



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

# New York City Policy Agenda 2025





# FOREWORD

By the time news broke about the wildfire in Prospect Park, there were already dozens of firefighters on site working to get it under control, and in a matter of hours, the flames were extinguished. Problem solved, right? Not so fast.

The fires, which continued to burn in the region for weeks, were not an anomaly, they were a preview. After watching the recent devastation in Los Angeles, who among us can't imagine the day when New York City's most beloved open spaces will face the same grave threat? Yet our city parks remain underfunded and understaffed.

It is unacceptable that as climate realities stare us in the face, promises go unfulfilled year after year, which is why it is so critical that we keep fighting for the city to allocate 1% of the budget to parks.

Climate change is wreaking havoc on our weather patterns and on our well being. The causes are global, but the impacts are local, and if our city is not prepared, the cost will come in both lives and property.

That means our park forests must be maintained so they don't serve as tinder during droughts; we need to upgrade our traditional gray infrastructure while also ramping up our natural green and blue defenses to protect against flooding and sea level rise; and we need more tree cover to protect people from extreme heat and improve quality of life.

At the same time we defend against the impacts that have already arrived, we must drastically reduce our reliance on fossil fuels to improve air quality and avoid the most devastating consequences of a warming planet.

That means clean energy powering our buildings, fewer gas-guzzling cars on the road, and less waste traveling to landfills, among other measures.

We achieve this with both new legislation and by implementing existing laws such as Local Law 97, the city's all-electric school bus mandate, the NYC Streets Plan, the Urban Forest Plan, and the Zero Waste Act in a timely fashion.

We also need to be laser-focused on the city's budget, because we cannot shore up NYCHA's

infrastructure or eliminate toxins from our water or fully staff our city's environmental agencies without proper funding.

Moreover, as New York's groundbreaking congestion pricing program is already reducing traffic and air pollution, the city must improve the service and reliability of the mass transit system, increase safety measures for pedestrians and micro-mobility riders, and reclaim public space for the benefit of all New Yorkers.

This city needs our elected leaders to take climate action seriously. And with leaders in Washington denying the very existence of climate change, local action is more important than ever.

Our 2025 agenda is more than a summary of our priorities. It's a roadmap for elected officials to achieve the kind of bold environmental action this moment demands.

The upcoming mayoral election will offer voters an opportunity to evaluate the candidates' environmental priorities, and we must continue to hold our council members accountable to ensure their actions match their commitments.

This agenda will inform much of our work and advocacy throughout the next year, guiding bills for selection in our NYC Council Environmental Scorecard, directing our educational programming, and helping us to prioritize our budget advocacy.

We look forward to working with the Mayor, City Council, and fellow advocates to make 2025 an impactful year for the environment.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julie Tighe".

**JULIE TIGHE**

President, NYLCV/EF

*Climate change is wreaking havoc on our weather patterns and on our well being. The causes are global, but the impacts are local, and if our city is not prepared, the cost will come in both lives and property.*







# Top Priorities for NYC 2025

Pelham Bay Park, The Bronx: Parks and green spaces make up 14% of the city's land, but receive less than 1% of the city's budget.

## INVESTING IN PARKS, TREE CANOPY, AND RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURES

The NYC Department of Parks and Recreation is chronically underfunded and understaffed. While parks and green spaces make up 14% of the City's land, it receives less than 1% of the City's budget. On top of this, parks, tree canopy, and access to the City's waterfront are not equitably distributed. Access to green spaces is on average much lower in Disadvantaged Communities (DAC) already plagued by adverse health problems and high levels of pollution. The City must allocate 1% of the budget to our parks system and create an Urban Forest Plan that equitably expands the City's tree canopy from the current 22% coverage to 30% coverage. Beyond investing in our existing parks, New York City must continue making its waterfronts more resilient and expand green infrastructure, especially in the outer boroughs.

## DECARBONIZING OUR BUILDINGS

Buildings account for over 70% of New York City's greenhouse gas emissions. This is one of the reasons why the City Council passed and NYLCV strongly supported Local Law 97—to directly combat this source of emissions and reduce harmful pollutants that disproportionately impact low income and communities of color. As this law's compliance and reporting period begins, the City must continue conducting outreach and education, and expanding technical assistance on compliance and financing pathways. Decarbonizing our building sector also requires a multipronged approach, including increasing the use of solar panels, energy storage systems, thermal energy networks, and upgrading current building systems to be more energy efficient.



