontline environmental justice communities to reinvigorate the economy, support a modern workforce and promote sustainable projects. This includes, but is not limited to, offshore wind, solar and BESS development and job training programs, including opportunities for supply chain manufacturing and use of port facilities.
- 11. Renewable Rikers:** Ensure the timely and equitable implementation of the City’s Renewable Rikers Act (Local Laws 16, 17, and 31 of 2021), which should pave the way for installing a wastewater treatment facility, community composting facilities, BESS, and a solar farm on the island, potentially generating as much as 14 megawatts of renewable energy.



## TRANSPORTATION

1. **NYC Streets Plan:** Achieve the milestones mandated in the existing NYC Streets Master Plan and restart long-delayed transit projects such as the Fordham Road and Tremont Avenue busways in the Bronx, as well as protected bike lane projects, such as the road-diet for Third Avenue in Sunset Park, and Ashland Place in Fort Greene. Publish a comprehensive and bold vision of transit and streets in the upcoming 2026 NYC Streets Plan.
2. **Buses:** Prioritize Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) improvements, such as all-door boarding, on corridors with the highest bus ridership and slowest speeds. Increase bus speeds by constructing more dedicated bus lanes and busways, especially in transit deserts. Increase bus lane enforcement with street-mounted cameras and automated bus cameras. Improve and expand covered bus shelters, especially in areas with a high heat vulnerability index.
3. **Congestion Pricing:** As Congestion Pricing continues to show positive results in both Manhattan and the region, the City must champion this program as well as improve public transportation service and reliability, safety, and reclaim space for pedestrians, cyclists, and public space. Ensure mobility via bus and bike is dependable and safe by increasing enforcement of dedicated lanes.
4. **Fair Fares:** Expand Fair Fares to 300% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), as well as fully free for households under 150% of the FPL. Expand with half-priced fares on MTA Express Buses and CityTickets on the LIRR and Metro-North railroads within New York City, and institute automatic enrollment of qualified households so Fair Fares is easily accessible. Conduct a robust public education campaign to help increase public transportation affordability for many residents.
5. **Bikes:** Work towards a comprehensive citywide bike network with protected bike lanes, bike parking near public transit hubs, and bike storage infrastructure. This bike network should consist of protected bike lanes and bike boulevards, and be coordinated with the citywide greenway master plan. Launch public education campaigns about road safety and enforcement rules to ensure effective progress towards safety and reliability for all users.
6. **Vision Zero:** Prioritize and fund Vision Zero policies and a citywide public education campaign that encourages safety to better protect pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists. This includes daylighting more intersections to not only increase visibility and safety, but to reimagine curbs for other uses such as bike racks, vegetation, or bioswales.
7. **Emissions and Pollution:** Support efforts to reduce traffic and emissions from trucks and indirect sources, including passing legislation that regulates existing indirect sources of air pollution, such as warehouses, and passing a zoning text amendment requiring new last mile facilities to apply for a special permit to ensure that these facilities do not create significant conflicts with their surroundings.
8. **Sustainable Deliveries:** Continue prioritizing efforts to revolutionize e-commerce delivery, such as NYC’s Blue Highways Initiative, DOT’s Microhubs Pilot, utilizing e-cargo bikes for last mile deliveries, increasing the number of Neighborhood Loading Zones, and implementing off-peak hour incentives for residential and commercial deliveries to improve air quality, reduce emissions, and improve worker and traffic safety, particularly in disadvantaged communities.
9. **Electric School Buses:** Ensure the timely implementation of Local Law 120 of 2021, mandating an all electric school bus (ESB) fleet by 2035, and hold a City Council oversight hearing on the City’s progress. Continue acquiring State and Federal funding for new ESB purchases, and explore the use of “repowering” existing diesel buses by replacing the diesel engine with an electric drive system and battery. Fund and develop a plan on ESB charging infrastructure, routes, vehicle to grid (V2G) charging, especially at school bus depots throughout the City. Launch a workforce training program for ESB drivers on charging, operations, and maintenance.
10. **City Fleet:** Allocate capital funding for the City to implement Local Law 140 of 2023, requiring all light- and medium-duty vehicles in the City’s fleet to be zero emission by July 1, 2035, and all heavy-duty vehicles in the City’s fleet to be zero emission by July 1, 2038.

