

“When I addressed fellow New Yorkers at my inauguration last year, I promised we’d do this as a team—participatory democracy at the borough level, with citizens encouraged to come out of isolation and work together. **A city government that works from the ground up is the best form of democracy.**

With a dedicated staff and many incredible community partners and volunteers, I’ve worked to keep these promises—take a look inside!”



Gale A. Brewer
MANHATTAN BOROUGH PRESIDENT

HOUSING & LAND USE

Fair & Affordable Housing

I support the Mayor's recommendation for mandatory inclusionary zoning, requiring developers to build affordable units in neighborhoods where bigger buildings will be allowed but I also support a broader inclusionary housing program in all areas of Manhattan.

All new developments should include affordable housing, as every unit of luxury housing has an adverse impact on the affordability of neighborhoods.

Where the city provides incentives for affordable housing, we must require more affordable units in neighborhoods where the "floor area bonus" is more valuable. If a developer will be making more money on a building, they should provide more affordable housing. And if a developer is taking advantage of more than one government benefit, such as a 421-a tax abatement or an additional height allowance, then that developer should have to provide additional affordable units. "Double dipping" should not be allowed.

I also support better safeguards to ensure that affordable HDFC (Housing Development Fund Company) buildings remain affordable, better enforcement against the illegal hotels that are draining our supply of affordable housing, and much stronger eviction prevention mechanisms so that tenants can remain in their affordable apartments. I am also working to ensure that NYCHA developments remain safe and that the many currently vacant SRO rooms become part of our plan for the preservation of affordable housing.

I support development that respects our communities and makes them livable for all—which means addressing community needs beyond the development site, such as open space, schools, transportation, and historic preservation.

Smart Development

My office's approach to land use policy consists of open communication, early planning, smart development, and maintaining community diversity. Any effective planning process needs to have an open dialogue between all parties involved and an effective bridge between community concerns and the administration. I have applied a "pre-ULURP" planning process in several areas of Manhattan.

Seaport Working Group

In cooperation with Council Member Chin, other elected officials, Manhattan Community Board 1, and other stakeholders, I helped form the Seaport Working Group last February to engage the community in a candid, open, and inclusive dialogue about development in and around the Seaport Historic District. Together, we developed guidelines and principles to inform current

and future development. I believe the Howard Hughes Corporation's proposal for a tower next to the Seaport does not meet those guidelines.

East Midtown Steering Committee

I joined Council Member Garodnick to form the East Midtown Steering Committee, which is conducting a study to identify the area's needs and to develop a rezoning framework. The group will help define future policy changes and make recommendations to the City Planning Commission. The committee's various stakeholders—community groups, business associations, civic organizations, and labor—are reviewing the need for updated commercial building stock, the appropriate density for the area, historic preservation, environmental concerns, transit, and other infrastructure priorities.

Protecting Section 8 Tenants

Last spring I called on the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) and NYCHA to halt the downsizing of our most vulnerable Section 8 residents. I'm glad to report that this effort was successful in keeping many seniors and persons with disabilities in their homes.

No to the Airbnb Business Model

Using residences as unregulated hotels risks further reducing the number of affordable and rent-regulated apartments in the city—right when they are most needed. That's why I called on City Hall to reject Airbnb's business model and fight its efforts to legalize the now illegal use of apartments for commercial use. The practice creates unsafe conditions for the renters, neighbors, and visitors, and the illegal hotel industry keeps substantial numbers of affordable housing units off the market.

Intelligent Landmarks Preservation

On the heels of the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) refusal to consider landmark status for the Rizzoli Bookstore building at 31 West 57th St. last spring, I called for preservation of remaining "icons from another era" and for reforms to the landmarking process.

After working with preservationists, real estate interests, and our City Council partners, my office is drafting legislation to reform the landmarking process to help protect buildings and increase transparency for all stakeholders.