## REIMAGINING OUR TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Transportation is the second highest source of NYC’s greenhouse gas emissions and is a major source of air pollution, causing respiratory and other public health issues. This is particularly burdensome near the City’s many major highways, which historically have cut through low-income and communities of color. The City must get back on track implementing the mandated milestones in the NYC Streets Plan, continue improving public transportation access, expand the Fair Fares NYC program to 200% of the federal poverty level, and work towards an all-electric fleet, including our City’s school bus fleet by 2035. With the launch of Congestion Pricing, we must take a comprehensive approach to reimagining our street space and fully commit to Vision Zero.

## 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—including the City’s Local Law 97, the all electric school bus law, the NYC Streets Plan, and the Zero Waste Act—we must ensure the City has sufficient resources and funding for agency staffing, implementation, and outreach. NYLCV will be actively engaged with the City’s annual budget process and we look forward to working with the Administration, City Council, and advocates.

## CENTERING EQUITY AS WE FIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE

Given the decades of environmental racism and historic disinvestment against low-income and communities of color, in addition to the day-to-day impacts of climate change such as extreme heat, DACs must receive specific attention and prioritization when it comes to investing in green jobs, parks, resilient infrastructure, transportation, and emissions reduction. NYLCV will ensure that environmental justice and equity continues to be integrated into all of our climate policy priorities and environmental advocacy work.



Dedicated bus lanes on 149 St. in the Bronx: MTA





# 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. We urge the City Council to pass a resolution in support of implementing a Cap-and-Invest Program at the state level to help accomplish the goals established by the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA). This economy-wide program will use market forces to cap greenhouse gas emissions and generate funds from polluters that will invest in carbon reduction infrastructure projects and programs. 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.

Rooftop Solar Panels in NYC: iStock

## BUILDINGS & ENERGY

1. Continue implementing Local Law 97 of 2019, including conducting outreach and education and expanding technical assistance on compliance and financing pathways given the first compliance reports are due on May 1, 2025. Implement the Affordable Housing Reinvestment Fund to allow building owners to comply with LL97 while reducing emissions in affordable housing throughout the city. Ensure that City-owned buildings are on track to meet Local Law 97 emissions reduction targets. Phase out capital spending on City-owned and operated fossil fuel-fired equipment, appliances, building systems, and infrastructure.
2. 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 climate goals.
3. Work towards the City's goal of 1,000 megawatts of solar citywide by 2030. As required by Local Law 99 of 2024, 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 DACs, with an interim goal of completing at least 100 MW worth by September 1, 2030.
4. Pass legislation establishing a goal for New York City to have at least 2 gigawatts of energy storage systems (ESS) capacity by 2030. Pass legislation requiring the City to conduct a study on the use of ESSs on city-owned sites. Explore opportunities to install ESSs at retired power plant sites. Address barriers to battery storage siting and to encourage interagency and statewide collaboration to achieve the goals set forth in the state's CLCPA. Incentivize co-locating ESSs with solar power generation to provide money-saving and resiliency benefits for building owners and residents.
5. Continue implementing and funding the City's school electrification effort, "Leading the Charge," which calls for the construction of all new city schools to be all electric and the conversion of 100 existing schools to all electric heating by 2030. 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.
6. 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. Allocate funding for a thermal energy network pilot for CUNY campuses.
7. 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.
8. Support the continued efforts of offshore wind development and job training programs, including opportunities for supply chain manufacturing and use of port facilities.
9. Ensure the timely and equitable implementation of the City's Renewable Rikers Act (Local Laws 16, 17, and 31 of 2021), which could pave the way for installing a wastewater treatment facility, community composting facilities, and a solar farm on the island, potentially generating as much as 14 megawatts of renewable energy.
10. Advocate for the creation of equitable green jobs and training programs, prioritizing DACs to reinvigorate the economy, support a modern workforce and promote sustainable projects.
11. Pass legislation to implement programs like 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.
12. Develop a dedicated funding stream 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.