11. **MTA Fleet:** Advocate for the MTA to operate zero emission and hybrid buses on New York City’s streets, focusing first on depots and buses in environmental justice communities with historically bad air quality, and urge the MTA to stay on track to transition to a zero emissions fleet no later than 2040.
12. **EV Charging Infrastructure:** Develop a comprehensive, citywide EV charging network, especially for medium- and heavy-duty vehicles. Continue working with utilities to identify and overcome charging infrastructure barriers. Cleaner technology should be prioritized for vehicles with the highest average miles traveled and highest emissions, and those that largely operate in environmental justice communities.
13. **Ferry System:** Continue expanding the NYC Ferry system, particularly in transit deserts and disadvantaged communities. Couple ferry stops with expansions in micromobility options, such as Citibike and e-scooter docks, as well as protected bike and bus lanes. Continue working towards an electrified ferry fleet for the whole NYC Ferry system.
14. **Micromobility:** Increase access to and improve safety for micromobility users. This includes support for bike-share programs and bike infrastructure, more public charging stations and battery swaps for e-bikes and e-scooters, and electrification of strategic Citi Bike hubs, with prioritization for low-income and transit desert communities. Continue equitably expanding and funding the DOT’s shared e-scooter pilot program, originally started in the East Bronx, by prioritizing transit desert areas throughout New York City.
15. **Citi Bike:** Commit to full citywide access to the Citi Bike bike share program by 2030 by allocating city funding to the program for the first time.
16. **Reconnect Communities:** Equitably reconnect communities impacted by historically discriminatory transportation policies. This includes opposing any attempts to widen highways in New York City, repurposing the Cross Bronx Expressway as greenspace to connect the community and reduce transportation pollution, and creatively and equitably reimagining the BQE to ensure air pollution is minimized and health, safety, and environmental justice are centered.
17. **Greenways:** Continue implementing Local Law 115 of 2022, requiring the Department of Transportation and the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) to create a citywide greenway master plan. As part of the federal RAISE grant, continue outreach, engagement, and planning with communities historically underserved to expand the City’s greenway network.
18. **Public Space and Multimodal Planning:** Adopt policies and legislation to reclaim our street space for pedestrians through an expansion of transportation alternatives such as protected bike lanes, open streets, school streets, pedestrian plazas, and continuous greenways and open spaces. Comprehensively plan bike, bus, subway, and ferry linkages to improve how New Yorkers get around.
19. **Parking:** Conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the use of street space, particularly for parking in predominantly residential neighborhoods. The study should assess common road blockage issues such as with delivery trucks and vehicles, and also look at how we can reform the placard system and improve enforcement around placard abuse. Work towards eliminating all parking mandates citywide in the NYC Zoning Resolution.