Later in the year, our staff mobilized to fight a misguided LPC proposal to remove from landmarks consideration 96 sites or districts citywide. We visited all 36 Manhattan sites after their announcement and found at least eight that deserve further consideration—not elimination. We were greatly relieved that the LPC decided to delay implementation of its plan.

JUSTICE

The Fair Chance Act

I've joined Council Members Williams, Torres, and Johnson in sponsoring the Fair Chance Act, barring employers from conducting a criminal history inquiry *before* making a conditional job offer. This essential legislation will help ensure that all qualified New Yorkers will be able to have a fair shot in the job application process. The difficulties ex-offenders face finding work often result in high rates of recidivism. New York must join the ranks of more than 60 cities and 10 states that give all applicants a fair chance at employment.

Curbing Sexual Assault

I join with my colleagues in government and all concerned New Yorkers in my outrage over sexual violence on college campuses. In order to gather the best information and find solutions, I will be hosting a series of focus groups, aimed at gleaning information from all those who are involved on campuses: security officers, administrators, counselors/Title IX Coordinators, and of course students themselves. And because we know that behaviors and misconceptions that lead to these college tragedies begin early, we will be holding a forum on dating violence at the high school level, as part of our involvement in Denim Day NYC, the annual citywide initiative to raise awareness about sexual violence.

Honoring 9/11 Survivors & Responders

Each month, another responder dies from a 9/11-related illness. We have lost over 100 NYC firefighters and 80 police officers to 9/11-related illnesses. In fact, more NYPD officers have died from their injuries *after* 9/11 than died that day. That's why my office joined the downtown residents, first responders and their unions, and city, state, and federal elected officials to form "The Committee to Create a Monument to 9/11 Survivors and Responders." It's time to honor these heroes and allow the full story to be told of the sacrifice and loss in the years following from the terrorist attacks with a monument near Ground Zero.

EDUCATION

Equal Access to Arts Education

Last summer, my office called for more and better arts education in city schools in a new report—*Arts Forward*—and announced \$20,000 in grants to help fund in-school arts partnerships.

Arts Forward calls into question the reliability of the DOE's Annual Arts Survey, which is used to monitor compliance with mandated arts requirements. Our report recommends ways to fix the survey's inaccuracies and ensure that schools have equal access to the resources needed to enhance arts education. Our Fall Arts Mixer and Hispanic Heritage Month networking event helped connect northern Manhattan

schools with cultural organizations looking to establish partnerships for arts education. Our Spring Arts Mixer will be held in May.

Tech Education

The City's share of Smart Schools Bond Act funds is estimated at \$783 million. For New York students to be equipped to compete and excel in the 21st century economy, the City's technology in schools policy needs to undergo essential reforms, including:

- Revision of capital hardware purchasing policies to better encourage utilization
- Creation of an accredited Technology Diploma
- Uniform training and professional development for teachers and principals
- Development of a hiring line for certified Computer Science teachers
- Mapping the current landscape of broadband connectivity in every school

We are launching a Technology Task Force and on March 30, my office will host a Technology Mixer for tech companies and school principals to devise new ideas for technology policy in City schools.

Mental Health

I've long worked for culturally appropriate mental health services in schools. I believe these services are key to preventing problems and assisting young people in overcoming obstacles and becoming healthy and successful adults. While I was able to obtain funding for the construction of some school-based facilities while I was in the Council, much more needs to be done. I will be releasing a report on this topic which will outline the benefits, challenges, and some concrete recommendations for moving ahead with this vital service.

HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT

Paid Sick Leave

The 2014 passage of the expanded Paid Sick Leave Law was a major victory for city workers, and stemmed from original legislation I passed as a member of the City Council. Now, the city's 3.4 million private-sector workers have the fundamental right to five paid sick days each year when they or a family member falls ill—including 1.2 million workers who had no access under the original law's passage. All New Yorkers can now be assured that a sick day won't cost them wages or their job.