NYC DOT pedal-assist e-cargo bicycle, “Cargi B”: NYC.GOV

## TRANSPORTATION

1. Timely implement and fund the NYC Streets Plan, which mandates yearly benchmarks for the installation of safe street infrastructure such as protected bike and bus lanes and pedestrian spaces. As Congestion Pricing continues, the City must improve public transportation service, reliability and safety, and reclaim space for pedestrians and cyclists by expanding open streets and greenways. Ensure mobility via bus and bike is dependable and safe by increasing enforcement of dedicated lanes. Increase bus speeds by constructing more dedicated bus lanes and busways, especially in transit deserts. Increase bus lane enforcement by prioritizing the rollout of automated bus cameras. Work towards a comprehensive citywide bike network with protected bike lanes and bike parking infrastructure along major bike commuting routes. Launch public education campaigns about road safety and enforcement rules to ensure effective progress towards safety and reliability for all users.
2. Expand the Fair Fares NYC program to 200% of the federal poverty level, which helps New Yorkers with low incomes manage their transportation costs, and conduct a robust public education campaign to help increase public transportation affordability for many residents.
3. Prioritize and fund Vision Zero policies that encourage safety through engineering, education, and enforcement to better protect pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists. This includes daylighting intersections to not only increase visibility and safety, but to reimagine curbs for other uses such as bike racks, vegetation, or bioswales.
4. 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. Continue implementing DOT’s Microhubs Pilot Project and increasing the use of e-cargo bikes for last mile deliveries. Prioritize blue highways to mitigate truck deliveries, and explore off-peak hour incentives for residential and commercial deliveries, low emission zones, and a low carbon fuel standard for heavy-duty vehicles, with priority to DACs.
5. 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. Incorporate electrification requirements in 2025 contract renegotiation with school bus fleet vendors. Launch a workforce training program for ESB drivers on charging, operations, and maintenance.
6. 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.
7. Advocate for the MTA to operate more electric buses on New York City’s streets, focusing first on depots and buses in DACs with historically bad air quality, and urge the MTA to stay on track to transition to a fully electric fleet no later than 2040.
8. Identify barriers and continue working with utilities to invest in and expand electric vehicle charging infrastructure, especially for medium- and heavy-duty vehicles. Cleaner technology should be prioritized for vehicles with the highest average miles traveled and