OPEN STREETS, BROOKLYN, DOT



DSNY'S NEW, AUTOMATED, SIDE-LOADING GARBAGE TRUCK

## WASTE MANAGEMENT

1. **Zero Waste Act:** Implement the Zero Waste Act of 2023. Increase funding to ramp up outreach and education efforts for the residential organics program. Increase funding for community recycling centers and organic waste drop off sites, as required by Local Laws 85, 88, and 89 of 2023. Invest in residential and commercial recycling and waste diversion programs, including enforcement and education programs, with an emphasis on reduction and reuse to bring New York City closer to its Zero Waste by 2030 goal laid out in Local Law 86 of 2023.
2. **Community Composting:** Continue supporting and working with the Community Composting Network and other local organizations to build awareness and change behavior towards organic waste recycling. Promote the equitable siting of regional capacity for processing organic waste, including investing in more City-owned composting facilities and community composting programs.
3. **Commercial Waste Zones:** Release an implementation timeline for the entire CWZs system by the end of 2026 to improve the safety of workers, pedestrians, and cyclists, and bring the City closer to its zero waste goals. Expand commercial organics separation requirements to all food businesses in concert with the implementation of Commercial Waste Zones.
4. **Waste Containerization:** Implement and fund a permanent, citywide residential waste containerization program, as laid out in Local Law 180 of 2025. Providing permanent, sealed containers throughout the City to hold trash bags prior to collection will improve quality of life and mitigate the issues of the bags being opened by rodents.
5. **Waste Equity:** Continue implementing Local Law 152 of 2018, the City's Waste Equity Law, requiring DSNY to reduce the permitted capacity of putrescible and non-putrescible transfer stations in four designated community districts. Work towards accepting and processing commercial solid waste at all city-owned or operated marine and rail transfer stations, and to publicly report the amount and type of waste received at such stations on an annual basis.
6. **Zero Waste Design:** Promote the use of Zero Waste Design Guidelines in buildings, planning for separation, movement, and storage of waste in a way that maximizes waste diversion and minimizes the use of space. Setting size requirements for waste storage areas in buildings, and requiring a waste management plan be submitted before building approval would increase recycling accessibility.
7. **Single Use Plastics:** Implement and enforce "Skip the Stuff" (Local Law 17 of 2023), reducing single-use plastic items in take-out and delivery orders. Adopt legislation requiring certain food service establishments to offer consumers the option to request reusable food packaging and participate in a system for return of the food packaging. This legislation should also mandate certain establishments to provide reusable eating utensils and containers for dine-in customers unless otherwise requested by the customer.
8. **Product Stewardship:** Work with the State to advance an Extended Producer Responsibility for packaging program, which would require companies to reduce packaging, increase the recyclability of their products, and increase the use of post-recycled content. DSNY should coordinate with the State on implementation of a safe recycling program for rechargeable lithium ion batteries, particularly e-bike and e-scooter batteries.
9. **Textiles:** Increase outreach and accessibility of textile recycling efforts, including DSNY's ReFashion NYC program. Establish textile collection options for all city households and institutions, with additional events and appointment-based pick-up for low-rise buildings (buildings with fewer than 10 units). Improve enforcement of the recycling requirement for businesses whose waste is made up of more than 10% textiles.
10. **Circular Economy:** Adopt legislation requiring city agencies to source materials for projects from the City's own waste stream where possible. For example, using recycled glass for the Department of Transportation's concrete needs and compost from the Department of Sanitation for landscaping needs by DPR and the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Reform public procurement rules to ease purchasing and integration into capital projects of local salvaged wood material. Develop a DSNY and DPR tree wood reuse program in order to utilize reclaimed wood instead of sending it to landfills.
11. **Food Rescue:** Ramp up DSNY outreach and education to increase the amount of donateNYC Food Portal users and donations. Expand food rescue initiatives at NYC schools and other city agencies.