Forging Partnerships for a Greener, More Sustainable City

My office brought together the Departments of Sanitation and Education and their constituent unions to better implement the Organics Collection Program, which cuts the solid waste produced by public school cafeterias and produces nutrient-rich compost in the bargain. The program, which began as a pilot that I helped launch with parents at Upper West Side schools,

now collects waste from 356 DOE schools in Manhattan. Because food waste comprises 40% of a typical school's waste output, this program could significantly reduce the city's solid waste expenses.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Community Boards

A prime responsibility of Borough Presidents under the charter is appointing members of Community Boards (in consultation with council members). My office has done more than merely appoint. We've aggressively recruited new members, including those from labor, NYCHA and other under-represented categories. We've also expanded the application criteria beyond the written application to help prospective members demonstrate their suitability for service more realistically than in their written application, and instituted the first online application process this year, likely the first in the city.

My office has also instituted an in-service training program to assist all CB members and enable more professionalism on the boards—and we've opened the trainings to the public at large and all other MBP appointees. These trainings include topics such as the ULURP process, Diversity & Inclusion, Budgeting, and Ethics.

Last June the City Council passed my Resolution of support for state legislation allowing 16- and 17-year olds to serve on NYC Community Boards. The state bill passed the legislature and Gov. Cuomo signed the measure into law. Allowing people this age to apply gives them an opportunity to influence day-to-day community life. We've aggressively recruited teens in this year's appointment cycle, including online advertising and videos.

Creating the African Immigrant Task Force

According to the NYC Office of Immigrant Affairs, the number of Manhattan residents born in West African countries increased by more than 35% between 2000 and 2011. So last year the MBPO and our 12 Community Boards launched an African Immigrant Task Force to address the health, quality of life, and security concerns of this booming population of New Yorkers.

The African Immigrant Task Force sponsored one of the first community forums on the Ebola virus to help spread accurate information about the disease, and it is now working to address the specific small-business needs unique to this community.

Registering More Women Voters

Last August, in celebration of Women's Equality Day, my office sponsored a "Take the Pledge" campaign to register women voters. Voting means power, and as I vowed at my inauguration, I'll never stop fighting to ensure that women can make their own choices about work and family.

TECHNOLOGY

Pay Phone Wi-Fi hotspots

I voted to approve Mayor de Blasio's LinkNYC plan, after working with my fellow Borough Presidents, to add scores of additional Wi-Fi kiosks at locations in Northern Manhattan and other underserved areas of the city. LinkNYC is a gigabit Wi-Fi network that will leverage the old payphone infrastructure to dramatically increase internet access in all neighborhoods. This new system of free public Wi-Fi is not a panacea for solving the ongoing digital divide, but it is a step toward wider web access.

.nyc

The potential of what New Yorkers can accomplish for their businesses and their communities with a .nyc web domain is enormous. I was an early advocate of this concept and introduced a resolution in support of creating the domain when I served on the City Council.

As the first U.S. city to successfully acquire its own top-level domain, New York has burnished its reputation as the city of possibility.

CUNY Service Corps

To leverage the great mass of data available under the city's Open Data Law (which I wrote), my office has engaged a team of 15 CUNY Service Corps Members to help Manhattan's Community Boards navigate and utilize city data in ways that help neighborhoods make better-informed decisions and ensure that our government is truly transparent.

FOOD

Summer Meals for Schoolchildren

The Department of Education's Summer Meals Program provides free, nutritious breakfasts and lunches to children 18 and under at convenient sites every summer. Unfortunately, too many New York families are unaware of the program's existence. After a "day of action" provided detailed information to parents at all of Manhattan's Title I elementary schools last June, my office called for a reset of the Summer Meals Program with recommendations to improve site planning and strengthen interagency coordination. I am co-sponsoring legislation with Council Member Vacca that would guarantee better administration of the program.

"Buy local"

Last August, my office and Cornell University's Cooperative Extension organized a tour of Upstate farms to encourage procurement administrators at government agencies and nonprofit organizations to "buy local." We led a caravan of city and state officials—including NYC Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) Commissioner Cumberbatch—to the produce and dairy farms of Orange County. There's enormous potential for New York City government and organizations to buy

from local providers, thereby creating jobs and making healthier and tastier meals. As a byproduct of the tour, we've established a weekly fresh food program for purchase by hundreds of city employees at 1 Centre St. in cooperation with DCAS and GrowNYC.