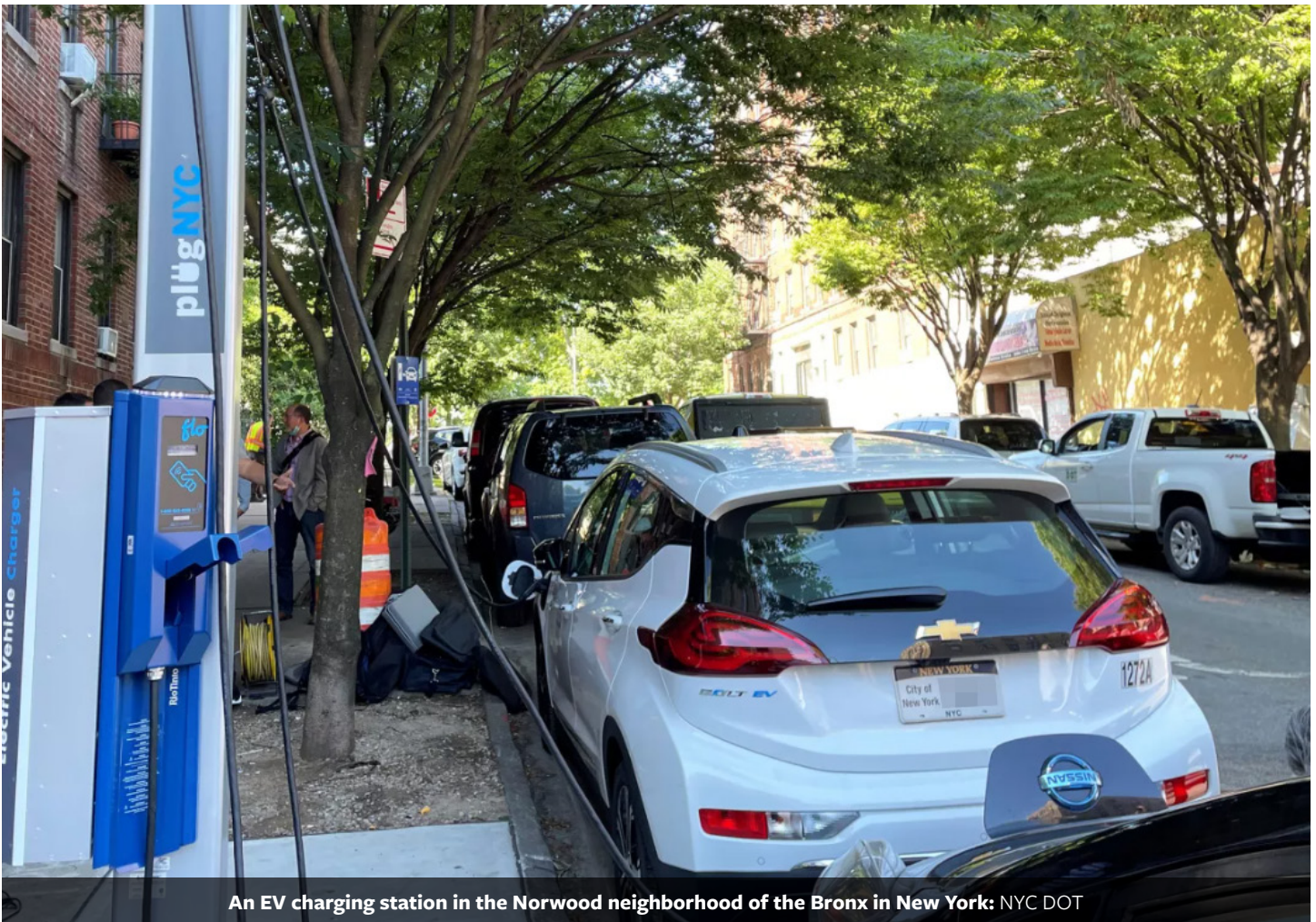


highest emissions, and those that largely operate in DACs.

9. Increase access to affordable multimodal strategies to bolster the public transportation system in the City with prioritization of low-income and transit desert communities. This includes support for bike-share programs and bike infrastructure, more public charging stations for e-bikes and e-scooters like the newly-proposed Street Deliveristas Hubs and electrification of strategic CitiBike hubs, light rails, ferries and car-sharing programs. 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, as well as the Citi Bike program, to serve more neighborhoods in the outer boroughs.
10. Equitably reconnect communities impacted by historically discriminatory transportation policies. This includes 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.

11. Conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the use of street space in predominantly residential neighborhoods. This should include the feasibility of a residential parking permit system and assess common road blockage issues such as with delivery trucks and vehicles. The study should also look at how we can reform the placard system and improve enforcement around placard abuse.
12. 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.



An EV charging station in the Norwood neighborhood of the Bronx in New York: NYC DOT





Curbside composting bin in Brooklyn: Alamy

## WASTE MANAGEMENT

1. Implement the Zero Waste Act of 2023, including funding for education, outreach, and robust enforcement of the citywide residential curbside organics program, in addition to funding for community recycling centers and organic waste drop off sites, as required by Local Laws 85, 88, and 89 of 2023. Invest in 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. Promote the equitable siting of regional capacity for processing organic waste, including investing in more City-owned composting facilities and community composting programs, to the extent feasible, transfer stations, and more.
2. Enact legislation to establish a safe recycling program for rechargeable lithium ion batteries, particularly e-bike and e-scooter batteries.
3. Ensure the timely implementation of the Commercial Waste Zones (CWZ) law to improve the safety of workers, pedestrians, and cyclists, and bring the city closer to its zero waste goals. With the first waste zone (“Queens Central”) having begun, DSNY must implement the nineteen other CWZs throughout the city.
4. Expand commercial organics separation requirements to all food businesses in concert with the implementation of Commercial Waste Zones.
5. Implement DSNY’s Pilot Containerization Program for Manhattan CD9 and work towards a permanent citywide waste containerization program. Providing permanent, sealed containers to hold trash bags prior to collection will improve quality of life and mitigate the issues of the bags being opened by rodents.
6. Implement Local Law 17 of 2023, reducing single-use plastic items in take-out and delivery orders. Ensure that enforcement of these policies are carried out and participating businesses comply.
7. Continue implementing Local Law 152 of 2018, the City’s Waste Equity Law, requiring the DSNY to reduce the permitted capacity of putrescible and non-putrescible transfer stations in four designated community districts.
8. 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.
9. Expand product stewardship programs for items such as packaging used for residential deliveries.
10. Adopt legislation requiring DSNY to conduct a study of the feasibility and potential environmental effects of a recycling mandate for household textiles.
11. 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.
12. 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 DSNY for landscaping needs by DPR and the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).
13. Reform public procurement rules to ease purchasing and integration into capital projects of local salvaged wood material.