# Increasing Green Space and Resilience

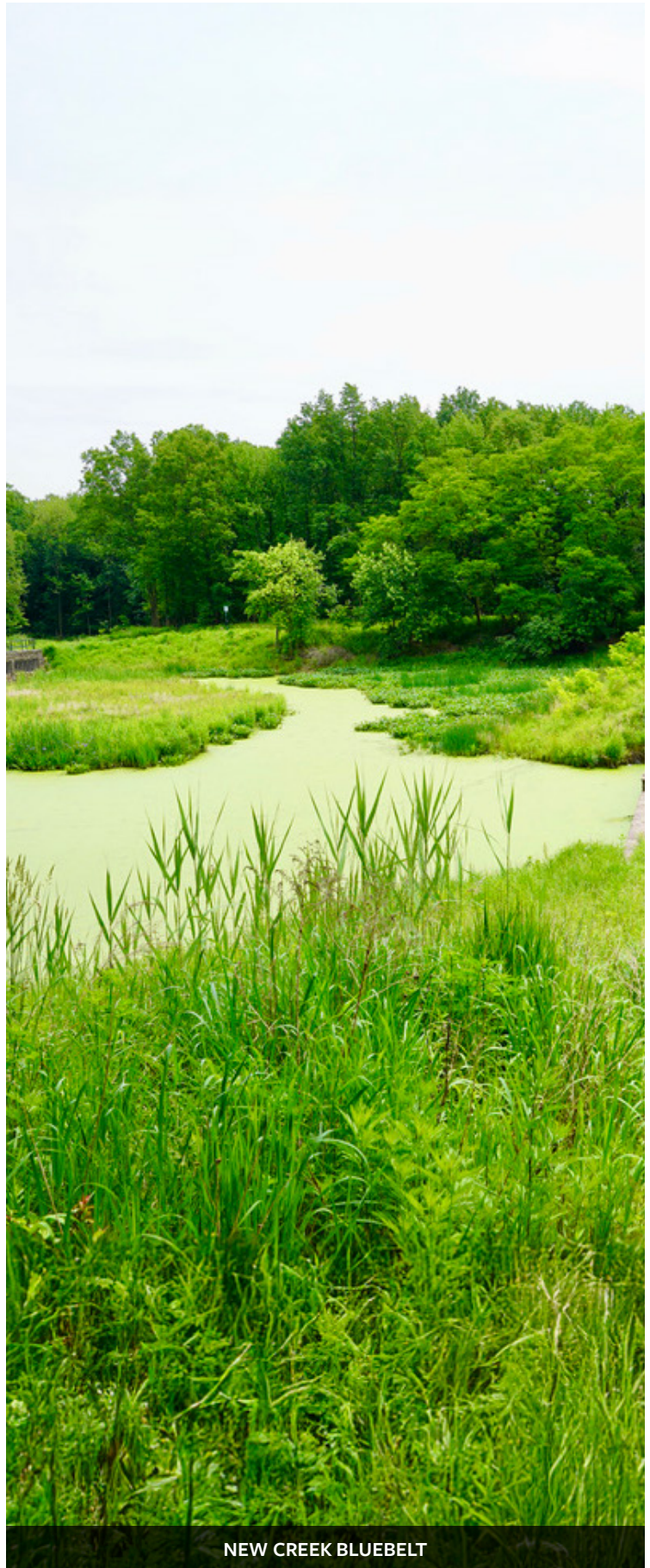
As hurricanes, extreme heat and rainfall, wildfires, and inland and coastal flooding become more frequent due to climate change, parks, open spaces, and natural areas such as wetlands have a vital role to play. We must invest in the maintenance and operations of our parks, open spaces, tree canopy, and green infrastructure. These are some of the best ways to not only make our city more resilient, but also provide health benefits such as lowering air temperatures, filtering out air pollutants, and improving mental health.

## PARKS AND NATURAL AREAS

- 1. Parks Budget:** In accordance with the Play Fair for Parks Coalition, restore and increase the NYC Parks Department budget, with a goal of investing at least 1% of the City's operating budget in parks. This includes funding for parks maintenance workers, Parks Enforcement Patrol (PEP) officers, nature trails, Swim Safety Expansion, forest and wetland management, recreation centers, and Tree Risk Management programs. Invest capital funding for the construction and maintenance of parks in communities underserved by open space and parkland.
- 2. Parks Revenue:** Explore innovative, revenue-generating models and public-private partnerships to ensure long-term, dedicated funding for parks, including attaching a 50 cent or \$1 surcharge on arena and stadium events to support parks maintenance, soliciting contributions during hotel stays for a new 'NYC Parks and Cultural Fund,' and creating new mechanisms for private developers to support parks maintenance and creation.
- 3. Urban Forest Plan:** Implement Local Law 148 of 2023, requiring the City to create an Urban Forest Plan that not only expands the tree canopy from the current 23% coverage to 30% coverage but protects the health of existing trees, with the additional goals of lowering temperatures, reducing carbon emissions, furthering environmental justice, removing pollutants from the atmosphere, and improving public health. Allocate robust funding for the development of this plan, including for community engagement. Allocate baselined funding to implement the Forest Management Framework for NYC.
- 4. Parks Equity:** Implement Local Law 67 of 2022, which seeks to reduce park inequities by requiring the City to identify and report on any of its parks and playgrounds that have routinely failed inspections and develop a plan on how such issues will be corrected.
- 5. Capital Planning:** Increase the efficiency of the DPR's Capital Division with a clearly defined process and deadlines for design, more expedient and transparent decision making on individual projects, standardized project management tools, and increased accountability for completing projects on time and on budget.
- 6. New Parks:** Prioritize and implement the QueensWay Project, which will transform a blighted stretch of abandoned railway in Central Queens into a linear park connecting neighborhoods and residents. Implement Local Law 10 of 2023, which requires the City to study the feasibility of installing micro parks and green spaces on vacant, City-owned land, such as highways and dead ends, with priority for environmental justice communities. This includes the planting of trees, bioswales, and other vegetation types.
- 7. Resilient Parks:** Reimagine and invest in parks and open spaces as climate mitigators, this includes Schoolyards to Playgrounds, Open Streets, and Greenways that can help manage stormwater, reduce extreme heat, and improve social resilience. Support waterfront parks as a vital component of resiliency and continue the expansion and protection of public access to the waterfront on both public and private property.
- 8. Jointly-Operated Playgrounds:** Protect parkland and jointly-operated playgrounds from alienation, a process by which these spaces can be sold or leased to be used for another purpose.