Our Fresh Food for Seniors program—in cooperation with Council Members Johnson and Rosenthal, Corbin Hill Food Project and GrowNYC—provides older Manhattan residents with delicious, locally sourced vegetables and fruit at an affordable \$8 a bag from July through October. I started this program when I was on the Council, and I'm delighted to be giving it a Manhattan-wide push as Borough President. The program covers senior centers in Harlem, the Upper West Side, Hell's Kitchen, Chelsea and Greenwich Village—and we plan further expansion in 2015.

Supporting Urban Agriculture

Our office is studying the current state of urban agricultural programs in Manhattan—which include hundreds of farms, hydroponic labs, and community gardens at public schools, NYCHA developments, and senior centers. We will recommend ways to sustain and enlarge upon these innovative sources of locally grown fresh food.

SMALL BUSINESS

Helping Small Business Succeed

Manhattan's greatest strength is the small businesses that keep our city running and make it stronger—independently owned bodegas and bakeries, dry cleaners and pharmacies, coffee shops and restaurants. These storefront shops have historically provided the majority of jobs for New Yorkers and a gateway to the middle class, especially for immigrants. The MBPO will soon release a report with recommendations that will help more Manhattan "storefronters" succeed.

TRANSPORTATION

Safeguarding Pedestrians

The MBPO has been major partner in the Mayor's Vision Zero pedestrian safety campaign, calling on Manhattan's 12 Community Boards to provide lists of their top traffic hotspots to help the initiative.

I also worked with Council Member Kallos to introduce legislation that would require the Department of Transportation to give a month's notice to Community Boards for any traffic changes. This bill will give communities an opportunity to raise red flags about new traffic rules that might pose a threat to pedestrian safety or otherwise negatively impact neighborhoods.

Council Member Mendez and I also introduced legislation to create a Bike Safety Task Force to establish better education and enforcement.

Curb Cuts & the Disabled

Our office is working with dozens of volunteers and disability rights advocates to

canvass pedestrian ramps along Broadway, Manhattan's main thoroughfare, assessing compliance with the ADA. We will release findings and recommendations this spring.

Buses

Bringing together city agencies, Community Boards, and Business Improvement Districts, my office is working to address the proliferation of tour buses and intercity buses in the borough. By fostering collaboration of agencies' enforcement efforts, and drafting legislation to cap the number of bus licenses with Council Member Chin, we can help reduce the impact on our neighborhoods.

Accessible Pedestrian Signals

Legislation I passed with Council Member Levine, Local Law 60 of 2014 increases the number of audible signals that cue visually-impaired pedestrians that they can cross intersections from 25 to 75 a year. These accessible pedestrian signals emit audible noises or messages and can also vibrate. This is just one of the tactics we are employing to make our streets safer.

AGE-FRIENDLY MANHATTAN

I'm committed to creating a more age-friendly Manhattan. That's why in 2014 I created the MBPO's Senior Advisory Board, a diverse group of older adults representing neighborhoods and communities throughout the borough. The group is exploring the opportunities available to older adults at Manhattan's colleges and universities. The MBPO is also publishing a comprehensive guide for Manhattan seniors that will reflect the diversity of this growing and considerable segment of New Yorkers.

Last year the City Council passed legislation I strongly supported—increasing the eligibility cap for the Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE). My office has already held one seminar in Washington Heights to help seniors apply for a rent freeze and plans to hold several more in areas where SCRIE enrollment is lowest.



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Edith Valentine *Receptionist*

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Brian Lafferty *Special Projects Coordinator*
Paola Liriano *Administrative Assistant*

1 Centre Street, 19th Floor
New York, NY 10007
(212) 669-8300

163 West 125th Street, 5th Floor
New York, NY 10007
(212) 531-1609

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