# Increasing Green Space & 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.

Prospect Park, Brooklyn: Shutterstock

## PARKS AND NATURAL AREAS

1. 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, Trail Formalization, 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. Explore revenue-generating funding models and public-private partnerships to ensure dedicated funding for parks, including, but not limited to, 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. Implement Local Law 148 of 2023, requiring the City to create an Urban Forest Plan that expands the tree canopy from the current 22% coverage to 30% coverage, ideally by 2035 in accordance with Forest for All NYC. Investing in the City's tree canopy protects the health of existing trees, lowers temperatures, reduces carbon emissions, furthers environmental justice, removes pollutants from the atmosphere, and improves public health. Allocate robust funding for the development of this plan, including funding for community engagement. Fund and implement the Forest Management Framework plan.
4. 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 DPR inspections and develop a plan on how such issues will be corrected.
5. 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 DACs. This includes the planting of trees, bioswales, and other vegetation types.
6. Prioritize access to all types of parkland by ensuring all New Yorkers live within a 10-15 minute walking distance of a clean and well-maintained park, natural area, or nature trail. Activate pedestrian plazas and streets with a focus on neighborhoods with limited access to open green space.
7. Prioritize and implement the QueensWay Plan, which will transform a blighted stretch of abandoned railway in Central Queens into a linear park connecting neighborhoods.
8. 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.
9. 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.





Sweet Brook Bluebelt, Staten Island: NYC DEP

## GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

1. Explore ways to reduce Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs) by funding the City's Green Infrastructure Program. This includes 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. The City must continue updating and modernizing our sewer system and wastewater treatment process to prevent CSOs from dumping unregulated contaminants in our waterways. Expand 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.
2. The City Council should pass a Resolution in support of the NYS Rain Ready NY Act (S4071), and, if approved, the City Council should pass legislation allowing NYC DEP to create an equitable structure in which property owners would pay fees related to the amount they contribute to stormwater runoff. The more impervious surface, the greater the amount of runoff contributed, and therefore the higher the fee, which would fund stormwater infrastructure improvements and green infrastructure projects.
3. Improve and expand the City's cloudburst infrastructure, prioritizing flood-prone communities and holistic solutions that utilize both grey infrastructure (such as sewer pipes and underground storage tanks) and green infrastructure.
4. 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.
5. Prioritize green and blue infrastructure projects with co-benefits beyond the primary purpose of flood-risk reduction, including improved air quality, recreational value, biodiversity, and more. Encourage more collaboration between city agencies to increase the adoption of green and blue infrastructure in projects beyond the jurisdiction of DEP, including providing the Departments of Transportation and Parks and Recreation critical maintenance funds to allow the use of permeable pavement, bioswales and rain gardens wherever possible, and retain more stormwater within NYC Parks.





Construction of the floodwall at Stuyvesant Cove Park

## COASTAL RESILIENCY

1. Continue working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), as well as other Federal and State agencies, to equitably plan, fund, and implement the USACE's New York and New Jersey Harbor and Tributaries Study (NYNJHATS). This includes deliberative community engagement through the establishment of an Environment and Climate Justice Work Group; a multi-hazard and phased approach; a holistic lens of racial, economic, and ecological impact and equity; and increased consideration of nonstructural, natural, and nature-based solutions.
2. Advance the Climate Strong Communities program, which are projects that address critical climate risk needs including street cooling features, solar energy, raised shorelines, and resilience hubs. Complimenting this, the City must fully implement Local Law 122 of 2021, which requires the development and implementation of a citywide climate adaptation plan, prioritizing long-term resilience in frontline communities and critical infrastructure along our waterfronts, including airports, wastewater treatment plants, NYCHA campuses, and marine transfer stations that are vulnerable to sea level rise, power outages, and storm surge.
3. Pass legislation to create a permanent home for the Bureau of Coastal Resiliency within the New York City Department of Environmental Protection.
4. 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. Integrate design guidelines, such as New York City's Climate Resilience Design Guidelines, into building code and infrastructure design standards.
5. Leverage funding from the New York State Clean Water, Clean Air, and Green Jobs Environmental Bond Act of 2022 to develop a citywide long-term, equitable, and voluntary buyout program for at-risk homes in the most vulnerable areas of the City. The City must begin working with residents, regional, state, and federal officials to identify funding and proactively begin stakeholder engagement and education. The City should also consider what happens to the land post-buyout, such as wetland and open space restoration, as well as site remediation if it was contaminated.
6. 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. Continue implementing the Lower Manhattan Coastal Resiliency plan in a timely manner. Develop adaptation and resiliency plans throughout the City, particularly in historically underserved neighborhoods in the outer boroughs that are vulnerable to sea level rise and coastal flooding. The planning process should prioritize transparency and meaningful community input.