## FLOOD RESILIENCE

- 1. Combined Sewer Overflows:** Continue updating and modernizing our sewer system and wastewater treatment process to work towards zero Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs) by 2060. This includes installing rain gardens, bioswales, water squares, green and blue roofs, daylighting rivers, and permeable pavement that help absorb stormwater, purify the air, and mitigate the urban heat island effect.
- 2. Inland Flooding:** Invest and accelerate the planning and delivery of stormwater resilience and sewer infrastructure projects, particularly in disadvantaged, flood-prone communities. Implement Local Law 70 of 2025, creating a Comprehensive Stormwater Management Plan and Dashboard.
- 3. Green Infrastructure:** Expand and fund the Green Infrastructure program to catalyze installation on private property in targeted communities where benefits can be maximized. This includes expanding the City's green roofs program and exploring public-private partnership opportunities to fund expansion.
- 4. Unified Stormwater Rule:** Allocate funding to increase DEP staffing to speed up permitting and enforce DEP's Unified Stormwater Rule, which requires new developments to responsibly manage onsite stormwater through green infrastructure and detention systems, improving local water quality and increasing flood resilience.
- 5. Rain Ready:** Work with New York State legislators to pass the "Rain Ready Act" [S.4071-A(May) / A. 7467-A (Rozic)], which would clarify the powers of sewer authorities throughout the state to manage stormwater and prepare for the increasing frequency and intensity of rainfall due to climate change.
- 6. Cloudburst Management:** Improve and expand the City's cloudburst infrastructure, prioritizing vulnerable communities and holistic solutions that utilize both grey infrastructure (such as sewer pipes and underground storage tanks) and green infrastructure.
- 7. Bluebelts:** Continue expanding the City's bluebelt program to reduce stormwater flooding with careful design and coordination for bluebelts on City parkland. The bluebelt program preserves natural drainage corridors such as streams, creeks, and ponds, and reconstructs them to help control, storm, or filter stormwater runoff. Bluebelts also provide open green space and a habitat for wildlife.
- 8. Co-benefits:** Prioritize green and blue infrastructure projects with co-benefits beyond the primary purpose of flood-risk reduction, including improved air quality, recreational value, and biodiversity. Encourage more collaboration between city agencies to increase the adoption of green and blue infrastructure in projects beyond the jurisdiction of DEP, including providing DOT and DPR critical maintenance funds to allow the use of permeable pavement, bioswales and rain gardens wherever possible, and retain more stormwater within parks.



NEW CREEK BLUEBELT



ROBERT F. WAGNER JR. PARK IN LOWER MANHATTAN — RBLFMR / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

## COASTAL RESILIENCE AND ADAPTATION

1. **New York and New Jersey Harbor and Tributaries Study:** Partner with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to develop solutions under the New York-New Jersey Harbor and Tributary Study (HATS) that protect against coastal flooding with direct input from and engagement with frontline communities.
2. **Citywide, Comprehensive Adaptation Planning:** Direct the Mayor’s Office of Climate and Environmental Justice (MOCEJ) to fulfill Local Law 122 of 2021, requiring the creation of a Five-Borough Climate Adaptation Plan, as part of Local Law 149 of 2025, which requires MOCEJ to quadrennially publish the long-term energy plan and the climate adaptation plan within its update to PlaNYC in 2027 and every four years thereafter. MOCEJ should launch a Climate Adaptation Working Group to develop the 2028 Climate Adaptation Plan and engage with existing community groups that have developed resiliency plans to consolidate bottom-up ideas into a citywide plan covering the diversity of challenges faced including stormwater, coastal flooding, and extreme heat. Continue advancing and expanding the Climate Strong Communities program, which addresses critical climate risk needs including street cooling features, solar energy, raised shorelines, and resilience hubs.
3. **DEP Bureau of Coastal Resilience:** Codify and increase funding for the Bureau of Coastal Resilience within NYC the Department of Environmental Protection to ensure that the City is ready for the next storm.
4. **Zoning and Land Use:** Update the City’s Zoning Resolution to set limits and guidelines for new development in the floodplain, include more Special Coastal Risk Districts to protect homes in vulnerable areas against the dangers of climate change, including the use of the most recent projections on storm surge, flood plains, and sea level rise. Require climate resilient design guidelines for all new public and private development to future-proof the City’s building stock over time.
5. **Housing Mobility:** Permanently establish and secure funding for Resilient Acquisitions, New York City’s pilot voluntary buyout program, for high flood risk homes. A permanent program must include land acquisition strategies and housing counseling services to support homeowners. Ensure that public land acquired through this program is designated as parkland or flood protection with passive uses.
6. **Nature-Based Solutions:** Invest in multi-hazard natural and nature-based solutions along the City’s coast, such as wetlands restoration, oyster reefs, dunes, maritime forests, bluebelts, and other living shoreline approaches that could protect residents from coastal and inland flooding. This includes exploring opportunities to enlist communities on these projects to educate and engage local residents, and implementing comprehensive plans such as the NYC Wetlands Management Framework.
7. **Coastal Resilience Plans:** Continue developing and funding the FiDi Seaport Coastal Resiliency plan in a timely manner, the last link in the Lower Manhattan Coastal Resiliency portfolio. Develop coastal resiliency plans throughout the City, particularly in historically underserved neighborhoods in the outer boroughs that are vulnerable to sea level rise and coastal flooding. Develop sustainable funding and financing solutions for coastal resilience infrastructure that supports long-term maintenance, staffing, and operations.



PHOTO COURTESY OF DOT TWITTER/MARCUS MEETS MALCOLM

## EXTREME HEAT

1. **Cooling Centers:** Implement and fund Local Law 128 of 2025, which codifies the City’s Cooling Center program for heat emergencies, prioritizing locations in heat-vulnerable communities. Conduct a public education campaign to increase awareness about heat emergencies; post information about the program online; develop and strengthen neighborhood-specific communication plans that promote the use of cooling centers; and install and upgrade cooling systems in public school buildings throughout the City. Hold an oversight hearing on the City’s extreme heat emergency preparedness and response.
2. **Right to Cooling:** Implement Local Law 23 of 2026, which requires that, by June 1, 2030, owners of tenant-occupied buildings provide cooling systems capable of maintaining 78 degrees Fahrenheit in rooms in which tenants sleep, upon the request of the tenant.
3. **CoolRoofs:** Prioritize the CoolRoofs program, which provides New Yorkers with paid training and work experience installing energy-saving reflective rooftops. This program aims to coat 1 million square feet of rooftops per year with materials that have high solar reflectance.
4. **Cool It! NYC:** Invest in Cool It! NYC, a citywide plan run by DPR to increase the amount of cooling features available to the public during heat emergencies, particularly in neighborhoods with high heat vulnerability index (HVI). This includes park elements such as water features, drinking fountains, and tree coverage.
5. **Get Cool Program:** Identify funding to restart and expand the City’s Get Cool Program, which provided air conditioners, free of charge, to low-income seniors or have a qualifying underlying condition. The City should also identify funding sources to help qualifying residents in this program with their summer utility bills.
6. **Cool Streets:** Expand the City’s Cool Streets program during heat waves by prioritizing communities that lack access to parks, safe pedestrian spaces, and bike infrastructure. Equitably expand access to green spaces, the urban forest, and green infrastructure throughout the City, particularly in neighborhoods that face the dangers of high heat.
7. **Cool Pavement:** Implement Local Law 152 of 2025, which requires NYC DOT, in consultation with DOHMH, DEP, and the office of long-term planning and sustainability, to conduct a pilot project on the use of cool pavement in at least one neighborhood in each borough that has high summer surface temperatures and low median income. Cool pavement is pavement or pavement coatings designed to keep temperatures cooler than traditional asphalt. This pilot project should be coordinated with DEP’s Green Infrastructure Program.
8. **NYC Pools:** Invest in public pool-related initiatives such as the City’s Swim Safety Expansion and DPR’s Cool Pools NYC initiative. Public pools keep people cool during extreme summer heat, foster community bonds, and encourage fitness for youth and families. Investment should prioritize historically underserved communities.