Outdoor pool in Harlem: Shutterstock

## REDUCE AND MITIGATE HEAT VULNERABILITY

1. Codify and fund 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 a City Council oversight hearing on the City’s extreme heat emergency preparedness and response.
2. Pass legislation mandating cooling requirements for new construction.
3. Develop an equitable maximum summer indoor temperature policy to protect New Yorkers from extreme indoor heat.
4. 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.
5. 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.
6. Identify funding to restart and expand the City’s Get Cool Program, which provided air conditioners, free of charge, to low-income seniors. The City should also identify funding sources to help qualifying residents in this program with their summer utility bills.
7. 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.
8. Pass legislation that would require DOT to conduct a pilot project on the use of cool pavement on City streets—pavement and pavement coatings designed to keep area temperatures cooler than traditional asphalt and thus combat the urban heat island effect. This pilot project should be coordinated with DEP’s Green Infrastructure Program.
9. 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 health-related illnesses and death. The City must prioritize the health and safety of NYCHA residents and work with the State and Federal government to address current building infrastructure and public health issues, as well as future threats.

NYCHA Housing Complex: Shutterstock

1. Continue implementing 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.
2. Ensure climate resilience and 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 and make 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.
3. Establish NYCHA Resiliency Hubs across its campuses, which are community spaces that have multiple benefits and protect residents from climate hazards such as flooding and extreme heat.
4. 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. Mitigate extreme heat risk by prioritizing reliable access to indoor cooling, increasing NYCHA's tree canopy, and comprehensively retrofitting NYCHA buildings. In accordance with NYCHA's Urban Forest plan and the NYC Urban Forest Agenda, 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. Prioritize workforce development and the creation of sustainable, green jobs for NYCHA residents to improve NYCHA's resiliency.
7. Support NYCHA and DSNY's efforts to improve and increase waste diversion on NYCHA campuses through funding for education and outreach. Ensure paper, metal, glass, plastic, and organics recycling is prioritized at NYCHA campuses.
8. 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. Safeguard NYCHA residents' health, including (but not limited to) by the elimination of 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. Expand NYCHA farms, gardens, and urban agriculture programs.





# 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.

NYLCV Senior VP Josh Klainberg and partners rallying for a comprehensive lead service line removal program. Replace lead pipes now

## LEAD POISONING PREVENTION

1. Pass legislation to establish a mandatory lead service line (LSL) removal program within ten years at no cost to residents. This legislation should allow for occupants of a residence to consent to the work. This legislation should 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).
2. Invest and fund existing lead prevention programs to conduct rigorous inspections and test dust and paint for lead.
3. Hold City Council oversight hearings on existing lead prevention laws and programs, and enforcement of lead abatement tenant and worker protections.
4. 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 1960-78.

## AIR QUALITY

1. Pass legislation establishing standards and reporting requirements regarding indoor air quality in schools within the city school districts. This includes issuing real time reports on the NYC Department of Education's website regarding air quality in schools and the installation and maintenance of air quality monitoring devices, as well as annual reports regarding air quality in schools.
2. 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. 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. Support the expansion of both community and commercial urban agriculture in New York City as outlined in the City's Urban Agriculture Report.
2. Fight to 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. 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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NYLCV is the only nonpartisan, statewide environmental organization in New York that fights for clean water, clean air, renewable energy, and open space through political action.

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