# Investing in NYCHA

The New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) has been long-neglected due to significant underinvestment. Issues such as lack of heating, hot water, mold, lead paint, and little to no recycling access have plagued NYCHA residents for years. Compounding this, NYCHA residents are disproportionately impacted by climate change. Many campuses are located in flood zones, exposing residents to sea level rise, coastal storm surge, and inland flooding. Many NYCHA campuses also lack access to air conditioning, leaving residents, especially seniors, more vulnerable to heat-related illnesses and death. The City must prioritize the health and safety of NYCHA residents by working with the State and Federal government to improve current building infrastructure and public health issues, as well as future climate threats.

- 1. Capital Repairs and Climate Threats:** Ensure climate adaptation is integrated into all planning decisions for NYCHA campuses by continuing to prioritize the goals in Climate Change at NYCHA: A Plan to Adapt. The City must work with State and Federal agencies to identify sustainable funding streams to address long-needed capital repairs in addition to making NYCHA campuses resilient to climate hazards such as sea level rise, storm surges, and extreme rainfall. This includes protecting mechanical, electrical, and plumbing infrastructure, floodproofing buildings, and installing new, more efficient boilers and back-up generators.
- 2. Sustainability:** Continue implementing the goals in NYCHA's Sustainability Agenda. Ensure that NYCHA campuses are on track to meet emissions reduction targets and procurement commitments for renewable energy, such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions 80 percent by 2050. Explore the possibility of investing in thermal energy networks to decarbonize NYCHA properties. Increase funding for roof work at NYCHA campuses to not only improve living conditions but make buildings "solar-ready" and able to participate in NYCHA's ACCESSolar program.
- 3. Community Resilience:** Establish a pilot program of NYCHA Community Resilience Hubs throughout the five boroughs to serve as multi-purpose hubs that residents can seek refuge in during extreme heat events, air quality emergencies, flash flood and storm events.
- 4. Induction Stove Challenge:** Continue working with the New York Power Authority (NYPA) and the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) to implement the Induction Stove Challenge, which calls on appliance manufacturers to design and produce energy-efficient, electric cooking systems to replace existing fossil fuel stoves while avoiding costly electrical upgrades in NYCHA buildings.
- 5. Extreme Heat:** Mitigate extreme heat risk by prioritizing reliable access to indoor cooling, increasing NYCHA's tree canopy. In accordance with NYCHA's Urban Forest plan and the upcoming NYC Urban Forest Plan, promote the health of NYCHA's urban forest and green spaces by protecting, expanding, and ensuring robust funding for urban forest maintenance and care.
- 6. Workforce Development:** Prioritize workforce development and the creation of sustainable, green jobs for NYCHA residents to improve NYCHA's resiliency.
- 7. Zero Waste:** Increase funding to expand paper, metal, glass, and plastic recycling to all NYCHA developments by 2026. Ramp up outreach and education to ensure NYCHA is included and participates in the citywide residential organics program. Increase the use of City-produced compost and mulch on NYCHA construction projects and at existing NYCHA development grounds.
- 8. Green Infrastructure:** Continue working with the DEP to improve NYCHA's stormwater management and implement green infrastructure projects such as permeable pavement, porous asphalt, porous concrete, rain gardens, and subsurface storage systems.
- 9. Public Health:** Safeguard NYCHA residents' health, including eliminating lead-based paint, mold, and pests from NYCHA residences, all of which contribute to adverse health impacts such as asthma and lead poisoning. Explore opportunities to piggyback investments in energy efficiency retrofits and zero-emission heating, cooling, and cooking systems when remediating lead and mold. Ensure reliable trash pickup, heat, hot water, and elevator service.
- 10. Urban Agriculture:** Invest in and expand NYCHA urban agriculture farms, programs, and community gardens to foster food security, green space, and education.



# Improving Public Health

All New Yorkers deserve indoor and outdoor environments that are free of contamination and pollution. Despite existing laws, lead exposure in our homes and through water service lines continues to cause permanent health and neurological issues with a disproportionate impact on children in low-income communities and communities of color. Another way to improve quality of life for New Yorkers is to prioritize safe indoor air quality and invest in sustainable food systems, such as improving food access in food deserts through urban farming.

## LEAD POISONING PREVENTION

- 1. Funding:** Invest and fund existing lead prevention programs to conduct rigorous inspections and test dust and paint for lead.
- 2. Council Oversight:** Hold City Council oversight hearings on existing lead prevention laws, programs, and enforcement of lead abatement tenant and worker protections.
- 3. Lead in Housing:** Pass legislation establishing stronger standards for lead testing and abatement, boost prevention, and improve enforcement of existing laws meant to eliminate lead poisoning, as outlined in the New York City Coalition to End Lead Poisoning (NYCCELP) Lead Agenda. This legislation includes, but is not limited to:
  - An assessment of certain children with elevated blood lead levels;
  - Declaration of a public nuisance by the Department of Housing Preservation and Development in connection with lead hazards; and
  - Expanding primary prevention to housing built between 1960-1978.
- 4. Lead in Drinking Water:** Pass legislation to establish a mandatory lead service line (LSL) removal program within ten years at no direct cost to residents. This legislation should allow for occupants of a residence to consent to the work. This program should coordinate with city agencies to address cross-cutting infrastructure improvements and be coupled with long-term funding by the City (i.e., as a capital expense just like other major water projects such as replacing water mains). It should require notification to tenants of the presence of a lead/possible lead pipe, filling a gap in communication as DEP has publicly acknowledged that it is not notifying tenants.

## DRINKING WATER

- 1. Water Rental Payment:** Eliminate the NYC Water Board Rental Payment, an unnecessary and regressive back door tax on ratepayers that led to a 3% increase in water rates in 2024. This would unlock \$313 million in FY27 and \$1.4 billion in currently baselined funds from 2025-2029 for stormwater flood reduction, drought management, drinking water resilience, and wastewater upgrades.
- 2. Water and Sewer Billing:** Direct the New York City Water Board to update its water and sewer billing to account for inequitable charges paid by New Yorkers who currently pay for sewer management based on how much water they use, ignoring how much stormwater runs off of large properties with impervious surfaces, like big box stores.

- 3. Filtration Avoidance Determination (FAD):** The City should negotiate a science-based FAD that responds to emerging threats, optimizes DEP's watershed protection programs, and delivers clear value to both New York City and watershed stakeholders. Invest in Watershed Protection to maintain safe sources of drinking water that do not require costly filtration.

## AIR QUALITY

- 1. School Indoor Air Quality:** Pass legislation establishing standards and reporting requirements regarding indoor air quality in city schools. This includes issuing real time reports on the NYC Department of Education's website regarding air quality in schools, installing and maintaining air quality monitoring devices, and annual reports on air quality in schools.
- 2. City-Owned Buildings:** The City should establish a pilot program to monitor indoor air quality in City-owned buildings, as well as certain commercial and residential buildings that receive city financial assistance.
- 3. Air Quality Emergencies:** Pass legislation requiring the City to establish emergency response protocols on days of air quality emergencies, in addition to developing a comprehensive plan for air quality emergencies.

## SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS

- 1. Urban Agriculture:** Support the expansion of both community and commercial urban agriculture in New York City as outlined in the City's Urban Agriculture Report. Improve how residents can access smaller-scale food processors and retailers to access locally-sourced healthy food.
- 2. Food Security:** Ensure every family has access to healthy, local, and affordable produce through the expansion of critical food access programs such as SNAP, FRESH, GrowNYC Farmstands, and Health Bucks redeemable at farmers markets across the City.
- 3. Education:** Aggressively expand the number of NYC schools that provide youth education programs on sustainability and healthy eating through workshops and school gardens. Expand funding for programs that help to achieve this goal.



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